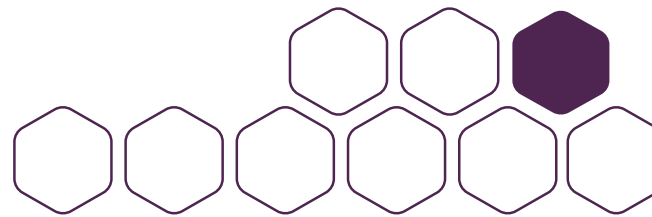





ANALYTICAL REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF STUDY

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS WORKING IN THE VETERAN SPHERE 2023





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CONTENT

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	3
INTRODUCTION	4
METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES	5
METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH	7
DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS	7
MAIN RESEARCH RESULTS	8
WORKING CONDITIONS AND PROFILE OF VETERAN AND PRO-VETERAN CSOs.....	8
SELF-ASSESSMENT BY ORGANIZATIONS OF THEIR ACTIVITIES. SOURCES OF FINANCING OF THE ACTIVITIES..	11
COOPERATION WITH OTHER VETERAN CSOs, LOCAL AND CENTRAL AUTHORITIES	12
URGENT NEEDS OF ORGANIZATIONS AND THE SECTOR AS A WHOLE	14
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIZATIONS WORKING IN THE VETERANS SPHERE	16
FOR STATE AUTHORITIES	16
FOR INTERNATIONAL DONOR ORGANIZATIONS	16
FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS	17
CHAPTER I. PROFILE OF THE VETERAN CSOs	18
I.1 Differentiation of organizations. Legal field of activities and activities profile	18
I.2 Categories of population CSOs work with and the main services provided by them	24
I.3 PERSONNEL CAPACITY OF ORGANIZATIONS	25
CHAPTER II. SELF-ASSESSMENT BY ORGANIZATIONS OF THEIR OWN POTENTIAL. SOURCES OF FUNDING	26
II.1 SELF-ASSESSMENT BY ORGANIZATIONS OF THEIR OWN POTENTIAL	26
II.2 Sources of funding	27
CHAPTER III. COOPERATION WITH OTHER VETERAN CSOs, LOCAL AND CENTRAL AUTHORITIES	28
III.1 Cooperation and assessment of relations with other CSOs, local and central authorities	28
III.2 Assessment of the importance of cooperation with other CSOs, local and central authorities.....	29
III.3 Perception of the functioning of veteran CSOs	29
III.4 Evaluation of the provision of services to veterans and their families by state bodies and services.....	30
CHAPTER IV.URGENT NEEDS AND PROSPECTIVE AREAS OF ACTIVITY	33
APPENDIX 1. DATABASE OF NGOs	34
APPENDIX 2.	35
APPENDIX 3	36
APPENDIX 4	38
APPENDIX 5	38

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ATO** – Anti-terrorist operation in the east of Ukraine
CSO – Civil Society Organization
JFO – Joint Forces Operation
NGO – Nongovernmental Organization
MES – Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine
IOM – International Organization for Migration
UBD – Status of a participant in hostilities
IREX – International Research & Exchanges Board

INTRODUCTION

Veterans as a separate social group began to stand out noticeably with the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war and the anti-terrorist operation in certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts since 2014. Their needs are emerging in contemporary public discourse, in particular, in the context of the establishment of new commemorative practices, honoring the memory of soldiers and those killed during the ATO and JFO.

As stated in previous studies, until 2014 the veteran movement in Ukraine was considered in terms of the experience of the Second World War and the war in Afghanistan. Accordingly, civil associations were created that represented the interests of veterans and interacted with state authorities and other subjects on behalf of the veteran community¹. With the beginning of Russian aggression against Ukraine in 2014, the structure of the social group of veterans completely changed, as well as the field of stakeholders who represent the interests of this community at various social and public levels, in particular, in matters of resocialization and adaptation during the return to civilian life, as well as in support of families of veterans and military personnel. The researchers claim that during the years of ATO/JFO in Ukraine, about 1,000 veteran organizations were created, among which 50 operated at the all-Ukrainian level. However, according to the authors, the institutionalization of the veteran movement faced a number of difficulties, primarily caused by the ongoing hostilities in the east of Ukraine and the varying level of ability of the founders of the organizations to ensure their stable activity. Thus, since that time, some organizations have continued their work until now, having developed into powerful networks within the veteran and pro-veteran community, while others, on the contrary, have ceased their activities.

