

ANALYTICAL REPORT

based on the results of a survey of employers in the Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk regions

“REINTEGRATION OF VETERANS THROUGH EMPLOYMENT, CAPACITY BUILDING, AND ADVOCACY”

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SUMMARY

This analytical report was prepared by the Charitable Organization “Rokada” Charitable Foundation in cooperation with the CO Bevar Ukraine, with support from CISU, the organization through which the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs finances and supports civil society projects in the field of international development and partnership, as part of the project “Reintegration of Veterans through Employment, Capacity Building, and Advocacy”. The study provides a comprehensive analysis of the staffing needs of employers in the Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk regions, the difficulties they face in recruiting staff, and their readiness to hire veterans. In particular, it examines whether employers have mobilized employees and whether their jobs are being held for them, as well as how organizations support veterans’ employment and professional adaptation. The study also covers the key challenges related to the employment and adaptation of veterans in the labor market, and identifies employers’ needs for financial, informational, and organizational support in developing sustainable employment practices for people with combat experience. Special attention is given to experience employing people with disabilities and to employers’ readiness to build an inclusive work environment. The findings make it possible to formulate practical recommendations for strengthening employers’ capacity to hire and support veterans, developing inclusive employment practices, and expanding opportunities for veterans’ professional integration into the labor market.

The Charitable Organization “Rokada” Charitable Foundation (hereinafter referred to as the Foundation) has been operating since 2003, providing support to people facing difficult life circumstances who need help to restore a life of dignity. In its early years, the Foundation focused on working with refugees and asylum seekers from more than forty countries, including Afghanistan, Sudan, Syria, and Iran, gradually building expertise in social support, integration, and the protection of human rights.

After the start of the full-scale invasion in 2022, the organization rapidly scaled up and transformed, becoming a national humanitarian and social actor with an extensive regional presence. The Foundation significantly expanded its program portfolio, operational capacity, and partner networks, enabling it to provide comprehensive support to people and communities affected by the war.

Today, the Foundation operates in 17 regions of Ukraine, bringing together over 600 professionals and providing multisectoral assistance to internally displaced persons, returnees, veterans, people with disabilities, older adults, women, children, and other vulnerable groups, while also supporting communities that have been systemically affected by the war. Drawing on its extensive experience working with vulnerable groups, the Foundation conducts this study as part of its analytical work.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CSO – Civil society organization

EC – Employment center

SP – Sole proprietor

RSA – Regional State Administration

CB – Combatant

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INTRODUCTION

The full-scale war has substantially transformed the Ukrainian labor market, deepening labor shortages across many sectors of the economy. In response to these challenges, employers and government institutions are introducing various mechanisms to expand the workforce, including retraining women for roles in industries traditionally dominated by men, [attracting labor migrants](#), supporting the employment of people with disabilities, and developing programs for the professional reintegration of veterans after their military service ends.

Effectively reintegrating defenders into civilian life is not only an important social task but also a necessary condition for restoring communities' human capital and driving regional economic development. As more people return to civilian life after completing military service, there is a growing need to build systematic approaches to their social and professional adaptation. This requires central executive authorities, local self-government bodies, employers, and other stakeholders to move from isolated initiatives toward comprehensive support mechanisms.

Successful social and professional adaptation of veterans involves two interconnected components. The first relates to creating conditions for a comfortable transition into the civilian professional environment, taking into account individual needs related to health, psychological adaptation, and the rebuilding of social ties. The second relates to using veterans' professional potential as a valuable workforce resource capable of strengthening the capacity of enterprises and organizations. Cooperation between employment services, the civil society sector, and employers plays an important role in this process. Providing information support to businesses, sharing successful employment and adaptation practices, and developing mechanisms to support employers will help expand opportunities for veterans' professional integration and sustainable employment.

The purpose of this study is to assess employers' readiness to hire veterans and to identify the key factors that support or hinder their professional integration into civilian life and the labor market. The study examines the adaptation of veterans in the workplace, employers' readiness to hire people with war-related disabilities, and the creation of an inclusive work environment. Special emphasis is placed on studying the practical experience of employers who have already hired veterans, making it possible to identify successful practices for further scaling.

The findings of the study can be used to improve regional employment policy, develop comprehensive veteran support programs, strengthen cooperation between employers, the non-governmental sector, and employment services, and create more favorable conditions for veterans to return to active professional life.

METHODOLOGY

The study combined a qualitative survey with desk research. The qualitative component involved an expert survey aimed at examining employers' experience, needs, and readiness to hire veterans. Because the study is based on an expert sample, its findings should be viewed as reflecting the opinions and practical experience of the study participants rather than as a representative characterization of the entire population of employers.

The desk research component involved reviewing inquiries, statistical data, analytical materials, and the findings of previous studies, providing broader context for interpreting the results obtained.

The geographic scope of the study covered territorial communities in the Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk regions, including regional centers as well as small towns and rural communities. Study participants included representatives of business, municipal and government institutions, local self-government bodies, and civil society and charitable organizations. A total of **35** respondents took part in the survey.

Data collection used a **convenience sampling method**: the questionnaire was openly available with no prior screening of respondents. Some participants joined the survey through a "snowball" approach, with the link being passed from one respondent to another within a professional or social network.

The main method of data collection was an employer survey, using a standardized questionnaire as the research tool. The survey was conducted using an online questionnaire (CAWI). The questionnaire included blocks of questions on employers' staffing needs, the difficulty of finding workers, forecasts for labor market development, experience working with mobilized employees, readiness to hire veterans, including people with disabilities, and practices for their workplace adaptation.

In some questions, the sum of responses exceeds 100%, as respondents were able to select several answer options at the same time. The questions included closed, open, semi-open, and scale-type formats.

Data collection ran from March 19, 2026, to May 28, 2026. Respondents filled out the questionnaires independently, at a time convenient for them, which ensured the confidentiality of responses and supported more open, objective assessments.

Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous, with no mandatory collection of personal data. Study participants could voluntarily leave their contact details to take part further in the project and receive support in implementing tools for veteran workplace adaptation within their organization or business.

The findings of the study can be used by local self-government bodies, employment services, and civil society organizations to assess employers' readiness to hire veterans, identify key barriers, and improve programs supporting their professional integration.

SECTION 1. VETERAN EMPLOYMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF ADAPTATION: CURRENT PRACTICES AND INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

1.1. CURRENT PRACTICES FOR EXPANDING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEMOBILIZED SERVICEMEN

State policy on the professional reintegration of veterans is built around three interconnected areas designed to provide different pathways back to active economic and social life after military service ends.

The first area concerns promoting veteran employment through cooperation with employers and creating favorable conditions for hiring them. Within this area, the state provides employers with information and advisory support on developing an inclusive work environment. Alongside dedicated veteran-policy measures, employers can also use general state mechanisms supporting the employment of people with disabilities, in particular [compensation for the cost of adapting workplaces for people with disabilities](#). An important element is supporting veterans' workplace adaptation, developing professional training and retraining programs, and strengthening cooperation between employment services, employers, and veteran organizations. This approach aims not only to create jobs but also to ensure veterans remain in stable employment over the long term.

The second important area is the development of veteran entrepreneurship. For many veterans, running their own business becomes an alternative to salaried work and a way to apply the management, organizational, and leadership skills gained during service. To this end, with state support and involvement from the non-governmental sector, grant programs are being introduced to start or expand a business, financial support is provided, and training programs are run on entrepreneurship, business planning, marketing, and financial management. Examples of such initiatives include the ["Dovira" \(Trust\)](#) project (implemented by the Czech humanitarian organization People in Need with financial support from the United States government), which offers up to UAH 216,000 to grow an existing business, along with training and mentoring support for veterans and their family members in the Lviv or Kharkiv city territorial communities; the government's ["Vlasna Sprava" \(My Own Business\)](#) program, whose veteran track offers up to UAH 1 million to combatants, people with war-related disabilities, or their family members. The development of veteran-owned businesses has both economic and social significance, as it helps create new jobs, supports local economic development, and builds an active veteran community.

The third area involves bringing veterans into public service, including in government bodies and local self-government bodies. Veterans often have significant experience making decisions under high personal responsibility, along with skills in teamwork, planning, and crisis management under limited resources. This is why the state views them as an important workforce resource for strengthening the institutional capacity of government bodies and communities. This area involves training programs, leadership development, internships, and preparation for work in public administration.

This becomes especially important in the context of the country's post-war recovery, when communities need active leaders capable of effectively organizing reconstruction and development processes. In particular, the [e-map of civil service and local self-government vacancies](#) portal is currently in operation. As of June 15, 2026, 4 vacancies were available in the Lviv region and 5 in the Ivano-Frankivsk region.

The comprehensive implementation of these three areas makes it possible to build a multi-level system of veteran support that takes into account different needs, professional trajectories, and life circumstances. At the same time, the effectiveness of this policy depends significantly on how well informed veterans and employers are about available opportunities, how accessible support programs are at the local level, and how well partnership develops between government institutions, business, and the civil society sector.

It is worth noting that businesses are increasingly engaged in creating favorable conditions for the employment and professional adaptation of veterans. One example of such initiatives was the presentation, in 2024 during the [CEO Summit, of the Principles of a Veteran-Friendly Business](#). This document supports veterans' reintegration into civilian life by promoting an inclusive work environment, introducing adaptation practices, and developing a corporate culture attuned to the needs of people with military service experience. The Principles were developed by the media company Starlight Media with expert support from Veteran Hub, in cooperation with Forbes Ukraine and with support from the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine. The proposed principles reflect a comprehensive approach to veteran reintegration through employment and emphasize employers' responsibility for creating conditions for veterans to effectively return to civilian professional life.

Principles of a Veteran-Friendly Business:

1. Ensure leadership on veteran support at the highest management level
2. Ensure fair, non-discriminatory conditions for recruiting and welcoming back veterans
 - 2.1. Create corporate programs and opportunities for veterans' education and retraining
3. Invest in building a veteran-friendly corporate culture
4. Provide access to quality physical and psychological health support programs, and support rehabilitation
5. Pay attention to gender-specific aspects and needs of veterans
6. Create programs and services to support veterans' families, as well as the families of the fallen and missing
7. Invest in building inclusive workspaces, services, and products
8. Support veterans and their families, and fairly reflect their experience and needs in marketing communications and campaigns
9. Support veteran-owned businesses, their partners, and the families of the fallen
10. Support veteran communities and specialized civil society organizations, and advocate for the interests of veterans and their families at the local and national levels
11. Honor the memory of fallen employees
12. Measurement and reporting

During the CEO Summit, 20 leading Ukrainian companies representing various sectors of the economy joined the Principles of a Veteran-Friendly Business. Among the first signatories were the heads of Starlight Media, Kyivstar, Uklon, Nova Poshta, Avrora, Kormotech, Darnytsia, Epicentr, Oschadbank, OMD Group, PrivatBank, 1+1 Media, SoftServe, Interpipe, Farmak, EPAM Ukraine, Ferrexpo Poltava Mining, ELEKS, Nemiroff, and WOG. Within a year, the number of businesses joining the initiative grew to 110, reflecting the growing readiness of Ukrainian business to adopt practices supporting veterans, their family members, and the families of fallen Defenders of Ukraine. The process of joining the initiative remains open, and anyone can join via the following link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe922HYqpjfqErupE6jr3mwcWD8d3fXFMSKiW-IUp1h6m8tA/viewform?usp=sf_link

In this context, it remains important to involve specialized civil society organizations and to continue developing dialogue among all stakeholders in order to build an effective system for supporting and reintegrating veterans.

At the same time, a significant problem is the lack of open data on the number of veterans (and their needs) broken down by region and community. One attempt to address this gap in open data is the [Analytical Information portal based on data from the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine](#). However, as of June 15, 2026, the information on this portal is displayed in test mode, and the published figures differ significantly from official data obtained from the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine. Specifically, the portal records 32,044 combatants in the Lviv region and 11,780 in the Ivano-Frankivsk region. At the same time, according to an official response from the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine to an inquiry, as of March 1, 2026, 36,113 combatants were registered in the Ivano-Frankivsk region. Similarly, according to analytical material from the Chesno Movement, prepared based on information officially obtained from the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine, as of May 1, 2026, the number of combatants in the Ivano-Frankivsk region was 35,800. These discrepancies show that the portal's data, still in test operation, requires further verification and cannot be used as the sole source for analytical calculations.

The development of digital services that make it easier for veterans to access current labor market offers is also of significant importance. To help address this issue, the Ministry of Veterans Affairs is introducing digital support tools, including the platform [“Veteran's Career”](#), intended to serve as a platform connecting veterans and employers. The platform helps match vacancies to candidates' professional skills, experience, and needs, while also giving employers more opportunities to hire veterans.

Data from the State Employment Service of Ukraine for 2025 and early 2026 show a gradual expansion in support for veterans as they return to civilian life and integrate into the labor market. During 2025, 18,000 combatants used employment service services, while in January–February 2026 alone, the number of such requests already reached 5,800. As of early March 2026, 4,000 veterans were registered, of whom 1,500 had a disability. The share of people with disabilities was 37.5%, underscoring the need to further develop inclusive approaches to employment, workplace adaptation, and comprehensive support for veterans with different needs.

Employment figures show steady results in integrating veterans into the labor market. In 2025, with the assistance of the employment service, 3,900 veterans found jobs, of whom about 1,000 had a disability. During January–February 2026, 629 veterans were employed, including 187 people with disabilities. The share of people with disabilities among those employed rose from 25.6% in 2025 to 29.7% in early 2026, which may indicate a gradual strengthening of the employment system's and employers' capacity to provide accessible employment opportunities for veterans with disabilities.

The occupational structure of veteran employment reflects current demand in the national labor market, in particular high demand for technical and blue-collar occupations. Veterans are most often employed in fields related to operating and servicing technological equipment, machinery, and mechanisms, performing skilled work involving tools, and in trade and services. This trend shows the significant role of industry, logistics, and the service sector in ensuring veterans' economic reintegration.

Vocational training remains one of the key tools for adapting veterans to changes in the labor market. In 2025, 1,000 veterans completed vocational training, and in the first two months of 2026, another 243 did so. An additional tool for skills development is the voucher program: in 2025, 890 veterans received training vouchers, with the most popular fields being driver training, tractor operator training, and training in psychology and management. In January–February 2026, another 103 vouchers were issued. This pattern of educational requests reflects both veterans' desire to gain practical, in-demand professions and growing interest in management, social, and psychological competencies that can support further professional self-realization and involvement in supporting the veteran community.

An important tool of state support for inclusive employment is compensating employers for the cost of adapting workplaces for veterans with disabilities. In 2025, this program helped adapt 452 workplaces for combatants with disabilities. Relative to the total number of employed veterans with disabilities, this indicates significant use of the workplace-adaptation mechanism and its important role in lowering barriers to employment for people who need additional accessibility conditions.

Alongside employment and vocational training, the development of veteran entrepreneurship is becoming increasingly important. In 2025, veterans, people with war-related disabilities, and their family members submitted 4,200 applications for grant support, of which 1,600 received a positive decision. In early 2026, 453 new applications were submitted under the program, of which 181 received a positive decision. The success rate of grant applications remains stable at around 38–40%, reflecting steady demand among veterans for starting their own business and the growing role of entrepreneurship as a path to economic independence and long-term reintegration.

