

# Veterans' Employment Assessment

*In Kharkivska, Mykolaivska and Zhytomyrska oblasts*

February 2026 | Ukraine

## Introduction

As of October 2025, 1.9 million veterans were registered in Ukraine – an over twofold increase compared to January 2022, at the wake of the full-scale invasion.<sup>1,2</sup> Securing sustainable livelihoods for this rapidly growing social group, including through integration into the civilian workforce, is a priority, yet poses a challenge to Ukraine's strained economy.

The Ukrainian Veterans Foundation's study conducted in 2024 revealed that almost a third of veterans were unemployed and over a half were in need of financial support.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, high labour demand in some sectors and geographical areas has been observed, suggesting insufficient effectiveness of employment policy tools.<sup>4</sup> Veterans often have heightened financial needs due to health issues and increased spending on treatment. Yet, implications of unemployment extend beyond securing financial resources. Veterans often highlight that work is as a crucial factor facilitating integration in a community and strengthening their sense of belonging.<sup>5</sup> Data suggests that employment and livelihoods wellbeing helps reduce intragroup tensions and increase wider social cohesion .

Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, REACH conducted two assessments (an area-based assessment in Dnipro city<sup>6</sup> and an assessment in frontline oblasts of Kharkivska and Zaporizka<sup>7</sup>) regarding veterans' access to basic services, including employment support. Both assessments revealed that although a set of employment and business support services for veterans are available, challenges in access, and quality issues persist. Meanwhile, veterans' needs in employment and livelihoods are shaped by a range of interconnected issues. Many veterans reported being unable to return to their previous jobs, either because their former workplaces no longer existed, were located in occupied territories, or veterans suffered health-related issues that limited their ability to work overall.

This assessment explores how veterans access job opportunities and employment or business support services, as well as the challenges they face in securing and retaining work or starting and conducting a business. It also proposes recommendations for a better integration of veterans into the labour market, while supporting their reintegration into civilian life, considering cross-cutting needs.

## Key Messages

- Veterans' reintegration into civilian employment was commonly reported as a gradual process that rarely begins with work itself. Veterans described prioritising health care, rehabilitation, and administrative procedures after demobilisation. Meanwhile, short-term social benefits were often reported as insufficient to fully cover needs during recovery, contributing to financial pressure before veterans felt ready to work.
- Veterans' job search experiences were shaped by a combination of economic necessity, shifting priorities, and multiple, interrelated barriers. Interviewees reported importance of seeking employment for veterans not only to secure income, but also to regain routine, purpose, and social connection. At the same time, many described veterans being unable or unwilling to return to previous jobs. Barriers to employment were reported as multi-dimensional, including stigma or discrimination, physical and psychological issues, skills mismatch, and limited availability of suitable vacancies, which often compounded one another.
- Self-employment was frequently considered by veterans as an alternative pathway, offering autonomy and flexibility. Yet, it involved distinct and substantial constraints. Veterans, service providers, and employers described business creation as hindered by self-doubt and lack of knowledge on operating a business, restrictive grant eligibility criteria, complex application procedures, limited start-up capital, and wider macroeconomic issues and war-related operating risks.
- Employment and business support services for veterans were mainly provided by government institutions, particularly employment centres, with NGOs playing a complementary role. Yet, veterans' perceptions varied - many reported dissatisfaction with support services, citing limited tangible results, fragmented information and accessibility issues, while many distrusted state services. Differences in perceptions between veterans, service providers, and employers highlighted gaps in mutual understanding regarding needs, constraints, and expectations.

## Methodology Overview

This assessment relied on a qualitative approach, combining Individual Interviews with veterans (46 in total) and Key Informant Interviews with service providers (39 in total) and employers (17 in total) in urban and rural areas of Kharkivska, Mykolaivska and Zhytomyrska oblasts (see Map 1 on p.3). In total, 102 interviews were conducted. Data was collected between 15 October - 12 November 2025. Detailed sampling can be found in Annex 1 and description of methodology can be found in the [Terms of Reference](#).

Individual Interviews (IIs) with veterans focused on the detailed analysis of their pathways in accessing employment support services as well as employment itself. In this assessment, we define the veteran pathway approach as a method for evaluating the accessibility and quality of services by mapping and analysing the steps a veteran takes to receive a specific type of service. This approach helped capture veterans' experiences at each stage of reintegrating into civilian workforce and identify potential related needs in other areas\*. The document includes storyboxes following pathways of two veterans whose names were changed.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with government and NGO service providers in employment and business support services targeting veterans. This allowed to collect information on the range of available services, barriers to access, and cooperation between service providers. KIIs were also conducted with employers (including private, public, and non-governmental entities), to understand their perspectives and approaches to employing veterans, and identify good practices\*\*.

Along with data collection, secondary data review and consultations with employers, service providers, and veteran business owners from locations outside the assessed oblasts were conducted to provide case studies and help identify and share good practices in employing veterans. The document includes success stories showcasing good practices of veterans' services and employment or starting own business.

As a complementary stage of the assessment, REACH conducted a workshop in Kyiv on 22 January 2026, aiming to brainstorm possible solutions to the issues identified during data collection. The workshop included participation of stakeholders in the sphere of veterans' employment and business, such as representatives of national and local authorities, public services, local, national and international NGOs, employers, members of veteran associations and veteran business owners, some of whom participated in the assessment during the data collection stage. Following a presentation and discussion of findings, participants focused on developing specific solutions, taking into account related challenges and assigning responsibility to relevant stakeholders. Findings from the workshop are included in the recommendations section.

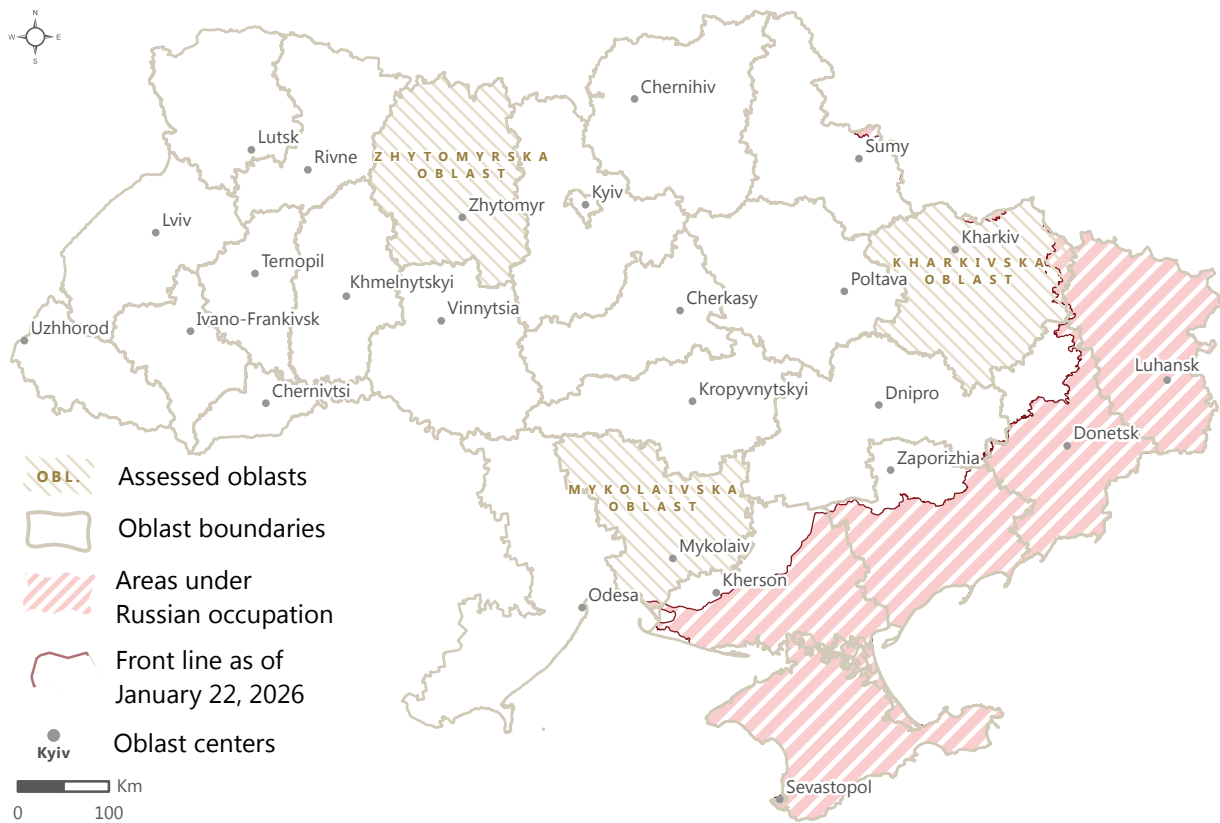
## Limitations

- Data is indicative of the situation at the time of data collection. As the Ukrainian government makes changes to the current veteran reintegration policy, the legal context may evolve over time. This could affect the relevance of some findings regarding administrative procedures and the accessibility of state benefits.
- As recruiting respondents for Individual Interviews was conducted with the help of local authorities and NGOs, the sample at least partially includes veterans who had already contacted or were aware of certain services. This could affect the assessment's findings, indicating a higher level of support services' accessibility than in reality.
- Veterans with certain types of injuries, such as those with vision or hearing loss or complex amputations, were more difficult to reach, and as a result may be underrepresented in the sample.
- Due to a limited number of respondents from rural areas participating in the study, comparisons between rural and urban areas should be drawn with particular caution.
- The sensitive nature of certain topics may have led veterans to be unwilling to disclose certain issues or needs, particularly those related to physical or mental health, which may limit the coverage of their experiences with reintegration.
- Key Informant Interviews may be biased to some extent, as respondents might have been inclined to present their organisations/institutions/businesses in a favourable light. Their opinions on access to services, were however balanced with insights provided by veterans via IIs.
- Some informants and respondents may not have knowledge of all programmes or stakeholders operating in the hromadas, therefore if they did not mention a certain activity in the given location, it does not denote a lack of such activity in the hromada.
- This is a qualitative case study that offers in-depth, indicative insights into the situation in the assessed hromadas. The findings are not statistically representative and do not capture the full situation across Ukraine.

\* In this report, where referring to information provided by veterans interviewed via IIs "veterans" or "respondents" are used.

\*\* In this report, when referring to information provided by key informants, terms "key informants", "informants" or "veteran informants" (for those key informants who have a veteran status) are used.

## Geographical scope



Map 1: Locations where data collection took place.

