

# TRANSITION FROM MILITARY SERVICE TO CIVILIAN LIFE

CONTEXTS, EXPERIENCES, SOLUTIONS

The presented document is the short version of the study “**Transition From Military Service To Civilian Life: Contexts, Experiences, Solutions**”.

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**The Human Rights Center “Pryncyp”**, is a non-governmental organisation founded in 2023 for the legal protection of servicepersons and veterans. Our priority goal is to protect the servicepersons and veterans dignity and to provide transparency in the processes along their path. For this purpose, we work in the following areas: the education in the law of servicepersons and veterans, and also their relatives about the existing mechanisms and opportunities for treatment and rehabilitation; the analytical work on the development of systemic solutions in reforming the system; the advocacy for changes in this system in cooperation with government agencies.

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Kingdom of the Netherlands

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# INTRODUCTION. STUDY STRUCTURE AND METHODOLOGY

Three years of the full-scale war have urgently highlighted that an effective national defence system requires a systematic approach to all its components – along with those that, at first glance, are not directly related to the combat capability of the troops

Among such areas is the coordination of the transition of servicepersons to civilian life, on which not only their successful bringing back to civilian life depends, but also the future capability of the military reserve and standby units in particular. Before the full-scale phase of the Russo-Ukrainian war, the issue of the professional transition of servicepeople **was not a priority of the state policy**: the support mechanisms were limited to basic social guarantees without the development of professional reintegration programs and the construction of an effective system of communication with those transferring to the reserve. Today, when Ukraine is forming the modern Defence Forces, our study focuses on the analysis of the current needs of servicepeople during the transition to civilian life and the search for effective mechanisms to support them.

In 2024, the state took important steps in this regard: presidential decrees were issued on the development of two strategic documents – the Strategy of Veterans' Policy and the Strategy for the Formation of a System for the Transition from Military Service to Civilian Life. At the end of the year, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the second strategy along with the operation plan for 2025-2027. These documents lay the foundation for systematic work to support servicepeople in their transition to civilian life. The next essential step is the direct modeling of the system and effective mechanisms for supporting beneficiaries. In the context of the ongoing war and limited resources, this task is of particular importance. Therefore, this study is devoted to solving the aforementioned issue.

The basic academic definition outlines the military-to-civilian life transition as “a period of reintegration into civilian life, covering the process of necessary changes that a soldier goes through upon his/her military career-ending”. The Ukrainian experience significantly expands this understanding. In the context of large-scale armed hostilities, the process of completing military service itself takes on a specific character: **due to the constant threat of remobilisation, it becomes conditional, the terms of demobilisation in wartime are unpredictable**, as a medical discharge or discharge on compassionate grounds, and the state, in the context of limited resources and active armed hostilities, pays little attention to those who are no longer part of the Defence Forces. The formation of an effective military-to-civilian life transition system is becoming one of the defining elements of the development of the security and defence sector, directly influ-

encing the development of human capital in the army and the capacity of the standby units of persons liable for military services and, in particular, the reserve.

The purpose of the study is to develop a conceptual framework and institutional mechanisms for a military-to-civilian life transition system that will meet the specifics of the situation in Ukraine. Due to the critical analysis of international practices, the analysis of the Ukrainian context and legislation, and the research into the servicepersons' attitude to needs during the transition, the text creates a basis for developing effective support tools at the individual and institutional levels.

➔ **To achieve this goal, we have defined the following study objectives:**

1. To conduct a critical analysis of international models of the military-to-civilian life transition, identifying elements that can be adapted to the Ukrainian context;
2. To explore the institutional mechanisms and legal framework for supporting servicepersons in Ukraine, identifying any systemic gaps and opportunities to overcome them;
3. To assess comprehensively the attitude to the needs of different categories of servicepersons discharged under martial law;
4. To propose an architecture for the military-to-civilian life transition system and its operating mechanisms, taking into account both the urgent challenges of wartime and the long-term development objectives of the Defence Forces.

It is important to define the focus and limitations of our study. This work forms the design concept of the military-to-civilian life transition and its basic architecture but does not delve into the details of its practical implementation. The study does not cover the content of specific programs, the development of a methodology for estimating the needs of participants, and specific tools that service providers should use during the transition.

**THE METHODOLOGICAL STRUCTURE** of the study combines desk research, and quantitative and qualitative approaches, which corresponds to the complexity of the phenomenon under study and the goal of providing substantiated recommendations for its institutional support. This composition allows us to consider the military-to-civilian life transition both as a systemic process that requires structural solutions at the state level and as an individual experience formed under the influence of specific military service conditions and personal adaptation pathways. The combination of different research strategies provides a

comprehensive understanding of the existing challenges and creates an empirical basis for developing systemic solutions in wartime conditions.

**THE INTERNATIONAL COMPONENT** focuses on the study of transition models in five countries – State of Israel (Israel), Republic of Finland (Finland), Republic of Poland (Poland), Republic of Lithuania (Lithuania), and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Great Britain). The selection of these states is based on their experience in organising the military to civilian life transition in various security contexts: from the constant readiness for military threats to the transformation of armed forces. The analysis of each model includes institutional mechanisms and support practices, allowing for the identification of elements that could potentially be adapted to Ukrainian realities, especially in terms of working with servicepersons with combat experience.

**THE LEGAL ANALYSIS** examines the current regulatory and legal framework governing the servicepersons' discharge processes, with particular attention to the difference in the support mechanisms for various categories of servicepersons and the specifics of applying these mechanisms under martial law. In addition, we focused on the potential of information and communication systems in supporting the military-to-civilian life transition processes.

**THE QUALITATIVE COMPONENT** was implemented through 28 in-depth interviews conducted from September 29 to December 9, 2024. The respondents were servicepersons of different categories, with a special focus on the experience of combatants. A significant part of the respondents had the experience of military service both during ATO/JFO and during the full-scale invasion, which allows us to trace the evolution of military to civilian life transition challenges in different periods of the Russo-Ukrainian war. This approach provides a better understanding of the specific needs and barriers that servicepersons may face when returning to civilian life.

**THE QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH**, conducted at the end of 2024, included 631 servicepersons. The uniqueness of this component lies in the involvement of two groups of respondents – those who already have the experience of transition to civilian life, and those who are expecting such a transition. This allows not only for the comparison of expectations and experience but also for the identification of systemic gaps between them.

**THE STUDY** demonstrates the need for a differentiated approach to the military-to-civilian life transition, taking into account the significant differences in the needs and challenges of various categories of servicepersons. The results create the basis for the development of a comprehensive support system that takes into account both the urgent needs of wartime and the long-term tasks of developing the security and defence sector of Ukraine.

➔ **Important terms used in the study in the following meanings:**

- **Veterans** – persons who participated in armed hostilities (from one day of participation).
- **Military to civilian life transition, transition** – is defined as a short-term transit period during which a serviceperson is discharged from service and integrated into civilian life.
- **Transition programs** – separate state initiatives and support mechanisms aimed at ensuring a coordinated process of discharge, informing, and social support for servicepersons at the stage of returning to civilian life.
- **Transition participants** – all servicepersons discharged from service, regardless of the type and duration of military service, or the presence of status of veteran, and combat experience.

# CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

All the countries studied – Israel, Finland, Poland, Lithuania, Great Britain – have different models of the military-to-civilian life transition. This is largely due to the historical, social, and political factors of each country.

There is an established transition policy in Great Britain and Lithuania. Poland and Israel do not single out the military-to-civilian life transition as a separate policy, but have clear algorithms and practices of transition programs for certain categories of servicepersons. The most uncertain transition model among the analysed countries is Finland's one. It covers only some disparate instruments of the military-to-civilian life transition and is not comprehensive.

The transition models of each of the countries studied show their characteristics and features, in particular:

 **GREAT BRITAIN** is distinguished by a systemic and cross-sectoral approach to the military-to-civilian life transition, which joins together the efforts of government agencies, charitable organisations, and the private sector. The main focus is on the social integration of servicepersons, the formation of a culture of recognition of their contribution, and the creation of conditions for successful entry into civilian life. The British model covers a wide range of areas, including employment, education, health care, and social support. A feature of the transition programs is the emphasis on ensuring compliance with the law and preventing crime. For servicepersons who may encounter problems in the justice system, special support is provided, which includes individual approaches and rehabilitation programs. In addition, there is an information support tool with a special focus on housing and financial issues in almost every area. There are separate support tools for families, in particular, grants for education, access to career development support, etc. Considerable attention is paid to the collection and analysis of data, which allows for the improvement of programs.

 **ISRAEL** has a model that focuses on the general participation of citizens in military service, the integration of persons with disabilities, and the support for young servicepersons without families. Servicepeople have access to financial, educational, and social support programs that help them to adapt to civilian life. The transition model is based on two universal financial instruments – a one-time grant (a payment) and a deposit account (with a target purpose of 5–10 years). These mechanisms are aimed at meeting the highest priority needs of discharged servicepersons. Their size must depend on several factors, including the serviceperson's economic and social status. Despite the multifaceted nature of the program, there is an inequality in access to resources for professional servicepersons with a long term of service.

 **FINLAND** uses the minimalist approach to the military-to-civilian life transition, integrating the support for servicepersons into the general social protection system. During service and transition, servicepersons obtain information on support on employment, education, and health care issues. In the run-up to demobilisation, events are held directly with employers, where there is an opportunity to pass an interview and get the opportunity to go on a probationary period. The reserve is the basis of the Finnish state's defence capacity, so after the conscript military service, everyone gets into the reserve. The veteran policy is limited in scope, in particular, the status of a war veteran is enshrined in law, but there are very few of them left.

 **POLAND** implements the model focused on reconversion, which includes assistance in retraining, employment, and social adaptation. The main focus is on professional servicepersons, although certain elements are available to reservists, combat veterans outside the state, and veterans (participants) of combat operations. The programs usually last from six months to two years after completion of military service. However, there are no unified stages of transition. They are usually established depending on the individual set of discharge conditions. The key tools are vocational consultations, internships, and financial support.

 **LITHUANIA** has implemented the comprehensive military-to-civilian life transition system that covers information, preparatory, and main stages. The peculiarity of the model is that the programs are focused exclusively on professional servicepersons of a certain age category (from 52 years old, who are retiring), regardless of their rank or status. At the same time, the transition programs do not cover career personnel and senior officers who have completed their service after reaching the retirement age established by the Law on Social Pension Insurance. This emphasizes the need for early preparation for the transition. The programs provide support in the areas of education, employment, medical rehabilitation, and psychological aid. The status of "veteran" has only recently been enshrined, and the veteran policy is still in the formative stage.

Despite the differences, there are many common features. In particular, all countries emphasize social integration and direct their efforts to ensure that servicepersons can adapt to civilian life using the skills acquired during military service. The social support, including employment, education, and health services, is a central part of the transition policy.

All models provide mechanisms for vocational counselling, retraining, and employment assistance. In most countries, servicepersons have access to financial instruments, such as grants, deposit accounts, or cash payments, that facilitate their adaptation.

All models pay special attention to supporting vulnerable categories of servicepersons, including persons with injuries or disabilities sustained during military service.

Thus, the experience of each country reflects their unique approach to ensuring the transition of servicepersons to civilian life. Despite their differences, all models of the military-to-civilian life transition focus on creating conditions for the comfortable integration of servicepersons into civilian life through social support, employment, education, and medical care, and their models can be adapted in Ukraine, taking into account the national specificities.

# CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ANALYSIS OF THE UKRAINIAN CONTEXT

**Since Ukraine gained independence, the security and defence sector has developed in the context of a problematic institutional legacy. With one of the largest armies in Europe, inherited from the USSR, the state faced the challenge of its transformation in new political and economic conditions.**

During this period, a specific institutional architecture was formed, where military service gradually turned into a predictable form of state employment with a defined system of career growth and social guarantees. Therewith, the issue of the professional transition of servicepersons to civilian life was considered primarily through the prism of the preferential pension provision system, which made military service an attractive form of a long-term career but limited the possibilities for professional development beyond its borders. Even the attempts to introduce certain Western practices through the NATO cooperation programs, despite a significant number of participants in retraining programs, remained single-point initiatives without systematic integration into the state policy.

**The beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian war in 2014 forced the state to take a new look at almost every aspect of defence policies:** from ensuring combat efficiency to the social security for servicepersons. The creation of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs was an important step in institutional development – the new body focused primarily on supporting combat veterans, while the issue of professional transition for a wider range of servicepersons required an additional institutional regulation. At the same time, the intensification of cooperation with NATO created new opportunities for the implementation of modern approaches to professional reintegration – despite covering a significant number of servicepersons, these programs remained mostly single-point initiatives without appropriate statutory recognition and systemic integration into the state policy.

At the same time, in the full-scale phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war, we observe that there are attempts to adopt a systemic approach to the professional transition of servicepersons. This issue has been included in the documents of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic and European integration, indicating the recognition of its strategic importance. In addition, the development of national strategies in the field of veteran policy and the transition system formation demonstrates the state's readiness to create comprehensive support mechanisms. An important step was the inclusion of professional transition issues in the Ukraine Facility program, which created additional opportunities for the development of this direction in the European integration context. In parallel, the Ministry of Defence

for the first time structured the issue of transition as an element of human capital development in the security and defence sector. This, together with the extension of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs programs, laid the foundation for a systematic approach to this issue. A feature of this period was **the need to form a new transition policy in the conditions of an unprecedented number of servicepersons with combat experience** – which requires a thorough study of their needs and the creation of flexible support mechanisms capable of functioning both during a war and in a post-war period.

According to the Ukrainian context analysis, the possibility of planning a transition from military service to civilian life depends largely on the discharge conditions and the legal regime. For example, in peacetime and a special period, contract soldiers have the opportunity to prepare in advance for the end of their service, since their discharge occurs according to a clearly defined deadline. On the other hand, mobilised and called-up reservists during special periods are not able to do such planning due to the uncertainty of the terms of a mobilisation call-up. For example, when several waves of mobilisation were declared during ATO/JFO in 2014, which had different durations, mobilised soldiers did not understand the terms for which they were called up. Since the decision on demobilisation is initiated by the President of Ukraine, guided by the military and political situation, this becomes a key factor in the discharge, which is unpredictable due to the uncertain nature and terms of this process. For mobilised and called-up reservists, the transition planning is practically impossible in such conditions.