Overall, the analysis of national indicators shows the gradual formation of a comprehensive veteran support system combining employment, vocational training, workplace adaptation, and business development tools. At the same time, the significant share of people with disabilities among the veterans registered with the employment service highlights the need to further develop a barrier-free environment, expand inclusive employment opportunities, and strengthen cooperation between government institutions, employers, and the veteran community.

1.2. ANALYSIS OF THE VETERAN EMPLOYMENT SITUATION IN THE LVIV AND IVANO-FRANKIVSK REGIONS

In the Ivano-Frankivsk region, there is a Regional Program to Support the Families of the Fallen, Injured Participants of the Revolution of Dignity, Persons Who Have Served or Are Serving in Volunteer Formations, Combatants, and Other Citizens Who Have Been and Continue to Be Directly Involved in Combat Operations, National Security and Defense Measures, and Repelling and Deterring the Russian Federation's Armed Aggression against Ukraine since February 20, 2014, for 2022–2026 (as amended), approved [by decision](#) of the regional council of 11.05.2022 No. 417-14/2022, while in the Lviv region there is the Comprehensive Program to Support War Veterans and Their Family Members, Family Members of Fallen (Deceased) War Veterans, and Family Members of Fallen (Deceased) Defenders of Ukraine for the Duration of Martial Law in Ukraine. However, neither document provides for any measures aimed directly at veteran employment. The measures provided for are limited to supporting vocational training and retraining. The main actors involved in job searches are veteran and demobilized-persons support specialists and employment centers.

As of March 17, 2026, **the Lviv Regional** Employment Center had 293 veterans registered, of whom 140 had disability status. Thus, almost half of registered veterans (47.7%) require additional accessibility and adaptation considerations when integrating into the labor market. This composition of the target group underscores the need to strengthen inclusive approaches to employment, develop a barrier-free work environment, adapt workplaces, and provide individualized support tailored to veterans' needs.

Employment figures show a gradual expansion of employment opportunities for veterans with disabilities. During 2025, with the assistance of the employment center, 329 veterans were employed, including 112 with disabilities. Between January 1 and March 16, 2026, 51 people found jobs, of whom 25 were veterans with disabilities. The share of people with disabilities among employed veterans rose from 34% in 2025 to 49% in early 2026, which may indicate a strengthening capacity of the employment system to meet the needs of veterans with disabilities, as well as a gradual increase in employers' readiness to adopt inclusive employment practices.

An analysis of the occupational structure of employment reveals mixed trends in how veterans are adapting to the civilian labor market. On one hand, there remains high demand for occupations linked to manufacturing, logistics, and services, including drivers, locksmiths, security guards, warehouse workers, sales staff, and other blue-collar occupations. On the other hand, there is growing interest in new professional fields tied to digital technologies and innovative sectors, in particular software testing (QA), drone operation, and the profession of specialist in the support of war veterans and demobilized persons.

Vocational training remains one of the key tools supporting veterans' economic reintegration. In 2025, 108 people completed vocational training, 98 veterans received training vouchers, and another 429 people were covered by educational programs under a pilot project of the State Employment Service that ran until September 2025. Between January and mid-March 2026, 23 veterans completed vocational training, and 16 received vouchers. The decline in the overall number of people involved in educational activities is largely explained by the end of the pilot project, pointing to the need to further develop sustainable mechanisms for veterans' access to retraining, upskilling, and acquiring new professional competencies.

At the same time, the structure of chosen training fields reflects a gradual shift in veterans' requests and labor market needs. Alongside traditional blue-collar occupations such as tractor operators, drivers, electric and gas welders, and boiler operators, demand is growing for occupations tied to new technologies, particularly in information technology and unmanned systems. The emergence of the specialist in the support of war veterans and demobilized persons profession also reflects the development of "peer-to-peer" social support mechanisms, which help veterans adapt to civilian life more effectively.

An important element in ensuring veterans with disabilities have access to employment is the mechanism compensating employers for the cost of setting up and adapting workplaces. In 2025, 22 employers used this tool, making it possible to set up 23 workplaces for combatants with disabilities. Enterprises of various sizes and forms of ownership took part in the program, including large manufacturing enterprises, municipal institutions, the private sector, and sole proprietors. The use of the compensation mechanism by veterans themselves, as they develop their own businesses and adapt their work environment to their needs, deserves particular attention.

At the same time, the ratio between the number of adapted workplaces and the total number of employed veterans with disabilities points to potential for further expanding use of this tool. This may be related both to veterans being employed in positions that do not require significant physical adaptation of the workspace, and to employers' insufficient awareness of existing state support mechanisms.

Entrepreneurship is gradually becoming an important avenue for veterans' economic self-realization. In 2025, 352 applications were submitted for the "Vlasna Sprava" grant, of which 153 received a positive decision, or 43.5% of all applications submitted. In the first months of 2026, 26 new applications were submitted, while 30 positive decisions were issued, reflecting the completion of review for some applications submitted at the end of the previous year. These figures point to steady interest among veterans in starting their own business and confirm the importance of grant programs as a tool for supporting economic independence and long-term reintegration.

Overall, the analysis of the response to the inquiry sent to the Lviv Regional Employment Center shows that the Lviv region is developing a multi-component veteran support system covering employment, professional development, work environment adaptation, and support for entrepreneurship. The high share of veterans with disabilities among those turning to the employment service points to the need for further development of inclusive, barrier-free approaches to employment.

At the same time, existing support tools show potential for facilitating veterans' sustainable return to civilian life, in particular through developing new professional competencies, expanding self-employment opportunities, and strengthening cooperation between government institutions, local self-government bodies, employers, and the veteran community.

As of March 1, 2026, **the Ivano-Frankivsk** Regional Employment Center had 270 veterans registered as unemployed, of whom 144 had status as a person with a war-related disability. The share of veterans with disabilities was 53.3% of all registered unemployed veterans, pointing to a significant need to develop inclusive employment mechanisms, create a barrier-free work environment, and introduce individualized approaches to professional reintegration. The high share of people with disabilities among veterans who turn to the employment service identifies inclusive employment as one of the key areas of regional veteran support policy.

An analysis of employment figures shows positive dynamics in expanding labor market access for veterans with disabilities. During 2025, with the assistance of the employment service, 283 veterans were employed, of whom 101 had a disability. During January–February 2026, 52 veterans found jobs, including 26 with disabilities. The share of veterans with disabilities among those employed rose from 35.7% in 2025 to 50% in early 2026, which may indicate a strengthening capacity of the employment system to address the needs of this group, as well as a gradual expansion of inclusive employment practices among employers in the region.

The occupational structure of veteran employment reflects a combination of demand from traditional sectors of the economy and a gradual expansion of opportunities to develop modern competencies. The most common employment areas are drivers, security guards, administrators, managers, production-line operators, timber stackers, sales agents, home repair workers, boiler operators, sales consultants, locksmiths, and general laborers. This structure reflects the current needs of the regional labor market, particularly in manufacturing, woodworking, and services.

Vocational training remains an important tool for veterans' economic adaptation and improved competitiveness in the labor market. In 2025, 77 people completed vocational training, and another 22 did so in January–February 2026. Training programs cover both traditional blue-collar occupations, including locksmith, boiler stoker, cook, electrician, and confectioner, as well as modern courses aimed at developing entrepreneurial, digital, and communication skills. In particular, veterans have access to programs on the basics of business planning, organizing labor relations under martial law, using artificial intelligence for professional development, and modern principles of business communication. This approach reflects a gradual diversification of vocational training tools and the adaptation of the training system to changes in the labor market and veterans' new career trajectories.

An important tool for supporting the employment of veterans with disabilities is the program compensating employers for the cost of setting up and adapting workplaces. In 2025, this support was used by 29 employers, including government and municipal institutions, private enterprises, and sole proprietors, who made up the largest share of program participants. In particular, 21 of the employers receiving compensation were sole proprietors. This reflects the important role small and micro businesses play in creating employment opportunities for veterans with disabilities, and their ability to adapt work processes more quickly to employees' individual needs. The compensation mechanism was mainly used to set up workplaces for veterans with Group I and II disabilities, underscoring its importance in supporting people with more pronounced needs for work environment adaptation.

Entrepreneurship is one of the important avenues for the economic reintegration of veterans in the Ivano-Frankivsk region. In 2025, 159 applications were submitted for business grants, of which 73 received a positive decision, or 45.9% of all applications submitted. In the first months of 2026, veterans submitted 20 applications, of which 11 were approved, with the success rate rising to 55%. These figures may indicate a gradual strengthening of veterans' entrepreneurial activity, the development of business-planning skills, and the importance of advisory support during participation in grant programs.

Overall, the analysis shows that the Ivano-Frankivsk region is developing a comprehensive system to support the economic reintegration of veterans, combining employment, vocational training, work environment adaptation, and business development tools. The significant share of veterans with disabilities among registered unemployed persons highlights the need to further develop barrier-free practices and inclusive approaches to employment. At the same time, the active involvement of small business in workplace adaptation, the expansion of educational opportunities in digital technologies and entrepreneurship, and steady demand for grant programs create favorable conditions for the long-term professional and economic self-realization of veterans in the region.

1.3. REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON VETERAN EMPLOYMENT

Given the importance and relevance of veterans' economic adaptation, in recent years government institutions, international organizations, the civil society sector, and other stakeholders have carried out a number of studies analyzing the processes of veteran employment, professional reintegration, and economic independence.

The most notable analytical work is being carried out under [the Veteran Reintegration Program, implemented by the International Research and Exchanges Board \(IREX in Ukraine\) with support from the U.S. State Department](#), and by the [Ukrainian Veterans Fund](#), the state institution under the Ministry of Veterans Affairs.

Leading online job-search and recruitment platforms (robota.ua and Work.ua), as well as representatives of the non-governmental sector, also contribute to the analysis of employment trends and practices for people with combat experience.

1.3.1. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR VETERANS

The study conducted by the Rating Sociological Group with support from the Ukrainian Veterans Fund was carried out between December 3 and 15, 2025. This was a quantitative survey covering 240 veteran respondents from all regions of Ukraine (excluding temporarily occupied territories), using face-to-face interviews (CAPI). The project also included a qualitative component consisting of 14 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with veterans.

Employment is viewed as one of the **key goals of veteran reintegration**, with education serving as the main “bridge” from military service to a civilian career. The authors conceptualize education not merely as a way to obtain a diploma, but as **a multi-level system** operating simultaneously across three dimensions:

professional: a “bridge” to civilian employment and adapting military skills to labor market needs;

social: a tool for gradually returning to society and rebuilding connections;

psychological: a way to restore a sense of control over one’s life and shape a new civilian identity.

The study found a significant gap between intention and follow-through. Although 25% of veterans feel a need for education, more than half of them (57%) did not join any program. And only 28% of those who had this need completed their studies. This shows that barriers arise both at the motivation stage and at the stage of practical implementation.

The study challenges the notion that education is driven purely by economic motives. For 60% of veterans, the main goal is self-development and personal growth. 33% of respondents want an education in order to change their line of work compared with their pre-war activity, and 22% want to improve their competitiveness in the labor market. Another 17% each choose education in order to enter the labor market as quickly as possible to ensure their family’s financial stability, and in order to socialize and build new connections.

50% of veterans say retraining is an urgent need for their future employment. This is often because returning to their previous job is impossible due to health issues (injuries), skills becoming outdated, or a shift in life priorities. Many veterans feel an internal disconnect from their pre-war professions, often described in terms of **reassessed values** and **moral burnout**.

- **Desire to change field:** among veterans who feel a need for education, **33% want to change their line of work** compared with their pre-war activity. This shows that their former job no longer matches their new needs or psychological state.
- **Moral burnout:** the study’s authors note that veterans return from the war in a state of **deep moral burnout**. This burnout is so specific and profound that standard civilian “burnout psychology” courses feel irrelevant to veterans and disconnected from their actual condition.

- **Reassessed values:** military experience is often accompanied by a fundamental shift in priorities. During interviews, respondents said that “their old job or old life no longer suits them”, and a persistent desire arises to start something new.
- **Inability to return:** for many, returning to their previous profession is objectively difficult, not only for psychological reasons but also because of **health issues** (the after-effects of injuries) or because their prior qualifications became outdated during their time in service.
- **A “vacuum” after service:** some veterans describe their state after returning as falling into a “vacuum”, where so much has changed in civilian life during their years away that their previous professional identity feels lost.

Thus, for veterans, education after the war often becomes not just a way to “brush up on skills”, but a tool for building a new civilian identity, since their old professional role no longer feels acceptable.

According to the study, veterans use a wide range of educational and professional opportunities, combining long-term strategies with pragmatic short-term courses. Among veterans who needed education and sought help, the breakdown of the opportunities used is as follows:

- **formal education (65%).** This is the leading choice. Veterans enroll in higher education, professional pre-higher education, or vocational education institutions. This is often seen as a tool for long-term stability and a change in professional trajectory (for example, moving from veterinary medicine into law);
- **vocational training and retraining courses (42%).** Used to quickly gain applied skills in fields such as cybersecurity, financial literacy, project management, and digital competencies;
- **non-formal education (27%).** Participation in trainings, seminars, and online courses offered by businesses, civil society, and international organizations;
- **grants and financial support (19%).** Using dedicated funds to pay for education or grow one’s own business.

Veterans actively use specific support mechanisms provided by the state:

- **State Employment Service tools:** in 2025, around **5,900 veterans** used the service’s educational services. Of these, more than **4,000** studied at vocational education centers, around **1,000** completed training on referral from the service, and nearly **900** received **training vouchers**;
- **benefits and compensation:** the right to free education under the state order, social stipends, and dormitory accommodation are used. There are also examples of regional programs covering, for instance, **50% of the cost of contract-based education**;
- **digital platforms:** the portals **“Veteran PRO”** and **“Veteran’s Career”** are used to search for opportunities and navigate the system.

The process of using these opportunities has several characteristic features:

- the need for education is most often not felt right away, but roughly **six months after discharge**, once the initial phase of adaptation and recovery has passed;
- veterans often combine different formats – for example, pursuing higher education while still in service, or combining retraining courses with a primary job;
- programs that offer a flexible schedule, online learning, or asynchronous access to lectures are used most successfully, as they allow training to fit into a veteran's busy schedule;
- the decision to take advantage of an opportunity is often made based on personal recommendations from fellow veterans or acquaintances, rather than through official advertising;
- veterans turn to specialized veteran development centers at universities, which help adapt the learning process to their needs and provide psychological support.

The main factor that makes any educational program attractive to veterans is support for subsequent employment (28%). Veterans expect programs to offer:

- a direct link between training and a job or income level;
- a practical training format (case studies, internships);
- mentoring support after completing courses to help with adaptation in a new workplace.