## Context

Labour market in Ukraine faces significant challenges caused or exacerbated by the war. Following the full-scale invasion, unemployment rose sharply, along with closures of many businesses. As economy began to recover, GDP growth reached 2.9% and unemployment fell to 14.3% in 2024. Yet, this progress has been insufficient to fully address the economic losses of 2022.<sup>8</sup>

Mismatches between skills and available vacancies have widened, as evidenced by high demand for labour in some skill-intensive sectors (e.g., technology, finance, defence), alongside structural unemployment.<sup>9,10</sup> In parallel, shadow economy with unofficial employment continues to grow.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, income inequalities are widening, with wages differing across regions and sectors, where salaries rise faster in high-skilled sectors, while average household income declines.<sup>12</sup>

The war has driven these imbalances and shaped demographic shifts through its profound impact on people's lives. By December 2025, UNHCR recorded 5.8 million refugees from Ukraine<sup>13</sup>, while IOM reported about 3.7 million internally displaced people.<sup>14</sup> The war has also led to injuries and rise in disability. As of 2025, over 6 million people in Ukraine were estimated to have

a disability, although only about half of them formally registered.<sup>15</sup> As of January 2025, 80% of people with disability were reportedly unemployed<sup>16</sup> - among those with a disability certificate - about 70%.<sup>17</sup>

Veterans often fall into the aforementioned categories, which frequently results in overlapping vulnerabilities. In 2023, approximately 73% of surveyed veterans reported having sustained an injury or illness directly related to their military service.<sup>18</sup> In 2024, 21% of veterans self-identified as having a disability<sup>19</sup>, while about 6% had a disability registered by the Pension Fund.<sup>20</sup> Veterans are also at greater risk of PTSD and a range of psychological disorders – in 2024, about a third reported symptoms of depression.<sup>21</sup> In a study conducted by the IOM after the beginning of the full-scale invasion, only 2% of veterans were IDPs.<sup>22</sup>

A ReScore study revealed that although veterans declared an overall higher level of economic security than the general population, they were less likely to claim salary from employment as their households' source of income (71% against 83% among general population), more often relying on social benefits, pensions and savings.<sup>23</sup> Economic mobilisation of veterans would help them secure livelihoods and reintegrate into the civilian society – yet, their pathway to employment is not without challenges.

## Veteran reintegration pathways

### Initial steps after discharge

Veterans' pathway after demobilisation most often begins with accessing healthcare services, primarily rehabilitation and obtaining prosthetics (many veterans received help from social protection), as well as dental care, surgical interventions (many received help from NGOs or INGOs, and military hospitals) and visiting other medical specialists. Medical care and rehabilitation were the most urgent issues for all the demographic groups of surveyed veterans. Accessing these services is a necessary part of reintegration process that influences future employment and business creation.

#### Veteran journey: Serhii

*Before joining the army, Serhii worked on a farm. However, the war left his house damaged and himself injured – he lost his leg. After dismissal from the military, he first sought treatment and rehabilitation. His path wasn't easy – although the village council provided him with a one-time financial assistance, he struggled to obtain full treatment and rehabilitation, benefits, and subsidy to restore his house. "No one heard me", he said, "And this is not only me problem, this is the problem of all our guys". After he finally managed to resolve most pressing issues, he started thinking of work. Serhii's wife tried to convince him to rest, but he disagreed - "I wanted to find some work, at least for the winter". In the summer, he planned to restore his old apiary.*

Many veterans started their reintegration pathway with accessing administrative services, primarily disability registration and early retirement obtained from the Pension Fund, or registering a place of residence. Less often, financial assistance was the first service that veterans sought after demobilisation, mostly benefits for unemployed, retired, veterans with disability, for those who need rehabilitation and healthcare services, or for single caregivers. Other benefits that veterans obtained included free transport, YeOselya service\*, tax exemption, subsidies and allowances.

Some veterans sought legal support (from private lawyers, veteran spaces, state or NGOs), often to address administrative issues or challenges in accessing services. Once the urgent needs in healthcare, livelihoods and administrative procedures were addressed, some sought psychological support (often from NGOs, but also civilians in their social circle, or other veterans), education (including university education and professional training courses), and sport for veterans.

Employment and business support services were accessed simultaneously or after receiving healthcare, psychological support, administrative services, etc., because without accessing these services veterans mostly were unable to work or were preoccupied with other problems.

\* YeOselya is an affordable housing loan program initiated by the President of Ukraine.

#### Veteran journey: Olena

*At 16 years old, Olena joined a military institute, training for a professional military, after which she joined the ranks. However, her family needed her back at home. Her husband joined the military as well, and a year after the full-scale invasion, she demobilised to take care of their child. Now, Olena is trying to find her own place in the civilian society – a new and at times challenging situation, after so many years spent with the army. Her mother supported her wholeheartedly, but Olena needed professional support as well. Psychological assistance was the first service she sought after leaving the army. "They brought me back from the war, [brought back] my thoughts", she recalls. About two months after demobilisation, Olena started thinking of a new career.*

Reintegration pathways varied between different groups of veterans in several ways. In urban areas, veterans sought psychological help and legal help much more often than in rural areas. Female veterans more often accessed psychological support than male veterans, and they received it first and foremost. Veterans with disabilities more often faced various needs, in particular, financial aid and administrative services. For IDP veterans, administrative services were key, primarily obtaining the appropriate status. Training and psychological support were more important for the unemployed than for the other groups.

Mostly, the interviewed veterans did not need help from their families in accessing services, but moral support and help in finding information was important for them. Some veterans also mentioned receiving financial support, help with rehabilitation and medical assistance from their families. Less commonly, veterans sought the support of a veteran's assistant, who helped search for information and prepare the necessary documents. People older than 25 years old (in particular, those aged over 61 years old sought family assistance more) and veterans with war-related disabilities were more likely to seek such assistance.

## Searching for employment

While veterans' employment preferences after discharge remained largely unchanged, their ability to work has often been affected by health issues (as a result of injuries or chronic illnesses). However, many also noted a partial or whole change in preferences after returning from the frontline, which manifested itself through change in values. Some veterans stressed a desire to move forward, sought greater recognition for their work, wished to spend more time with their families, or just wished to change their workplace.

*At some point, I realised that I didn't want to work as many hours as I used to. I wanted to spend more time with my family.*

*Employed veteran, Kharkiv*

Many veterans could not return to the jobs they held before joining the military. Sometimes, their positions were no longer available, or the workplaces closed.

Out of those veterans who were looking for a job, most were motivated to find employment to satisfy their financial needs, but some also highlighted that they wanted to be active, socialise and not to think about the past wartime experiences. When choosing a job, veterans prioritised financial well-being, followed by psychological ability to work, accessibility (accessible location above all), shared values with the team and good teamwork in general, a job aligned with interests, job stability, schedule flexibility (including a schedule that allows for spending more time with the family) and physical ability to work.

Veterans often reported receiving job offers directly from employers. They also frequently searched for opportunities on the Internet, including such websites as Work.UA and Robota.UA, or through friends and acquaintances. Those who successfully found employment looked for work through friends and acquaintances and received offers from employers, underscoring the difficulty in finding employment for those with weaker social networks. Interestingly, many did not apply for jobs at all, because they were offered a job or returned to their previous place of work.

### **Veteran journey: Serhii**

*Serhii needed funds to restore the apiary – by the time he left the army, only a few survived the full-scale invasion. Spring's frost and summer's drought made his restoration task even more challenging. He turned to two NGOs for funds, but without success – he could not meet their specific criteria. Therefore, Serhii started looking for a job. He looked for offers on the Internet, called local companies and finally turned to the employment centre. He did not have trouble with accessing the employment centre, however "the results were not very good", he said, "because two months have already passed and... except for one security [officer] position they did not offer anything".*

Veterans, employers and service providers mentioned mostly similar barriers to finding work, including discrimination, physical and psychological barriers, deficit of relevant vacancies, skills mismatch and administrative barriers. Veterans with disability status overall more often mentioned facing different barriers. Older veterans were also often noted among the most disadvantaged groups in search for employment, due to higher likelihood of skill mismatch and bias from employers.

*Incidentally, my comrade, with whom I served, also has a second-degree disability, and he had difficulty finding employment. This is an example from real life. He was unable to find work, stating that as soon as they heard he had a disability, he was immediately rejected.*

*Employed veteran, Mykolaiv*

Overall, three main levels of barriers to employment can

be identified: structural barriers, systemic barriers, social barriers and individual-level barriers.

### **Structural barriers**

Structural barriers were mostly mentioned by service providers and included job market issues such as shortage of vacancies, low salaries, skills/education mismatch, inaccessible infrastructure, and broader economic constraints, especially in areas closer to the frontline.

Respondents and informants noted lack of relevant job offers or job offers in the area. This problem was more often mentioned within veterans from settlements outside of oblast centre. According to ReScore, this obstacle is pressing (moderately or extremely) for 48% of veterans.<sup>24</sup> Employers also recognised the difficulty to find official and stable employment for veterans. According to IOM, veterans were more likely to report relying on irregular earnings, for instance, occasional or short-term work (18% and 12% respectively)<sup>25</sup>, in line with the findings of this study. Employers noted that the shortage of relevant vacancies may be partially caused from the lack of adaptation of workplaces for veterans, particularly those with disabilities. At the same time, some could not afford to adapt their workplaces.

Barriers such as skills mismatch, lack of required education (including higher education required for some jobs), were named by veterans, employers and service providers. Employers mentioned gaps in veterans' education and skills far more frequently. According to ReScore research, this obstacle was moderate or major for 24% and 9% accordingly.<sup>26</sup> Veterans may experience some professional challenges after discharge which are related to long absence on the civilian job market and sometimes employer's unawareness how to apply veterans' skills in civilian life.<sup>27</sup> Meeting needs within education and training services (especially for veterans with disability and for unemployed) may help to deal with such barriers, according to veterans and employers.

Additionally, veterans, employers and service providers noted perceived low salaries and inability to find a well-paid job due to disability. According to the ReScore study, 44% of employed veterans earned less than the estimated base salary for soldiers (20,000 UAH, 464 USD).<sup>28</sup> For veterans, financial problems were most painfully reflected in the lack of money for treatment, including medicines and rehabilitation. Veterans and employers suggested meeting this need with financial support for rehabilitation and treatment. Furthermore, service providers noted that unemployment benefits are only provided to veterans for 3 months. This is insufficient, because veterans may need more time to rehabilitate and readapt.

Difficulties with finding employment concern not only veterans, but also wider population. The shortage of jobs is particularly acute in areas close to the front line, as the danger has led to relocation of businesses and displacement of population. Skills mismatch is also an issue of Ukrainian job market overall, resulting in structural unemployment.<sup>29</sup> Finally, low wages are not only an issue concerning veterans: according to The World Bank, uneven

decline in labour incomes, deepening inequality, was a result of Russia's invasion's impact on economic sector.<sup>30</sup>

Service providers emphasised the problem of inaccessible infrastructure for veterans, especially those with disabilities. Commuting to work may be a problem for veterans, especially with disabilities, which is why remote work may be more accessible.

