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ПРОБЛЕМИ ПРАВОВОГО РЕГУЛЮВАННЯ ВЕТЕРАНСЬКОЇ ПОЛІТИКИ В УКРАЇНІ

У статті розглянуто трансформацію ветеранської політики в Україні у контексті повномасштабної збройної агресії та зростання ролі військовослужбовців у житті суспільства. На основі аналізу трьох взаємопов'язаних стратегічних документів – Стратегії ветеранської політики на період до 2030 року, Стратегії розвитку людського капіталу в силах оборони України до 2027 року та Стратегії формування системи повернення з військової служби до цивільного життя до 2033 року – авторкою обґрунтовано формування нового цілісного підходу до підтримки ветеранів. Здійснено аналітичне порівняння цілей і механізмів реалізації стратегій, з урахуванням таких ключових аспектів, як реінтеграція, професійна адаптація, психосоціальна підтримка, розвиток системи мотивації, залучення до державної служби та формування культури вшанування. Особливу увагу приділено проблемі міжвідомчої координації, кадрового забезпечення, фінансування та моніторингу реалізації стратегій. Окрім того, висвітлено досвід Італії в контексті формування політики пам'яті та вшанування. У роботі наголошено на необхідності інституалізації індивідуального підходу до ветеранів як бенефіціарів політики. Авторська позиція полягає в тому, що лише синергія трьох стратегій та їх системне впровадження на всіх рівнях – від національного до локального – здатні забезпечити ефективну політику повернення, підвищити соціальну стійкість держави та сприяти національній єдності.

Kavetska N. I. Problems of legal regulation of veteran policy in Ukraine

The article examines the transformation of veterans' policy in Ukraine in the context of full-scale armed aggression and the growing role of military personnel in society. Based on the analysis of three interrelated strategic documents – the Veteran Policy Strategy for the period up to 2030, the Strategy for the Development of Human Capital in the Defense Forces of Ukraine until 2027, and the Strategy for the Formation of a System for Returning from Military Service to Civilian Life until 2033 – the author substantiates the formation of a new holistic approach to supporting veterans. An analytical comparison of the goals and mechanisms for implementing the strategies is made, taking into account such key aspects as reintegration, professional adaptation, psychosocial support, development of a motivation system, involvement in public service and the formation of a culture of honor. Particular attention is paid to the problem of interagency coordination, staffing, financing and monitoring of the implementation of strategies. In addition, the article highlights the Italian experience in the context of shaping the policy of memory and commemoration. The paper emphasizes the need to institutionalize an individual approach to veterans as policy beneficiaries. The author's position is that only the synergy of the three strategies and their systematic implementation at all levels – from national to local – can ensure an effective return policy, increase the social stability of the state and promote national unity.

Key words: *veteran policy, reintegration, human capital, defense capability, strategy, system of return to civilian life, social support.*



Problem statement. Until 2022, veterans' policy in Ukraine was characterized by fragmentation and lack of a systematic approach. Support for veterans was limited mainly to social payments and benefits, without due attention to their reintegration, professional adaptation and psychological support. The lack of strategic vision and coordination between government agencies created barriers to the effective implementation of veterans' policy.

With the outbreak of Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine in 2022, the number of veterans increased significantly, highlighting the critical need to reform approaches to veterans' policy. In response to these challenges, the state has begun developing strategic documents aimed at creating a comprehensive system of support for veterans at all stages of their life cycle, from the beginning of military service to full reintegration at the stage of returning to civilian life. The development of new regulations has not fully resolved the problematic issues of legal and social protection of veterans, which led to the writing of this article.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The issues of veterans' policy, introduction of tools for its implementation, social support for combatants and persons with disabilities as a result of war are studied by such scholars as N. Tilikina, I. Pesha, Selivanova I., M. Sungurovskyi, Datsiuk O., Kyrychenko A., Demchenko I., Bulyha N. However, a comprehensive analysis of the legal framework that strategically influences the development of veteran policy is not sufficiently covered in the scientific literature, which was the prerequisite for writing this article.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the legal gaps and conflicts in the regulatory framework for veteran policy in Ukraine in the main strategic documents and draft legal acts, and to develop recommendations for their improvement.