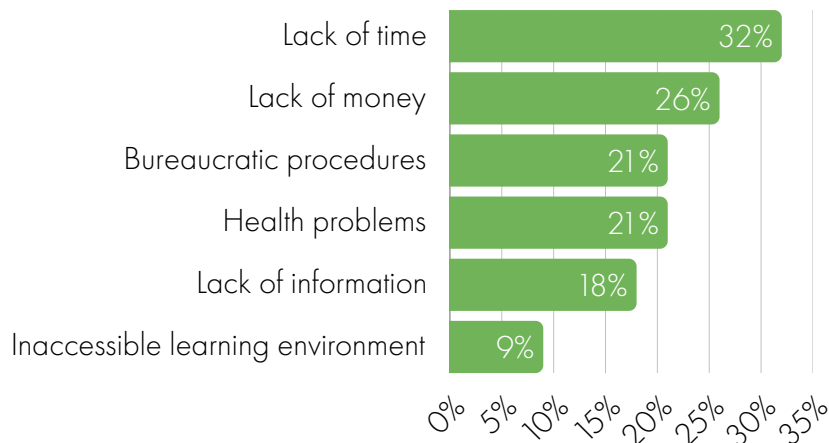
Barriers to employment

The study identified a number of problems hindering successful employment:

- **lack of guarantees:** the risk of “wasting time for nothing” without a guarantee of getting a job after training is a significant demotivating factor;
- **physical limitations:** the after-effects of injuries and concussions often make it impossible to return to physical labor, requiring a shift to office or IT fields;
- **low pay:** some civilian professions (such as teaching) offer income that veterans consider insufficient to support a family compared with military pay;
- **the gap between the education system and the market:** many programs are not oriented toward employers' real needs, making the resulting diplomas little more than a formality.

Despite existing demand, more than half of veterans (57%) who needed training were never able to join an educational program. Only 28% fully completed their training, and another 15% dropped out early. This points to a significant gap between veterans' need for professional development and the real availability of educational opportunities.

Main barriers to accessing education



The study also examined mechanisms aimed at helping veterans find work:

- **the state employment service** provides training vouchers and organizes training at vocational education centers (in 2025, around 5,900 veterans used these services);
 - **the Ukrainian Veterans Fund** supports veteran entrepreneurial initiatives, helping people start their own business;
 - **digital platforms**, the “Veteran PRO” and “Veteran’s Career” portals, aggregate information on vacancies and professional navigation opportunities;
- the private sector** is increasingly developing corporate internship and training programs geared to its specific staffing needs.

1.3.2. CHALLENGES, NEEDS, AND OBSTACLES TO VETERANS’ EMPLOYMENT IN CIVILIAN LIFE

The study [“Challenges, Needs, and Obstacles to Veterans’ Employment in Civilian Life”](#) was conducted by the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation, commissioned by the Ukrainian Veterans Fund of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine, with support from the International Renaissance Foundation. Fieldwork ran from November 2024 to January 2025. The study was qualitative in nature and included five focus-group discussions with veterans from various categories, 12 in-depth interviews with business representatives, and 3 interviews with veteran entrepreneurs.

Veterans’ reintegration into the civilian labor market is accompanied not only by economic but also by socio-psychological barriers. Veterans note that after returning to civilian life, the hardest part is not job-hunting itself, but adapting to new rules of interaction. Military experience shapes a different communication and decision-making style, which makes it harder to return to a flexible civilian environment.

They also often feel that employers respond with pity rather than support, which they perceive as demeaning or as a failure to understand their real experience.

- Business, especially small business, fears veterans' emotional instability and manifestations of PTSD and aggression. There is also a fear of repeat mobilization: employers are reluctant to hire veterans because they worry the person will soon sign a new military contract or be called up again.
- Managers are often unaware of veterans' rights to additional leave (14 days for combatants). During interviews, HR managers sometimes ask inappropriate questions about combat experience, causing discomfort for candidates.
- Civilian colleagues are often wary of or ignore veterans out of fear of "saying the wrong thing". Cases of bullying of veterans have been documented, especially those who worked at territorial recruitment and social support centers.
- Many veterans feel "burned out" in their pre-war professions and want to change fields (for example, moving into psychology or social support work).

One of the most common complaints is the formal, box-ticking nature of state employment centers' work. Veterans report:

- job offers that do not match their education or health condition (for example, an engineer with a disability being offered a job sorting buttons). Staff at these institutions often do not understand the specifics of limitations caused by injuries (such as epileptic seizures or limited mobility) and cannot offer relevant options, including remote work. In addition, the offered jobs may be physically inaccessible due to a long, difficult commute;
- insufficient consideration of the after-effects of injuries and the need for remote or adapted work;
- complex bureaucratic procedures. For example, women veterans who served under contract may have been asked specifically for demobilization documents, with existing discharge papers ignored, making registration impossible;
- insufficient awareness of existing support programs. State programs often exist only on paper, and veterans either have not heard of them or consider them ineffective tools that do not reflect the current economic and demographic situation.

At the same time, many veterans reconsider their life priorities and seek to change professions, choosing work related to psychological support, the social sphere, or helping other veterans.

Adaptation is needed not only by veterans, but also by employers and work teams. The study shows that much of the difficulty arises because the civilian environment is not ready for veterans' return. Colleagues often avoid communication out of fear of offending the person or asking an inappropriate question, which leads to veterans' social isolation. To overcome these barriers, businesses need systematic team preparation, veteran-sensitivity training, the development of internal support policies, and training materials for managers.

Employer stereotypes remain one of the main barriers to employment.

Despite a positive attitude toward military experience, employers often display a number of biases regarding veterans:

- fear of PTSD, aggression, or emotional instability. There is a stereotype that veterans are psychologically unstable or “impulsive”, which could negatively affect team atmosphere;
- not knowing how to communicate properly with veterans. Some employers admit they are simply afraid of veterans or do not know how to talk to them without risking conflict;
- fear of a repeat mobilization. Business prefers candidates who already have grounds for a conscription deferral and are certain not to leave their job, while veterans are seen as a category with a high risk of departure;
- doubts about the ability of veterans with disabilities to work. Employers fear hiring veterans with disabilities, believing they will often need time off or will not be able to keep up the pace of work;
- fear of conflicts within the team, difficulties with subordination, and the risk of addiction issues. Some employers believe veterans have a heightened sense of justice and tend to reject civilian authority;
- lack of resources for adaptation. Small businesses fear they will not be able to provide a veteran with the psychological support or specific working conditions needed, unlike large corporations, which have in-house psychologists and other relevant resources.

A separate problem is employers’ and HR specialists’ lack of legal awareness regarding veterans’ guarantees and rights, as well as the use of inappropriate questions during interviews, which can cause psychological discomfort.

Against this backdrop, civil society organizations, which provide career counseling, psychological support, retraining, and individual support for veterans, enjoy a significantly higher level of trust.

According to the study, there is nonetheless positive movement in veteran employment – businesses are increasingly adopting systematic practices to support veteran employment. Despite the existing risks, employers note veterans’ high discipline, responsibility, motivation, stress resilience, and leadership qualities. Large companies are already introducing comprehensive reintegration programs that include:

- veteran coordinators or assistants;
- psychological support;
- workplace adaptation;
- expanded medical packages;
- mentoring;
- internal programs to support and train teams.

Large businesses show the most systematic approach to adaptation. The study presents successful reintegration cases at large companies:

- **energy sector:** one of the largest companies in the sector has already brought back **more than 900 veterans** (out of 5,400 mobilized) and hired 100 new veterans from the market. The company runs the **“Defender/Veteran Assistant”** program – a dedicated contact person to help with administrative matters;
- **furniture industry:** a large company employs around 110 veterans (2.5% of staff), integrating them through values of equality and inclusiveness;
- **multinational corporations:** are introducing expanded medical packages (including psychotherapy) and conducting workplace accessibility assessments for wheelchair users.

Veteran-owned businesses also show high effectiveness in employing fellow veterans, thanks

to:

- **a shared “language” and experience:** it is easier for veteran business owners to communicate with those who have been through the war, since they understand a person’s state in critical situations without needing many words;
- **the absence of paternalism:** veteran entrepreneurs follow the principle of “giving a fishing rod, not a fish”, believing that pity is demeaning and that work is the best rehabilitator;
- **a safe environment:** such businesses usually have a democratic atmosphere without the rigid civilian hierarchies that often irritate former servicemen.

According to the study’s findings, representatives of Ukrainian business at various levels generally **view the effectiveness of state support skeptically** and consider current legislation insufficient to protect employers’ interests. Business’s main assessments of state policy include:

1. Lack of incentives and a sense of “burden”

Entrepreneurs note that the state does not create real incentives to hire veterans, and instead shifts responsibility for their socialization onto business.

- **small business** feels that lawmakers do not motivate them to take risks but only threaten legal consequences: “if you fire them, we’ll take you to court”;
- because of limited financial reserves, small enterprises fear potential legal and economic risks that the state does not compensate for;

2. Formalism and bureaucracy

Representatives of large business point out that state initiatives are often **formal in nature** and disconnected from reality;

- businesspeople note weak inter-agency coordination (between the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, the Ministry of Economy, and the Ministry of Social Policy), which slows down systemic change;
- veteran entrepreneurs complain about complex bureaucratic procedures, a lack of benefits at startup, and the need to “work off the books” in order to pay off loans.

Thus, the study found that the key challenges are veterans' difficult psychological adaptation to civilian life after service ends, deep-seated stereotyping by employers (especially fear of aggression or PTSD symptoms), and workplaces that are poorly adapted to the needs of people with war-related disabilities. The study also documented the bureaucratic, box-ticking nature of state support, as a result of which veterans place far greater trust in practical civil-society initiatives, and it highlighted a trend within the veteran community toward professional retraining or starting their own socially oriented business.

1.3.3. VETERAN EMPLOYMENT: BARRIERS AND ADAPTATION CHALLENGES

The study, initiated by the Ukrainian Veterans Fund with support from the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine and the robota.ua platform, covered three main areas. The first was a quantitative survey of veterans conducted via an online questionnaire distributed on social media and in the press, with 322 respondents. The second was a quantitative survey of employers conducted on the Robota.ua platform among its clients and partners, yielding 155 responses from business representatives. A qualitative study was also conducted, including 6 semi-structured interviews with veterans for a deeper analysis of their adaptation period. The veteran survey was conducted in March–April, and the employer survey in April 2025. The study "[Veteran Employment: Barriers and Adaptation Challenges](#)" covered the entire territory of Ukraine.

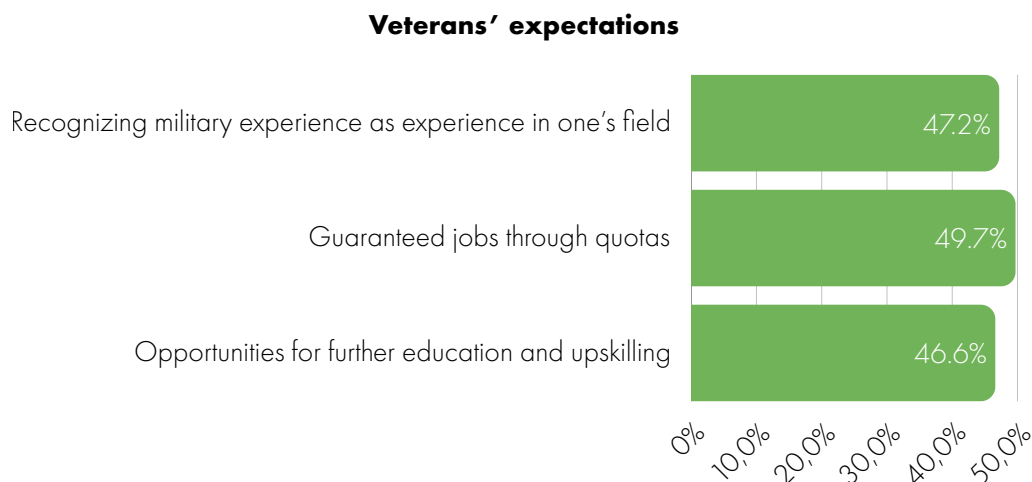
According to the study's findings, more than half of surveyed veterans **(57%)** face obstacles when seeking employment.

The main barriers are:

- **financial factors:** a mismatch between salary levels and veterans' needs is the most common obstacle, cited by **37.3%** of respondents;
- **health status:** physical health problems hinder **36.3%** of respondents;
- **psycho-emotional state:** their own psychological state was an obstacle for **25.5%** of veterans. During interviews, participants also noted how psychologically hard it is to "get past yourself" and your own moral principles when returning to peaceful life;
- **discrimination:** cited by **23.3%** of respondents. Veterans fear stereotyping and having to prove their professionalism all over again. **7.5%** of respondents also cited discrimination as the reason for leaving their first job after service;
- **professional skills and experience:**
 - lack of experience is felt by **14.3%**;
 - loss of professional skills during service was noted by **14%**;
 - lack of theoretical knowledge – **4.7%**;

- **educational barrier:** during service, civilian fields see updates and new tools emerge (such as artificial intelligence) that veterans need to learn to use;
- **a values and social gap:** veterans feel a difference in values between the military and civilian environment, and also encounter civilians' lack of understanding of their experience, indifference, or a sense that their work is less important than their service;
- **infrastructure problems:**
 - an unadapted workplace or lack of inclusiveness **(7.5%)**;
 - challenges related to mobility and the lack of inclusiveness of urban/rural spaces **(4.7%)**;
- **team relationships:** for **9.9%** of veterans, unsatisfactory team relationships were the main reason for leaving their first civilian job after returning from the war;
- **stereotypes:** veterans expressed concern about biased attitudes and the need to prove their professionalism again because of existing societal stereotypes;
- **a values gap:** respondents mentioned an "internal conflict from realizing that fellow soldiers are still at war", while the civilian environment around them may not support the war or may show indifference, which complicates adaptation within a team.

Veterans expect specific steps from society and employers to ease reintegration:



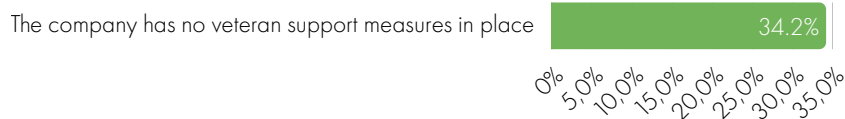
Employers' views on hiring veterans are generally assessed as positive. The study identified the following trends in candidate selection:

Employer attitudes toward hiring veterans, depending on professional competencies		
A veteran and a civilian candidate have the same professional level	Would prefer the veteran	43.2%
	Would choose based solely on professional competencies, regardless of status	40%
The veteran has somewhat lower competencies	Would choose the candidate with better professional qualifications	51.6%
	Would still be willing to hire the veteran	22.6%

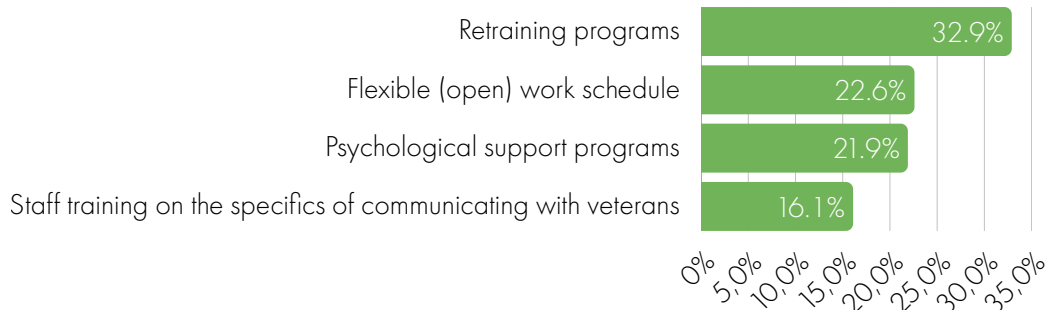
- **The value of military experience:** employers see great value in the “soft skills” gained during service. The most in-demand are **the ability to work in a team (54.2%), fast adaptability to new conditions (49%),** and **critical thinking (41.3%).**

Despite general willingness to hire, a significant share of businesses still lack systematic support programs.