### Systemic barriers

Among system-level barriers respondents and informants mentioned administrative barriers, especially bureaucracy. Accessing needed services and benefits and document preparation may be a long and complicated process, that challenges potential employment.<sup>31</sup> Service providers underlined the problem of delays with obtaining certificates of statuses (e.g., of a person with disability). Veterans mentioned administrative barriers such as bureaucracy more often than employers and service providers.

The problem of fragmentation across institutions and duplicated responsibilities persist. Veterans still have to navigate multiple entry points, are often redirected between institutions, and face heavy documentary requirements and uneven local procedures, which together prevent a clear, one-stop algorithm for accessing services.<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless, veteran's bureaucratic pathway became more digitalised and less complicated over the years. While about a third of the veterans highlighted lack of coordination between service providers, among general population this share rises to 40%. This could signal a more efficient system dedicated to veterans, although further work is needed.<sup>33</sup> Employers underlined administrative restrictions on the employment of persons with disabilities in certain types of work. Veterans, especially those with disability, proposed to address these barriers by providing legal support.

Another system-level barrier is insufficient awareness of available opportunities, despite service providers seeking to spread information. Veterans pointed out the need for information about updates on job opportunities and new services (this was especially important for unemployed veterans).

### Social barriers

Veterans and service providers named perceived, or manifested in specific actions, discrimination and stigmatisation of veterans. Discrimination due to veterans' status, lack of understanding, prejudice from civil society has been persisting through the years and has been noted across various oblasts.<sup>34,35,36,37,38</sup> The problem of discrimination arose before 2022 for veterans of the anti-terrorist operation (ATO)\*\* at first and extended to veterans of the full-scale war.<sup>39,40</sup> Veterans from oblast centres more often mentioned such problems. Stigma

\*\* Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) in Ukraine refers to the military and security operation conducted by Ukrainian forces from 2014 to 2018 in eastern Ukraine against Russia-backed armed groups in parts of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. It was formally replaced in 2018 by the Joint Forces Operation (JFO).

and discrimination were the main problems mentioned by veterans regardless of their disability status, but some respondents noted that the disability status also negatively impacted employment. Discrimination is an issue that is experienced not only by veterans with disabilities but by other people with disability as well.<sup>41</sup>

### Individual-level barriers

Individual-level barriers included physical barriers, psychological and psychosocial issues, and lack of support. Among psychological and psychosocial barriers respondents and informants mentioned communication and adaptation gaps. They also noted physical barriers such as inability to work full-time or to work at certain types of job because of trauma, unstable health condition or disability. Veterans further highlighted the interconnected nature of barriers hindering their reintegration into workforce and more broadly, into civilian life.

Employers typically focused on what is required for a veteran to "be able to work" and to "fit in" with the team, most often mentioning veterans' communication challenges resulting from trauma, veterans' withdrawal into themselves, and the need for long-term reintegration. Informants emphasised challenges of creating appropriate hiring conditions for veterans, particularly due to uncertainty about how to communicate with veterans in a respectful and psychologically safe way. Informants also suggested that veterans face a problem of a different approach to work in civilian life compared to the army. As a result, employers more often emphasised the need for tools to adapt workplaces, trainings on how to interact with veterans, and solutions to close skills gaps. Study conducted by the Ukrainian Veterans Foundation underlines this dilemma: employers are uncertain and cautious about how to communicate with veterans (including fear of "saying the wrong thing"), while veterans often felt that civilians/employers could not truly understand their experience and sometimes perceived support as pity.<sup>42</sup>

Additionally, employers and service providers claimed that some veterans were unmotivated to find employment

#### Veteran journey: Olena

*"It was very difficult to find a job" said Olena, "because the vacancies were either not relevant to my experience, education, and so on, or low-paid, or the working hours were poorly organised". With a small child under her care, finding a job proved even more challenging. She searched on her own. "I don't know why I didn't go to the [employment] centre to do it." She pondered, "I probably just didn't know my way around the moment. It's a habit. Well, I almost never worked [a civilian job]." However, she was determined to find something. "I was looking for a job in order to do something useful. I myself am of such a temperament that I cannot sit still." Immersing herself in everyday life helped her shift focus away from her difficult past memories and ease anxiety about her husband at the frontline.*

and undergo training, especially because of reintegration issues, distrust of the state and uncertainty about its future. To deal with these barriers veterans and employers underlined the need in psychological support and reintegration services (especially for unemployed veterans).

According to The World Bank, more than a half of respondents agreed on supporting veterans and their family as the most pressing need in Ukraine, because loss of social cohesion, internal division, and political instability may be the top risks to rebuilding Ukraine.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, according to State employment centre, 91% of employers were ready to employ veterans.<sup>44</sup> While civilians declare that support to veterans is one of the main goals for Ukrainian society, veterans often may not feel this support. In this study, lack of support, namely perception of employers as uninterested in veterans' adaptation, lack of support for caregivers, etc., were highlighted by veterans and service providers, while employers only occasionally mentioned barriers related to employers' lack of interest in hiring veterans.

Most often, interviewed veterans who were unemployed (including those not looking for employment), were those undergoing rehabilitation, internally-displaced veterans and single caregivers. The women surveyed were less likely to apply for jobs than men, including for reasons such as taking care of a child or needing time to recover. Most of those who were unemployed at the time of data collection indicated that they mostly did not work at all after being discharged from the army, signalling prolonged issues with reintegration into workforce.

Meeting needs connected to these barriers requires a comprehensive system of support and accessibility: infrastructure solutions, coordination across services, stable MHPSS and rehabilitation programmes, legal assistance, as well as career counselling, retraining, and employment support.

### Challenges while working

Veterans face barriers not only while searching for the employment but also during the working stage. The assessment of the prevalence of these problems varied among veterans, employers, and service providers. Employers were significantly more likely to report that veterans faced challenges at work than veterans and service providers. Veterans with disability status more often mentioned different problems while working.

There were several groups of barriers for veterans while working, first of all, social and psychosocial barriers. Employers and service providers often mentioned communication issues (especially regarding veterans with disability), mismatch in values and conflicts at work between veterans and civilians. The Ukrainian Veterans Foundation's study also notes that employers sometimes show interest in veterans' military experience, which creates psychological discomfort for the veterans themselves.<sup>45</sup> Additionally, lack of motivation was mentioned by informants, while veterans underlined

### Snapshot of good practices: Veteran Hub career counseling

Veteran Hub is a charitable foundation supporting veterans and their family members through a multi-entry system: in-person services in Kyiv and Vinnytsia, a national support line, and a mobile team.

It provides free legal consultations, psychological and psychotherapeutic support, and "support management" to help beneficiaries navigate rehabilitation, prosthetics, and access to education or grants via referrals to partner organisations. As demand grew, Veteran Hub expanded career support into a separate direction and piloted a three-level model, - information, counselling, and longer-term accompaniment, focused on giving veterans tools for independent self-realisation rather than ready-made job placements.

The organisation observes that post-demobilisation requests increasingly involved "existential" questions, with many beneficiaries struggling to translate military experience into civilian roles and facing identity and meaning challenges. It also noted a persistent expectation gap: some veterans wanted immediate job offers, while sustainable career recovery required time and reflection.

Veteran Hub frames employment barriers as cultural and systemic as well as individual: employers' declared openness to hire veterans is not always match the practice, workplaces are often poorly adapted for people with disability, and HR teams frequently lack practical skills for veteran-sensitive communication. It emphasised that reintegration is rarely a linear "employment-only" pathway - many beneficiaries need recovery and legal support first, yet financial pressure accelerate job seeking, hence- better outcomes required continuity of support and better data on veterans' trajectories.

stigma and discrimination at workplaces, once again signalling disparities in perceptions.

Physical barriers were also mentioned by interviewees. Employers, service providers and veterans highlighted health issues, for example illnesses, traumas and disability, that influence the ability to work (including ability to work full day and to do certain types of work). Informants mentioned unmet needs in medical support for veterans. Some of veterans experienced challenges with adapting within new spheres of work. Employers and service providers highlighted problems with creating inclusive work conditions for veterans.<sup>46</sup> This included inclusive infrastructure, but also flexible adaptive work schedule, and possibility to work online.

There were also problems with employers offering unofficial work or, conversely, employing veterans officially (i.e., to fulfill some benefits/grants' requirements) while veterans did not work there in reality. Full-time, permanent

formal employment was often difficult to find. Out of those interviewed veterans who found employment, about a half had part-time jobs and others - full-time jobs. Some even took up more than one job to meet financial needs.

### Skills' alignment

The mismatch between veterans' skills and available job opportunities in observed oblasts mostly was evaluated by informants as medium or low. The root of this mismatch mostly lies not in veterans' lack of professional training but in changes in their values and preferences after discharge, inability to work at a previous job because of physical or psychological issues. Veterans want to find employment opportunities that are more aligned with their new state of health and self-perception.

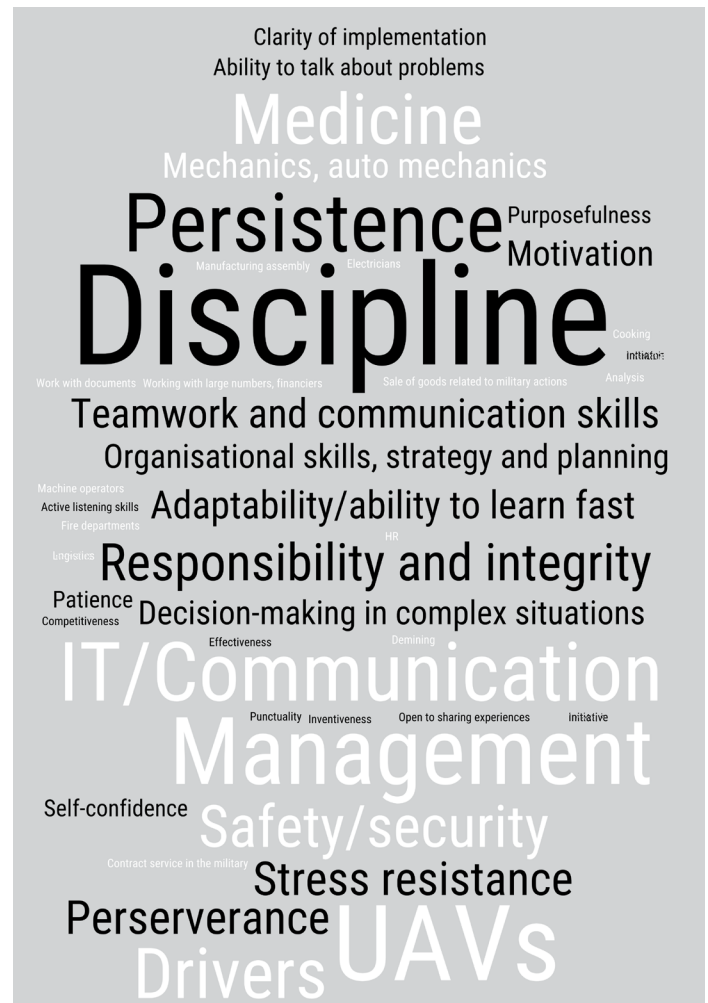
To make skills more relevant to job offers in the area, veterans and employers proposed to influence employers to be more interested in hiring veterans, learning basics of working communication with them and creating work conditions for veterans. Also, they mentioned need in more training and education opportunities for veterans. Employers assumed that veterans may need career counselling to deal with job opportunities mismatch.