At the same time, a discharge from service does not guarantee a final rupture with the military system, since most of the servicepersons are discharged to the reserve, and in a special period and during martial law – they are enrolled in the military operational reserve. This means that in the event of a new mobilisation, the imposition of martial law, **they can be called up for service again, and therefore a full transition to civilian life for the majority of those discharged from service people is conditional and often temporary.** Thus, the only category of persons who can finally sever their ties with military service are those who are recognised as unfit for service for health reasons or who have reached the age limit.

Having analysed the provided support for different categories of servicepersons, we can conclude that state support directly depends on a reason for discharge from military service, the length of service, health status, the presence of status of veteran or other status of the person. At the same time, the basic state support for servicepersons who, for example, are discharged after the end of their service is quite limited and covers only travel to their place of residence and the right to return to the civilian workplace where they worked before their service. There are the smallest number of benefits and guarantees for conscripted

soldiers. In contrast, the most socially protected are military veterans, for whom a separate law with a significant list of benefits is provided.

As a rule, persons discharged from military service do not obtain any universal financial support or targeted payments that could help them adapt to the new conditions. The payment of a one-time cash benefit in connection with a discharge is due only to those who are discharged for a limited range of reasons (health status, family circumstances) or subject to ten years of service. In addition, a one-time cash benefit upon discharge is paid to mobilised and called-up reservists, with certain exceptions.

In addition, after leaving the armed forces, there is no time for rest or rehabilitation before integration into civilian life begins. A person who has been discharged from military service **immediately finds himself/herself in a new environment without prior preparation and support** that forces him/her to independently resolve all issues related to searching for a job, housing, and access to benefits or social programs.

The current legislation provides only a framework description of the process of discharging servicepersons and the basic mechanisms for their further support. However, the lack of detail in this process creates significant difficulties at the level of practical implementation, in particular, in military units, which are critical for this process.

The review of international experience and previous analytical insights of the organisation indicate that part of an effective program for the transition from military career to civilian life should be **the collection and management of data, and the construction of digital services for more productive support at the discharge stage**. In the Ukrainian context, where some transition participants will be discharged to the reserve and potentially serve in the future, the issue of the quality of data collected during the transition is also relevant for the proper registering of persons liable for military services and reservists, maintaining contacts with them, ensuring information, etc.

As of the beginning of 2025, the participants in the transition system are “clients” of two state registers. In the context of implementing programs on the transition from military career to civilian life, in our opinion, the information that will be stored about a person in the Territorial Recruitment and Social Support Centres and recorded in the Unified State Register of Conscripts, Persons Liable for Military Service and Reservists is complete.

An analysis of the current data management system for transition participants revealed the structural shortcomings, in particular, the fragmentation of data storage and the insufficient standardisation of military experience docu-

mentation processes. The situation with mobilised soldiers and sergeants is especially acute, for whom comprehensive personnel files are not maintained, but only record and pay books, which creates significant gaps for analysing their career path. In addition, the challenge is that the main actors providing support services for transition participants – military units and the Territorial Recruitment and Social Support Centres – do not collect high-quality data on previous civilian experience at the stage of a person’s start service and during a discharge.

It is also worth emphasising that the problem of high-quality analysis of data on transition participants also has more systemic problems, namely, an imperfect personnel policy in the Defence Forces. Under its conditions, the ranks, positions, and servicepersons’ military occupational specialities may not indicate the real military service experience and acquired skills and competencies. It, in turn, affects both the possibility of standardising support and the data on the military reserve, which are updated after such persons are discharged from service.

To provide support and ensure digital services during the transition, the potential of already developed platforms based on the aforementioned registers can be used. In particular, the Reserve+ and the Army+, which operate thanks to the capabilities of the Unified State Register of Conscripts, Persons Liable for Military Service and Reservists, as well as the electronic cabinet of the eVeteran application in the event of its significant revision or alternative to it.

A critically important initiative to improve the quality of data collection and management of transition participants is the implementation of **electronic systems for better-registering personnel by military units**.

# CONCLUSIONS FROM THE QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE SURVEY OF TRANSITION PARTICIPANTS

**The transition from military service to civilian life is a process that covers physical, psycho-emotional, social, and professional adaptation.**

This issue has become particularly relevant in the context of the full-scale invasion, which forced many servicepersons to experience the transition again. Unique conditions, including a prolonged military threat, shelling of peaceful cities, and a high level of personnel involvement in armed hostilities, create additional challenges for adaptation to civilian life.

**THE QUALITATIVE PART OF THE STUDY** is based on a qualitative analysis of in-depth interviews, which allowed us to delve into the everyday lives of servicepersons who went through the stages of discharge, adaptation, and entry into civilian life. The sample covers a wide range of service experiences – from military retirees to individuals with experience in combat operations, captivity, or service in rear positions. However, it should be noted that most of the study participants live in Kyiv or other cities, and half of them have experience serving both during ATO/JFO and during the full-scale invasion. The methodological approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the problems and specifics of adaptation in the Ukrainian context. The theoretical framework of the study was the adaptation of Arnold van Gennep's classical transition theory and its subsequent interpretations.

**THE QUANTITATIVE PART OF THE STUDY** is based on the results of an online survey of servicepersons and veterans conducted in November-December 2024. The survey was conducted using a structured questionnaire that included questions about service experience, expectations regarding inclusion into the reserve, needs, and expectations in the process of transition to civilian life, as well as general information about the survey participants. The study sample consists of 631 individuals: 266 have already had experience of being discharged from service, 365 have continued to serve and had no experience of being discharged at the time of the survey. Given the specifics of the online survey method and the distribution of the questionnaire through the Pryncyp social networks, it should be noted that the sample is not representative of all servicepersons and veterans. Nevertheless, the study constitutes the first attempt to quantitatively study the expectations and needs of servicepersons in the process of transition from military to civilian life, and its results regarding expectations and needs after a discharge from service are confirmed by part of the conclusions of the qualitative study.

The structure of the transition covers three main stages: the discharge from service, the adaptation to civilian life, and the entry into a new social role.

– **The first stage** involves the end of service, which is often accompanied by bureaucratic obstacles and psychological stress.

– **The second stage** – an adaptation – covers physical renewal, psychoemotional stabilisation, job search, establishment of social relations and rethinking of identity.

– **The entry into civilian life is the final stage.** It can be realised completely, or partially, or a person can find himself/herself in a state of extended liminality or decide to return to service.

The main factor characterising the transition is the transformation of a person's identity, which involves understanding the experience of service and finding one's place in civilian life considering this experience.

