

Annual Report 2024

ORGANISATION

The Human Rights Center “Pryncyp” was founded in 2023 by serviceman Masi Nayyem and volunteer Liubov Halan. The organisation’s mission is to support military personnel, veterans, and their families by helping them feel dignified and protected, offering clarity about their path, and providing access to support both during service and in civilian life.

The organisation conducts analytical and advocacy work, enhancing the capacity of relevant stakeholders to raise awareness, provide legal assistance, and develop policies to protect the rights of military personnel and veterans.

Two Program Areas

Military

In this area, the organisation focuses on implementing systemic reforms for active-duty military personnel. Key priorities include:

- Personnel policy
- Protection of military personnel’s rights, with an emphasis on human rights and strengthening the capacity of the military justice system
- Health care for military personnel and policies related to fitness for military service

Veteran

This area focuses on former military personnel who have permanently or temporarily completed their military service (including conscripts and reservists). Key priorities include:

- Implementation of national policy on veterans and their families
- Development of a transition system from military service to civilian life
- Protection of the rights of vulnerable groups of veterans, including those who have been injured, live with disabilities, and their families

TEAM

As of the end of 2024, the organisation employs 20 specialists, including analysts, project managers, lawyers, communications managers, and financial managers. Among them are veterans and family members of military personnel and veterans.



Structurally, the organisation is composed of the following departments: project, analytical and advocacy, legal education and protection, communications, and finance.

PARTNERS

Non-governmental organisations:

- Veteran Hub
- Legal Hundred
- Space of Opportunities

Digital Partners:

- Fedoriv Agency (pro bono development of the concept and platform for the Legal Navigator)
- HotBuro (pro bono design of the Legal Navigator)
- Zgraya.Digital (pro bono development and design of the organisation's first official website)
- Demch.co (current official website – pryncyp.org)
- Build App (development and design of the updated Legal Navigator)

Partners Who Systematically Distribute Informational Materials for the Military:

- Zgraya, volunteer coordination hub
- Ukrainian Railways (Укрзалізниця)
- Hospitallers Medical Battalion, evacuation bus "Austriyka"
- Volunteer Oleksii Maslo
- Superhumans, a center for prosthetics, reconstructive surgery, rehabilitation, and psychological support for war-affected individuals
- Dostup Charitable Foundation, support for service members undergoing Military Medical Commission procedures in Kyiv hospitals
- Abrams, military gear store
- Coalition of Veteran Spaces
- Halychyna Rehabilitation Center
- Vinnytsia Regional Clinical Psychoneurological Hospital, named after Academician O. I. Yushchenko

AWARDS

State Award of the President of Ukraine – "Golden Heart"

Each year, on International Volunteer Day, the President of Ukraine presents this award to individuals and organisations that have made a significant contribution to volunteer assistance and the development of the volunteer movement. In 2024,



Pryncyp received this award as a non-governmental organisation dedicated to protecting the rights of military personnel and veterans.

Award of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine

This award is presented to non-governmental organisations that support the healthcare sector. In 2024, Pryncyp received the award as an organisation working to protect the rights of wounded military personnel and veterans.

NV's "50 Inspiring Women" List

Ukrainian media NV has released its annual list of "50 Inspiring Women," honouring female leaders across four categories: military, civil society, government, and business. The Civil Society category features public figures, athletes, volunteers, media professionals, scientists, and entertainers. Among the honourees is Liubov Halan, co-founder and head of the organisation Pryncyp.

DEVELOPED ANALYTICS

Public

- Social Services for Veterans in Communities: Challenges and Needs

The social protection system in Ukraine consists of two main components: one includes benefits, payments, and other forms of material support for veterans; the other encompasses social services. Our study focuses on the latter. We analysed whether the current system recognises veterans as recipients of social services, whether it takes into account their specific needs, and whether it is capable of supporting their successful reintegration and adaptation to civilian life.

- Behind the Scenes of Care: Relatives of Veterans and Unpaid Care Work

Policy brief on the unpaid care work carried out by the relatives of veterans and military personnel following their injuries. Its aim is to highlight the need for both societal and governmental support for these individuals, as they often assume responsibilities that should fall to the state. The analysts reviewed the needs of this group and the current level of support provided by the state.