Despite the overall skills' mismatch situation, interviewees mentioned many skills and qualities that veterans gained during service (see Figure 1). They most often underlined veterans' soft skills, mainly discipline, responsibility and integrity, adaptability/ability to learn fast (this skill was noted in Veteran Fund's report as the most cited – by 73% of surveyed veterans), teamwork and communication skills (67% and 52% respectively mentioned this skill in Veteran Fund's report), organisational skills, strategy and planning, decision-making in complex situations, persistence, etc.<sup>47</sup>

Additionally, informants and respondents noted such potential professional spheres in which veterans may be effective as management (Veteran Fund in their survey asked about management skills - 65% of respondents declared them), IT (21%42), communication, medicine (in Veteran Fund's report this skill was formulated as first aid skills – 67% of respondents noted that they received this skill during their service), driving (mentioned by 35% of the Veteran Fund's respondents), operating Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), safety/security, mechanics and auto mechanics etc.<sup>48</sup>

There was a slight difference in assessing skills by different groups. Veterans mostly mentioned soft skills and, among professional skills, most often medical skills, but a significant portion of veterans believed that the skills acquired in war are of little use/unnecessary in civilian life (according to Veteran Fund survey, 44% of veterans replied that their skills will not help with their employment).<sup>49</sup> Meanwhile, service providers and employers emphasised that service has given veterans a strong set of transferable soft skills and, additionally, technical skills depending on their role. Therefore, it appears that veterans often underestimated their potential developed during the service and employers evaluation of veterans skills.

Figure 1: Wordcloud of veterans' skills gained during the service based on veterans', service providers' and employers' responses.



*[...] very often people who return, they consider their experience gained there to be irrelevant in civilian conditions. That is, there I was the commander of a cannon battery, so I know everything about artillery, or I was a gunner there, but how, what will it give me in civilian life? [...] Our task, and also our opportunity, is to explain to them that in addition to some very narrowly specific military experience, this person already has absolutely invaluable experience. First of all, veterans are people who will never be afraid to start something new again in their lives, because they start something new about thirty times a day. These are people, who [...] have survival skills and not only directly, but also metaphorically.*

*NGO representative, Mykolaiv*

### Setting up a business

After leaving the army, veterans often became self-employed or started their own businesses in such spheres as hotels, restaurants, catering (HoReCa), agriculture, services, engineering, law, construction, trade, taxi. The main reasons for starting own business were inability to find oneself in another sphere or a previous experience in business creation.

According to the ReScore study, veterans are more likely than general population to wish for entrepreneurship – among veterans (males, aged under 60 years old), 3%

had their own business and 25% thought of starting it (compared to 6% and 16% among general population).<sup>50</sup>

### Veteran journey: Olena

*Six months after leaving the army, Olena found a stable job. "The work was not bad" said Olena, "I really liked it. There was a decent salary, there were decent working conditions." However, she struggled working alongside civilians who lived with their families, while she missed her husband in the frontline. She wanted to grow as a person and feel more in charge of her life. Hence, Olena decided to set up her own business – a restaurant. Customers, veterans and other locals, started coming. "I saw people's satisfaction." said Olena, "Food always unites people".*

*I can't say for sure, but I think there is a lot of potential in the field of starting your own business. The guys who returned from the war have valuable experience. After all, entrepreneurship is, in fact, activity of risk and responsibility. And the qualities that they acquired during the war - determination, responsibility, the ability to make quick decisions - will help them in business. [...] we all understand that small business is the future of the country's reconstruction.*

*Public service provider, Urban settlement in Kharkivska oblast*

Veterans faced a range of barriers while setting up a business. First of all, there were administrative issues, including complicated procedure for writing grant applications, bureaucracy and corruption. Despite the availability of grants, criteria were too restrictive for many to access (e.g., employers mentioned the inability to obtain a grant if veteran has a history of administrative offenses). According to ReScore research, this obstacle was moderate, major or extreme pressing for 29%, 22% and 12% accordingly.<sup>51</sup>

Additionally, veterans faced financial barriers - the need to hire employees after starting a business, which is financially challenging, high taxes, the need to repay funds to the state, financial inability to start a business. Grants offered were reportedly too low to establish a business (i.e., additional own input was needed) and grants offered by the state resemble loans in that they have to make a certain revenue within first 3 years of functioning to pay some amount back to the state. In ReScore research such an issue as lack of affordable loans from banks or economic incentives from government was moderate, major or extreme pressing for 69% of respondents. Also, absence of a starting capital (85%) and large amount of bribes to be paid (67%) were pressing issues.<sup>52</sup>

Difficult economic environment and demographic shifts also caused concerns about starting a business, as they may lead to both shortage of staff and customers. The war created additional obstacles, including water deficit (especially in Mykolaivska oblast), power outages, infrastructure destruction.

### Snapshot of good practices: ProGalushky veteran's business

Before the full-scale invasion, the founder of Pro Galushky had already built entrepreneurial experience, yet, he closed his business and transferred remaining goods to the army. During military service, conversations with fellow soldiers about food from their home regions shaped the concept: many had never heard of halushky, so the idea emerged to popularise the dish while creating a veteran-oriented workplace.

Pro Galushky is launched as a family enterprise. From the outset, it is positioned not only as a source of income but as a reintegration mechanism through employment for other veterans. The business offers discounts for veterans and a "suspended" free-meal option, and it intentionally build a team connected to the military community, including veterans and their family members. As of January 2025 the team comprised four employees in addition to the founder, with a stated goal to hire two more veterans.

Other veterans' employment is treated as more than staffing: the business hired a veteran with a high amputation and provided practice-based training, using work to support socialisation and stability. In the founder's view, employment reduced isolation and the other associated risks, while a veteran-friendly workplace provided routine, community, and a pathway toward independence. The businessman is happy to share his experience and supports the idea of his veteran employee to open his own business.

*Firstly, it is the Kharkiv region. Here it is difficult to open your own business due to the unstable situation. It seems to me that this has a strong impact. If we talk about myself personally, I would not open a business in the Kharkiv region now - it's scary. I'm afraid to even make repairs, because God forbid something [such as a missile] will hit. This is probably more of a psychological moment that affects the decision.*

*Public service provider, Urban location in Kharkivska oblast*

Veterans and service providers mentioned issues with lack of skills and competences for setting up a business relations, service providers and employers also noted the lack of motivation and self-confidence among veterans. According to ReScore research, this obstacle was moderate, major or extreme pressing for 28%, 15% and 8% accordingly.<sup>53</sup>

Employers underlined one more barrier within business creation - information gaps. People with disability, veterans in rural areas and older veterans were noted by service providers among other groups of veterans more often facing barriers to self-employment. To address these barriers informants and respondents proposed to give more tax benefits, better grant conditions, information and businesses consulting support.

Veterans often plan to set up a business in the future. The most frequently mentioned areas in which veterans plan to create a business were agriculture (fishing and beekeeping), HoReCa, and rehabilitation, also veterans want to set up businesses in such spheres as leisure, construction, medicine, trade, household services, taxi, and robotics.

*“Non-governmental organisations, [...] they created spaces here, or for example psychological training, and it was a very effective tool. Not so much employment was provided, but as an auxiliary tool it was very, very effective. And now the same programs are being reduced, some have closed. Therefore, it would seem that the opportunities in non-governmental organisations also decreased significantly.”*

*NGO representative, Rural settlement in Kharkivska oblast*

## Landscape of available services

### Available employment support services and business support services

The landscape of employment and business support services is heavily dominated by government institutions (see Figure 2). For 2026, the government allocated 4% of the state budget to stimulating economic activity and 10% to social protection and support.<sup>54</sup> Yet, the economy of Ukraine continues to be strained by the war, with 59% of 2026 spending funnelled toward security and defence efforts.<sup>55</sup> Hence, reliance on the government institutions may pose capacity challenges, such as staff shortages within institutions providing services or insufficient resources for business and training grants. Meanwhile, foreign funding, which NGOs often rely on, has been diminishing over the past year with foreign donors prioritising lifesaving activities<sup>56</sup>, further restricting development stakeholders' capacity.

Public employment support, mostly provided via employment centres includes help in finding employment and professional retraining programmes (with either training offered directly by the government institutions or employment centres providing vouchers for training).<sup>57</sup> On top of that, although less often, employment centres were cited as providers of career counselling, including assistance in preparing job applications, and as organisers of job fairs and other events where veterans could connect with employers and service providers. In 2025, 17,900 veterans used services of the employment centres, a rather low share.<sup>58</sup>

Employment centres offer the aforementioned services to general public or (as in case of professional training and training vouchers) specified vulnerable groups of society.<sup>59</sup> Hence, veteran family members can also access these services, although usually without dedicated, faster access. Some employment centres and other public institutions conducting employment support offer a department

Figure 2: Reported available services in assessed oblasts

This table offers a preliminary overview - it is based on services reported by all respondents and informants – each service/provider is marked if it was mentioned by min. 1 respondent/informant in at least 1 oblast. Some services were mentioned more often than others. Situation may differ by location.

Reported available services in assessed oblasts		Government institutions	NGOs	IOs/INGOs	Private entities
Employment support services	Professional training programmes	●●	●		●
	Assistance in finding employment	●●	●		
	Job fairs/events	●	●		●
	Career guidance and assistance	●	●		●
	Subsidies for employers to enhance accessibility of workplaces	●		●	
	Trainings for employers on communication with veterans	●	●		
	Subsidies for salaries of veterans/people with disability or benefits to employer	●			
	Professional training programmes for veteran family members	●	●		
	Career guidance for veterans family members		●		
Business support services	Business grants/loans	●●	●●	●●	
	Entrepreneurship skills trainings	●●	●●	●	
	Support in/after opening a business	●	●		
	Benefits for veterans' businesses	●			
	Grants for businesses for veterans' family members	●			

Reported in:

- Oblast centre
- Urban settlement (outside of oblast centre)
- Rural settlement

dedicated to veterans, cited more frequently in oblast centres, which may shorten waiting times for the veterans.

Furthermore, the law "On the status of war veterans, guarantees of their social protection" defines benefits and preferential conditions for veterans in work and education. Among them are additional paid leave of 14 days per year, preferential right to stay employed in case of staff reductions, preferential rights to enter higher and vocational education, as well as free access to Internet, databases and textbooks. On top of that, persons with disabilities as a result of war (hence frequently – veterans with disabilities), are awarded preferential employment in accordance with their professional specialisation and social benefits to those employed.<sup>60</sup>

NGOs reportedly provide mainly professional (re)training courses, with some helping to find employment, prepare job applications or organise job fairs, both to veterans and (less often) – to their family members. Veteran spaces offering complex support, including information and referrals to relevant service providers (including in employment and business) were noted in urban settlements.