Share of employers



Veteran support measures implemented by employers



According to the study, there is no single, universal timeframe for veteran adaptation. However, the optimal transition period between discharge and starting work is between three months and half a year for most veterans. Specifically:

- 34.6% of respondents consider half a year the optimal period;
- 30.2% of respondents point to a period of 3 months;
- around 17.8% believe a full year is needed for recovery.

On average, veterans start looking for work 4 months after discharge. Study participants named 2 months as the minimum necessary period, though some veterans stress that at least half a year is needed for a person to get used to basic civilian realities (street lighting, shops, the absence of threat) before starting work. Too short an adaptation period can lead to a person quickly leaving their job, since they have not had time to integrate into peaceful life. In complex cases involving psychological difficulties or addictions, the adaptation process can take much longer – documented cases show this path taking 2–3 years.

1.3.4. THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN THE SOCIAL REINTEGRATION OF VETERANS

The study was prepared by the training and analytics department of the Ukrainian Veterans Fund. In August–September 2024, the Fund’s team held six online focus groups with veterans from different regions of Ukraine to gain a deeper understanding of their adaptation experience. In parallel, an analysis of state and local programs was carried out, and data from the previous study “Veterans’ Needs 2023”, collected in January–April 2023, was used. The work covered the entire country and combined desk research with qualitative interviews, allowing for a comprehensive assessment of the situation.

The study [“The Role of the State in the Social Reintegration of Veterans \(Ukrainian Veterans Fund\)”](#) focuses on analyzing the role of state institutions in veterans’ return to civilian life, in particular assessing the accessibility of state support, employment opportunities, entrepreneurship development, access to social services, and identifying the main barriers and needs of the veteran community.

According to the analytical study’s findings, veterans face a number of systemic problems in accessing state services, covering both organizational and legal aspects as well as the subjective experience of interacting with officials. The main problems include:

- **an information vacuum and disorientation:** veterans often lack access to systematized, clear information about their rights and the steps to take after discharge. Study participants themselves rate their satisfaction with information and advisory support as low, saying “there’s zero information”;
- **excessive bureaucracy and complex procedures:** the processes for obtaining statuses (combatant, person with a war-related disability) and processing benefits are highly bureaucratic. Nearly 44.5% of veterans consider the problem of processing benefits highly likely. Going through these procedures is often described as “a challenge to one’s dignity”;
- **negative attitudes among civil servants:** one of the most acute problems is indifference and a dismissive or “toxic” attitude among staff at government institutions. Sharply negative experiences of interaction lead veterans to give up on services altogether in order to avoid “humiliation”;
- **inclusivity problems:**
 - **physical inaccessibility:** institutions are often located in unadapted buildings (for example, a social service office on the 4th floor with no elevator);
 - **gender inaccessibility:** government institutions and rehabilitation centers are often not adapted to the needs of women veterans.
 - **geographic inequality:** smaller towns and villages have a shortage of specialists, less funding, and weaker staff training compared with regional centers;
 - **lack of mechanisms to protect rights:** veterans say that if their rights are violated or they encounter refusals or rudeness from officials, they do not know where to complain, since there is no effective system for quality control or feedback on services;

- **lack of mechanisms to protect rights:** veterans say that if their rights are violated or they encounter refusals or rudeness from officials, they do not know where to complain, since there is no effective system for quality control or feedback on services;
- **outdated, contradictory legislation:** the current “On the Status of War Veterans...” law is criticized as archaic (compared to an “icicle” that new provisions keep getting layered onto) and out of step with current realities and veterans’ interests;
- **the state’s financial and staffing constraints:** respondents point to the state’s lack of sufficient financial capacity and qualified staff to fully deliver on all declared services.

Together, these problems create **distrust of the state** among veterans and can lead to social isolation and conflict. Veteran communities of fellow soldiers, however, play one of the key roles in the process of returning to civilian life, often serving as more effective helpers than government institutions.

According to the sources, veteran communities help with reintegration in the following main areas:

- **psychological support:** fellow veterans provide emotional support, since they share a unique common experience that makes mutual understanding easier;
- **practical advice:** veterans share their experience going through **rehabilitation** and navigating complex **bureaucratic procedures** (for example, obtaining statuses or benefits);
- **socialization and networking:** communities help build new social networks, which helps prevent veterans’ isolation from civilian society;
- **economic self-realization:** community members often develop businesses together or help each other with finding jobs;
- **institutional support in communities:** veteran centers, hubs, clubs, and associations are being set up at the community level, which:
 - help build cohesion;
 - provide a sense of unity;
 - speed up the social adaptation process.
- **volunteering:** involving veterans in volunteer activities within their communities helps them feel useful to society.

The study emphasizes that the state should not replace these communities, but rather **strengthen them** by providing resources and advice, since the veteran environment is capable of providing expert support at many stages of reintegration.

1.3.5. FROM SERVICE TO CIVIL SERVICE: VETERAN REPRESENTATION IN UKRAINE'S GOVERNMENT BODIES

The study [From Service to Civil Service: Veteran Representation in Ukraine's Government Bodies \(Chesno Movement\)](#), analyzes the level of veteran involvement in public administration, in particular their representation in ministries, executive authorities, and management positions. The Chesno Movement's methodology was based on an analysis of official information requests sent to all 15 ministries of Ukraine and their subordinate bodies. Under this methodology, data on the number of employed representatives of these categories, including in management positions, was analyzed based on responses from all ministries and 26 relevant subordinate bodies. The study identifies the key barriers to veterans entering civil service, including limited availability of positions, insufficient adaptation support, and the need to recognize military experience as a professional asset. The conclusions highlight the need to build systematic mechanisms for integrating veterans into the public sector, developing mentoring and professional support programs, and creating more open, veteran-oriented government institutions.

The distribution of veterans across central government bodies is uneven and is mostly concentrated in the security and specialized sectors.

The largest presence of veterans (combatants (CBs) and persons with war-related disabilities (PWDs)) was recorded in the following bodies:

- Ministry of Defense;
- Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA);
- Ministry of Veterans Affairs.

A significant number of veterans also work at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economy, Environment, and Agriculture. The largest number of veteran civil servants and servicemen in management positions is concentrated at the Ministry of Defense.

The lowest presence of veterans is seen at the following bodies:

- Ministry of Digital Transformation;
- Ministry of Energy (where only one veteran works).

In addition, there are agencies with no persons with war-related disabilities at all: the ministries of digital transformation, energy, youth and sports, and justice. At the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Energy, no veteran in a management position had been recorded as of the time of the study.

Overall, although the number of veterans has grown at some agencies (for example, the Ministry of Culture and the MIA), it has decreased at the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Education and Science, and the Ministry of Energy.

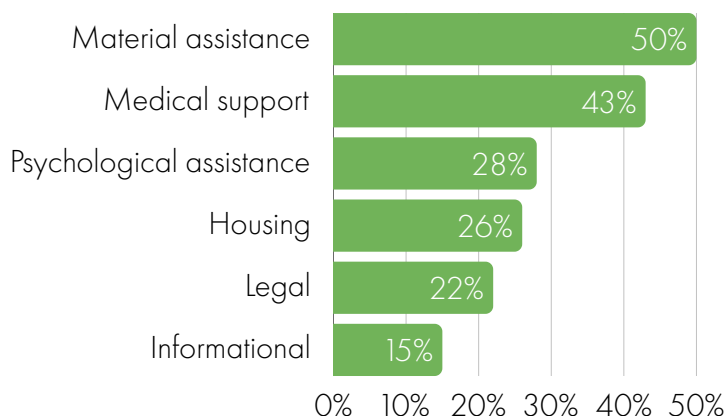
1.3.6. PORTRAIT OF A VETERAN – 2025

The study was prepared by the analytical department of the Ukrainian Veterans Fund under the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, in partnership with the Rating sociological group. It was conducted in September–December 2025 and covered all regions of Ukraine except temporarily occupied territories and regions without mobile connectivity. The work included two surveys: a nationwide telephone survey of 1,000 respondents and face-to-face interviews with 240 veterans, making it possible to combine society's views with the experience of combatants themselves.

The study examines how systemic reintegration problems can deepen defenders' social isolation if the state and society fail to respond in time to key challenges: the lack of an inclusive environment, the mismatch between military experience and civilian life, and bureaucratic barriers. Drawing on surveys of active servicemen, veterans, and Ukraine's civilian population, it shows that without comprehensive medical, psychological, and financial support, returning to peaceful life is difficult. It presents effective response practices, from funding veteran businesses and retraining programs to expanding legal aid and simplifying access to benefits. For Ukraine, a deep understanding of veterans' current needs is a prerequisite for national resilience, social justice, and successful community recovery.

The analytical report "[Portrait of a Veteran 2025](#)" highlights a number of critical needs and likely problems that defenders face after returning to civilian life.

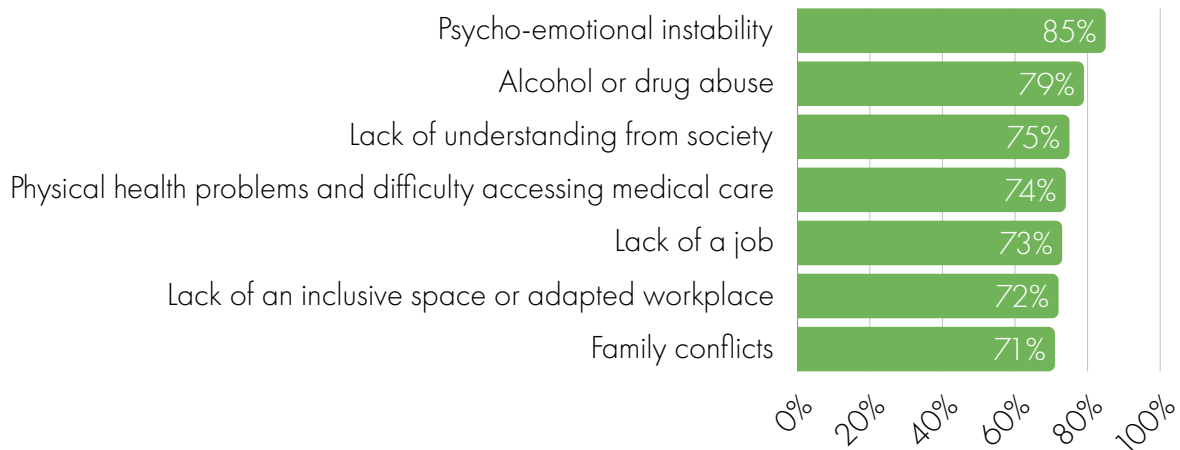
Veterans' main needs



At the same time, veterans rate the extent to which these needs are met unevenly. They are best served in terms of **discounted travel** (4.3 out of 5), while the lowest ratings went to **legal support** (2.7 points) and **housing provision** (2.6 points).

Veterans identify a number of negative phenomena that are highly likely to arise in their lives:

Risks facing veterans



Demographic and regional characteristics

The study finds differences in needs depending on age and region:

- older veterans (46+) and people with war-related disabilities more often report needing **material and medical support**;
- psychological assistance is more often needed by women, along with the youngest and oldest categories of veterans;
- the need for **housing** is most acute for young veterans, women, and residents of border and frontline regions;
- the problem of **inaccessible public spaces** is most often highlighted by residents of frontline territories and women veterans.

It is also worth noting that **58% of veterans believe society is insufficiently informed about their problems**, which creates a barrier to effective reintegration.

55% of surveyed veterans believe the state is currently **failing** to fulfill its obligations to them (21% say it is not fulfilling them at all, 34% say it is rather failing to fulfill them). Notably, the civilian population rates the state's fulfillment of its obligations even more critically than veterans themselves.

1.3.7. VETERAN EMPLOYMENT: GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES AND TAKEAWAYS FOR UKRAINE

The desk research drew on the findings of an employer survey on readiness to hire veterans, presented in a publication by Olena Skyba, [Veteran Employment: Global Best Practices and Takeaways for Ukraine \(robota.ua\)](https://robota.ua/en/veteran-employment-global-best-practices-and-takeaways-for-ukraine). The material was prepared based on a study conducted jointly with the Western Ukrainian office of the European Business Association at the request of the National Guard of Ukraine. The study identifies several barriers forming a “vacuum” between the military and civilian sectors:

- **psychological bias:** employers often fear the psychological risks associated with candidates’ combat experience, and while society sees a veteran as a “hero”, it is not always ready to see them as a “colleague”;
- **the problem of self-assessment and adapting skills:** veterans themselves often tend to undervalue their experience or do not understand how to translate specific military skills (hard skills) into civilian professions;
- **a focus on benefits instead of development:** state policy is still too focused on passive social support (benefits) rather than creating active reintegration tools.

The survey shows a high level of declared readiness among businesses, but restraint in practical action.

Main characteristics of employers’ readiness to hire veterans		
Readiness to hire	Already hiring or planning to hire veterans	82%
	Ready to hire veterans with disabilities	88%
	Ready to offer up to 10 vacancies	83%
Approach to recruitment	Do not run a separate search for veterans, but consider them under general conditions	67%
	Focus on bringing back their own demobilized employees	48%

An analysis of employers’ staffing needs shows that demand remains highest for blue-collar workers, cited by 64% of surveyed companies. Nearly half of employers (45%) also feel a need for narrow-specialty professionals. At the same time, demand for IT specialists is significantly lower, at 15%.

The material notes that business highly values veterans’ skills – leadership, stress resilience, loyalty, critical thinking, and the ability to work in a team under unpredictable conditions.

The article also examines international experience in supporting veterans as they return to civilian life and integrate into the labor market. Drawing on examples from Israel, the United States, and Canada, it shows that without systematic adaptation programs, career counseling, and business readiness, defenders' reintegration cannot be complete. It presents effective global practices, from training programs like TAP and SkillBridge to dedicated platforms such as the Veterans Job Bank. For Ukraine, the key directions are building a comprehensive system to support veteran employment, developing partnerships between the state, business, and civil society organizations, and recognizing veteran experience as a valuable resource for the economy and society.

In particular, the author analyzes three successful models in which veterans are treated as an **economic driver** rather than an object of charity:

- **Israel (career springboard model):** military experience is an unconditional plus on a resume. The Employment Equal Opportunity Law is in effect. The state provides targeted payments to start a business or pursue education, while nonprofit organizations provide deep psychosocial adaptation support.
- **USA (a comprehensive state, business, and CSO model):** the TAP program prepares servicemen for civilian life while they are still in service. The SkillBridge project allows internships at private companies during the final six months of service while retaining military pay. The Veteran Readiness & Employment program compensates businesses for up to 50% of the salary of a veteran with a disability.
- **Canada (single digital window model):** the Career Transition Services platform and the My VAC Account portal assign each veteran a licensed career counselor. The Veterans Job Bank has been created, with a converter that translates military occupations into civilian ones.

Recommendations and conclusions for Ukraine:

Ukraine has a unique opportunity to build its own **"veteran economy"** by adapting the best global tools:

Technological solutions: creating a single national online platform (following Canada's example) with a veteran's personal cabinet, a vacancy database, and an automatic skills converter.