At the state level, the State Service of Ukraine on Veterans Affairs was established in 2014. It carried out its activities as a central body of executive power until 2019. Subsequently, the Service was reorganized into the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine. For less than a year it was united with the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons, but already in 2020, the unification of ministries was canceled and the Ministry of Veterans Affairs received back its former title.

In order to understand the general context of veteran social issues, it is worth briefly recalling the results of previous studies that were carried out in this area in order to compare them with the current situation. According to the data of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, as of July 2019, there were 369,451 people in Ukraine who received the status of a participant in hostilities (UBD) out of those who defended the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and participated in ATO. The share of women among participants in hostilities actions equaled 15,000 (4.1%) in 2019. All these people belonged to various departments; majority belonged to the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine (68%), smaller numbers - to the National Guard, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (10% each), the State Border Service, the Security Service of Ukraine and others². A survey of veterans conducted before the start of a full-scale invasion³ created a "portrait of a veteran" in Ukraine before a full-scale invasion on February 24, 2022. According to the data of this study, 92% of veterans are male (respectively, 8% are female), most often (in 55% of cases) they belong to the age group of 30-44 years, most often (in 70% cases) they reside in the administrative centers of the oblasts. The largest part of the respondents came from the northern macro-region (27.7% - Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Sumy and Chernihiv oblasts, as well as the city of Kyiv), the smallest - from the south (10%

¹Sociological study "The role of the veteran community in the development of a democratic society", Svitlana Balyuk, Natalia Klauning, Lyudmila Chetvertukhina, January 2022

²Data of information requests to departments within the scope of the sociological study "Involvement of veterans in public and political life: the path from military victories to personal ones." Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, NGO "Studena", 2019

³Sociological study "The role of the veteran community in the development of a democratic society", Svitlana Balyuk, Natalia Klauning, Lyudmila Chetvertukhina, January 2022

- Mykolaiv, Kherson and Odesa oblasts). Most of the veterans - 65% - are married, the largest share of veterans found themselves in the ATO zone in 2014 - 2015 (35% and 28%, respectively). Even before the start of the full-scale invasion, the majority of veterans (64.3%) believed that their rights were not sufficiently protected at the state level. About a third of veterans have occasionally encountered a violation of their rights (32.8%), which correlates with the data of other sociological studies⁴.

Today, according to Analytical Information, provided by the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine, the total number of persons covered by the Law of Ukraine "On the Status of War Veterans, Guarantees of Their Social Protection" is 851,068⁵. Among them 438,834 are participants of combat actions that took place during ATO/JFO. The largest number of veterans of the Russian-Ukrainian war belong to the age group of 31-40 years old (43.5%), the share of women among veterans is about 9%.

At the same time, according to the head of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, after the end of the war, there will be at least 4 million citizens who, in one way or another, will be related to the veteran sphere⁶. How are our state and civil society preparing to meet the challenge of supporting these people?

During the period of the ATO/JFO up to the beginning of the full-scale invasion on February 24, 2022, initiatives were implemented in the field of psychological, legal, economic, and educational support for veterans, and society's perception of the veteran community was changing. For example, in 2019, 62% of respondents expressed a positive attitude towards veterans, in 2023 - 93% of respondents trust veterans who will return from a full-scale war, and 95% - veterans of the anti-terrorist operation (ATO) of 2014-2021⁷.



METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

The researchers aimed to study the field of civil society organizations, projects and initiatives that are active in the field related to work with veterans, their families, families of fallen soldiers and missing soldiers, and to investigate the structure of stakeholders involved in the field of supporting veterans and veterans' organizations. At the beginning of work on the project, the following research tasks were formulated:

- To study the field of CSOs, initiatives and projects that are implemented in the field related to work with veterans, their families, families of fallen soldiers and missing soldiers; mapping of formal and informal networks of CSOs that unite veterans, their families, and families of fallen or missing soldiers;
- To assess the level of the CSO's capacity to provide services to veterans, their families, families of fallen and missing soldiers;
- To determine the development and training needs of CSOs working on the provision of services or implementation of projects for veterans, their families, families of deceased soldiers and missing soldiers;
- To determine the development and training needs of CSOs working on the provision of services or implementation of projects for veterans, their families, families of deceased soldiers and missing soldiers;

⁴Study of veterans' needs, 2019, CANTAR.