➔ **THE DISCHARGE PROCESS** is characterised by a complex bureaucratic procedure, varying depending on whether it is carried out in peacetime or wartime, and it depends on the corporate culture of a particular military unit, rank, and relations with the command. For those with a short service experience, the discharge process is perceived as particularly confusing, and often it is required to have any personal informal contacts to simplify it. Servicepersons face a lack of transparent rules, which aggravates psychological pressure and provokes additional stress.

**When preparing for the transition to civilian life, servicepersons often do not expect much support from the state,** given previous negative experiences with government services and bureaucratic obstacles. Disappointment in government structures increases by problems with payments, excessive bureaucratic requirements, and unwillingness to take into account the psychoemotional and physical state of a person after combat experience when providing services. This provokes a tendency to rely only on oneself, so people's expectations are focused on simple but important things: no obstacles, minimal bureaucracy and the ability to comfortably integrate into civilian life. At the same time, state actions, especially those related to medical care, benefits, and payments, are critical to forming a positive return experience because they form an idea of fairness and gratitude for service.

➔ **THE ADAPTATION PERIOD** begins after leaving the servicepersons category and continues until entering the civilian category. It is important to note that, despite the transformation of a person's identity during this process, his/her soldier identity is incorporated into a new understanding of himself/herself in the civilian world.

The adaptation process after a discharge covers several areas: health, living conditions, financial situation, and social relations.

The servicepersons physical health after a discharge is an important aspect of adaptation to civilian life, **but it often becomes neglected due to the attention of the state system.** The state medical services for the servicepersons often cause mistrust due to low quality and limited resources. Servicepersons who have such an opportunity try to treat themselves at their own expense or seek help in private clinics. A common practice is to combine state treatment with private consultations, which adds a financial burden. Some servicepersons, due to a lack of funds or access to qualified care, postpone the treatment of chronic or acute conditions, which can lead to health deterioration. A positive aspect is the private sector initiatives, including free services or discounts for veterans in dental and other clinics. Such initiatives are perceived as an expression of public support and partially help to compensate for the shortcomings of the state health care system.

The psychoemotional adaptation **is one of the most critical, but at the same time, one of the most difficult aspects of the transition** of servicepersons to civilian life. Service experience, especially participation in armed hostilities, an injury, or imprisonment, carries long-term emotional and psychological consequences. In Ukraine, there is no systemic state program of psychological aid to people in the transition process. Although some servicepersons turn to volunteer organisations or private psychologists, the majority of them remain without adequate support due to a distrust of psychologists, a stigmatisation in society for seeking help, or a lack of access to qualified specialists.

The lack of adequate support during the transition to civilian life increases the risk of developing addictions among servicepersons who try to cope with stress on their own. Alcohol and drug addiction, as well as gambling addiction, which can begin during service, are major problems. Addictions not only exacerbate psychoemotional issues, but also increase the risk of antisocial behaviour, marginalisation, and crime, complicating an adaptation.

Living conditions after discharge from service largely determine the comfort of the transition to civilian life. The homeownership significantly facilitates adaptation, as it relieves financial and emotional stresses that allow focusing on other aspects of the transition, such as employment or rehabilitation. At the same time, those who do not have housing face expenses that can lead to financial difficulties, as well as additional adaptation challenges due to unstable living conditions. The provision of housing becomes especially important for those who have lost their home due to an occupation or a front-line approaching.

After being discharged from service, servicepersons may face financial uncertainty, especially if they do not have civilian work experience or a retained workplace. The priority task is to find a job, and retrain or implement the knowledge and skills acquired during military service. The financial situation of servicepersons after military service depends on the comprehensive state support in the early period, the removal of barriers in the labour market and the development of programs, which facilitate the employment of people with military service experience and their social stability.

After a discharge, servicepersons need to resume or form new social relations, adapt to civilian norms of behaviour and return to society. Family and loved ones become the main sources of support facilitating adaptation, but, on the other hand, the lack of family support can have an extremely negative impact on the psychoemotional state of a person upon return. Misunderstanding of the specific needs of people with military experience on the part of society and the state creates additional challenges.

**Scenarios for completing the transition from military service to civilian life may differ depending on a serviceman's experience, level of support, and adaptation opportunities.**

The first scenario is the full integration into civilian life, which includes stabilisation of the psychoemotional state, employment, and establishment of social contacts. Depending on military experience, level of stress and psychological burden, this process can last from several weeks to a year or more. Veterans with combat experience often associate the completion of the adaptation period with a decrease in anxiety level, a reversion of emotional stability and the ability to interact with civilian society.

The second scenario is the partial integration into civilian life. This occurs when a person adapts to one area but faces difficulties in another. For example, he/she may establish social contacts, but find it difficult to seek a job or, conversely, he/she may quickly find a job but feel alone in the civilian environment. The study participants who have served during ATO/JFO often noted that they did not perceive their discharge as a final withdrawal from military service. They continued to live with the thought of the possibility of returning to a front that influenced their life decisions and adaptation strategies.

The third scenario is prolonged liminality, when a person cannot find their place in civilian life, and experiences isolation, emotional discomfort or difficulties with employment. This condition provokes the risks of marginalisation, in particular, addictions, social isolation, or crime.

The fourth scenario is returning to service. Some people decide to refuse the transition and return to service. The reason may be the desire to realise their potential in the military profession, and build a military career, or it may be a forced decision due to the inability to find themselves in civilian life.

Among the factors contributing to the transition, we can highlight **support on the part of family and loved ones, high-quality public services, in particular medical ones, and access to education and work**. Negative factors include the lack of proper state support, the inadequate quality of medical and psychological services, the insufficient delicacy on the part of the civilian environment, the lack of work, and the general uncertainty in war conditions.

After discharge, servicepersons liable for military services are automatically entered into the reserve. The expectations of the respondents from the reserve service often did not coincide with reality. This led to disappointment, because, in their opinion, the reserve service did not always contribute to the honing of skills or coordination; it was often no more than a formality. The study participants identify the main reserve problems as insufficient funding, the discrepancy between training and real needs, the difficulties in combining a service with civilian work, and the low quality of training. Despite this, they emphasize that the reserve is an important component of the country's defence capacity. In their opinion, to improve it, it is necessary to regularly maintain military skills, to hold training on an area basis, to ensure decent pay for reservists, and to implement any programs for familiarising civilians with military service. They also noted the need for unit coherence, which is a significant factor in the effectiveness of the reserve.

In the conditions of the war active phase, not all transition experiences can be fully analysed, because a demobilisation has not yet been carried out, and the contracts of those who served at the beginning of the full-scale invasion have been extended until the end of the special period. In such conditions, the difference between those who have combat experience and those who served in the headquarters or back areas is obvious and most important, because these groups differ both in adaptation challenges and rehabilitation needs. For veterans with combat experience, great difficulties are associated with the consequences of stress, physical rehabilitation, and the search for a new role in society. They are more likely to look for a job that provides a sense of purpose, especially in the context of the unfinished war, or to choose professions with a high level of risk. At the same time, those who did not participate in armed hostilities usually integrate into the civilian environment faster, although they may encounter difficulties in professional self-realisation. However, further research is needed in peacetime to clearly distinguish between different scenarios, taking into account the type of service, its duration, the number of transitions, etc.