Adaptation internships: introducing programs modeled on the American SkillBridge – a transitional internship at the end of service while retaining military pay, which would remove financial risk for businesses.

Education and career guidance: mandatory career counseling and the launch of targeted retraining programs (especially in IT and other technology fields facing shortages).

Business incentives: certifying "veteran-friendly" companies and offering them tax benefits or preferences in public procurement.

Systematic mentoring: combining vocational training with mandatory psychological support and coaching from civil society organizations.

Ukraine needs to move from scattered, one-off initiatives to a national system. Veteran reintegration should be viewed not as a financial burden on the budget or an obligation (a "debt to defenders"), but as **a strategic investment in human capital** capable of relaunching and leading the country's economy.

1.3.8. "THE INVISIBLE TALENT MARKET"

Of interest in the context of this study is a review of existing positive practices for employing veterans in the Ukrainian labor market, showcasing successful approaches to their professional adaptation, integration into work teams, and the development of veteran-oriented HR practices.

[25 Cases of Inclusive Employment in Ukrainian Business](#) (the "Invisible Talent Market" project by Happy Monday and the International Renaissance Foundation, 2025) presents a large-scale study of the real state of diversity and accessibility in Ukraine's corporate sector.

The study is based on an analysis of 25 successful cases from leading Ukrainian companies across various industries (food and agri-tech, manufacturing, banking, IT, retail). The presented veteran employment practices demonstrate a diversity of inclusive approaches used across different economic sectors and organizational contexts. This approach makes it possible to identify shared strategic tasks for the state and business in supporting the employment of veterans, internally displaced persons, and older people, as well as to identify effective models of a socially responsible employer.

Particular attention is warranted for the veteran reintegration methodology introduced by the company MHP, based on the principles of comprehensiveness and individualized support. Its key elements include systematic support for the employee at every stage – from mobilization and service through to returning to civilian professional activity, institutionalizing support through the creation of a specialized Center for Interaction with Service Members and Veterans, engaging professional coordinators and experts, and extending support programs to veterans' family members.

An important feature of this model is its adaptation to the company's geographically distributed structure by engaging experts directly on-site, ensuring a prompt response to the needs of veterans and their families.

This experience shows a gradual shift in the approach of Ukrainian businesses to veteran employment – from implementing individual support measures to building comprehensive reintegration ecosystems centered on individualized support, cross-sectoral cooperation, and the creation of specialized institutions to work with the veteran community.

1.3.9. VETERAN INITIATIVES. VETERAN POLICIES OF UKRAINE'S LARGEST COMPANIES

The study [“Veteran Initiatives: Veteran Policies of Ukraine’s Largest Companies” \(H1 2025\)](#), covers the experience of more than **100 of Ukraine’s largest non-state companies**, focusing on the veteran’s path from employment to full adaptation. The study’s methodology is based on a survey of the **top 200 largest non-state companies in Ukraine** by revenue, whose actions effectively set the key market trends in veteran policy. The final results are based on responses from 78 companies and supplemented by the integrated expertise of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs and the Ukrainian Veterans Fund.

Coverage: 97% of surveyed companies already have veterans on staff. Veteran policies are being adopted most actively in **manufacturing (100%)** and the **IT sector (90%)**. Veterans are employed not only as technical staff (51.4%) but also in sales (36.1%), IT departments (34.7%), marketing, law, and finance. Despite the high presence of veterans on staff, a systematic approach is still at the formative stage.

Employment barriers and challenges

Lack of policies	Only 45% of the largest companies have an officially established policy on veteran employment.
Communication gap	53% of companies do not indicate in their vacancy listings that they are open to veterans.
Main obstacles for veterans	A mismatch between salary and needs (37.3%), physical health problems (36.3%), and psycho-emotional state (25.5%).

Market leaders are moving from one-off measures toward building comprehensive ecosystems.

Support ecosystems: key cases

Metinvest	Runs the “Hero’s Path” program, covering more than 1,000 working veterans . The system includes medical checkups, “Brothers-in-Arms” psychological support, and training at the
DTEK	The “ProVeteran” program supports the employee from the moment of mobilization. The company has introduced the “Veteran+” package (expanded insurance) and is adapting production
MHP	The “MHP Poruch” (MHP Nearby) program has supported the return of over 800 veterans and established a Center for Interaction with Service Members, providing individualized support.
Kyivstar	The “4.5.0. Finally Home” initiative focuses on preparing teams and managers for veterans’ return.

The experience of Ukrainian companies shows that the most common workplace tools for supporting veterans are psycho-emotional support programs, used by 71.8% of employers. A significant share of businesses also cover employees' medical services and health insurance (61.5%), and more than half of companies (53.8%) have introduced adapted training, mentoring, and professional support systems. This shows a gradual shift by employers from isolated support measures toward a comprehensive approach that combines the psychological, medical, and professional reintegration of veterans into the workplace.

Overall, the study shows veteran policy moving out of the "charity" category and into the realm of corporate culture and strategic HR. The key remaining challenge is the "mental gap" between veterans and colleagues who lack combat experience. For successful reintegration, businesses need to focus on preparing teams, making spaces inclusive, and recognizing combat experience as a unique professional advantage (leadership, stress resilience, analytical thinking).

1.3.10. SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS OF THE DESK RESEARCH

The desk research covered a range of national studies on veteran employment, professional adaptation, educational needs, and social integration. The analysis included both quantitative sociological surveys and qualitative studies (focus-group discussions, in-depth interviews) carried out by different research organizations using different methodological approaches, samples, and data-collection tools. As a result, the findings of individual studies cannot be directly compared with one another or used to build comparison tables. At the same time, taken together, the reviewed materials make it possible to form a holistic picture of veterans' current situation in Ukraine and to identify shared trends that recur regardless of research method.

Overall, the findings show that for most veterans, returning to civilian life is accompanied by a set of interconnected challenges, chief among them employment, professional reorientation, psychological adaptation, and rebuilding social ties. The key barriers are not so much veterans' insufficient level of professional training, but rather the after-effects of military service, health status, stereotyped perceptions on the part of employers, an insufficiently adapted work environment, and limited awareness of existing support opportunities.

Nearly all of the studies reviewed confirm strong demand among veterans for professional development, retraining, and new competencies. At the same time, education is seen not only as a tool for improving competitiveness in the labor market, but also as an important mechanism for social and psychological adaptation after military service. At the same time, financial, organizational, and informational barriers stand in the way of meeting these educational needs.

The review also shows a gradual increase in businesses' readiness to hire veterans, although the level of employer preparedness remains uneven. The most successful practices are those that combine professional adaptation, psychological support, career counseling, mentoring, and support for employers in creating a veteran-friendly work environment.

Thus, the findings of the desk research show that veterans' effective reintegration requires a comprehensive, cross-sectoral approach that brings together the efforts of government institutions, employers, educational institutions, and the civil society sector. It is precisely this kind of coordinated cross-sectoral cooperation that creates the necessary conditions for veterans to successfully return to active professional and social life.

SECTION 2. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS IN THE LVIV AND IVANO-FRANKIVSK REGIONS

2.1. EXPERT COMPOSITION OF THE SAMPLE

The study ran from March 19 to May 28, 2026. A total of 35 employers took part in the survey. Of those surveyed, 23 respondents were from the Ivano-Frankivsk region and 12 were business and institution representatives from the Lviv region.

Please indicate the region where your business/organization/institution is located:		
Lviv	12	34.3%
Ivano-Frankivsk	23	65.7%

A significant share of respondents represent small business, in particular sole proprietors (SPs) with and without hired employees, who together make up almost half of all study participants. Representatives of private and municipal enterprises, local self-government bodies, and the civil society sector also took part in the survey, making it possible to form a comprehensive picture of the current state and prospects for veteran employment, and to take into account the specific needs of different categories of employers in this area.

What is your organization's legal form?		
Sole proprietor without hired employees/self-employed person	4	11.4%
Sole proprietor with hired employees	13	37.1%
Private enterprise	5	14.3%
Joint-stock company	2	5.7%
Municipal enterprise/institution	7	20%
Local self-government body	2	5.7%
Civil society or charitable organization	2	5.7%

The most represented among study participants are employers in manufacturing and services (7 each), as well as trade (6). Construction and engineering services, healthcare, and the government/municipal sector are also notably represented (3 each). IT companies, agribusiness enterprises, educational institutions, and civil society and non-governmental organizations also took part in the survey, though to a somewhat lesser extent.

Overall, the study covers both traditional sectors of the economy and specialized fields, making it possible to analyze the specifics of veteran employment across different segments of the labor market and to account for differences in employment conditions, staffing requirements, and approaches to work organization.

Company's field of activity:		
Manufacturing	7	20.6%
Trade	6	17.6%
Services	7	20.6%
Agriculture/agribusiness	1	2.9%
Information technology/IT/digital services	2	5.9%
Construction and engineering services	3	8.8%
Healthcare/medical services	3	8.8%
Education/research	1	2.9%
Civil society and non-governmental organizations	1	2.9%
Government/municipal sector	3	8.8%

Most respondents represent enterprises with up to 50 employees or operate as sole proprietors. At the same time, the study also included representatives of the municipal and government sectors and medium and large businesses, ensuring that different models of work organization and approaches to veteran employment are taken into account.

How many employees does your company have?		
Sole proprietor without hired employees/self-employed person	4	11.4%
Sole proprietor (veteran business) without hired employees	1	2.9%
Sole proprietor (veteran business) with hired employees	3	8.6%
Micro business (1–10 employees)	8	22.9%
Small business (11–50 employees)	7	20%
Medium business (51–250 employees)	1	2.9%
Large business (over 250 employees)	3	8.6%
Municipal institution/enterprise	6	17.1%
Government institution/enterprise	2	5.7%

Enterprises and organizations with many years of operating experience predominate among study participants. The largest share of respondents represent enterprises and organizations that have been operating for more than 15 years (14 people). Another 6 respondents represent enterprises or organizations operating for 8 to 15 years, and 7 for 4 to 7 years. At the same time, almost a quarter of respondents (8 people) represent businesses and organizations established within the last three years.

This composition of respondents combines the experience of employers with established HR practices and “younger” businesses that are still building their own approaches to personnel management amid today’s economic and social challenges.

The strong representation of organizations with a long operating history increases the analytical value of the findings, since their assessments are grounded in practical experience of working under different economic conditions and observing labor market changes over an extended period, including experience employing veterans since 2014. This composition of respondents also makes it possible to analyze how organizations with established management practices are adapting to current challenges related to ensuring an inclusive work environment and employing demobilized servicemen.

How long has your business/organization been operating?		
Up to 1 year	3	8.6
1–3 years	5	14.3
4–7 years	7	20.0
8–15 years	6	17.1
More than 15 years	14	40.0

The structure of respondents by functional role shows a high level of involvement among people who directly influence HR policy and hiring processes within their organizations. In particular, more than half of respondents are business owners, including sole proprietors (16 people), ensuring that the study reflects the perspective of employers who independently make decisions about hiring staff and organizing team work. HR managers and personnel management specialists also make up a significant share (5 people), as do heads of organizations and enterprises (4 people).

This composition of respondents makes it possible to treat the findings as expert assessments from professionals with direct, practical experience in HR management, recruitment, and work-process organization. This increases the reliability of the data obtained and provides a deeper understanding of employers’ readiness in the Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk regions to hire veterans, while also making it possible to objectively assess existing barriers and opportunities for their professional integration.

What is your role/position at the enterprise/institution?		
Business owner/sole proprietor	16	55.2%
Head of organization/director	4	13.8%
HR manager/personnel specialist	5	17.2%
Department head/line manager	2	6.9%
Person authorized for HR policy matters	2	6.9%

The gender distribution of study participants is balanced, with a slight predominance of women. This composition of respondents makes it possible to take into account the views of both men and women on issues of employing and adapting workers after military service.

Your gender:		
Female	19	54.3%
Male	16	45.7%

2.2. CURRENT AND FUTURE STAFFING NEEDS

The presence of open vacancies among some employers points to sustained demand for labor and a certain dynamism in the local labor market. Specifically, 11 respondents reported having open vacancies, and another 6 said they plan to create new jobs in the near future. At the same time, half of the surveyed organizations and businesses operate with stable staffing and no plans to expand.

This distribution shows that some employers are in a phase of expanding or renewing their workforce, while others operate with an established staff and do not need additional employees in the short term.

In the context of veteran employment, this means that the labor market's integration potential exists, but depends on individual employers' activity and their readiness to expand staff or renew their workforce. Accordingly, how effectively this group is employed will depend not so much on the overall availability of vacancies as on the accessibility of information about them and employers' readiness to bring in new categories of employees.

Does your business/organization/institution currently have open vacancies?		
Yes	11	31.4%
No	17	48.6%
Planning to open vacancies soon	6	17.1%

An analysis by legal form shows that municipal enterprises and institutions are the most active in hiring, with 4 organizations already having open vacancies. All surveyed private enterprises also reported a current or expected need to hire: 3 enterprises are already searching for employees, and another 2 plan to open vacancies soon.

Among SPs with hired employees, most are not currently recruiting, although a few entrepreneurs have open vacancies (2) or plan to hire (1) in the future. SPs without hired employees mostly have no staffing needs, which is expected given the nature of their work, though 1 respondent plans to hire employees. Local self-government bodies and civil society or charitable organizations show isolated cases of open or planned vacancies.

Does your business/organization/institution currently have vacancies?			
What is your organization's legal form?	Yes	No	Planning to open vacancies soon
Sole proprietor without hired employees/self-	0	3	1
Sole proprietor with hired employees	2	9	1
Private enterprise	3	0	2
Joint-stock company	1	1	0
Municipal enterprise/institution	4	3	0
Local self-government body	0	1	1
Civil society or charitable organization	1	0	1

A breakdown by field of activity shows that most employers with open vacancies are concentrated in manufacturing, services, and healthcare. These industries most often reported a current need for new employees. Healthcare institutions stand out in that none of the surveyed employers in this field reported no staffing need at all: most already have open vacancies, and some plan further hiring. Construction, education, and the IT sector also show a trend toward expanding vacancies, with both open positions and plans to increase staff.

Does your business/organization/institution currently have open vacancies?			
Company's field of activity:	Yes	No	Planning to open vacancies soon
Manufacturing	2	4	1
Trade	1	4	1
Services	2	5	0
Agriculture/agribusiness	0	1	0
Information technology/IT/digital services	1	0	0
Construction and engineering services	1	1	1
Healthcare/medical services	2	0	1
Education/research	1	0	0
Civil society and non-governmental organizations	0	0	1
Government/municipal sector	0	2	1

A regional breakdown shows that employers in the Ivano-Frankivsk region somewhat more often reported having vacancies and plans to hire than employers in the Lviv region. At the same time, in both regions, organizations that were not searching for employees at the time of the survey predominate, pointing to broadly similar trends in local labor markets.

Does your business/organization/institution currently have vacancies?			
*Note: This question was asked of all survey participants. The distribution of responses includes SPs without hired employees, who could indicate either no need to hire or an intention to do so in the future.			
Please indicate the region where your business/organization/institution is located:	Yes	No	Planning to open vacancies soon
Lviv	3	6	2
Ivano-Frankivsk	8	11	4

By organization size, municipal institutions and large enterprises show the greatest hiring activity, with vacancies most frequently recorded among them. By contrast, employers who currently have no need to hire predominate among microbusinesses, veteran-owned SPs, and self-employed individuals. Small business occupies an intermediate position, combining both open vacancies and an absence of any need to expand staff.