- Social Support Systems for Veterans: Croatia, Israel, the United Kingdom, Serbia, and Denmark

This study aimed to analyse how different countries approach social support for veterans and the models of veteran policy they employ. Some of these practices and

policies may be of interest to Ukraine, as they could bring tangible benefits to its veteran population.

- “I was forced to walk on crutches to every hospital.” The Experience of Wounded Personnel in the Ministry of Internal Affairs System

Our analysts investigated the experience of wounded personnel within the Ministry of Internal Affairs system. Injured service members from the National Police, the National Guard, and the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine share many challenges with those serving in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, but they also face specific issues, each of which represents an additional burden. Based on the collected data, we developed recommendations for the relevant authorities.

- Rehabilitation of Ukrainian Military Personnel and Veterans: Addressing Systemic Fragmentation

Previous work by Pryncyp has highlighted a number of issues in the rehabilitation sector. As a human rights centre, it became evident that our next step was to conduct a deeper analysis of this field in order to develop recommendations for the relevant authorities and other stakeholders. The aim of the study was to provide an overview of rehabilitation services in Ukraine for combat-related injuries and the policies governing this area, to assess the current state of service provision and identify key challenges.

Non-public

- Territorial Centre for Recruitment and Social Support: Functional Review

Given this institution’s managerial role in military staffing, it was important for us to assess its efficiency, not only in terms of mobilisation and data management, but also in delivering services to individuals liable for military service, active personnel, veterans, and their families. At the request of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, Pryncyp analysed the key problem areas in the functionality of Territorial Centres for Recruitment and Social Support (with a focus on the district level) and developed recommendations to enhance their performance.

- Reports in the Armed Forces of Ukraine: Current Situation

Analysts and legal experts from Pryncyp prepared this policy brief, which examines the legal framework for submitting reports, includes a business process analysis at the levels of operational command, brigade, battalion, company, platoon, and squad, and presents findings from a series of in-depth interviews with military personnel of

various ranks to identify pain points in the reporting process. This brief formed part of an effort to improve report submission procedures, ultimately enabling the creation of an online reporting mechanism through the Army+ application.

ADVOCACY VICTORIES

Military Sector

- Procedure for Submitting Paper and Electronic Reports

In August 2024, the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine issued Order No. 531 “On Approval of the Procedure for Organising the Handling of Military Reports within the Ministry of Defence System.”

This document sets out regulations concerning:

- Timeframes for reviewing reports
- A prohibition on rejecting reports on formal grounds
- Guarantees for the processing of all paper reports
- Rules and responsibilities of commanders regarding electronic reports

The text of the Order was developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, including the Department of Legal Support, the Central Directorate for the Protection of Servicemen’s Rights, the Directorate of Digital Transformation, and the Department of Personnel Policy. The regulation simplified the process of submitting and reviewing reports and addressed legal inconsistencies in national legislation.

- An Experimental Resolution Regulating the Process of Transfers in the Armed Forces of Ukraine

In autumn 2024, the Pryncyp team joined a working group to develop a pilot project concerning the transfer of military personnel.

Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Resolution No. 1291 “On the Implementation of a Pilot Project to Improve the Mechanism for the Transfer of Military Personnel of the Armed Forces and the National Guard at Their Own Initiative” establishes:

- A clear list of documents to be submitted alongside a report via the Army+ application
- Conditions under which military personnel may transfer without their commander's permission
- Grounds for refusal of a transfer at the level of the Armed Forces Personnel Centre
- Timeframes for the consideration of transfer requests

- Conclusion of the Military Medical Commission: “Fit for Service in Rear Units...”

In 2024, amendments were made to the Law of Ukraine “On Mobilisation Preparation and Mobilisation” and to the Ministry of Defence Order No. 402. These legal acts revised the procedures of the Military Medical Commission (MMC), particularly the criteria for assessing fitness or unfitness for further military service. The changes abolished the status of “limited fitness” for military service.