Particular attention should be paid to vulnerable categories of veterans, such as young servicepersons without any experience of independent living, and veterans with experience of imprisonment or addictions, since each of these groups has unique challenges and requires targeted support. However, it is important to conduct additional research to fully detect all vulnerable categories.

As for the results of the study's quantitative stage, it revealed a stable structure of priority needs, which persists for both male and female survey participants who have already had the experience of being discharged and for those who are expecting a discharge.

**Treatment and/or rehabilitation** – 53% and 63%, respectively

**Psychological aid** – 47% and 53%, respectively

**Temporary financial support** – 44% and 42%, respectively

It can be assumed that these three areas can form a basic “support package” that is universal, regardless of the individual trajectories of the serviceman's transition to civilian life.

The data show a significant difference between the request for temporary (43% of all male and female survey participants) and permanent (12% of all male and female survey participants) financial support. This indicates the existence of a specific “critical period” in the transition process when even temporary support can have a disproportionately high impact on the reintegration success. Therefore, financial support should be viewed primarily as a tool for facilitating a successful transition to civilian life, and not as long-term compensation.

The support in finding employment and/or retraining is important for about a third of male and female survey participants who have not yet had the experience of being discharged. In addition, about a third of respondents who have already had the experience of being discharged answered that after returning to civilian life, they needed such support. For the survey participants, the assistance with developing or starting their own business is relevant; this need was noted by 51% of respondents who are currently serving and have not had the experience of being discharged from service and 26% of respondents who have already had the experience of being discharged.

At the same time, returning to the labour market is associated with several challenges. The survey demonstrated a gap between the desired area of employment after a discharge from service (programming, IT and telecommunications, education, healthcare, provision of social services) and the servicepersons ideas

about the spheres where they have a greater chance of employment (defence and security spheres). In addition, 20% of respondents who had already had the experience of transition indicated that they encountered prejudices during the employment process. At the same time, the civilian workplace should take into account the needs of the servicepersons during the transition process, such as the ability to devote enough time to family and personal recovery, the social importance of work, etc.

**The study also reveals a critical gap between high readiness to defend the country (52%) and low readiness to formalise this readiness through a reservist contract (16%).** This does not indicate a reluctance to serve as such, but a deeper systemic distrust of the institutionalised forms of military service. This phenomenon is especially noticeable in the context of the fact that 69% of respondents seek the opportunity to choose a unit without a contract, that is, they seek informal guarantees in the conditions of low institutional trust.

Combining the results of the qualitative and quantitative components of the study helps to form a comprehensive understanding of the military-to-civilian life transition process in the Ukrainian context. Both methodological approaches consistently point to the existence of a common understanding of the “core needs” for most servicepersons during the transition – medical rehabilitation, psychological support and short-term financial assistance during the critical period of adaptation. In-depth interviews reveal how these needs emerge in real-life situations, emphasizing the importance of family and informal support networks in the context of imperfect state mechanisms.

The important result of the study is the contradiction between the high readiness of servicepersons to defend the state and their limited trust in formal institutional mechanisms, which indicates the need to improve the transparency of procedures and develop effective communication strategies. The findings define a conceptual framework for future transformations in the military-to-civilian life transition field, where the priority should be the creation of an institutional environment capable of effectively balancing the state's strategic interests and the individual needs of those defending it.

Large-scale transformations in the defence sector require the state to develop balanced mechanisms for the transition of servicepersons to civilian life in wartime. At the same time, these mechanisms must be relevant for future servicepersons who will serve in the post-war period.

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## 1. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS ON THE TRANSITION FUNCTIONING

### ➔ International experience

The analysis of international experience shows that the effectiveness of transition programs is determined primarily by their compliance with the specific challenges facing a particular state. For example, in Lithuania, the transition program is focused primarily on servicepersons who have dedicated many decades of their careers to service and are getting on for retirement age. This meets the needs of a professional army in peacetime. In contrast, the Israeli model focuses on supporting young men who are ending a relatively long military service – from 24 to 30 months, often with combat experience. This reflects the specific nature of constant readiness for military threats. **These examples show how states create their transition programs under their strategic objectives.**

The experience of the analysed countries shows that an effective support system must include a wide range of activities. The main components include information counselling, retraining, and integration into the labour market, access to education, medical and psychological aid, financial instruments, and effective interdepartmental coordination. Important factors for success are the flexibility of adaptation mechanisms and the active cooperation between the public, private, and social sectors.

In addition, **the international experience shows that an individual approach in military to civilian life transition programs is particularly effective** – this is the case in the Great Britain, Finland, Poland, and Lithuania. The main element is the presence of a clear transition algorithm and personalised support, which involves the development of individual adaptation plans and the selection of appropriate tools. The general trend is to create the mechanisms that help transition participants apply the skills acquired during military service in civilian life, as well as the support for the most vulnerable categories of servicepersons, including those wounded or with health problems.

### ➔ Ukrainian experience and the current system

Until 2014, the professional transition system reflected the general approach to the organisation of military service, where the end of a career was viewed primarily through the prism of social security rather than professional development. Attempts to modernise this system through international support programs have had a limited effect – the experience of NATO programs are indicative, where only 639 people obtained the real support out of the planned 20 thousand participants. This discrepancy between the stated goals and practical results reflects a more systemic issue: **the lack of a comprehensive vision of the role of professional transition in the development of human potential in the defence sector.**

With the onset of the Russian aggression in 2014, the principles of recruitment for the military underwent significant changes. Up until that time, military service was mostly carried out within the framework of a contract or conscript system, which provided the opportunity to plan the transition to civilian life.

However, the mobilisation waves declared after 2014, as well as the imposition of martial law in 2022, have led to uncertainty about the timing of service and made it impossible to plan for a discharge for the majority of servicepersons. It is important to note that the implementation of six waves of partial mobilisation and subsequent demobilisation in 2014-2015 formed the first Ukrainian experience in organising the transition to civilian life not only for career servicepersons, but also for citizens who were called up for mobilisation and participated in combat operations. This experience provides significant empirical data on the needs and challenges that servicepersons face during the transition to civilian life, that can be useful for the formation of modern policy in this sphere.

Mobilised people, as well as all servicepersons serving under martial law, cannot predict the moment of their discharge and prepare for the transition in due time. After discharge, servicepersons remain without adequate support. This withdrawal outside the system can also be unexpected, which also complicates integration into the civilian environment.

At the same time, **a discharge from military service does not mean a complete rupture with the army, since the majority of servicepersons pass to the reserve, and in the conditions of a special period or martial law are automatically enrolled in the reserve.** This creates a risk of re-conscription in the event of a new wave of mobilisation, which makes a stable transition to civilian life impossible and makes it temporary for the majority of discharged servicepersons.