By length of operation, the strongest demand for employees is seen among enterprises and institutions that have been operating for more than 8 years. Younger businesses, especially those operating for less than three years, have no vacancies, work with their existing staff, and rarely plan to expand it. This suggests that staffing demand is largely driven by mature, established employers.

More than half of respondents (11 people) reported a need for skilled workers, alongside demand for administrative (6 employers) and management staff (4 employers). At the same time, demand for narrow-specialty professionals (in particular in accounting, engineering, and IT) and logistics and transport workers is less pronounced. Isolated mentions of the need for technical staff, marketing and communications specialists, and sales and customer-service staff show that demand for service and support functions is fragmented and likely depends on the specifics of individual organizations.

The structure of staffing demand shows that skilled occupations dominate as the key employment segment, forming the greatest potential for employing veterans in particular. This also highlights the importance of developing short-term vocational training and retraining programs focused on the practical skills most in demand among employers.

Which positions does your organization need to fill most right now?		
Management positions	4	22.2%
Specialists (accountants, engineers, IT, etc.)	3	16.7%
Managers/administrative staff	6	33.3%
Skilled workers	11	61.1%
Technical staff	2	11.1%
Sales and customer service	1	5.6%
Marketing/communications/SMM	2	11.1%
Logistics/transport/warehouse	3	16.7%
Unskilled labor	4	22.2%

The survey results point to a structural imbalance between employer demand and labor supply in the local labor market. The key barrier is a shortage of candidates with the necessary qualifications, cited by more than half of surveyed employers. This structural challenge is compounded by a mismatch between the pay employers offer and candidates' salary expectations. Together, these qualification and financial imbalances form the core problem in the local labor market and make it harder to fill vacant positions, affecting the staffing stability of enterprises.

External factors also significantly affect staffing, including labor migration and competition among employers for skilled workers, as well as constraints related to working conditions, candidates' level of preparation, and health status. This points to the complex nature of the problem, which combines structural market factors with the individual characteristics of potential employees.

Overall, the situation reflects a persistent labor shortage that requires systemic solutions in vocational training and skills development, as well as expanding the sources of labor supply, in particular by integrating veterans into the labor market.

What are the main reasons for difficulties in recruiting staff?		
Shortage of candidates with the required qualifications	10	55.6%
Overly high salary expectations	8	44.4%
Labor migration	5	27.8%
Competition among employers	5	27.8%
Low level of candidate preparation	3	16.7%
Restrictions on certain types of work due to health status	3	16.7%
Unwillingness to work under certain conditions	4	22.2%
Specific job requirements	2	11.1%

Employer responses point to significant difficulties in finding the necessary employees. The vast majority of respondents with hiring experience rate the recruitment process as difficult or very difficult. Given this situation, expanding the workforce by bringing new categories of workers, including veterans, into the labor market is becoming increasingly relevant. At the same time, realizing this potential requires developing their professional competencies and creating conditions for successful adaptation to the civilian labor market.

How difficult is it for your business/organization/institution to find the employees you need?		
Very difficult	3	16.7
Rather difficult	13	72.2
Hard to say	2	11.1

Most respondents do not expect significant changes in staffing over the next 6–12 months: 17 respondents forecast that staffing needs will remain unchanged. At the same time, 10 participants forecast a moderate increase in staff, and another 1 expects a significant increase in staffing needs. 2 respondents anticipate a decrease in staffing needs. These results point both to a deepening staffing crisis, since the labor shortage may worsen, and to additional opportunities to employ new workers.

Do you anticipate expanding your staff and increased staffing needs over the next 6–12 months?		
Yes, significantly	1	02.9
Yes, moderately	10	28.6
No, needs will remain unchanged	17	48.6
Anticipate a decrease	2	05.7
Hard to say	5	14.3

Employer responses show a varied picture of future staffing needs, reflecting the industry diversity of study participants. In particular, respondents forecast growing demand for workers in manufacturing, construction, logistics, trade, and services. A specific need is also noted for skilled blue-collar occupations, including electricians, auto mechanics, and technical and operational staff.

At the same time, some employers expect growing demand for management-level specialists, managers, subject-matter experts, and workers in the social sphere, education, and psychological support. This shows continued demand not only for blue-collar occupations, but also for qualified specialists capable of supporting organizational development, delivering social services, and implementing educational programs.

Some responses point to future demand for workers in tourism, transport services, and public employment services. Employers also emphasize the importance of attracting young specialists with up-to-date knowledge and professional competencies.

Overall, the results show continued demand for both blue-collar occupations and qualified specialists and management staff, creating potential opportunities for veterans' professional fulfillment, provided they receive appropriate training, retraining, and adaptation support for the civilian labor market.

Employers who took part in the survey are mostly oriented toward creating jobs with traditional forms of employment: 11 of them offer full-time employment. 8 respondents are ready to offer part-time employment, and 6 a flexible schedule, showing some adaptability to different worker needs. Remote, project-based, and shift work are less acceptable to employers. At the same time, the availability of alternative employment formats expands labor market access for people who need more flexible working conditions.

Overall, the results show that standard forms of employment predominate, while flexible approaches to work organization are gradually spreading. This creates additional opportunities to bring different categories of the population into employment, in particular people who need an adaptation period or who combine work with other responsibilities.

What employment formats are you ready to offer?		
Full-time employment	11	68.8%
Part-time employment	8	50%
Flexible schedule	6	37.5%
Shift work	1	6.3%
Remote work	2	12.5%
Temporary employment	4	25%
Project-based work	2	12.5%

The survey results show a high level of employer openness to training new employees without prior experience: 15 of 16 are ready to train candidates directly on the job.

Is your organization willing to consider candidates without work experience, with the option of on-the-job training?		
Yes	6	37.5%
Rather yes	9	56.3%
Rather no	1	6.3%

These findings are a positive signal for veterans who are going through professional reorientation or returning to the civilian labor market. Employers' high readiness to train staff creates additional opportunities for people whose prior experience does not fully match a vacancy's requirements but who are motivated to develop professionally and acquire new competencies.

2.3. EMPLOYERS' EXPERIENCE AND READINESS TO HIRE VETERANS

A significant share of employers who took part in the study have employees mobilized into the Armed Forces of Ukraine. In particular, more than a third of respondents said one or more employees at their organization had been mobilized, and another significant share reported the mobilization of a large part of their team. Thus, more than half of surveyed organizations have directly experienced the effects of mobilization on staffing and work organization.

Overall, these findings confirm the relevance of retaining workforce potential, planning for employee replacement, and preparing work teams for veterans' return to the professional environment.

Do you have mobilized employees?		
Yes, one or a few cases	13	37.1%
Yes, a significant part of the team was mobilized	5	14.3%
No, there have been no such cases	15	42.9%
Hard to say	2	5.7%

Among employers who reported having mobilized employees, the number of such people varies significantly. Most often, respondents reported the mobilization of 1–2 employees (4 mentions each). Some employers also reported the mobilization of 3–7 people. At the same time, the sample also includes organizations that experienced a much greater staffing impact from mobilization. Some respondents reported the mobilization of 11, 32, and 59 employees, and one employer noted that around half of their team had been called up for military service.

The study's findings point to a certain link between employee mobilization and the need to hire staff. Among employers with vacancies, those where one or more employees were mobilized predominate, and cases where mobilization affected a significant part of the team are also fairly common. Only isolated organizations with open vacancies reported having no mobilized employees. By contrast, among employers with no vacancies, organizations with no cases of mobilization predominate.

Do you have mobilized employees?

Does your business/organization/institution currently have vacancies?	Yes, one or a few cases	Yes, a significant part of the team was mobilized	No, there have been no such cases
Yes	6	4	1
No	5	0	11
Planning to open vacancies soon	1	1	3
Hard to say	1	0	0

Overall, the data confirm that mobilization is one of the factors transforming the local labor market, affecting enterprises' staffing and highlighting the need for mechanisms to support veterans' return and professional reintegration after military service ends.

Employer responses show that it is common practice to hold jobs for employees serving in the military. Some organizations limit themselves to complying with legal requirements, while individual employers also introduce additional internal mechanisms to support mobilized employees.

The presence of responses indicating partial use of such practices, or their absence, may point to varying levels of employer awareness regarding current labor guarantees and how to implement them. This highlights the need for additional efforts to inform employers about mobilized employees' rights and mechanisms for staying in touch with them during their military service.

Under current Ukrainian law – Article 119 of the Labor Code of Ukraine – employees called up for military service during mobilization or who have signed a military service contract retain their job and position for the entire duration of their service. This guarantee applies to all employees regardless of their employer's form of ownership: at state, municipal, and private enterprises, institutions, organizations, farms, agricultural cooperatives, and with sole proprietors, for whom they worked at the time of call-up.

To ensure veterans' successful reintegration, it remains important not only to formally hold their job, but also to maintain communication with the employee during their service, plan for their return, and create conditions for their further professional adaptation within the team.

Does your organization hold jobs for employees serving in the military?

Yes, in accordance with the law	15	42.9%
Yes, and additional internal support mechanisms are also in place	2	5.7%
Partially (in certain cases)	3	8.6%
No	9	25.7%
Hard to say	6	17.1%

The survey results show a high level of employer openness to hiring veterans. Most respondents view demobilized servicemen as potential candidates for filling vacancies, creating favorable conditions for their professional integration into the labor market.

At the same time, a significant share of employers do not have a clearly defined position on hiring veterans, which may point to a lack of practical experience working with this category of employees or insufficient understanding of the specifics of their professional adaptation after military service. Under these conditions, measures aimed at building cooperation between employers and the veteran community to share successful employment and adaptation practices become especially important.

Does your organization consider veterans as potential candidates for filling vacancies?

Yes	19	54.3%
Rather yes	4	11.4%
No	3	8.6%
Hard to say	9	25.7%

Employers who follow the practice of holding jobs for mobilized employees are significantly more likely to view veterans as potential candidates for employment. Among organizations that hold jobs in accordance with the law or have additional internal support mechanisms for servicemen, positive responses regarding readiness to hire veterans predominate. Cases of a negative attitude toward hiring veterans within this group are rare.

At the same time, among employers who do not hold jobs for employees serving in the military, the share of those unwilling to consider veterans as candidates for vacancies is noticeably higher. Even within this group, some organizations show openness to hiring veterans, though their position overall is less favorable.

Does your organization consider veterans as potential candidates for filling vacancies?				
Does your organization hold jobs for employees serving in the military?	Yes	Rather yes	No	Hard to say
Yes, in accordance with the law	10	2	1	2
Yes, and additional internal support mechanisms are also in place	2	0	0	0
Partially (in certain cases)	3	0	0	0
No	2	1	2	4
Hard to say	2	1	0	3

Thus, the study shows a trend in which organizations that support their employees during military service tend to be more open to hiring and professionally reintegrating veterans.

Respondents most often mention the possibility of employing veterans in skilled worker positions (17 mentions), as well as unskilled labor (12 mentions). Employers also see notable employment potential for veterans in management and administrative work, as well as logistics, transport, and warehousing. One in four respondents believes veterans can work effectively in sales and customer service.

Employers somewhat less often consider employing veterans as specialists, technical staff, or in management positions, which may be related to the need for specialized education, experience, or narrow-profile competencies, as well as a limited number of potential vacancies in these areas.

Overall, the results show that employers are willing to consider veterans as potential employees across a wide range of professions. At the same time, the greatest demand is concentrated in blue-collar occupations, logistics, and administrative positions, pointing to the value of developing professional adaptation, retraining, and employment support programs for veterans that reflect current labor market needs.

**Which of your open/planned vacancies
do you think could potentially be filled by veterans?**

Management positions	3	10.7%
Specialists (accountants, engineers, IT, etc.)	5	17.9%
Managers/administrative staff	9	32.1%
Skilled workers	17	60.7%
Technical staff	5	17.9%
Sales and customer service	7	25%
Logistics/transport/warehouse	9	32.1%
Unskilled labor	12	42.9%

A bit more than a third of surveyed employers currently have experience hiring veterans. This shows that the practice of hiring veterans is gradually taking shape, but has not yet become widespread among employers in the Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk regions.

Does your company have experience hiring veterans?

Yes	13	37.1%
No	22	62.9%

Among employers with experience working with veterans, a significant share have already hired people who were wounded or have a disability. In particular, about half of respondents reported successful experience hiring such candidates, showing the existence of positive inclusive employment practices and work-environment adaptation tailored to veterans' needs. Another share, more than a third of respondents, have no relevant experience but express readiness to consider candidates from among veterans who were wounded or have a disability. These responses show a high level of employer readiness to hire veterans with disabilities or the after-effects of injuries. Taken together, more than 84% of respondents either already have positive experience with such employment or are ready to consider such candidates in the future.

Does your organization have experience hiring veterans who were wounded or have

Yes, we have successful experience	6	46.2%
No, but we are ready to consider such candidates	5	38.5%
No, and we are not currently ready to	1	7.7%
Hard to say	1	7.7%

Does your organization have experience hiring veterans who were wounded or have a disability?		
Yes, we have successful experience	6	46.2%
No, but we are ready to consider such candidates	5	38.5%
No, and we are not currently ready to	1	7.7%
Hard to say	1	7.7%

Employer responses show that veterans are already being brought into positions at various levels and in various professional fields. Employers most often hired veterans to fill skilled worker positions (5 mentions), consistent with the overall structure of staffing demand. Another 4 respondents have experience hiring veterans into management positions.

There is also a notable share of veterans hired as professional specialists, technical staff, and in unskilled work (3 mentions each). Surveyed employers somewhat less often hired veterans into management or administrative positions.

Which categories of positions have you hired veterans for?		
Management positions (directors, department heads)	4	30.8%
Management/administrative positions	2	15.4%
Professional specialists (accountants, engineers, lawyers, IT, etc.)	3	23.1%
Technical specialists (mechanics, technicians, equipment operators)	3	23.1%
Skilled worker occupations	5	38.5%
Unskilled labor	3	23.1%
Sales and customer service	2	15.4%
Logistics/transport/warehouse	1	7.7%
Services	1	7.7%

Overall, employer experience shows that veterans work successfully both in blue-collar occupations and in skilled, management positions. This points to a wide range of professional opportunities for veterans and the importance of an individualized approach to assessing their experience, competencies, and potential during hiring.

Hiring veterans is mostly not accompanied by significant difficulties in organizing the work process. 9 respondents said that after hiring veterans, they encountered no barriers or additional organizational challenges.

Among the employers who reported difficulties, the need for individual working conditions was mentioned most often. A few respondents also cited the need for a more flexible schedule, additional time for adaptation conversations, adjustments to management style, determining the optimal workload, and specifics of setting and monitoring tasks.

The results show that integrating veterans into work teams generally did not require significant organizational barriers to be overcome, and that the existing challenges are situational and individual in nature. Given open communication and a flexible approach from the employer, veterans can successfully adapt to the civilian work environment and effectively carry out their professional duties.