However, Pryncyp carried out an advocacy campaign that led to the retention of an “intermediate” fitness category. The updated legislation now recognises the status of “Fit for service in support units, Territorial Centres for Recruitment and Social Support (TCRSS), higher military educational institutions, training centres, institutions, medical units, logistics, communications, operational support, and security units.” This allows, for example, soldiers who have sustained serious injuries to continue serving in so-called rear units.

- Meetings with the President of Ukraine and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces

On 23 October and 11 November, Liubov Halan, Head of Pryncyp, met with the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Oleksandr Syrskyi, respectively.

During these meetings, the following key issues were raised:

- Establishing a confidential reporting channel for offences committed within the units of the Ukrainian Defence Forces
- Improving the quality of training for junior officers with combat experience and introducing a system for assessing skills and competencies relevant to their assigned positions
- Facilitating transfers, leave, rotations, and recovery – factors that directly impact the morale, psychological well-being, and combat readiness of personnel
- Encouraging mobilisation among the civilian population to strengthen the army's human capital and ensure access to quality basic military training

- Launch of a New System of Medical Examinations for Persons Liable for Military Service

The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence, is implementing a reform aimed at digitising the medical examination process for persons liable for military service. Pryncyp has contributed its expertise to this initiative. The introduction of digital tools will allow the tracking of Medical Commission decisions by region and by individual doctors. This, in turn, will help to identify potential violations that may impact the mobilisation process.

Veterans' Policy Sector

- Veterans' Policy Strategy

Pryncyp, in cooperation with partner civil society organisations (Veteran Hub, Legal Hundred, and Space of Opportunities) and the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, contributed to the development of the Veterans Policy Strategy for Ukraine. As a result, on 29 November 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the Veterans Policy Strategy for the period until 2030 and adopted an operational action plan for its implementation in 2024–2027. This is a foundational document intended to ensure comprehensive reform and development of the state's veteran policy. For the first time, the Strategy formally recognises and aims to support veterans' families.

- Digitalisation of Granting Combatant Status

In 2023, Pryncyp began advocating for the acceleration of the procedure for granting combatant status, including through meetings with the Deputy Minister of Defence for Digitalisation and participation in sessions of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on National Security and Defence. In April 2024, the President of Ukraine signed Draft Law No. 10062 "On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine", which regulates the interaction between the Unified Electronic Register of Persons Liable for Military Service and other state registers. Currently, the procedure for granting combatant status is automatic, and every combat unit has access to the Unified State Register of War Veterans.

GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES WE COLLABORATED WITH

- President of Ukraine
- Office of the President
- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Veterans Affairs
- Ministry of Internal Affairs
- Ministry of Digital Transformation
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Social Policy
- Ministry of Economy
- Verkhovna Rada Committee on Social Policy and Protection of Veterans' Rights
- Verkhovna Rada Committee on National Security and Defence
- Armed Forces of Ukraine
- Military Law Enforcement Service of the Armed Forces of Ukraine
- Office of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights

- Presidential Commissioner for the Protection of the Rights of Military Personnel and Their Families
- National Health Service of Ukraine
- Free Legal Aid System of the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine

LEGAL EDUCATION AND PROTECTION

Legal Navigator

In 2023, Pryncyp launched a platform offering step-by-step guidance for military personnel, veterans, and their families. The resource serves as a knowledge base on relevant legal matters and provides users with free information tailored to their status: active-duty personnel, wounded individuals within the Ministry of Defence or Ministry of Internal Affairs systems, veterans, or family members.

In addition to the web version, a mobile application for Android and iOS was developed based on the Legal Navigator and is available on Google Play and the App Store. The app expands the platform's functionality by offering users convenient access to legal information at any time, including:

- A directory of medical institutions and social services, featuring up-to-date contact details and opening hours.
- A navigation feature that helps users quickly locate relevant institutions and plan a route.

We launched a legal consultation chatbot for wounded military personnel.

The AI-powered chatbot responds to legal queries and connects users with first-line lawyers or a community of pro bono lawyers who offer free primary and secondary legal assistance to military personnel and veterans.