The system of social protection of discharged servicepersons is provided for by the Law of Ukraine “On the Social and Legal Protection of Servicepersons and Their Family Members” and does not take into account the majority of the needs

of persons discharged from service. Additionally, the separate benefits and guarantees are provided by the Law of Ukraine “On the Status of War Veterans, Guarantees of Their Social Protection” for people with veteran status. However, this model does not cover all categories of discharged servicepersons, but it applies mainly to persons with disabilities and career servicepersons with the appropriate length of service (military veterans, military retirees). This creates significant gaps in support for other categories. Therefore, the lack of a high-quality system for adaptation and reintegration of servicepersons after a discharge requires the development of a separate regulatory framework for the guaranteed effective transition to civilian life, regardless of the discharge grounds.

At the end of 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the long-term strategy for the formation of the system for the servicepersons transition to civilian life. In the context of a large-scale transformation of the security and defence sector, this document allows for the further conceptual understanding of the basic functions of the transition system and its role in maintaining the defence capacity of the state. That is why the need for a comprehensive study of both the needs of servicepersons and the strategic objectives of the state in the field of developing the human capital of the Security and Defence Forces takes on particular importance. This will provide the created institutional framework with specific and effective support mechanisms.

### ➔ Transition participants in Ukraine

The military to civilian life transition policy is aimed at all servicepersons completing their military service, regardless of the grounds and circumstances of a discharge. It is important to understand that such a policy is broader than the veteran one (the latter covers only combat veterans and their families). Transition programs at this time should cover the entire spectrum of servicepeople: persons ending a basic military service (up to 2023 - a conscript military service), to career servicepersons retiring and mobilised persons, contract soldiers returning to civilian life under martial law. Based on the conducted study, the following basic groups can be identified by type of service:

- 1. Servicepersons of a basic** (up to 2023 – compulsory) **military service**, discharged after the completion of the statutory term of military service;
- 2. Servicepersons serving under the contract**, and whose subsequent categorisation should depend on the conditions and duration of service.
- 3. Persons called up for mobilisation:**
  - persons without a prior military service experience
  - persons with a prior military service experience

Based on the analysed data, it can be preliminarily concluded that among the identified categories, the following, but not limited to, **groups of servicepersons will require special attention:**

- ✓ internally displaced persons
- ✓ persons with disabilities
- ✓ persons rescued from captivity
- ✓ servicepersons who signed a contract being in custodial settings
- ✓ persons with alcohol and drug addictions
- ✓ servicepersons without a prior civilian work experience
- ✓ servicepersons who may be in the reserve temporarily (upon expiration of a deferment term or re-examination after 6–12 months)

In this case, it is fundamentally important to understand the difference between a retirement, which involves a complete cessation of interaction with military structures, and a discharge into the reserve, when a serviceman retains certain obligations under the law regarding a possible further mobilisation or a reserve service. In war conditions, such a difference takes on special significance, because most of the discharged servicepersons are automatically enrolled in the military reserve, which creates a specific context for planning their civilian career.

The study shows that servicepersons with combat experience need more intensive medical, psychological, and social support due to a set of challenges associated with the consequences of stressful conditions and rethinking identity.

At the same time, servicepersons without combat experience face other challenges, including the resumption of a civilian career and social adaptation. These differences highlight the need for a differentiated approach in developing support tools.

#### ➔ Objectives, directions, and duration of the transition in Ukraine

**We hypothesize that the transition policy has two strategic objectives:**

- **to provide support to military personnel upon discharge from service;**
- **to promote high-quality human capital management in the defence forces.**

Based on this hypothesis, we propose an appropriate program structure. It is important to note the fundamental difference between these directions:

#### **1) IT IS FOCUSED ON SUPPORTING THE SERVICEMAN HIMSELF/HERSELF UPON DISCHARGE.**

It provides for both mandatory, universal mechanisms for all those ending their service, and additional tools, access to which is provided at will – in some cases, to all discharged servicepersons, in others – to individual groups determined in accordance with the program differentiated approach.

#### **2) IT IS AIMED AT MAINTAINING THE DEFENCE CAPACITY THROUGH THE HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT.**

It is a mandatory component for all discharged servicepersons, because it is directly related to the functioning of the reserve.

The main characteristic of military to civilian life transition programs is the limited period of their validity.

This feature follows from the main purpose of these programs – to ensure the coordinated transition of a serviceman to civilian life. The transitional nature is one of the important features of the program, because it must coordinate the transition to several institutional areas at once – from the civilian medicine system to obtaining a new status within the Security and Defence Forces Reserve.

Therefore, the transition program must function as a transition mechanism: not only to provide the serviceman with the necessary support during the critical period of ending service, but also to create institutional conditions for maintaining a stable and comfortable connection with the Security and Defence Forces system that meets both the individual needs of a serviceman and the strategic interests of the state.

The duration and structure of the transition programs are determined by the specifics of the discharge of servicepersons. We distinguish three main scenarios for organising the transition:

- in the case of demobilisation or completion of military service, the duration of which was extended due to martial law, **it is impossible to plan the transition in advance due to the unpredictability of hostilities.** In such circumstances, servicepersons often strive to complete formal discharge procedures as quickly as possible and begin civilian life creating a demand for intensive short-term support programs (e.g., 1–2 months before a discharge from service – 6 months, 1 year after the completion of service). The majority of these servicepersons will

become recipients of the veteran policy, which partially compensates for the short-term nature of the transition program;

- for servicepersons completing their planned contract service, **there is an opportunity to begin preparing for the transition during their service.** This allows the program to be expanded over time (e.g. from 6 months to 1 year before a discharge and the same period after a discharge from service), providing more thorough preparation for civilian life and the opportunity to gradually enter a new professional and social reality;

- special attention should be paid to special categories of servicepersons, **such as those who start to service from custodial settings, for whom the duration of particular elements of support may be extended, regardless of the type of discharge.** The flexibility in determining the duration of the program for these categories becomes an important factor in its effectiveness;

- in the context of basic military service, which lasts 3–5 months, it is advisable to emphasize only the need to inform upon a discharge in the last month of service.

While military-to-civilian life transition programs in other countries traditionally focus on professional reorientation and career counselling, the Ukrainian context requires a much broader approach. The scale of hostilities, the significant number of internally displaced persons, and the consequences of prolonged stay in a combat zone create a specific set of needs. In our case, the priorities are emergency financial assistance, housing support programs, and systemic psychological support. A separate strategic task is the development of effective mechanisms for transfer to the reserve, which is critical for maintaining the state's defence capacity. Such specifics require a comprehensive approach to the design of transition programs, where the professional adaptation is integrated into a broader system of social support and maintenance of human capital in the defence sector.

#### ➔ Proposed legal regulation of the transition

A significant aspect of the institutional design of the transition system is the definition of areas of responsibility and tasks within it of all key stakeholders. This is necessary to avoid duplication of functions and irrational use of resources, as well as to prevent the emergence of areas of uncertainty between the involved government bodies or the non-governmental sector.

At the same time, the effectiveness of the program critically depends on the formation of the unified state policy and the establishment of systemic interaction with related spheres, in particular, with the policy of maintaining and developing human capital both in a country as a whole and in an army, the military reserve policy, and the veteran policy. Such interaction should ensure the continuity of support for a serviceman during the transition between different statuses and institutional systems.