⁵Analytical information according to the data of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine [Electronic resource] // Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine: <https://data.mva.gov.ua/>

⁶From the interview of Yulia Laputina, head of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, to Radio Svoboda on May 22, 2023: <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/laputina-intervyu-ministerstvo-dopomoha-veteranam/32422428.html>

⁷According to the twentieth national survey. The image of a veteran in Ukrainian society, Sociological Group "Rating", January 2023.

- To determine the main sources of funding of CSOs that unite veterans, their families, and families of deceased or missing soldiers;
- To determine the most urgent thematic areas of activity for veteran organizations and the main factors that influence the creation and active work of veteran organizations;
- To determine the regional distribution of the activities of veteran organizations; in particular, determining at what level veteran organizations usually work (Kyiv, oblast administrative center, administrative center of the amalgamated territorial communities, etc.);
- To establish thematic areas where several projects/initiatives work concurrently and areas that, on the contrary, are not sufficiently supported by projects/initiatives;
- To analyze of the presence or absence of mechanisms or initiatives for the coordination of projects in the veterans sphere;
- To investigate whether veterans' organizations cooperate with other CSOs, authorities and local government bodies;
- To investigate what areas of work in the veterans sphere central government and local authorities are planning to implement and support.

The research fieldwork was preceded by investigation of the "sphere" of CSOs using the available open sources and information provided by external experts. A list of 1,066 organizations at the national and regional levels that included information about the name of the CSO, the thematic sphere of activity and types of services provided by the organization, contacts of the organization (if available), target audiences of the organization was utilized as a base for this research. This list of organizations served as the basis for filling the data set of the quantitative survey of organizations. For the desk research, data from already available social studies related to the veteran sphere, conducted in 2019-2023, were used. The list of references to additional studies is provided in the text of the analytical report.

A questionnaire with mostly closed standardized questions was developed to conduct a quantitative survey. The questionnaire was programmed in the KoBo Tool software package for self-completion by respondents online. Next, an invitation to fill out a questionnaire was sent to representatives of veteran CSOs from the provided database (the database included a total of 1,066 organizations). The study was conducted during July-August 2023 with veteran CSOs. A total of 117 completed questionnaires were received. Questionnaires were predominantly filled out by managers/heads of organizations. The maximum theoretical sampling error does not exceed 8.6% (however, additional systematic biases may occur). It is worth noting that during the online survey, the organizations were also contacted by the interviewers through the indicated contacts (e-mail, contact phone). Thus, from the combined base consisting of 1066 organizations, 354 organizations responded to the contact of the interviewers, 69 organizations indicated that they temporarily do not carry out NGO activities or do not carry out them at all, 644 organizations could not be contacted (predominantly respondents reported that currently they are military personnel and are not related to the activities of organizations).

The qualitative component of the study included conducting in-depth interviews with key informants. A total of 27 expert in-depth interviews were held with representatives of ministries (Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine, Ministry of Social Policy, Ministry of Health); representatives of civil society working in the field of veterans; representatives of donors and communal institutions related to the area of research (see Appendix 2). Expert in-depth interviews were conducted online using the Zoom platform and lasted from 60 to 90 minutes (each) according to a previously created guide (see Appendix 3), which includes 4 thematic blocks, namely "Sector of veteran organizations in Ukraine", "Cooperation with CSOs working in the veterans sphere", "Activities of CSOs working in the veterans sphere" and "Needs and activities of CSOs working in the veterans sphere".

METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This study took place during the active phase of fighting on the territory of Ukraine, which became a significant limitation both in the context of implementing the logistics of data collection (conducting interviews and collecting completed questionnaires), and in the context of the respondents' reach. In particular, our hypothesis is that some of the organizations, in particular those founded by veterans and directly representing this social group were not active at the time of the survey due to the presence of their members in the war zone. Specifically, research experts point out that the contemporary field of civil society organizations, which, in particular, represent veterans, has changed a lot and continues to transform due to the fact that a large part of the founders and members of veteran NGOs (unions, councils, associations, etc.) are currently at the front lines and it is not known whether they will resume their full-fledged work after the end of the active phase of hostilities on the territory of Ukraine. This means that the research data can be interpreted as correct, first of all, for the period of the research. It can be used with caution for forecasting or modeling the situation with the field of veteran organizations in the future.

In light of this, it is pertinent to operationalize the concept of the object of research. We need to remind that the focus of the researchers' attention was concentrated on veteran organizations and organizations related to veterans' support in a broader sense, so it is necessary to operationalize the concept of veteran organizations and organizations related to the veteran sphere, which are considered within the scope of the study.

DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

War veteran - in accordance with the Law of Ukraine "On the Status of War Veterans, Guarantees of Their Social Protection"⁸, is a person (persons) who participated in the defense of the Motherland or in warfare on the territory of other states, which include: participants in war actions, persons disabled as a result of war and war participants. According to the research data of the sociological group "Rating"⁹, until recently, Ukrainians considered that various categories of combatants belong to the group of "veterans". For example, in the summer of 2022, a third of respondents considered "veterans" to be those who "fight and will return from the front in the current (Russian-Ukrainian war)", another third of respondents defined a "war veteran" primarily as a participant in the Second World War, which, respectively, means that a war veteran from this point of view is an elderly person. However, in six months, public opinion has changed, and almost a fifth of respondents who participated in another study¹⁰ conducted by the sociological group "Rating" in January 2023, stated that a veteran is a young person, and for the majority of respondents (55%) a veteran is a "middle-aged person. That is, public opinion and the image of a veteran are undergoing changes. For the purpose of this research, when we talk about veterans and their needs, we mean people who took part in the Russian-Ukrainian war (since 2014) and their needs.

The Russian-Ukrainian war or Russian military aggression on the territory of Ukraine is a term used in mass media, journalism, and school textbooks and means military actions on the territory of Ukraine by Russian troops from 2014 until now.

Currently, the definition and activity of a **veteran organization** or civil association of war veterans is not regulated by a separate regulatory act, so veterans' public associations are included in the general group

⁸Source: Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3551-12#Text>

⁹The sixteenth national survey in war conditions, conducted by the sociological group "Rating" on August 6-7, 2022.

¹⁰Research by the Ukrainian Veterans Fund, the sociological group "Rating" and Texty.org, source: https://veteranfund.com.ua/opportunity/portret_veterana/

of "non-governmental organizations". Their special feature is that they are created by citizens who have the social status of war veterans, war participants, combatants, etc. The composition of these organizations, first of all, includes precisely those who have this status, which determines the affiliation of the organization to the "veteran" type. However, within the scope of this research, which is designed to study a wide range of civil initiatives that work in the field of supporting veterans, it is appropriate to single out such organizations, whose founders or members are not veterans directly. This research suggests using the definition of **"pro-veteran organizations"**, that is, those that work at least to a certain extent with veterans' social group. It is also important to point out that the interviews with experts of the study, dealt, to a greater extent, with the cooperation of organizations with veterans of the Russian-Ukrainian war. More details on the distinction between these types of organizations and other forms of civil associations created with the direct participation of veterans or members of their families and civil society figures who provide services to veterans will be discussed in Chapter 1.