Additionally, some NGOs provided more complex support to veterans, providing services within, e.g., information, MHPSS and rehabilitation, which contribute to veterans' overall wellbeing and could indirectly help veterans return to civilian workforce. Yet, representatives of employment centres showcased low awareness of NGO-provided services in employment support, suggesting a need for better communication and exchange of information between these providers. NGOs were also less often noted by various informants from settlements outside of the oblast centres, as they seem to have less presence in these areas. Singular cases of private entities offering free-of-charge career counselling, training and events were mentioned in Kharkiv.

Additionally, the state supports veterans' employment by nudging businesses to hire them, e.g., by offering benefits to employers hiring veterans or people with disability. This includes subsidies for employers to equip workplaces adequately for people with disability and subsidised salaries for people of those groups. Some also reported public institutions and NGOs providing trainings to employers on communication with veterans. Nonetheless, a few informants noted that employers were not always aware of available programmes and subsidies, which highlights the need for increased cooperation and information sharing between the public and private sector.

In business support, respondents and informants highlighted the availability of grants for establishing businesses, provided by the state, and reportedly less often – by NGOs or international donors. In some cases, offered grants and other business support extended to veteran family members. Furthermore, some of the grants are available to general public, but offer better conditions to veterans. For example, state programme Vlasna Sprava (Own Business)\*, open to various population groups,

\* A component of the Made in Ukraine policy aimed at supporting the development of Ukrainian production and creation of jobs.

offers microgrants of 50k-250k UAH (1,2k-5,9k USD)\*\* for establishing a business – in 2025, 1442 veterans or veteran family members received Vlasna Sprava grant.<sup>61</sup> The state-provided Grant for Veterans and Their Families is more generous, offering up to 1mln UAH (23,5k USD) for veterans and up to 500k UAH (11,7k USD) to veteran family members.<sup>\*\*\*62</sup>

Apart from the grants, respondents and informants noted a more complex support in and after opening a business, as well as entrepreneurship skills' trainings, provided by public institutions (often employment centres), and less frequently – by NGOs. State benefits for veterans' businesses, such as discounted rent for premises and tax deference were also noted.

According to the informants and veterans, rural areas are characterised by a lower availability of employment and business services for veterans. Those who reported otherwise noted that employment centres and business support programmes overall were officially available to people living in rural areas in proximity of said urban centres. Nonetheless, that would require travel if accessing in person, which has been cited as a difficulty.

*I think all groups of veterans who live in rural areas [face difficulties in accessing services]. Everyone needs to get to the city centre, but not everyone has their own transport, and fixed-route buses do not run every day. And if it is a person with a disability, not all vehicles are suitable for persons with disabilities. There is also a problem with this.*

*Public services provider, Urban settlement in Kharkivska*

Additionally, although many services can be accessed online (via Diia application for public services)\*\*\*\*, weak Internet connection and power outages may prove an additional barrier, especially to receiving services such as trainings. Thus, although such services are in theory open to veterans from rural areas, they might face practical difficulties in accessing them. Differences in access between rural and urban areas did not differ strongly across the oblasts, suggesting that these are broader issues.

Overall, oblast centres showcased the highest variety of employment and business support services for veterans and were more likely to have NGO or private service providers. In Kharkivska oblast, a marginally wider range of services and service providers was noted than across Mykolaivska and Zhytomyrska oblasts. A few service providers noted insufficient overall availability of training programmes (in Zhytomyrska oblast) and grants for veterans' family members (in Mykolaivska oblast). Some informants added that availability of services varied across settlements regardless of urbanisation status. Interviewed veterans did not report major unmet needs regarding employment and business support services, although barriers to access persisted.

\*\* Value depends on how many people the business employs. Values shown reflect the ranges as of December 2025.

\*\*\* Value depends on how many people the business employs.

\*\*\*\* Diia is Ukraine's official e-government platform that provides access to digital identity documents and a range of public services via a mobile app and online portal.

## Adaptation programmes at workplaces

Awareness and availability of adaptation programmes was perceived differently among surveyed groups. The vast majority of employers indicated that they had workplace adaptation programs (some of them indicated that they did not have such programmes, but during the conversation they mentioned services or benefits for veterans in the organization).

They mentioned professional training, psychological support, and identifying veteran's needs, peer-to-peer communication, lighter workloads for veterans, flexible work schedules, clear working conditions, additional leave, and job retention for those who have been mobilized as adaptation programmes. Private organisations (especially large businesses) had more opportunities and variety of different adaptation programs for veterans. Greater availability and variety of adaptation programs were indicated more often in urban areas (especially oblast centres).

*... these are people with whom we are constantly in contact, we understand where they are, what is happening with them, we know their needs, we try to help them in any way we can... we have an individual approach to each person, because everyone has their own experience, everyone has their own problems or requirements for their workplace.*

*Private employer, rural settlement in Mykolaivska oblast*

Veterans mostly were aware of such programmes, but the majority haven't used them. They mentioned such services as psychological help, insurance (especially for rehabilitation), additional vacations and workplace adaptation for people with disabilities. Employers also mentioned that they heard about similar adaptation programmes in other companies. Among the existing adaptation programmes that veterans used, they mentioned medical insurance, rehabilitation (sports and massage), additional leave, retraining, legal aid, workplace adaptation for people with disabilities, psychological help etc.

However, there were veterans who were unaware of the existence of adaptation programmes or claimed that such programs did not exist. Veterans with disability status mostly were aware but did not use adaptation programs, while veterans without disability status were less informed about availability of adaptation programmes.

Unemployed veterans were mostly unaware of such programmes. In studies conducted by the Ukrainian Veterans Foundation, 39% of veterans reported lack of adaptation programmes, and 27% - insufficient level of support within the team<sup>63</sup>.

### Snapshot of good practices: Kyivstar employment programmes

Veteran employment and reintegration at Kyivstar have been organised under the corporate initiative "4.5.0. Finally Home", which frames integrated support for mobilised employees, veterans and their families, and the wider team.

Kyivstar has not created "veteran-only" vacancies: veterans are able to apply for any role on the same basis as civilian candidates, reflecting both veterans' own feedback and military psychologists' advice against singling people out. Benefits have been delivered through the general employee package, with some components particularly relevant for mobilisation and return: medical insurance, life insurance, an additional medical check-up within the first year after demobilisation, and a mental wellbeing programme that offers 10 free sessions with psychologists, coaches, nutritionists, financial consultants, and lawyers (also available to family members). For mobilised staff, Kyivstar preserves the job and the average monthly income during service.

Reintegration support includes adaptation training for recruiters/HR, managers, and all staff, as well as informal formats (meetings with veterans, discussions after cultural events) intended to reduce "polarisation of experiences" within teams. Veterans often require longer onboarding, clearer guidance, and stable points of contact, supported through a buddy system. Kyivstar has also described ongoing work on accessibility (office audits and renovations, alongside hybrid work options) and relies on an external "one-stop" provider for referrals to mental health and advisory services, while exploring more systematic partnerships.

### Snapshot of good practices: Prykarpattiaoblenergo veteran's adaptation programmes

Prykarpattiaoblenergo has employed and reintegrated veterans since ATO mainly through an internal, trade-union-led support system. The company tends to prioritise hiring a veteran, and similar logic could apply to promotions. Veterans' support was described as multi-component, demand-driven, and voluntary. The company provides free diagnostics and treatment routes through partner medical facilities and offers medical insurance fully funded by the company for veterans. It is also supporting sports rehabilitation and helping veterans navigate available state/municipal sports programmes.

For mental health and social reintegration, Prykarpattiaoblenergo offers access to a dedicated psychotherapist on request and holds quarterly veteran meetups that are often including mental health professionals or other supportive figures. Operationally, the company has introduced a veteran assistant role and maintained a Viber community to keep veterans in a shared information space. Prykarpattiaoblenergo also formalised a "planned

return" model: individualised adaptation can last from 2 weeks to 2 months, which is particularly important in a high-risk industrial environment where immediate medical clearance after demobilisation can be difficult. In addition, the company provides two extra weeks of paid leave funded by the enterprise and complemented this with family-oriented recuperation and community activities. When injuries limit a return to previous role, it seeks to retain employees through reassignment and re-skilling where it is possible.

Adaptation is treated as a two-way process: the company invests in training for managers and teams on how to communicate with veterans and prepare workplaces for their return. This includes briefings and learning materials, and, when a specific veteran's return is expected, targeted conversations facilitated by a psychologist with the team/unit the employee would re-join, to reduce misunderstandings and support respectful day-to-day interaction.

### Cooperation between service providers

Cooperation among public institutions regarding veterans employment was often noted at the local level, including referrals, exchange of information and experiences, joint events and sharing information about each other's programmes with veterans. Cooperation was often reportedly informal, based on network of acquaintances in relevant institutions. Cooperation between government institutions was proportionally more frequently noted in urban areas outside of oblast centre.

Overall, most service providers reported cooperation regarding employment/self-employment of veterans between government institutions and between NGOs and government institutions.

*"Of course, I observe that NGOs, if I call, will never say: 'This is not my issue' or 'I won't solve this'. If you can't do it yourself, then you try to find that person, because our city is small, and someone will help."*

*Government service provider, Zhytomyr*

NGOs often cooperated with employment centres - this was often mentioned by employment centres, rather than interviewed NGOs, suggesting a need for higher awareness of those NGOs' programmes. Government institutions and NGOs reportedly exchanged information and experiences and shared updates about each other's programmes with veterans, organised joint events or trainings, or referred veterans to one another.

Cooperation helped address capacity gaps with authorities asking NGOs for support in certain areas where their capacity fell short, and, conversely, public institutions funding some of NGOs' activities. Formal cooperation was reported by some, while informal cooperation also happened. NGOs cooperated as well with one another, including exchange of information, referrals and

joint projects. Overall, cooperation between different stakeholders was more often mentioned by service providers from Kharkivska oblast.

Several service providers noted poor or insufficient cooperation between government institutions and NGOs, and some cited poor cooperation between government services or NGOs and private entities. This suggests a need for improvement, given that cooperation can facilitate information sharing, enhance institutional learning and facilitate referrals, all of which in turn can contribute to higher hiring rates of veterans', as well as increased quality and capacity in service provision.