As of February 2025, no regulatory legal act regulates the tasks, procedures, and powers of government bodies and their divisions regarding the transition organisation. However, this task can be solved by a resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, which will define the powers of all government bodies, in particular the Defence Forces, and align the procedure with the current strategy regarding the transition participants.

## 2. PROPOSALS ON GOALS AND TOOLS IN THE TRANSITION DIRECTIONS

### ➔ a. Support for servicepersons transitioning to civilian life

Our study demonstrates a wide range of needs for servicepersons during the transition to civilian life. This complex process involves physical and psychoemotional adaptation, as well as social and professional one. A systematic approach to organising the support is required here.

The quantitative study, in which both servicepersons with a discharge experience and those who are still serving, took part, reveals the attitude of servicepersons to priority areas of support. These are three main directions: the treatment and rehabilitation (63% and 53%, respectively), the psychological aid (53% and 47%, respectively), and the temporary financial support (44% and 42%, respectively). The significant gap between the request for temporary (43%) and permanent (12%) financial support is also indicative. This indicates the existence of a crucial period immediately after a discharge, when even a short-term support can have a decisive impact on the successful return to civilian life.

The study points out the need for additional development of a detailed matrix of needs that will take into account different categories of transition participants. Among the criteria for such categorisation, the following can be distinguished: a service form, a discharge reason (demobilisation, military retirement, medical discharge or discharge because of the contract completion, etc.), a length of ser-

vice, a presence of combatant status, specific categories (persons mobilised from custodial settings, persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons), etc.

This in turn means the need to create the institutional capacity of responsible stakeholders to maintain the relevance of program materials. The periodic monitoring, analysis of the needs of target audiences, as well as the exchange of information with other governmental and non-governmental organisations on the results and success of various forms of support are necessary.

#### GOALS:

- ✓ **To prepare a serviceman** for the effective interaction with civilian state support systems and institutions: it will ensure the continuity of access to necessary services and resources
- ✓ **To ensure an optimal use of the professional potential** of servicepersons by directing their experience, knowledge, and skills into the areas of activity which are priority for the state
- ✓ **To create conditions for the comprehensive adaptation** of servicepersons to civilian life through the coordination of medical, psychological, social, and professional support in accordance with the identified categories of needs.

#### TOOLS:

- ➔ **1. Basic support:**
  - A monetary support upon discharge, which provides an opportunity for short-term rest and time for job searching and housing rent
  - A support in completing discharge procedures and formalising documents
  - Comprehensive information on available state programs, benefits and services, including medical services, employment services
- ➔ **2. Professional adaptation:**
  - Counselling on employment opportunities, retraining, and education provided by the state and the non-governmental sector
  - Career counselling, including on the experience of the military profession

#### ➔ **3. Specialised support for individual categories:**

- Internally displaced people: an assistance with housing rent, an informing on targeted support programs within the framework of other state programs
- Persons mobilised from custodial settings: conducting consultations on returning to civilian life, a social support
- Persons with disabilities: an assistance in receiving rehabilitation services, a support in professional adaptation and employment
- Other categories: the support system should retain the possibility of including new groups of servicepersons whose needs may be identified during its implementation.

#### THE MAIN BODIES PROVIDING SUPPORT ARE:

- ✓ **Responsible subdivisions of military units**, in particular support services that will be deployed in military units
- ✓ **Social workers** in the Territorial Recruitment and Social Support Centres
- ✓ **Providers of services in employment, health care, social protection areas, and others.**

#### b. Human Capital Management in the Security and Defence Forces

One of the main tasks of the military to civilian life transition policy should be to prioritise working with servicepersons who are discharged to the reserve, since they are part of the state's defence capacity.

The quantitative study results demonstrate a critical gap between the high readiness to defend the country (51.6%) and the low readiness to formalise this readiness through a reservist contract (16%) that indicates a deep institutional distrust of the existing mechanisms or a previous negative experience of reserve service. According to respondents, the most important conditions for being in the operational reserve are the ability to choose a military unit and a position (69%) and the provision of regular training and coordination (45%), that can also be considered as an indicator of potential ways to increase a trust in the reserve system. The development of an effective human capital management system in the defence sector should take these priorities into account when forming mechanisms for interaction with reservists.

Such work requires an integrated approach: on the one hand, it is necessary to create an effective system for record keeping and managing data on discharged servicepersons, that will include an information about their experience, qualification and specialisation, and on the other hand, to ensure that enrolment in the reserve will be understandable for the discharged people themselves.

#### GOALS:

- ✓ **To establish the proper communication** regarding the conditions of being in a standby of persons liable for military services and a reserve service, ensuring the possible transparency of these mechanisms
- ✓ **To create mechanisms for maintaining the stable communication** between a reservist and his/her military unit
- ✓ **To create a reliable data management system** that will cope with current problems, such as inaccurate, incorrect or missing data on persons liable for military services in the reserve
- ✓ **To provide the General Staff with up-to-date and accurate data** on the quantitative and qualitative composition of the reserve for strategic planning of the Security and Defence Forces development

#### TOOLS:

- ➔ **1. Data collection and processing system:**
  - To ensure high-quality data collection at the level of military units when organising a discharge from service
  - To ensure the transmission of complete and high-quality data on persons liable for military services discharged to the reserve to the Territorial Recruitment and Social Support Centres. This includes a subsequent uploading of them to the Unified State Register of Conscripts, Persons Liable for Military Service, and Reservists.
  - To develop an analytical potential for processing and interpreting data in the Unified State Register of Conscripts, Persons Liable for Military Service and Reservists

#### ➔ **2. Interaction with people discharged to the reserve:**

- Providing people discharged from service with explanations on further being in the standby (in particular, the reserve), interacting with military units and the Territorial Recruitment and Social Support Centres, choosing a place of service in the reserve
- Creating a culture of constant communication between reservists and military units. In particular, a support for communication with persons liable for military services in the reserve through the Reserve+ application and alternative means
- Implementing regular surveys to monitor the needs of people discharged to the reserve
- Implementing the ability for persons liable for military services to update as much data as possible independently online

#### MAIN BODIES:

- ✓ **Military units**
- ✓ **Territorial Recruitment and Social Support Centres**

## On the definition of the conceptual framework and legal regulation of the transition

### ➔ for the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine

1. To develop and approve by a Government Resolution the procedure for organising the transition from a military career to civilian life, regulating the issues of powers and areas of responsibility of the authorities supporting the transition processes.

2. To define the tasks of the transition system following the context and realities of the Ukrainian servicepersons experience, as well as taking into account the tasks of attracting, developing, and retaining human capital in the defence forces. In particular, to take into account other needs of transition participants, in addition to the employment sphere. In developing a new transition system, take into account the multiple scenarios of attraction and discharge from service that have consequences for priority needs for support, as well as the scope and content of the support itself, services, and solutions.

3. To determine the approximate duration of the implementation of transition programs by responsible subdivisions among the military and civilian authorities. To divide the programs according to the principle of predictability of the time of a discharge from service – respectively, into peacetime (6 months – 1 year before and, after a discharge from service) and martial law, a special period (1–2 months before a discharge and 6 months – 1 year after a discharge from service). To consider that more vulnerable categories of servicepersons may require longer periods of support than others during the transition.