Summary of the main material. In October 2024, the Government of Ukraine approved the Veterans' Policy Strategy for the period up to 2030 [2], which means a qualitatively new approach to the formation of state policy in the field of support for veterans and their families. The adoption of this document is significant both from a legal and humanitarian perspective, as the state for the first time systematically formalizes not only material support, but also the psychological, cultural and identification component of veterans' policy. According to the provisions of the Strategy, state support should be based on three key blocks that correspond to the stages of the life cycle of a serviceman [2]:

- the period of military service,
- the period after discharge from service;
- the period of life in the civilian environment.

This approach is extremely important as it avoids fragmentation in service provision and ensures policy integrity. It is the interstage support that ensures that veterans are not left alone with the difficulties of adaptation after returning to civilian life.

The central goal of the document is not only to recognize the merits of veterans, but also to create conditions for their decent life, full recovery, employment and reintegration into society. In this context, it is particularly important to support veterans' families as an integral system that requires a specialized approach. International experience (the United States, Canada, Israel) shows that family support has a significant impact on the effectiveness of returning to peaceful life. In addition, the Strategy envisages important steps in shaping a culture of honoring veterans and preserving the memory of the fallen [2]. This is not only a humanitarian imperative, but also an element of the state's identity policy. Defining the role of veterans as an active resource for the development of defense capabilities and national identity is another strategically important vector that demonstrates the transition to a value-based public policy [2].

The approval of the Strategy for Attracting, Developing and Retaining Human Capital in the Defense Forces of Ukraine [3], in my opinion, is the state's response to the challenges posed by the ongoing military conflict and the need to formulate a new personnel policy in the defense sector. It outlines a holistic vision of the transformation of the personnel management system in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, taking into account the best international practices, in particular the standards of NATO member states.

The Strategy clearly delineates several priority areas, among which the most important are: formation of a personnel reserve, transformation of military education, improvement of the



recruitment system, digitalization of personnel management, gender equality, and creation of mechanisms to support servicemen during the transition to civilian life [3]. It is worth emphasizing the systematic approach to the development of this document – it is not only about technical modernization of processes, but also about changing the philosophy of human capital management. It is also interesting to note the desire to ensure continuity in the formation of defense consciousness: through reforming pre-prescription training, integrating defense education into higher education institutions, and developing a system of basic military service. In the long run, this should lay the foundation for a sustainable staffing of the Armed Forces not only in times of war, but also in the long post-war period.

The strategic goal of creating a modern, motivating military career system should be emphasized. The introduction of the principles of “talent management”, transparent promotion procedures, professional development and mentoring will help to retain personnel and increase the prestige of military service. In my opinion, it is the proper management of career trajectories that can ensure staff loyalty, reduce burnout and promote long-term service. An equally important component is the introduction of a new model of “soft return” of servicemen to civilian life. This approach demonstrates the state's awareness of its social responsibility for the military after completion of service, which is fully consistent with the goals of veteran policy.

Approval of the Strategy for Returning from Military Service to Civilian Life was the logical conclusion of the three-part framework of the new state policy in the field of support for servicemen and veterans [4]. I believe that the human-centeredness of the document is its defining characteristic, as the focus is not so much on the functioning of institutions as on the adaptation of a person returning from war to a peaceful environment.

The Strategy clearly states that the main goal of the return policy is to create a barrier-free environment that will facilitate the socio-economic and political reintegration of combatants [4]. It is worth emphasizing that we are talking not only about basic services, but also about comprehensive, individualized support – psychological, educational, legal, medical, and labor. I am convinced that an individualized approach and multisectoral cooperation are crucial factors for the sustainable return of veterans to a full life.

Among the strategic goals of the document are the creation of a national infrastructure for returning veterans, the launch of mechanisms for rehabilitation, professional adaptation, and economic independence of veterans, especially those with disabilities [4]. This is seen as not only ethically but also economically feasible – reintegration should be based on the principle of active inclusion, not exclusion, which is in line with the modern approach to social policy in developed countries. Special attention should be paid to the provision on the training of specialists in veterans' support, enshrined in a separate regulatory act [1]. We believe that such an institutional step is critically important – no system will function effectively without adequate human resources.