Some service providers voiced the need for improved exchange of information between the public and non-governmental stakeholders, but also between central and local authorities. Gaps in collaboration, particularly among government actors and between public and NGO stakeholders and need for stronger cross-sectoral cooperation were also noted in the previous study.<sup>64,65</sup>

### Cooperation with employers

It appears that employers most often cooperate with employment centres. Cooperation with other entities seemed less prevalent - this included other government institutions, as well as NGOs, veterans' unions, veteran and non-veteran foundations and other businesses. For public and private employers, the main ways of interacting with other stakeholders were job referrals and exchange of information, often via personal connections. Some government institutions conducted joint events or trainings with private employers. Some NGOs signed memoranda on cooperation with certain employers.

Cooperation between employers and other stakeholders regarding the employment of veterans consisted mainly of proposing veterans as candidates for employment. It also includes informing other stakeholders about available services for veterans, exchanging information, retraining veterans in the form of meetings and discussions, official requests, group projects, memorandums, and agreements. Interactions are mainly based on personal connections.

Urban areas, especially oblast centres, seemed have the most established and diverse forms of cooperation between employers and other stakeholders. Such cooperation was the most visible in Kharkivska oblast, where employers more often exchanged information with service providers or conducted joint projects, one of which resulted in opening a centre for business resilience, although successful cases of cooperation were also mentioned in the other oblasts.

Nonetheless, both service providers and employers often called for increased and improved cooperation between private sector and government institutions or NGOs to facilitate veterans' employment, including enhanced exchange of information and joint work on solutions.

## Barriers to access and quality of available services

### Barriers to accessing employment and business support services

About a half of service providers did not mention any barriers to accessing employment or business support services. Many informants noted that services, mainly employment centres, were accessible, citing barrier-free infrastructure, mobile teams of support specialists visiting rural areas or online/phone access to services. Some also noted that social transport was available to people with disability, while overall infrastructure of the settlement was improving toward inclusivity. Accessible services were more often reported in urban settlements outside of oblast centres, and slightly more often - in Zhytomyrska oblast.

Nonetheless, veterans and informants highlighted physical barriers to access premises, especially for people with disability or mobility issues. Yet, some reported otherwise – a similar divergence of opinions on inclusivity of public space was noted in the survey of the Ukrainian Veterans Foundation.<sup>66</sup> Veterans and informants reported as well unclear or restrictive criteria for obtaining business grants. Some believed that receiving support would take a long time, which is why they sometimes did not even try to access services, although others noted short waiting times.

Another barrier commonly reported by service providers was bureaucracy. This was reported most often in Zhytomyrska oblast, although some lengthy or unfavourable processes are nation-wide. For example, employers can only be reimbursed for workplace adaptation for people with disability if the employee has had a disability (and its legal proof) before being hired. This, along with sometimes lengthy process of obtaining certificate of disability can complicate or limit employment of such persons. Finally, insufficient information hindered some from accessing services or programmes.

In IOM's study, almost half of the veterans who attempted to access grants for self-employment and/or professional retraining were unsuccessful.<sup>67</sup> While this seems to represent a worryingly high proportion, it should be noted that grant allocation is a competitive process, which partly explains this outcome.

Some veterans reported that employment and business support services were not available in their area (or they did not know of any) and that they were not able to receive needed support. Overall, barriers to employment and business support services were largely similar to those to accessing other services, including findings of this and previous studies.<sup>68,69</sup>

Additionally, both veterans and informants noted veterans' lack of trust or disappointment, either directed toward a specific institution or the state overall. This was slightly more often reported in oblast centres.

*I don't want to go at all and I don't believe in it, because no one will give you anything, and if they do give something, you have to fight for it and keep going back and forth.*

*Employed veteran, Zhytomyr*

A 2025 study by the Ukrainian Veterans Foundation revealed that 55% of veterans did not believe that the state fulfilled its responsibility toward veterans (against 43% who declared the contrary).<sup>70</sup> According to the IOM, veterans tend to express a higher level of confidence in the armed forces (with 88% reporting "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence), less so in ministries and substantially less in local authorities (51%).<sup>71</sup> One veteran reported that they did not want to feel controlled by the state, while some said they did not feel comfortable asking for support.

Informants highlighted that a first negative experience with accessing services (either due to barriers or lack of results), could deter veterans from doing so in the future. However, such stances may not be exclusive to the veterans - general population of Ukraine expressed similar distrust in ministries and other authorities.<sup>72</sup>

### Quality of employment and business support services

This deepened analysis of employment and business support suggests a higher level of veterans' dissatisfaction with provided services than noted in the previous studies.<sup>73</sup> Most veterans rated the quality of public employment and business support services negatively. Negative feedback for employment support services from veterans prevailed in urban areas and Zhytomyrska oblast, while for business support programmes - in rural areas and Mykolaivska oblast\*\*\*\*. Employment support was more often assessed negatively by men and veterans aged 25-60 years old.

Employed and unemployed veterans mentioned positive and negative aspects with similar frequency. Employed and unemployed veterans, and people with disability mainly evaluated state business support services negatively, while opinions among the self-employed diverged. Self-employed veterans evaluated NGO-provided business support services exclusively negatively, while unemployed veterans and people with disability provided positive feedback. Opinions on different support services diverged as well among employers. Yet, in line with the previous study and likely due to a slight bias, most service providers assessed the quality of public employment and business support services positively (particularly in urban settlements outside of the oblast centres).

Veterans reported choosing a specific service provider to address their needs based on more information available on this provider, a positive previous experience with this provider (either their own or of peers), less barriers to access, perceived higher effectiveness and quality. Both veterans and informants often associated the high quality of services with good communication from staff – including respectful approach, providing comprehensive

\*\*\*\* Respondents from Zhytomyrska oblast did not respond to the questions about the quality of business support services as few respondents accessed them in that area.

information and addressing uncertainties.

*I'm very grateful to the girls and to the manager [of the employment centre, providing business support] - they approach this topic very carefully and explain everything very well, what is what and how it works. As they said, they will provide ongoing support over the course of these three years. This is very, very important for us.*

*Unemployed veteran, Mykolaiv*

Similarly, communication appeared in the previous studies as one of the key factors shaping veterans' perceptions of service quality.<sup>74</sup> Among other aspects contributing to a positive assessment of employment support services, some employers and veterans noted the desire of staff to help (especially in business support). Service providers noted as well knowledgeable support specialists, individual approach (especially in employment support), complex

### Veteran journey: Olena

*Olena first applied for a grant from the Ukrainian Veterans Foundation. The programme seemed clear and reliable to her. "I was only required to have a good understanding of what I wanted to do, to collect the entire package of documents, to competently present myself and start my business. And [I received] a lot of support." The staff of a local employment centre helped her by reviewing her grant application, offering information and advice. Olena was rejected from some programmes, but she didn't give up. She searched for other opportunities on the Internet and won three grants from foreign donors. Each programme had its own conditions and application process, but Olena asserts that with enough patience, effort and understanding – it is possible to get it. "They are absolutely adequate, performable, real."*

support and service providers taking into account feedback and suggestions from veterans.

Among the factors contributing to a negative assessment of services' quality, employers and veterans noted unwillingness of some staff to help address veterans' problems, or unfavourable grant conditions.

Additionally, employers pointed out the complicated process of preparing a grant application. Several service providers rated public employment and business support at moderate quality level, and some - at low, citing shortages of specialists, and delays of funds. Regarding NGOs providing business support, veterans pointed out that not all of them are able to provide business support to veterans and some have unclear grant conditions.

Even the positive ratings of service provision quality did not always translate into an overwhelmingly positive assessment of effectiveness of these services. Although service providers most often noted high effectiveness of public employment and business support programmes, several service providers and employers reported moderate or low effectiveness level, especially regarding employment support.

Most veterans rated the quality of public employment and business support services negatively because they did not succeed in addressing their issues, such as helping find employment - proposed job offers often do not match the jobseekers' requirements. In 2025, only about 30% of unemployed veterans who turned to employment centres have been hired.<sup>75</sup>

This was often dictated by the overall insufficient availability of relevant vacancies at the location - even though employment centres could provide well-rounded trainings and help in finding employment, that did not always result in hiring veterans. Some veterans noted that they did not access employment services because they did not believe that there would be available and relevant vacancies in their settlement anyway.

*"I rated the quality itself at 5/5. But, you see, the quality of the service. That is: to tell, to advise, to help. This is what I would rate at five. But the fact that there are no vacancies, that there are no employers who would be willing to hire these people with pleasure – this is the problem."*

*Public service provider, Urban settlement in Mykolaivska oblast*

### Veteran journey: Serhii

*The employment centre offered Serhii a professional training required for the security officer position. However, himself close to retirement age, he did not see himself retraining – "I just want a more or less calm, more or less reliable job, that's what I want." Serhii found himself in a difficult position. He spent all his life working in agriculture, but the disability - he can't work with agricultural equipment anymore, drive a tractor or cultivate land. He also feels that enterprises don't want to hire people with disability. But finding an appropriate and adequately paid job in his area is difficult, while he doesn't want to move again - "I don't want to leave my family again anymore". Serhii is still looking for a job – he needs the remuneration, but also company – "it seems to be a little easier [to be] among people".*

## Quality of adaptation programmes at workplaces

Very few interviewed veterans accessed adaptation programmes at workplaces<sup>\*\*\*\*\*</sup>. They rated the quality of adaptation programs mostly negatively, including perceived discrimination and the inability of these programmes to address veterans' problems.

*In our region there is none of this, apart from visits by psychologists who do not understand veterans, because they are not connected to veterans or the veteran community in any way.*

*Unemployed veteran, Rural settlement in Mykolaivska oblast*

Nonetheless, this reveals a disparity between feedback from the veterans and perceptions of employers. The quality of adaptation programs at other companies

\*\*\*\*\* None of the respondents in Zhytomyrska oblast answered the question on the quality of adaptation programmes.

is mostly rated positively or neutrally by employers, who highlighted their effectiveness and the various opportunities they offer to veterans. Among the positive aspects, they mentioned stable employment and work for veterans, motivational programs, and the ability to help cope with difficulties. Representatives of the private sector in urban areas in the Zhytomyr oblast most often noted ineffectiveness of veteran adaptation programs in other companies. None of the employers gave a negative assessment of the adaptation programs in their own companies.

## Information and awareness

### Information and awareness of job opportunities

Most veterans surveyed indicated that they had average or low awareness of employment opportunities. The problem is the most acute in the Mykolaiv oblast, where none of the respondents indicated a high level of awareness. Veterans without a disability, those within the 18-25 age group, and unemployed veterans more often reported medium and low levels of awareness of job opportunities.

Service providers are also pointed a low veteran's awareness in sphere of employment, especially of people with disability, older veterans and those who sought employment in a sector that they haven't worked before in. These findings reveal a slight difference between informants' perceptions and veterans' accounts concerning awareness of available support among people with disability (who self-reported rather high awareness, contrary to informants' beliefs). However, employers suggested that veterans are well informed about work opportunities.