MAIN RESEARCH RESULTS



WORKING CONDITIONS AND PROFILE OF VETERAN AND PRO-VETERAN CSOS

- Experts from among representatives of state authorities, communal institutions, and the civil society note that in their work they usually single out organizations that are founded and consist mainly of veterans and/or their family members¹¹. It is correct to call such organizations "veteran". Those organizations whose activities - advocacy or services - are aimed at providing assistance to veterans, are considered by CSO experts working in the veterans' sphere as "pro-veteran organizations/projects/initiatives", etc. (this term will be used hereinafter in this research too). The Ministry of Veterans Affairs is trying to formalize the separation of civil society organizations founded by veterans or their family members. Currently, one of the criteria for classifying an organization as "veteran" by the Ministry of Veterans Affairs and other state authorities is the presence among the founders of representatives of the veteran community and the designation of veterans as one of the target groups in the statutory documents. Representatives of state authorities unequivocally positively evaluate this initiative, adding that it would help state authorities make more balanced decisions about cooperation with certain civil society organizations. Especially, taking into account the prospect of further denationalization of social and other services to veterans and provision of them by civil society organizations. Experts emphasized the need for a single base of organizations or the systematization of such organizations by types of services provided, geography of activity, target audiences, etc. Currently, each of the institutions, to a certain extent, interacts within its "bubble", focusing on cooperation with the most loyal or "friendly" NGOs.

¹¹Draft Law of Ukraine dated July 18, 2023 "On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine Regarding the Legal Status of Civil Associations of War Veterans"

- On the other hand, the majority of civil society organizations that have experience of interaction with state authorities, on the contrary, insists that it is precisely the state authorities that lack consistency and coordination in their work with veterans. For example, experts critically assessed the effectiveness of the work of the Public Council under the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, the dispersion and partial incoherence of initiatives related to the introduction of new approaches (case managers or mentors for veterans), difficulties in communication with state authorities, cases when requests from the NGO were left unanswered, etc.
- All in all, the opinions of all groups of experts converge when it comes to the need for further revision of approaches to the formation of state policy regarding veterans. This policy should take into account the socio-demographic profile of veterans' community (people of young, active and working age), stimulate their social and economic activity, be inclusive, and transition from incentives in the form of social benefits (which, in turn, form a certain image of veterans in society as depending on paternalism of the state) towards emphasis on the opportunities and development of the strengths of veterans in their civilian life after they return to their communities.
- So far, we can talk about the process of transformation in the field of veteran and pro-veteran organizations. Currently, experts note, to a greater extent, is the peak activity of the second category of organizations. That is, there is a resource and there is a demand for the development of the system of provision of social, psychological, informational and legal services for veterans, which are carried out predominantly precisely by pro-veteran organizations. Currently, most of the cooperation and consultation is in the process of the development of state policies and the implementation of new models is happening precisely with pro-veteran organizations. It is worth noting that the founders of pro-veteran organizations can also include veterans, most of whom are currently at the front and, in fact, are not involved in the activities or management of the organizations.
- Experts predict a surge in recommencing of the work or creation of new veteran organizations after demobilization in Ukraine. This means that by this time both the state and, preferably, donor organizations will be able to better navigate both the needs of the community itself and the possibilities of supporting their civil activity. For example, representatives of international organizations indicate that in the future such support should be provided to diverse, and more often - local - organizations that will be created and act in the interests of veterans of local communities.
- So far, based on the results of the desk research, we can conclude that despite the large number of officially registered NGOs (1066 organizations appear on the research map), only half of them have valid contacts, and only 10% responded and participated in the quantitative survey.
- According to the results of a quantitative survey by region of location (or the region of the location of head office in the case of several branches), 25% of the surveyed CSOs are located in the western regions of Ukraine, 27% - in the city of Kyiv, 30% - in the Center/North, 18% - in the South/East;
- The vast majority (73%) were founded between 2014 and February 24, 2022. 5% were founded after February 24, 2022, and 22% before 2014;