Key figures:

- 174,000 unique users of the web platform
- 19,210 app installations
- 8,399 users engaged with the chatbot

Service Navigator

Based on analytical research, Pryncyp developed the Service Navigator for veterans—a practical tool designed to help them access and understand available public and state-provided services. It features diagrams and guides outlining where and how veterans can apply for official statuses, pensions, benefits, payments, and social or legal assistance. The Navigator is also available as posters containing key



information and brochures with detailed explanations of services and interaction mechanisms. These materials were distributed in communities across three regions as part of a pilot rollout.

A tool for family doctors to interact with veterans

In cooperation with the National Health Service of Ukraine, we have developed 16 informational brochures covering the most common medical conditions that arise or worsen during military service. Veterans can receive these brochures during consultations with their doctors and use them to determine whether they may need further medical advice. The brochures also outline the healthcare services available free of charge.

We have distributed 16,000 brochures across 40 healthcare facilities.

Brochures for Free Legal Aid

Pryncyp analysed the most common legal aid requests submitted to the Free Legal Aid system – a state network that provides free legal services to veterans – and to the Territorial Centre for Recruitment and Social Support, where veterans undergo demobilisation and receive the necessary documentation. In partnership with the Free Legal Aid system, we developed concise informational brochures covering topics from obtaining veteran status to mobilisation deferrals.

Pro Bono Community of Lawyers

Pryncyp developed a targeted pro bono online course aimed at enhancing the qualifications of legal professionals in the field of military law, specifically for supporting wounded military personnel and veterans. Lawyers who successfully complete the course commit to providing free legal consultations to wounded military personnel over a three-month period. Among the community's achievements is the recovery of hundreds of thousands of UAH in compensation for military personnel.

Key figures:

- 126 lawyers successfully completed the training.
- 91 lawyers participated in the Pro Bono programme.
- 919 legal consultations were provided.

"Protecting the Defenders" Award

In 2024, we launched the Pryncyp Award – a recognition for volunteer lawyers who provide pro bono legal support to wounded military personnel and veterans.

Throughout the year, the community played a vital role in upholding legal rights by assisting with documentation, compensation, and access to medical services. Some lawyers continued their involvement beyond the required three-month period, demonstrating exceptional professional standards. The 25 most dedicated lawyers were honoured with the award, presented by Maksym Butkevych (Ukrainian human rights defender, journalist, civic activist, and serviceman.), in recognition of their contributions and in support of the professional community working to defend the rights of Ukraine's defenders.

TRAINING

- Online Courses

The course “Effective Legal Protection of Injured Veterans” was launched on the Free Legal Aid distance learning platform.

Participants: 293 registered

Results: 125 participants successfully completed the course.

The online course “How to Effectively Defend the Rights of Wounded Military Personnel” was implemented in partnership with the Prometheus platform.

Participants: 423 registered

Results: 126 participants successfully completed the course.

- Offline and Online Training

– For 100 employees of the Free Legal Aid system under the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine:

Offline: Two two-day training sessions on “Effective Legal Protection of Veterans and Their Families”.

Online: Two webinars – “Effective Legal Protection of Veterans and Their Families” and “One-Time Financial Assistance and Social-Legal Guarantees for Wounded Veterans”.

– For employees of the Territorial Centre for Recruitment and Social Support:

Offline: One training session on “Fundamentals of Social Support for Veterans and Their Families”.

Online: Five training sessions on “Fundamentals of Social Support for Veterans and Their Families”.

PROJECTS

- Stronger civil society voice in defending veterans' rights in Ukraine, funded by the European Endowment for Democracy

We established cooperation with key governmental stakeholders, including the Office of the President of Ukraine, the Verkhovna Rada (Committee on Social Policy and Veterans' Rights), the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Policy, and the Ministry of Economy. A major achievement of Pryncyp's advocacy team was the successful inclusion of veterans' issues in the Internal Victory Plan.