### Awareness of available services

More than half of interviewed veterans assessed their knowledge of available services as high, while the others, particularly veterans living outside of oblast centres, rated their awareness as medium or insufficient. Female veterans, veterans without a disability and unemployed veterans were more likely to report lower levels of awareness regarding available services. Many veterans reported needing additional information, primarily about available vacancies and updates on available services, but also grants and training opportunities.

Among service providers, perceptions of information availability about employment and business services diverged, with some noting that information was insufficient, difficult to find, inaccurate, too complicated or fragmented. Service providers noted as well that some veterans did not trust the information on available support, for example, not believing that advertised services would indeed be free of charge. Others, in particular representatives of public institutions, cited sufficient, detailed and up-to-date information.

Overall, most informants, especially employers, admitted that not all veterans were aware of the full range of services that they are entitled to - in particular, people

for who access to establishment may be more difficult (people with disability and those in rural areas), those with constrained access to the Internet or limited of digital skills (including older people), and recently discharged veterans who have just began their reintegration path. These findings reveal a slight difference between informants' perceptions and veterans' reports, particularly concerning awareness of available support among people with disability (who self-reported rather high awareness, contrary to informants' beliefs). Awareness of services among people with disability may be increased as they are more likely to access certain services overall due to the needs stemming from the disability (in this study, they more frequently reported resorting to employment services).

Both, informants and veterans often suggested that more information outreach should be conducted and that creating an aggregated source of information would be beneficial – this has already been mentioned by veterans surveyed in other geographic locations in 2023 and 2024, highlighting persistent need for centralised and comprehensive source of information.<sup>76,77</sup> Although some service providers highlighted the available comprehensive maps of veteran-oriented services prepared by the authorities<sup>\*\*\*\*\*</sup>, none of the surveyed veterans mentioned them, which suggests insufficient awareness of these information materials. Moreover, these maps are not yet available in every oblast, leaving some areas uncovered.

### Sources of information

The majority of interviewed veterans knew where to find the information they needed. Gaps in awareness of information sources were slightly more frequently reported outside of oblast centres and among non-displaced veterans. Self-employed veterans were the least likely to say that they did not know where to find information about the necessary services.

Veterans appeared to rely on similar information sources as other demographic groups.<sup>78</sup> Most veterans, in line with the findings of the previous veterans' needs assessments<sup>79,80</sup>, reported searching for jobs and employment or business support services on the Internet. This included official websites and social media channels of support services' providers, Diia, job search websites as well as other social media. Service providers' and employers' perceptions aligned with these findings.

Moreover, veterans often noted receiving information via word of mouth or from government institutions - including employment centres. Service providers and employers pointed to employment centres as veterans' source of information more often, highlighting activities such as information meetings organised by the centres. This signals that informants may have slightly overestimated veterans' reliance on employment centres for information. Among other information sources, veterans and informants noted NGOs, veterans spaces or volunteers, and less often – printed materials, such as

\*\*\*\*\* For example, Mykolaivska oblast authorities created the [Roadmap of a Veteran](#), outlining relevant services in the area.

leaflets or posters.

In rural areas, lower variety of information sources was noted. Outside of oblast centres, employment centres, other public services and NGOs appeared to be a slightly more popular source of information. Unemployed veterans turned to employment centres for information less often, which can have double implications. On the one hand, some haven't turned to these institutions as they weren't yet looking for a job, on the other – some faced challenges in finding employment as they were not aware of available support.

Internet, including social media, websites and Diia, appeared as the preferred source for obtaining additional information. Some veterans wished as well to receive information via direct messaging, including phone calls, emails or SMS. Only a few, mainly older veterans, non-displaced, pointed to employment centres or NGOs as a preferred source of information.

## Future developments

### Concerns about future influx of vets vs capacity of institutions

Ukraine's economic outlook is difficult to predict as it largely varies depending on the assumptions taken regarding the war. The Kyiv School of Economics offers a positive forecast, with GDP growing at 3.1% in 2026 and accelerating to about 5% in 2027-2028 given lower intensity of hostilities or ending the war.<sup>81</sup> OECD's forecast is less optimistic, with 1.8% GDP growth in 2026, further slowing down to 1.5% in 2027, given continuation of the war.<sup>82</sup>

In either case, continued structural unemployment is expected, largely driven by displacement, emigration and aging population. Labour shortages are expected in the next years due to diminishing working age population, partially stemming from the outflux of Ukrainian refugees abroad – in September-October 2025, 57% of refugees vowed the wish to return to Ukraine in the future, while the share of those who don't or are uncertain has increased over time.<sup>83</sup>

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Veterans Affairs estimates that after the war, the number of veterans and their family members could reach 5 to 6 million people.<sup>84</sup> However, for veterans to join the workforce, appropriate mechanisms and services have to be functioning in order to first address their needs in healthcare, psychosocial sphere, administrative procedures, etc., as well as in training and professional development. Some worry, that with a rapid increase in the number of veterans, institutional capacity may be insufficient.

*There are still a lot of problems. And if over time active hostilities stop, and the process of demobilization becomes massive, then it will be difficult for state bodies to cope with such an influx of people. Therefore, in my opinion, now the system is not yet ready for a mass solution of veteran issues, in particular in the field of employment.*

*Public service provider, Urban settlement in Kharkivska oblast*

### Planned developments in policy/local initiatives

In December 2025, the Ministry of Economy presented the draft of Employment Strategy until 2030. The key benchmark of the strategy is to engage min. 2 million people in workforce by 2023. Among other objectives, the strategy aims to align skills of population with labour market demand trends, ensure socio-economic inclusion, promote formal employment with decent wages, strengthen institutional capacity and advance digital transformation. The strategy vows to follow principles of people-centred approach and inclusivity, promising particular attention to veterans (among other groups).<sup>85</sup>

A shorter-term state programme "Veteran. Work" for 2026-2027 considers veterans, importantly, not as a vulnerable group per se, but as a source of human capital. The aim of the programme is to help veterans secure livelihoods long-term, via ensuring stable employment. The programme envisions improving workplace adaptation (e.g., via recommendations to employers) and increasing access to services, including training, as well as enhancing cooperation between stakeholders (central and local authorities, state and private sector). The programme highlights the importance of data-based decision making and systematic monitoring of effectiveness.<sup>86</sup>

Additionally, since January 2026, new categories of grantees are eligible for the state business grant Vlasna Sprava, to include veteran family members, extending to parents and adult children. The amount of the grants has also increased.<sup>87</sup>

## Recommendations

During the interviews, respondents and informants were asked for recommendations on how to improve veterans' access to employment and entrepreneurship. Most often, interviewees put significant emphasis on communication with veterans, i.e., teaching service providers, employers, workers, families, or general society, how to respectfully communicate with veterans and how to understand their perspective. Overall, communication appears as a major factor impacting perception of service quality and a potentially conflict-igniting issue at work – hence, efforts to address it via courses or information campaigns are crucial in veterans' reintegration in civilian life.

*[We need] psychoeducational work at all levels, and not only with employers, but also with communities in general. This is what we can do now. We can build a foundation for the return of veterans, because now there are few of them back, and we already see that this problem is urgent. When they all return, then we will face social upheaval, of an absolutely unheard-of scale. Therefore, we need to work now not only with the mental health of veterans and their readaptation, we need to work with the mental health of the community, and their readaptation as well.*

*NGO representative, Mykolaiv*

Furthermore, interviewees emphasised the need to provide adequate professional training, corresponding to the needs of the labour market, as well as adapted for veterans' needs (e.g., not constituting a financial burden on the households). Additionally, interviewees highlighted usefulness of conducting more career guidance events and courses, to facilitate veterans' connections with employers.

Additionally, many highlighted that to facilitate veterans' reintegration into civilian life, including obtaining employment, cross-cutting needs and underlying barriers must be addressed. This includes facilitating access to medical treatment, rehabilitation and psychosocial services.

Some interviewees suggested integrating physical and psychological rehabilitation with work, including through employers providing more flexible schedules and inclusive work conditions, or services being provided via employers if possible (e.g., psychologists at companies). Interviewees advocated as well for easier and faster processes of obtaining documents and certificates, and improved provision of legal aid.

To support veterans' entrepreneurship, interviewees emphasised the need to expand grant programmes (including provision of larger grants and easing grant criteria), as well as providing more trainings and mentorship opportunities on how to establish a business, recognising that many don't have such education or prior experience.

In service provision, interviewees most often called for investing in physical accessibility of premises and enhancing information sharing – e.g., through a centralised source of information about all services across all hromadas, conducting more direct outreach to veterans (including via calling, SMS, in person meetings), or spreading information on available services in places frequented by veterans. Additionally, many advocated for a flexible, individual, peer-to-peer approach in service provision and adaptation programmes at workplaces.

Many stressed as well that increased exchange of information, coordination of activities and joint work on solutions between stakeholders would be greatly beneficial to effective service provision – this includes cooperation between public institutions and NGOs, as well as between government/NGOs and private stakeholders. Finally, some stressed the need for evidence-based decision-making (including needs assessments and monitoring and evaluation of services' quality and effectiveness), including veterans in shaping solutions.

While some believed that new projects should be directed specifically to veterans, to address their particular needs, others highlighted that where possible, changes should benefit general society or other vulnerable groups with partially similar needs (e.g., people with disabilities or chronic illnesses). Some stressed, that singling out veterans, for example offering them particular programmes or benefits at work, in some cases may lead to tensions between them and civilians.

*Yes, there should be certain privileges for veterans when returning to civilian life — I agree with that. But if something is improving, then it should be done for everyone. There are other vulnerable segments of the population who also need support.*

*Kharkiv, urban, gov*

When asked for advice to the new veterans, respondents (veterans) most often suggested to communicate and not withdraw in themselves. Veterans advised as well to set goals in life, search for employment, start a business or obtain further education. Finally, some stressed not to be afraid to seek assistance, and give yourself time to rest.

Following data collection, a workshop with stakeholders in veterans' employment was conducted to further discuss the recommendations. Workshop participants worked on developing recommendations to each of the twelve most often noted issues, including barriers to employment, self-employment and accessing services.

Most of the proposed solutions focused on expanding and strengthening already existing approaches. Yet, many would involve significant financial burden. Participants believed that the government and NGOs should be responsible for implementing most solutions, with some also involving private employers. Cooperation between those stakeholders would help address the financial burden and increase effectiveness of projects and service provision. Full list of solutions proposed during the workshop can be found in Annex 2.

## Conclusion

Veterans' reintegration into the civilian labourforce is a crucial part of their overall reintegration, helping to secure livelihoods and offering important psychosocial benefits.

While veteran status in itself does not necessarily imply vulnerability, those discharged from the armed forces often become veterans due to serious injury or other compelling circumstances, such as the need to care for a family member. As a result, beyond general labour-market challenges, such as limited availability of suitable vacancies or low wages, many veterans face compounded barriers linked to physical injuries and psychological trauma.