What barriers in organizing veterans' work have you encountered after hiring them?		
Difficulty setting tasks and monitoring their completion	1	8.3%
Need to change management style	1	8.3%
Need for a more flexible work schedule	1	8.3%
Need for individual working conditions	2	16.7%
Difficulty assessing the optimal workload	1	8.3%
Need for additional time for adaptation conversations	1	8.3%
No barriers arose	9	75%

According to employers, veterans' workplace adaptation is most often linked to a psychological state that affects their work. 5 respondents noted this problem, pointing to the need to create a supportive environment within the team as veterans return to civilian life. Another respondent reported difficulties related directly to organizing the employee's adaptation process at the workplace. Two employers' experience points to a need for additional support for veterans as they join the team and take on new professional duties.

If the veterans you hired had difficulties adapting to the workplace, what were they?		
A psychological state that affected work	5	62.5%
Difficulty organizing the employee's adaptation	1	12.5%
Need for additional support	2	25%

These findings show that the main challenges in veterans' adaptation are mostly psychosocial in nature and are much less often related to professional training or the ability to perform job duties. This underscores the importance of developing mentoring practices, adaptation support, supportive communication, and a psychologically safe work environment within organizations.

In most cases, veteran employment is fairly stable. Among employers with experience hiring veterans, 9 report no dismissals in the first six months of work. At the same time, 4 respondents reported cases of dismissal.

Have there been cases of veterans being dismissed within their first 6 months of work?		
Yes	4	30.8%
No	9	69.2%

Overall, these findings show a mostly positive experience of retaining veterans in the workplace. At the same time, the existence of dismissal cases underscores the importance of introducing adaptation measures, mentoring, psychological support, and support practices for veterans at the initial stage of employment. Such measures can help employees integrate successfully into the work team and improve their long-term retention in the workplace.

These findings show that after going through the initial adaptation stage, veterans are able to successfully integrate into work teams and remain employed over the long term. In 9 cases, employers reported that veterans work or have worked at their organization for more than a year.

Are there veterans who work or have worked for you for more than 1 year?		
Yes	9	69.2%
No	4	30.8%

Combined with the results of the previous question, this shows that the main challenges relate mainly to the initial adaptation stage, while after successfully joining the team, veterans show a sufficient level of stability and long-term engagement in their work.

Employer assessments show that veterans are seen as employees with a number of valuable professional and behavioral competencies that can be in demand across various fields. Employers most often note their high discipline and responsibility (9 mentions). Another 6 responses highlight veterans' ability to work effectively in a team. A significant share of respondents also note leadership qualities and willingness to take responsibility, a results-oriented approach, and stress resilience, which are especially important qualities in today's labor market. Some employers highlight veterans' ability to learn quickly, organizational skills, and ability to follow established procedures.

Which strong professional or behavioral qualities do you most often note in candidates/employees with veteran experience?

High discipline and responsibility	9	69.2%
Ability to work in a team	6	46.2%
Leadership qualities and willingness to take responsibility	5	38.5%
Results orientation	4	30.8%
Organizational skills and ability to follow procedures	2	15.4%
Planning and process management skills	1	7.7%
Stress resilience	4	30.8%
Fast learning	3	23.1%
None of these	1	7.7%

Overall, the results show a positive employer perception of veterans' professional potential. Responsibility, discipline, teamwork, leadership, and stress resilience are considered the most valuable qualities, ones that can support successful professional adaptation and boost veterans' competitiveness in the labor market.

8 respondents each said they had no open vacancies and that there were no obstacles at all to hiring veterans. Among the factors that directly affected employment opportunities, the main obstacle is the absence of veteran candidates among applicants for open vacancies (14 mentions). Employers also cited specific job requirements that can be difficult to reconcile with veterans' individual needs, candidates' salary expectations, and the need for additional training or retraining.

What prevented you from hiring veterans at your institution/company/organization?

No open vacancies	8	23.5%
No veteran candidates among applicants	14	41.2%
Need for retraining or additional training	1	2.9%
Salary expectations	2	5.9%
Specific job requirements that are hard to reconcile with veterans'	4	11.8%
No obstacles at all	8	23.5%
Hard to say	3	8.8%

Thus, the key challenge is not so much bias or employer reluctance to hire veterans, but rather an insufficient number of veterans among vacancy candidates, or a mismatch between positions and veterans' individual needs. This highlights the importance of developing labor market intermediation mechanisms, career counseling, career guidance programs, and platforms that can better match employer needs with veterans' professional potential.

Surveyed employers show an overall high level of readiness to hire people with disabilities, although this readiness is often accompanied by a need for additional support and consideration of workplace specifics. The largest share of respondents (13 people) said they are ready to consider candidates depending on the type of disability and the requirements of the specific position.

8 respondents already have practical experience hiring people with disabilities and creating suitable working conditions. Another 7 are ready to do so provided they receive financial support for adapting the work environment. 5 respondents each cited a need for advisory or organizational support. At the same time, 9 employers show caution on this issue: 5 chose "not ready at this time", and 4 chose "hard to say".

Are you ready to hire people with various types of disabilities?		
Yes, we already have experience hiring and creating suitable conditions	8	23.5%
Yes, we are ready, but we need additional financial support	7	20.6%
Yes, we are ready, but we need advisory support	5	14.7%
Yes, we are ready, but we need organizational support	5	14.7%
Partially ready – depending on the type of disability and job requirements	13	38.2%
Ready to consider candidates provided the workplace is adapted beforehand	1	2.9%
Rather ready, but we have no practical experience	3	8.8%
Rather not ready, due to limited resources or the nature of the work	3	8.8%
Not ready at this time	5	14.7%
Hard to say	4	11.8%

Study participants' responses show a potential readiness for inclusive employment, though realizing it requires additional support mechanisms. This primarily concerns financial tools for adapting workplaces, advisory support, sharing successful practices, and raising awareness of opportunities for employing people with disabilities.

In the context of veterans returning to civilian life, these responses are especially informative, as they show there is a basis for expanding employment opportunities for veterans with disabilities, provided both candidates and employers receive adequate support.

Surveyed employers show a high level of readiness to provide veterans with additional support during adaptation to a new workplace. Only 2 respondents said they do not plan to introduce any special support measures, while the vast majority are ready to apply various tools to support professional integration.

The most common adaptation mechanism is a flexible work schedule, which makes it possible to account for veterans' individual needs and ease their return to work.

A significant share of respondents are also ready to apply mentoring or coaching support, as well as adapt the workplace to the employee's needs. Nearly a third of employers intend to provide vocational training or retraining, creating additional opportunities to acquire new competencies and take on new professional roles. Every surveyed employer also shows readiness to support a veteran in accessing psychological support.

Overall, employers largely recognize the importance of adaptation support for veterans and are ready to introduce practical support mechanisms. The greatest emphasis at present is on flexible work arrangements, mentoring, professional development, and workplace adaptation.

Is your organization ready to provide veterans with additional support during workplace adaptation?		
We do not plan any additional support	2	5.9%
Mentoring, coaching	13	38.2%
Flexible work schedule	16	47.1%
Vocational training or retraining	11	32.4%
Psychological support	9	26.5%
Workplace adaptation	12	35.3%
Temporary transfer to other positions	3	8.8%

Introducing systematic approaches to veteran adaptation remains insufficiently widespread in practice. More than half of respondents reported having no veteran adaptation programs at all in their organizations.

Only one respondent (a sole proprietor without hired employees) reported having a systematic veteran adaptation program in place at their organization. Another 3 respondents said they have individual elements of support, but these are not formalized into a comprehensive support mechanism.

At the same time, one in five employers expressed interest in introducing such programs in the future, showing an awareness of the importance of supporting veterans as they return to civilian professional life.

Does your organization have veteran adaptation programs in place?		
Yes, systematic adaptation programs are in place	1	2.9%
There are individual elements of support	3	8.6%
No, but we would like to introduce them	7	20%
No, there are no such programs	19	54.3%
Hard to say	5	14.3%

The responses show a situation in which most employers do not yet have formalized mechanisms to support veterans, and existing veteran adaptation processes are mostly handled on an individual or informal basis. At the same time, a clear demand for introducing such programs creates the groundwork for developing a systematic approach to veterans' professional reintegration through the dissemination of successful practices, employer training, and organizational and methodological support.

2.4. BUSINESS NEEDS FOR FACILITATION AND SUPPORT

The study's findings show low employer interest in receiving support for veteran adaptation within the scope of the project. 14 employers said they do not need such support, and 10 could not give an answer. Only 11 respondents expressed interest in receiving support and assistance with the process of adapting a veteran to the workplace.

Would you like to receive support within the project for adapting a veteran to the workplace?		
Yes	11	31.4%
No	14	40%
Hard to say	10	28.6%

Overall, the results show a small share of potentially interested employers, pointing to a need for additional outreach on the possibilities for workplace adaptation support for veterans.

Employer demand for support with veteran adaptation is complex in nature, covering organizational, advisory, and informational needs. The most in-demand item is information about state programs supporting veteran employment, chosen by 10 respondents. Also in demand are consultations on organizing the workplace based on a veteran's health status and methodological materials/recommendations on veteran adaptation (8 respondents each).

At the same time, 6 employers each note a need for training for HR specialists and managers, consultations on internal communication and interaction with veterans, and legal consultations on veteran employment. There is also demand for developing internal adaptation policies and legal support for employment processes.

What specific support is important for you to receive?		
Psychologist support for the veteran	4	20%
Consultations for the team on communication and interaction with veterans	6	30%
Developing an internal veteran adaptation policy	5	25%
Training/workshops for HR or managers on veteran adaptation	6	30%
Consultations on organizing the workplace based on veterans' health status	8	40%
Mentoring or coaching for the veteran in the workplace	4	20%
Information about state programs supporting veteran employment	10	50%
Legal consultations on veteran employment	6	30%
Methodological materials/recommendations on veteran adaptation	8	40%

These requests confirm that effective support for veteran adaptation requires a combination of informational, methodological, and organizational components aimed at building a systematic approach to their integration into work teams.

Increasing employers' readiness to hire veterans is closely linked to financial and institutional support mechanisms. The most influential incentive is salary compensation, cited by more than half of respondents (18 responses). State support programs (16 responses) and tax benefits (13 responses), which lower employers' hiring and adaptation costs, were also important among survey participants.

Measures that received a moderate level of employer support include adaptation programs, training and retraining, and advisory support for HR specialists. A need for psychological support was also noted separately, showing that employers are aware of the complexity of integrating veterans into work teams.

Overall, the results show that employer readiness to hire veterans depends most on financial incentives and state compensation mechanisms, while educational, psychological, and organizational measures play a supporting but important role.

What would increase your readiness to hire veterans?		
Salary compensation	18	54.5%
Tax benefits	13	39.4%
State support programs	16	48.5%
Training/retraining	8	24.2%
Psychologist support	5	15.2%
Adaptation programs	10	30.3%
Consultations for HR	6	18.2%

In other words, directly reducing employers' costs is the key factor in increasing openness to hiring veterans.

Employer responses show an uneven level of awareness about state programs supporting veteran employment. More than a third of respondents said they are well informed about existing state support mechanisms, while around a third have only heard of such opportunities but lack sufficient information on the conditions for using them.

6 study participants reported not knowing about such programs at all, and some respondents were unable to assess their own level of awareness.

Are you aware of state support for veteran employment?		
Yes	13	37.1%
No	6	17.1%
Heard something about it, but don't know the details	11	31.4%
Hard to say	5	14.3%

Although information about state support for veteran employment is known to some employers, the overall level of awareness remains insufficient. Nearly half of respondents either do not know about such programs or have only superficial information about them. This points to a need to strengthen outreach and awareness efforts regarding existing support mechanisms, the conditions for receiving compensation, and other incentives for employers. Raising awareness could help engage business more actively in hiring veterans and make more effective use of state tools supporting their professional reintegration.

Employment centers remain the key channel through which employers learn about state support programs. Most respondents (17) received their information this way. Other important sources of information include social media (6 respondents) and veteran organizations (4 respondents).

How did you learn about state programs supporting employers?

Employment centers	17	63%
Social media	6	22.2%
Veteran organizations	4	14.8%

These responses highlight the importance of employment centers as the main intermediary between state support programs and employers. At the same time, the relatively small share of alternative information channels suggests potential for expanding outreach campaigns, in particular through digital platforms and civil society and veteran organizations, which could help raise employer awareness of existing support opportunities.

Surveyed employers make fairly limited use of state compensation mechanisms for setting up workplaces for people with disabilities or veterans. Only 6 study participants reported having received such compensation from the state. At the same time, the vast majority of respondents (23) said they had not used this support tool.

Have you received compensation from the state for setting up a workplace for a person with a disability (including a veteran with a disability)?

Yes	6	20.7%
No	23	79.3%

The main reason employers did not seek or use state support for setting up a workplace for a person with a disability (including a veteran with a disability) is that they had no such need (19 responses). At the same time, some respondents cited insufficient awareness of existing support tools (5). A few responses also point to other factors, including unclear regulatory requirements, complex compensation procedures, lack of time and resources, and distrust in the effectiveness of such measures. Expanding access to compensation programs, simplifying the procedures for obtaining them, and stepping up outreach to employers could help broaden the adoption of adaptation measures and the creation of a barrier-free work environment for veterans and people with disabilities.

Why did you not receive/apply for this support?		
Didn't know about it	5	17.9%
Unclear regulatory requirements	1	3.6%
Complex compensation procedure	1	3.6%
Don't believe it would be effective	1	3.6%
No time/resources to deal with it	1	3.6%
No need for it	19	67.9%

Respondents' ratings show a mostly positive perception of the effectiveness and adequacy of state support for veteran employment. Respondents most often gave it the highest rating, indicating a high level of satisfaction with current support measures. The average score is 3.63 out of 5, indicating an overall positive, though not uniformly high, assessment of support effectiveness, with room for further improving its tools and increasing accessibility for employers.

Rate how effective and sufficient you consider this support to be, on a scale of 1 to 5.		
1	3	8.6%
2	4	11.4%
3	9	25.7%
4	6	17.1%
5	13	37.1%
Average score	3.63	3.63

Some respondents already plan or are considering repeat or initial use of these tools. However, 9 respondents have no defined position, and 6 will not take part in state programs. These responses show potential demand for state programs, provided they become more accessible, easier to understand, and employers are better informed about the benefits of participating.

Do you plan to use state programs (including again)?		
Yes	7	20%
Maybe	13	37.1%
No	6	17.1%
Don't know	9	25.7%

Do you plan to use state programs (including again)?

Yes	7	20%
Maybe	13	37.1%
No	6	17.1%
Don't know	9	25.7%

Two-thirds of surveyed employers show readiness to cooperate with veteran programs and NGOs in selecting candidates, laying the groundwork for developing partnership models for veteran employment. A third of respondents are not currently ready for such cooperation or have no defined position.

Are you ready to cooperate with veteran programs/NGOs in selecting candidates?

Yes	10	28.6%
Maybe	14	40%
No	6	17.1%
Hard to say	5	14.3%

Overall, the results show there are preconditions for developing cooperation between employers and veteran programs/NGOs, though scaling it up requires building more trust and raising awareness of how effective such models are.

The vast majority of surveyed employers need financial and informational support to develop veteran employment practices. These are the most relevant areas and define the basic conditions for expanding opportunities to hire this category of employees.

There is also demand for intermediation in candidate selection, legal support, HR consultations, and manager training.

What support would be most useful for you?

Financial	21	65.6%
Informational	20	62.5%
Legal	8	25%
HR consultations	5	15.6%
Manager training	6	18.8%
Intermediation in candidate selection	9	28.1%

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Current and future staffing needs of employers in the Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk regions

- The local labor market is characterized by moderate dynamics: nearly half of surveyed employers have vacancies or plan to create them, while the other half has no intention of expanding staff. This points to genuine demand for labor and employment opportunities, in particular opportunities for veterans.