Pryncyp also contributed to the development and promotion of legislative changes by analysing draft laws. In particular, lawyers and analysts worked on:

- Simplifying the procedure for obtaining combatant status;
- Introducing an electronic veterans' register and digital identification;
- Expanding social guarantees;
- Amending the draft law on the Patronage Civil Service for Veterans;
- Improving employment conditions through legislative initiatives;
- Reforming the Medical and Social Expert Commission for veterans with disabilities.

In addition, as part of a consortium with organisations such as Veteran Hub, Legal Hundred, and the Space of Opportunities, we actively contributed to the development of the Concept and Strategy for Veterans' Policy.

- Promoting changes and reforms of the military medical commission, funded by the International Renaissance Foundation

– We undertook the task of identifying and addressing the issues faced by military personnel and veterans during rehabilitation, with the aim of developing solutions to facilitate their access to rehabilitation services and improve their social protection.

– As part of this project, we advocated for an intermediate status between “fit” and “unfit for service,” which was subsequently enshrined in law as “Fit for service in military support units, Territorial Recruitment and Social Support Centres, higher education institutions, training centres, institutions, medical units, logistics, communications, operational support, and security units.”

– We established a community of skilled lawyers to provide free consultations to the wounded regarding the Military Medical Commission and the Medical and Social Expert Commission.

We created four policy briefs with relevant recommendations for government authorities:

- “The System of Determining Fitness for Service: A Review of International Experience and Challenges in Ukraine”. This brief addressed the issues with the current system of determining fitness for service and reviewed international approaches to fitness assessment.
- “I Was Forced to Visit All the Doctors on Crutches: The Experience of Wounded Personnel within the Ministry of Internal Affairs System”. This brief highlighted the challenges faced by wounded individuals navigating the healthcare system in the Ministry of Internal Affairs.
- “Rehabilitation of Ukrainian Military Personnel and Veterans: Overcoming Systemic Inconsistencies” – This brief examined the challenges faced in the rehabilitation process and how these issues were overcome.
- “Between Military and Civilian Medicine: A Study of the Path of Military Personnel with Cancer” – This brief explored the medical journey of military personnel with cancer, bridging military and civilian healthcare systems.

- Strengthening the state's capacity to inform veterans and their families about the necessary services and facilities, funded by Chemonics PFRU

In collaboration with the National Health Service of Ukraine, we developed 16 types of brochures on the following topics: “Guarantees for Veterans in Healthcare” and “The Algorithm for Medical and Social Expertise” for family doctors and their veteran patients in healthcare institutions. A “Service Navigator” was also created, consisting of four types of posters (featuring a visualised route) and four types of brochures (containing more detailed information) for four different types of communities (urban territorial communities, village and settlement communities, regional centres, and starosta districts). The objective was to guide veterans in understanding the services available based on their needs and to help service providers navigate the veteran’s pathway, enabling them to act as guides and offer basic assistance (e.g., where and what to apply for).

- Strengthening Capacities for the Provision of Complex Rehabilitation Services in Ukraine, Central Project Management Agency (CPVA)
- Analysis of the potential and educational needs of three healthcare institutions in Ukraine in the rehabilitation of military personnel and veterans.
- Mapping of stakeholders in rehabilitation within Ukraine’s healthcare sector (functions, plans, and influence, with a focus on military personnel and veterans).

COMMUNICATIONS

Social media reach

- Facebook: 1,542,891
- Instagram: 2,382,139

Number of followers

- Facebook: 21,897
- Instagram: 25,508
- Over 100 mentions of Pryncyp products in national and international media.

Joint Products with the Media

A series of reports on caregivers for veterans:

- Report by Suspilne News: “Women Who Care for Military Personnel with Severe Injuries”
- Report by Hromadske: “The Life of Military Personnel After Injury: Bureaucracy, Payment Issues, and Medical Negligence”
- Joint podcast with Hromadske: “In the Affairs of the Military” (First three episodes) (Memorandum of Cooperation signed)
- Joint podcast episode with Kharakter Media: “The Journey of a Wounded Soldier from Evacuation to Rehabilitation”

Joint Products with State Platforms:

- Diia.Osvita: Information on the interaction between military personnel and their unit