Comprehensive support for veterans in Ukraine today is based on three complementary strategic documents: The Veteran Policy Strategy, the Strategy for the Development of Human Capital in the Defense Forces, and the Strategy for Return to Civilian Life. From my point of view, this triangle of strategic planning allows us to talk about the emergence of a full-fledged state policy of support for the military – from mobilization to full socialization.

The Veteran Policy Strategy sets the ideological framework and defines general principles. The human capital strategy focuses on service, professionalization and preservation of potential. The strategy of return focuses on recovery, rehabilitation and a new start in life. Their synthesis is not just a set of documents, but evidence of progress towards a holistic, human-centered policy.

However, the implementation of these strategies requires clear interagency coordination, adequate funding, professional staffing and a flexible monitoring system. Without these elements, there is a risk that the intentions will remain only on paper.

Compared to foreign experience, the peculiarity of legal regulation of veteran policy in Italy is the gradual transition from a fragmented approach to systematic regulatory recognition of the status of veterans. In 2023, the Ministry of Defense of Italy for the first time approved the official definition of the categories “Defense Veteran” and “Veteran of International Missions,” thus



securing the right to public recognition of persons who participated in hostilities, peacekeeping and humanitarian operations [6]. The legal basis for this was a special ministerial decree, which also provides for the introduction of honorary medals, the solemn celebration of November 11 as Veteran's Day, and a number of symbolic and social events. The peculiarity of the Italian model is the granting of veteran status regardless of physical or mental injuries, which expands the scope of legal recognition and promotes a culture of gratitude in society. In this context, Italy's experience can serve as a guide for Ukraine in creating legal mechanisms for the formation of a policy of celebrating heroism, national memory and commemoration.

Conclusions and recommendations. The transformation of veterans' policy in Ukraine is a natural response of the state to new challenges caused by full-scale armed aggression and a significant increase in the number of female and male veterans. The adopted strategic documents – the Veteran Policy Strategy until 2030, the Strategy for the Development of Human Capital in the Defense Forces until 2027, and the Strategy for Return to Civilian Life until 2033 – form the holistic architecture of the state policy of supporting servicemen and women. Their synergy makes it possible to provide comprehensive support at all stages of the life path of defenders – from the moment they enter military service to full socialization in civilian life. However, it should be noted that the key factors for successful implementation of the strategies are interagency coordination, training of highly qualified multidisciplinary specialists, sustainable funding and an effective monitoring system. It is important to emphasize that support for veterans is not only a social responsibility of the state, but also a tool for building national unity, resilience and trust in state institutions. Therefore, modern veterans' policy should not be an ad hoc response, but a strategic priority in the post-war recovery of the country. Given the above, it is advisable to implement a number of measures at both the national and local levels.

At the national level:

1. Legislative consolidation of the integrated model of support for veterans. It is necessary to adopt a framework law that will combine the provisions of the three strategies into a coherent legal system.
2. Development of a single digital office of specialists in support of war veterans and demobilized persons, which will automate access to veterans' support measures and possible services, tracking individual needs and feedback.
3. Training of multidisciplinary specialists. It is necessary to create a full-fledged training system for support specialists for war veterans and demobilized persons and other professionals (psychologists, social workers, HR specialists, career counselors, medical specialists, etc.), since interaction with veterans takes place at all levels and in all areas.
4. Ensure sustainable financing. It is advisable to introduce mechanisms for medium- and long-term financing of strategy implementation, including through international assistance.
5. Introduce a system of monitoring and evaluation of effectiveness. At the ministerial level, success indicators and a system of annual reporting on strategy implementation should be developed.

At the local level:

1. Scaling up the work of specialists in supporting war veterans and demobilized persons in communities, creating veteran spaces in communities.
2. Involvement of the veteran community in policy implementation.
3. Supporting veterans' social entrepreneurship initiatives. Creation of microfinance programs, tax benefits and consulting.
4. Organizing school and community events to develop a culture of support for veterans. This will help reduce stigma and increase solidarity in society.

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