Although numerous programmes and services for facilitating veterans' employment and self-employment exist, largely led by the state, gaps in accessibility, quality and effectiveness persist. Veterans' needs and situation often differ, meaning that one-size-fits-all approaches to service provision are often inadequate. Instead, considering individual and cross-cutting needs where possible was often emphasised, strengthened by peer-to-peer approach and including veterans in shaping solutions.

In addition, communication between veterans and civilians stands out as a major factor, dictating veterans' perception of services' quality and their relations with employers and coworkers. While supporting veterans in their reintegration into civilian life is essential, equal emphasis should be

placed on preparing society to receive and reintegrate veterans.

Finally, it is important to recognise that the veteran population will continue to grow, substantially so in the post-war period. This will place increasing pressure on already strained service providers and represents a major priority for safeguarding both economic growth and social cohesion. At the same time, addressing veterans' needs offers an opportunity to rethink broader policies and service delivery models in ways that could benefit other groups with similar needs, particularly people with disabilities. Addressing these challenges will therefore require comprehensive and long-term solutions.



## ABOUT REACH

REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT).

## Annex 1

Figure 3: Sampling for Individual Interviews

Individual Interviews with veterans												
Oblast	Type of area			Employment status			IDP status		PwD status		Sex	
	Oblast centre	Non-centre urban	Non-centre rural	Employed	Unemployed	Self-employed	IDP	Non-IDP	PwD	Non-PwD	Male	Female
Kharkivska	6	5	4	6	5	4	4	11	10	5	14	1
Mykolaivska	5	4	4	5	4	4	2	11	7	6	11	2
Zhytomyrska	10	7	1	10	6	2	3	15	9	9	17	1

Figure 4: Sampling for Key Informant Interviews with service providers

Key Informant Interviews with service providers					
Oblast	Type of area			Type of stakeholder	
	Oblast centre	Non-centre urban	Non-centre rural	Public	NGO/INGO
Kharkivska	6	6	1	9	4
Mykolaivska	7	4	0	8	3
Zhytomyrska	8	6	1	8	7

Figure 5: Sampling for Key Informant Interviews with employers

Key Informant Interviews with employers						
Oblast	Type of area			Type of stakeholder		
	Oblast centre	Non-centre urban	Non-centre rural	Private	Public	NGO
Kharkivska	3	3	0	4	2	0
Mykolaivska	2	0	2	2	2	0
Zhytomyrska	4	3	0	5	0	2

## Annex 2

Figure 6: Workshop results - Proposed solutions to selected issues

Issue to be addressed	Proposed solution	Details	Responsible stakeholders	Risks and challenges
Problem of lack of trust in/ disappointment with existing employment and business support services	Educate employment and business support service providers (staff) on how to communicate with veterans	Ensure comfortable and decent conditions for communication and provision of an appropriate range of services. Recieve feedback from customers on service quality. Provide information about new blue-collar professions (as they are in high demand).	Central and local authorities, NGOs, and private stakeholders should be responsible for ensuring comfortable conditions for communication and providing an appropriate range of services, as well as collecting feedback from clients. Informing the public about new blue-collar professions is the responsibility of local authorities and private stakeholders.	Implementing solutions requires financial investment and infrastructure improvements.
Problems with awarness and access to information about employment opportunities and employment/ business support services	Create a centralised source of information for all available services across all hromadas	Information about services can be provided through Telemarathon (media). More information should be provided to attract representatives of different genders to the work. Advertising about support for retraining at the state level should be introduced. Social networks (for younger age groups) and advertising in transport (for older age groups) should also become sources of information.	Both the authorities (central and local) and NGOs and private stakeholders should be responsible for providing information.	Problems that may arise in connection with reporting - the need for financial investments and infrastructure solutions.
Available employment and business support services are not accessible for people with disabilities/ people with mobility issues	Increase and standardise physical accessibility of premises providing employment and business support services	Accessible sign language trainings should be provided. It is necessary to create a position of inclusion specialist/consultant. Monitoring of compliance with workplace adaptation obligations, checking accessibility is needed. Replacement of service providers' premises that cannot be converted into inclusive ones with others can be reccomended.	NGOs and authorities should be responsible for teaching sign language. The position of inclusion specialist/consultant should be introduced on the initiative of the authorities, private stakeholders, and NGOs. The authorities should monitor compliance with obligations to adapt workplaces. The replacement of non-inclusive premises of service providers should be monitored by the authorities and private stakeholders.	Teaching sign language requires financial investment. An inclusion specialist/ consultant and verification of the inclusiveness of premises require financial investment and changes in legislation. Replacing non-inclusive premises of service providers requires financial investment, infrastructure solutions, and legal changes.
Employment and business support services are not available in smaller/rural hromadas	Encourage communities to create jobs by supporting business creation, improving infrastructure and training for types of work that can be done remotely	Encourage the creation of small agricultural businesses among veterans with the help of the community, district authorities, and the state. Support these veterans' businesses. Involve veterans from rural areas in defense industry production. Train them in professions that allow them to work remotely. Improve infrastructure and create social transport, especially for veterans with disabilities.	Improvements should be undertaken by the authorities and NGOs.	The proposed solutions require significant financial investment and the resolution of infrastructure issues.

<p>Low effectiveness/unhelpfulness in resolving issues while accessing employment and business support services</p>	<p>Monitor, evaluate and adapt available employment and business support services (including usage and quality of services), ensure a feedback mechanism</p>	<p>A feedback mechanism should be built into the service at a centralized level. The assessments received should be processed and quality control should be carried out. State statistics should include separate indicators on the receipt of employment services by veterans. The Ministry of Veterans Affairs should analyze problems on the ground and make changes and adapt the services provided. The State Labor Service should monitor and penalize failure to fulfill obligations to improve existing services in accordance with feedback.</p>	<p>Implementation should be coordinated between service providers, the State Statistics Service, and authorities (Ministry of Veterans Affairs and State Labor Service).</p>	<p>The key issue is the creation of an administrative mechanism for implementing the monitoring system.</p>
<p>There are prejudices among employers/employees (regarding veterans/veterans with disabilities) and difficulties in communication between civilians and veterans</p>	<p>Strengthen campaigns to raise awareness and understanding of the issues faced by veterans and people with disabilities</p>	<p>Systematic research into the needs and problems of veterans/the needs of employers is needed. Representation of veterans in the media (realistically, but positively) is required. Information sessions for businesses on the specifics of employing veterans should be a great practice. A corporate social responsibility campaign is needed to highlight the importance of employing veterans. .</p>	<p>Systematic research should be conducted by NGOs and the government. The government, NGOs, and private stakeholders should be responsible for the representation of veterans in the media. Information sessions for businesses should be conducted by NGOs and the government. Corporate social responsibility depends on private stakeholders.</p>	<p>All solutions require financial investment.</p>
<p>There are physical barriers/health issues (especially for people with disabilities) that prevent veterans from getting/keeping a job.</p>	<p>Ensure inclusive conditions at the workplaces, including people with disabilities. Apply similar standards for hiring/adaptation programmes for veterans with disabilities</p>	<p>Change the procedure for compensating workplace adaptation costs is needed. It should be more accessible and beneficial for employers (it is important to agree on specific lists of expenses that employers can spend money on). It may be good practice to recommend that employers undergo training in corporate culture. It is essential to monitor compliance with inclusion commitments with the help of an occupational safety engineer/human resources department.</p>	<p>The Employment Center at the central and local levels should be responsible for changes in the procedure for compensating workplace adaptation costs. The Ministry of Veterans Affairs, NGOs, and private stakeholders should be responsible for implementing changes in corporate culture regarding veterans, particularly those with disabilities.</p>	<p>All solutions require financial investment.</p>
<p>There is a mismatch between available jobs and veterans' skills and preferences</p>	<p>Provide mentorship to veterans to help them transform their military skills into civilian ones</p>	<p>Create the role of Chief Veteran Officer - a veteran who will help veterans integrate into their new environment. It is essential to study the current needs of employers in terms of skills and abilities while also monitoring the skills of veterans to ensure that they match the vacancies. It is necessary to make existing reskilling programs inclusive for veterans.</p>	<p>Government, NGOs and private stakeholders are responsible for implementing these solutions.</p>	<p>All solutions require financial investment, administrative changes and resolving infrastructure issues.</p>

<p>Veterans need rest and time to adapt to civilian life before returning to work</p>	<p>Increase and extend unemployment benefit, so that veterans can focus on recovery and adaptation to civilian life first</p>	<p>Subsidies from the budget and international support to give veterans more time to recover are needed.</p>	<p>The issue of providing veterans with better opportunities for recovery should be addressed by the government, NGOs, and private stakeholders.</p>	<p>All solutions require financial investment and administrative changes.</p>
<p>Veterans face psychological problems that complicate the process of finding employment/starting a business</p>	<p>Provide additional vacation to veterans, offer flexible/shorter working hours</p>	<p>Updating standards for working hours and adapting these standards to the needs of veterans is needed. Educating employers about the cost-effectiveness of introducing flexible working hours with a focus on productivity may be a good practice.</p>	<p>The State Labor Service is responsible for updating the standards for the length of the working day. Civil society organizations, private stakeholders, and the State Labor Service are responsible for educational activities regarding changes to the work schedule.</p>	<p>Updating labor standards requires administrative changes, and educational activities regarding changes in the work schedule for veterans require financial investments.</p>
<p>Small grants are offered (insufficient funding to start a business from scratch) and restrictive criteria for granting grants are applied</p>	<p>Provide more/larger grants for starting a business</p>	<p>Scaling up grant provision at the local level and introducing post-grant support is needed. Promote business creation programs and successful business creation cases may be a good practice. Creation of jobs and collaborations between grant recipients, networks between veteran organizations and business structures is needed.</p>	<p>Local authorities are responsible for scaling up grant provision. Central and local authorities are responsible for providing post-grant support and promoting business creation programs. Local authorities and private stakeholders are responsible for creating jobs, collaboration, and networking.</p>	<p>All solutions require financial investment.</p>
<p>Veterans face a lack of business knowledge/skills and self-confidence due to a lack of business experience</p>	<p>Provide individual mentoring in opening and doing business, ensure a systematic support for veteran businesses</p>	<p>Developing veterans' granting and business mentoring programs is needed. Support provision at all stages of business creation, from idea to implementation, may be a good practice. Integration of veteran businesses into the business community is needed. Providing career guidance testing for veterans to identify their strengths and weaknesses for starting a business may be recommended. The business community should be an active participant in the process.</p>	<p>The government, NGOs, and private stakeholders should develop grant and mentoring programs and provide support for business creation, while educational institutions should provide skills training. NGOs, local authorities, and private stakeholders should integrate veteran businesses into the business community and provide career guidance testing for veterans.</p>	<p>Grant and mentoring programs, support for veterans at all stages of business creation require financial investments and infrastructure solutions. Engaging the business community requires financial investments.</p>

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