Recommendation: to improve the effectiveness of veteran employment, it would be worthwhile to strengthen outreach on available vacancies and develop partnership mechanisms between employment centers, communities, NGOs, and employers, with an emphasis on training and retraining aligned with labor market needs.

- Staffing demand in the labor market is mostly concentrated in skilled worker occupations, while demand for other categories is less pronounced and fragmented.

Recommendation: to increase veteran employment, it would be worthwhile to strengthen short-term training and retraining programs in blue-collar occupations aligned with employers' current needs. Develop short-term veteran retraining programs tied to specific employer vacancies. Involve employers in shaping the content of training programs. Organize rapid upskilling programs geared to specific vacancies.

- Employers cite a shortage of qualified staff and a mismatch between candidates' salary expectations as the main barriers to hiring. Labor migration and competition among employers add further pressure.

Recommendation: hiring strategy needs to shift toward investing in people's development rather than searching for "ready-made" specialists. Employment centers, together with business, should broaden their search for candidates among veterans. Employers need to lower initial experience requirements and instead launch rapid on-the-job upskilling programs together with the State Employment Service. Given that local businesses have limited room to raise pay, flexible working conditions, health support programs, and transparent career-growth mechanisms become important tools for attracting and retaining workers.

- The survey shows a situation in which almost every employer has their own specific need – from electricians and cashiers to tour guides, managers, and programming instructors. Under these conditions, it is difficult to run universal vocational training or retraining programs, since employers need small numbers of specialists across many different professional niches.

Recommendation: it would be worthwhile to move toward a model of training vouchers and targeted commissioning. Together with donors, it is worth funding the retraining of veterans and other jobseekers for a specific position guaranteed by an employer (for example, auto-repair or manager courses commissioned by a specific firm).

Encourage employers to develop mentoring programs for veterans who are learning a new profession or lack sufficient experience in a new specialty. When designing such programs, it is worth using a “peer-to-peer” approach, involving veterans who have already successfully integrated into the civilian professional environment as mentors and supporters of new employees.

- Inflexible working conditions and the predominance of classic employment formats limit market access for many vulnerable groups.

Recommendation: it would be worthwhile to encourage employers to more actively adopt “hybrid” and flexible work schedules as one of the key tools for addressing the labor shortage. It would also be worthwhile to develop practical guides for local businesses on organizing remote work and splitting a single full-time position between two employees (job sharing). Since some surveyed companies are already ready for flexible schedules, they need help setting up these processes legally and operationally.

- The vast majority of employers rate finding the employees they need as a difficult or very difficult process. This points to a persistent labor shortage that is already affecting the operations of enterprises and institutions. The problem is compounded by the effects of mobilization, since organizations whose employees were mobilized into the Armed Forces of Ukraine are notably more common among employers with vacancies. Thus, the war has become an additional factor reducing the available workforce.

Recommendation: strengthen coordination between local self-government bodies, local business, veteran councils, employment centers, educational institutions, veteran support specialists, and other relevant institutions on veteran employment issues. As part of this work, build a regional database of employers with current or prospective vacancies for veterans, along with a mechanism for building a talent pool based on their professional competencies, qualifications, and experience. Ensure regular job fairs, “employer–veteran” meetings, and other communication events aimed at developing partnerships, exchanging information, and supporting veteran employment.

- Despite a high level of openness to candidates without work experience, employers mostly take a cautious approach to such hiring. This points to a need for additional conditions to support new employees' successful adaptation, in particular resources for training, mentoring, and workplace support.

Recommendation: it would be worthwhile to strengthen support for employers who are willing to hire candidates without relevant work experience, by developing on-the-job training and mentoring mechanisms. Useful tools could include programs compensating the cost of adapting new employees, along with standard approaches to their vocational training and support. This would help expand employment opportunities for veterans and other groups of the population who need professional adaptation.

Experience and readiness of employers in the Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk regions to hire veterans

- The study shows that mobilization has already become one of the factors behind the labor shortage. A significant share of employers have mobilized employees, meaning that the issue of veterans returning to their previous jobs will become increasingly important for the labor market.

Recommendations: encourage employers to move from formal compliance with legal requirements toward adopting comprehensive practices to support mobilized employees, which could include maintaining contact during service, individualized planning for their return to work, adaptation support after demobilization, and involving mentors in the first months after return.

- The presence of responses indicating partial retention of jobs for mobilized employees, or the absence of such a practice, may point to an insufficient level of employer awareness regarding current labor guarantees and how to implement them. At the same time, there is a clear pattern: organizations/institutions that hold jobs for mobilized employees in accordance with the law are significantly more likely to be open to hiring veterans after their service ends.

Recommendation: strengthen informational and advisory support for employers regarding the labor guarantees of mobilized employees, mechanisms for their return after demobilization, and the specifics of hiring veterans. Consultations could be integrated into the work of existing business and veteran support institutions, in particular Diia.Business centers, veteran spaces, Administrative Service Centers, employment centers, and the structural units of local self-government bodies responsible for business and economic development. Consultations should involve lawyers and other labor-law experts, representatives of the employment service, veteran support specialists, and other relevant specialists. Special attention should be given to disseminating practical recommendations on organizing the return of mobilized employees after demobilization and building a veteran-friendly HR policy at enterprises.

- A significant share of surveyed employers express readiness to consider veterans who were wounded or have a disability for employment.

Recommendation: it would be worthwhile to develop and distribute simple visual guides (instructions) for employers on how to make an office or production facility accessible, what technological solutions already exist, and how to obtain 100% compensation from the state for setting up a workplace for a person with a disability. Improve communication between the community, the veteran community, and businesses and the regional offices of the Social Protection Fund for Persons with Disabilities and All-Ukrainian public organizations of people with disabilities.

- Employers who already have experience hiring veterans mostly rate it positively. Most did not encounter serious difficulties organizing the work, and the main challenges related to the adaptation period and employees' psychological state.

Recommendation: share successful veteran employment cases and adaptation practices through business associations, employment centers, veteran organizations, and professional events for employers. It would also be worthwhile to create opportunities for exchanging experience between employers who already have practical experience hiring veterans and those who are only considering it. This would help reduce uncertainty and bias among employers who do not yet have such experience.

- The study shows a pattern: a veteran's workplace adaptation period lasts up to 6 months. The main difficulties after hiring veterans relate not to professional skills, but to psychological adaptation, the need for additional support, and a gradual return to the civilian work environment.

Recommendation: provide for psychological support, mentoring, and support programs both for veterans and for work teams. It would be worthwhile to train managers and HR specialists on the specifics of communicating with and adapting veterans.

Needs of businesses and organizations in the Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk regions for facilitation and support

- The survey results show a comprehensive employer demand for support with veteran adaptation, covering informational, methodological, and organizational needs. The greatest interest is in information about state programs supporting veteran employment, as well as practical tools for organizing workplaces for veterans with disabilities and adapting employees.

Recommendation: it would be worthwhile to develop a single support package for employers, combining information about state programs, methodological materials, and practical instructions on veteran adaptation. Special attention should be given to advisory support for HR and managers, and to developing standard solutions for workplace organization and internal adaptation policy.

- Employer responses show an uneven level of awareness about state support for veteran employment. Only some respondents are well informed about relevant programs, while a significant share have only a fragmentary picture or lack sufficient information about their content.

Recommendation: it would be worthwhile to strengthen information and communication efforts on state tools supporting veteran employment, with an emphasis on simple, practical information about participation conditions. Creating a single, clear information resource for employers and providing regular updates through employment centers and local business communities would be effective. Prepare simple step-by-step instructions for obtaining state support. Organize webinars and consultations for employers.

- The greatest incentive for employers to hire veterans is financial support. Above all, they expect the introduction or expansion of compensation mechanisms.

Recommendations: develop a comprehensive support system for employers who hire veterans. Alongside expanding outreach on existing compensation programs and simplifying the procedures for obtaining them, it would be worthwhile to provide employers with advisory support on the specifics of hiring veterans, creating a barrier-free work environment, and organizing adaptation and mentoring. An additional incentive could be introducing grant programs for employers who create new jobs for veterans or invest in their professional adaptation.

Recommended direction for supporting employers within the project:

The project can help build a system for veteran workplace adaptation.

Practical measures:

- developing a standard veteran adaptation plan;
- consultations for managers and HR specialists;
- workplace mentoring;
- developing checklists for employers;
- psychological support for the veteran and the team as needed;
- preparing recommendations on communicating with veterans.

Employers are mostly ready to hire veterans with disabilities, but need additional knowledge, consultations, and financial support.

Recommended direction for support:

Creating an inclusive employment support service.

Practical measures:

- workplace audits;
- consultations on work-environment adaptation;
- help with processing compensation;
- preparing individualized recommendations on work organization;
- consultations on different groups and categories of disability.

Most employers do not have systematic veteran adaptation programs, though some express interest in introducing them.

Recommended direction for support:

Providing methodological assistance to employers.

Practical measures:

- veteran adaptation policy templates;
- post-service return plan templates;
- developing veteran-friendly HR policies;
- conducting training for HR staff and managers;
- creating a community of employers who work with veterans.

Thus, based on the survey results, a comprehensive plan for cooperation with employers can be developed within the project.

Build a network of veteran-friendly employers:

- mapping employers in the region;
- establishing cooperation with the Employment Center and employer associations;
- holding a public "round table" event and signing memorandums of cooperation;
- conducting project presentations;
- collecting current vacancies;
- supporting the hiring process.

Informational support to raise awareness:

- webinars;
- consultations;
- methodological materials;
- information bulletins on state programs.

Veteran adaptation and successful employee retention:

- mentoring;
- psychological support;
- a 12-month adaptation plan;
- consultations for the enterprise's team.

List of sources used

Job retention / Ministry of Defense of Ukraine

Ivano-Frankivsk RSA, Regional Program to Support the Families of the Fallen, Injured Participants of the Revolution of Dignity, Persons Who Have Served or Are Serving in Volunteer Formations, Combatants, and Other Citizens Who Have Been and Continue to Be Directly Involved in Combat Operations, National Security and Defense Measures, and Repelling and Deterring the Russian Federation's Armed Aggression against Ukraine since February 20, 2014, for 2022–2026 (as amended), approved by decision of the regional council of 11.05.2022 No. 417-14/2022

A Principled Advantage: Community of Veteran-Friendly Businesses Reports on Its First Year of Work

20 Ukrainian companies sign the "Principles of a Veteran-Friendly Business" memorandum
Principles of a Veteran-Friendly Business, created by Starlight Media with expert support from Veteran Hub, in collaboration with Forbes Ukraine and with support from the Ministry of Veterans Affairs

Analytical Information based on data from the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine

Chesno examines veteran representation in civil service

Sivkov, S.V. Problems and Prospects of the Economic Reintegration of War Veterans: An Administrative-Legal Approach.

E-map of civil service and local self-government vacancies

Annex 1. Total number of war veterans by hromada, district, and status as of 01.03.2026

Region	District	Hromada	Combatant	War participant	Person with a war-related disability
Ivano-Frankivska	Verkhovynskyi	Biloberizka	13		
Ivano-Frankivska	Verkhovynskyi	Verkhovynska	234	121	34
Ivano-Frankivska	Verkhovynskyi	Zelenska	6		
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Bilshivtsivska	16		
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Bohorodchanska	475	324	95
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Bukachivska	16		
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Burshtynska	264	173	22
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Halytska	376	414	490
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Dzvyniatska	14		
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Dubovetska	19		
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Yezupilska	21		
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Zahvizdianska	30		
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Ivano-Frankivska	3,887	922	850
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Lysetska	13		
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Obertynska	25		1
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Oleshanska	16		
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Rohatynska	323	358	76
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Solotvynska	42		
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Starobohorodchanska	21		
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Tysmenytska	604	349	110
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Tlumatska	313	362	87
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Uhrynivska	12		
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	Yamnytska	22		

Region	District	Hromada	Combatant	War participant	Person with a war-related disability
Ivano-Frankivska	Kaluskyi	Bolekhivska	139	112	23
Ivano-Frankivska	Kaluskyi	Broshniv-Osadska	14		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kaluskyi	Verkhnianska	21		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kaluskyi	Vyhodska	52		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kaluskyi	Vytvytska	14		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kaluskyi	Voynylivska	29		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kaluskyi	Dolynska	717	618	155
Ivano-Frankivska	Kaluskyi	Dubivska	25		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kaluskyi	Kaluska	1,249	740	238
Ivano-Frankivska	Kaluskyi	Novytska	21		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kaluskyi	Perehinska	25		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kaluskyi	Rozhniativska	324	381	101
Ivano-Frankivska	Kaluskyi	Spaska	6		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kolomyiskyi	Hvizdetska	17		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kolomyiskyi	Horodenkivska	423	498	103
Ivano-Frankivska	Kolomyiskyi	Zabolotivska	38		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kolomyiskyi	Kolomyiska	996	271	203
Ivano-Frankivska	Kolomyiskyi	Korshivska	28		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kolomyiskyi	Mateivetska	16		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kolomyiskyi	Nyzhnoverbizka	718	471	154
Ivano-Frankivska	Kolomyiskyi	Otyniiska	53		1
Ivano-Frankivska	Kolomyiskyi	Piadytska	39		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kolomyiskyi	Pechenizhynska	38		1

Region	District	Hromada	Combatant	War participant	Person with a war-related disability
Ivano-Frankivska	Kolomyiskyi	Pidhaichykyivska	19		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kolomyiskyi	Sniatynska	494	343	85
Ivano-Frankivska	Kolomyiskyi	Chernelytska	11		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kosivskyi	Kosivska	494	504	160
Ivano-Frankivska	Kosivskyi	Kosmatska	4		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kosivskyi	Kutska	31		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kosivskyi	Rozhnivska	22		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kosivskyi	Yablunivska	23		
Ivano-Frankivska	Nadvirnianskyi	Vorokhtianska	10		
Ivano-Frankivska	Nadvirnianskyi	Deliatynska	42		1
Ivano-Frankivska	Nadvirnianskyi	Lanchynska	20		
Ivano-Frankivska	Nadvirnianskyi	Nadvirnianska	1,151	483	203
Ivano-Frankivska	Nadvirnianskyi	Pasichnianska	47		
Ivano-Frankivska	Nadvirnianskyi	Pererislianska	19		
Ivano-Frankivska	Nadvirnianskyi	Polianytska	11		
Ivano-Frankivska	Nadvirnianskyi	Yaremchanska	154	50	47
Ivano-Frankivska	Verkhovynskyi	hromada not specified	3		
Ivano-Frankivska	Ivano-Frankivskyi	hromada not specified	11		7
Ivano-Frankivska	Kaluskyi	hromada not specified	3		
Ivano-Frankivska	Kolomyiskyi	hromada not specified	5		6
Ivano-Frankivska	Kosivskyi	hromada not specified	4		
Ivano-Frankivska	Nadvirnianskyi	hromada not specified	3		
Ivano-Frankivska	address not specified		21,768	3	1,268

Annex 2. Number of veterans by region of Ukraine

КІЛЬКІСТЬ ВЕТЕРАНІВ В ОБЛАСТЯХ УКРАЇНИ