4. To state that this procedure applies to all Security and Defence Forces of Ukraine. The governing bodies shall ensure the execution and implementation of such procedures.

5. In developing the relevant procedure, take into account the provisions of the Strategy for the formation of the system of returning from military service to civilian life for the period until 2033 and the Veteran Policy Strategy for the period until 2030.

6. To develop and approve by a Government Resolution the provisions on the establishment of the Inter-agency Coordination Council on the military-to-civilian life Transition under the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, defining its tasks, composition, frequency of meetings, etc.

7. To involve expert public organisations in the development of relevant regulatory legal acts.

➔ **For the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Security Service of Ukraine, the State Guard Department, the Foreign Intelligence Service, and the State Service of Special Communications and Information Protection of Ukraine**

8. By a separate order of the Minister of Defence, to approve the implementation of a pilot project for six months to pilot the program based on selected military units. This allows the development and testing of a standardised program for supporting servicepersons and training of the personnel of military units organising a discharge from service.

9. Based on the approved procedure of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the pilot project results, develop and approve departmental regulatory legal acts on the execution and implementation of the procedure within their defined competence.

10. In departmental regulatory legal acts, determine the differentiation of the functions of the relevant subdivisions involved in the implementation of the transition processes. For example, between the personnel divisions of military units, support services, psychological support units, the Territorial Recruitment and Social Support Centres, etc.

11. Based on the approved procedure of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the pilot project results, to develop methodological recommendations for responsible structural subdivisions within the Security and Defence Forces regarding the direct algorithms for working with personnel discharged from military service. For example, for support services in military units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

12. To provide mechanisms for reviewing the essence of support programs during the transition to take into account changes in the context and needs of the target audience. To develop a methodology for periodically assessing the needs of transition participants.

13. To audit the current support for servicepersons discharged from service to identify those audiences who have unreasonably lower guarantees than others. Such an analysis should also cover the issue of distinguishing with the veterans' policy, which provides guarantees of support specifically for participants of combat operations, and not for all transition participants, to avoid a duplication of support.

14. When reviewing the current support for discharged servicepersons, to pay special attention to the issue of paying a one-time benefit, its size and assigning it in different amounts to all participants of the transition from military service to

civilian life (except for those participants who are doing a basic military service, provided that it lasts 3-5 months).

## On the support for the military personnel during a discharge

➔ **for the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Security Service of Ukraine, the State Guard Department, the Foreign Intelligence Service, the State Service of Special Communications and Information Protection of Ukraine**

15. Based on the approved resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, prepare explanations for personnel implementing transition procedures at the army level regarding the effective interaction with civilian bodies of the state and local authorities, and non-governmental organisations that are service providers after a discharge from service.

16. To train and prepare personnel of military units and the Territorial Recruitment and Social Support Centres on the implementation of specific tasks in the field of transition from military service to civilian life.

17. To direct individual support, and case management within the army to those categories of servicepersons who will be most vulnerable to adaptation after a discharge or who will independently seek help and individual counselling.

18. To consider the possibility of providing temporary housing after a discharge for those categories of transition participants who will face challenges. In particular, internally displaced people, persons who joined the army from custodial settings.

19. To develop mechanisms for involving public organisations and charitable foundations to enhance the effectiveness of the support provided during a serviceman's discharge from service.

20. To establish the interaction between the Territorial Recruitment and Social Support Centres and the local government bodies, and local governmental authorities in terms of creating the unified algorithms for redirecting and supporting the transition participants at the community level.

➔ **To the Directorate of Digital Transformation of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine**

21. To analyse priorities in the digitalisation of the servicepersons discharge processes to identify services that need to be made easier to access or to ensure effective interaction with the military unit during support.

22. To develop training materials for transition participants within the Army+ and/or the Reserve+ applications.

23. To consider the possibility of developing a survey among transition participants, according to the results of which more personalised instructions and advice on further return to civilian life will be provided. In particular, regarding the potential employment opportunities based on experience.

➔ **To the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Policy, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Education and Science, the State Employment Service, the National Health Service, the Pension Fund, the local government bodies, the local governmental executive authorities**

24. To develop informational, educational, and training materials for transition participants to navigate bureaucratic procedures and available forms of support at the state level, local government bodies and the non-governmental sector. To pay special attention to services in the health care system, social protection, employment, as well as social guarantees.

25. To develop consultation materials for employment service providers from the public and non-public sectors on career opportunities, retraining for discharged servicepersons who may have different periods and experiences in the military.

26. When developing materials, to involve the experience of non-governmental organisations and to ensure their participation in the developments.

27. To enable the provision of retraining, education, and employment services not only for transition participants who are participants of combat operations, but also for those who are not beneficiaries of the veterans' policy.

28. To prioritise an individual support for the retraining of transition participants for those who had no previous work experience in civilian life or had been in military service for a long time (more than five years), transition participants with disabilities, an imprisonment experience, and internally displaced people.

**On the implementation of the policy on human capital management in the Defence Forces**

➔ **to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine**

29. To finalise and adopt the Law on Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on the Establishment and Functioning of the Unified State Register of Servicepersons and the Improvement of the Procedure for Keeping Military Records.

➔ **For the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Security Service of Ukraine, the State Guard Department, the Foreign Intelligence Service, the State Service of Special Communications and Information Protection of Ukraine**

30. To prepare explanations for persons discharging military service regarding the principles of enrolment of transition participants in various types of military operational reserves. In particular, regarding the rights and obligations upon a discharge to the reserve, an enrolment in the reserve, a signing of reservist contracts, etc. In particular, to use the Army+ platform capabilities.

31. To conduct an analysis to improve the record keeping of mobilised soldiers and sergeants by military units in order to preserve comprehensive information about the military experience which they have gained.

32. To ensure the deployment of information and communication systems to improve the record keeping of personnel in military units of the defence forces.

33. To ensure the accurate and high-quality collection of data on the military service experience of transition participants in relevant documents such as, for example, a record and pay book, a personnel file for transfer to the Territorial Recruitment and Social Support Centres and the Unified State Register of Conscripts, Persons Liable for Military Service and Reservists.

34. To develop a mechanism for collecting information on a real experience and skills, mastered weapons for recording, because the data may differ from the skills provided for by the position, military occupational speciality, etc.

35. To take into account the experience of transition participants who have already served in the reserves during the Russo-Ukrainian war, in preparing for a training and developing approaches to calling for such a training.

36. To take into account the experience of ATO/JFO and to improve the mechanisms for supporting communication between military units, the Territorial Recruitment and Social Support Centres and servicepersons discharged to the reserve. In particular, through the Reserve+ application.

➔ **To the Directorate of Digital Transformation  
of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine**

37. To provide the opportunity for servicepersons discharged to the reserve to update as much data as possible through tools such as the Reserve+ without the obligation to come to the Territorial Recruitment and Social Support Centres.

38. To complete the implementation of all stages of the Medical Advisory Board reform for servicepersons to enable those discharged to the reserve to undergo an examination and receive up-to-date data on their fitness for service.