- 38% operate at the national level, and another 11% operate at the level of several oblasts. The remaining 51% are concentrated either (mostly) at the level of one oblast, or (less often) at the level of a separate settlement or community; The median number of persons contacting the surveyed CSOs every month (among those who provided information) is 55 (although the range is from 1 to 1,000). 88% of CSOs work directly with representatives of 5 categories of veterans, on average – with 3 different categories (the remaining 12% work in almost all cases with certain other categories). Among all CSOs, the most frequent answer was that they work with veterans of the current war (78% work with them), with families of deceased military personnel (72%) and with families of veterans of the current war (68%). 48% talk about working with the families of those who have gone missing, and 44% – with the families of those who are in captivity;
- Most often, CSOs provide such services as psychological support / adaptation (79%), information and educational activities (73%), legal support (64%). More than half (55%) also organize activities for children. Other types of services were mentioned less often (from 40% in the case of medical support to 30% in the case of material support);
- At least 33% of surveyed CSOs do not have a single full-time or part-time employee. At the same time, at least 80% of the surveyed CSOs reported that they have volunteers who do not receive a salary.
- These data fully correlate with the results of the qualitative component of the survey. In particular, representatives of state authorities mostly interact with powerful, institutionally developed organizations. They do not have the resources to look for new partners in the regions and provide appropriate support to such organizations, which would help them to develop institutionally. According to experts representing the donor community, this direction will be one of the priorities for their grant programs in the future. Nevertheless, the question of access to precisely veteran organizations, which are often perceived as a rather closed and "niche" community in the NGO sector, remains open.
- Experts from NGOs, who participated in the survey as key informants, point out that in the near future their organizations will be implementing the following projects (as the most urgent ones) – social, educational (training initiatives) both at the All-Ukrainian and at the local levels.
- While certain specialized niches already exist among institutionally developed and stable non-governmental organizations - legal aid, development of training programs for specialists of various services and departments, work with local self-government bodies, involvement of business in projects for the inclusion of veterans, advocacy activities to promote changes in the field of policies regarding veterans – for those organizations that are just entering this field, this process is at an initial stage. This means that mentoring programs for relevant NGOs, programs for networking and development of cooperation, in particular, at the community and national level, may be relevant.



SELF-ASSESSMENT BY ORGANIZATIONS OF THEIR ACTIVITIES. FUNDING SOURCES FOR ACTIVITIES

- CSOs that participated in the quantitative survey evaluated themselves according to 8 characteristics. The vast majority of surveyed CSOs rated themselves rather well or very well in following three characteristics: prospects for the future (85% positive assessments, including 54% rated themselves very well), qualifications of employees (74% positive answers, including 45% rated themselves very well) and employee motivation (72% rated themselves positively, including 56% rated themselves very well). Only 3-5% rated their CSOs rather poorly or very poorly when it comes to these characteristics;
- Then there are three characteristics according to which formally the majority or a significant part of respondents positively evaluated their organizations, while a small part of respondents gave negative evaluations. However, in this case, no more than a quarter rated their organizations very well (that is, these positive ratings are "less confident"). These characteristics are: the effectiveness of meeting the needs of the population categories with which they work (67% rated it positively, including 26% of respondents who rated it very well), capacity (57% rated it positively, but 24% of them rated it very well), the sufficient number of employees / volunteers (44% rated it well, but of them 25% rated it very well);
- There are also two characteristics where most CSOs rated their organizations negatively. One relates to the stability of funding sources (56% rather poorly or very poorly rated their organizations against only 11% who rated rather well or very well) and the other - to the sufficiency of financial resources (57% against 11%);
- The majority of CSOs that did not rate the effectiveness of meeting needs by their organization by 9-10 points, primarily explain this by the lack / instability of funding (55%). Other barriers were mentioned less often, but it is pertinent to take into the account that the top 3 needs also include problematic / unestablished relations with the authorities (19%) and lack of employees (18%).
- 92% of the surveyed CSOs have at least one source of financing of their activities (the remaining 8% answered that their organization's activities are not financed in any way). Most CSOs – 50% out of total number – named donations of ordinary residents as their source of financing. This is followed by the donations from businesses (26%), funding from international organizations (26%) and funding from the local budget (25%). 19% of CSOs finance their activities from their own funds or at the expense of membership fees, 16% - at the expense of other Ukrainian NGOs. 5% of CSOs mentioned the national budget;
- Among the interviewed CSOs, only 7% answered that they would have to cease to exist immediately in case of termination of financing. At the same time, 6% could still exist up to 1 month after this, 17% - from 1 to 3 months, 10% - from 4 to 6 months, and 60% - for more than 6 months.



COOPERATION WITH OTHER VETERAN CSOS, LOCAL AND CENTRAL AUTHORITIES

- Experts from the ranks of key informants, who all represented powerful and institutionally developed organizations (with a history of implemented projects and initiatives), noted that today the sector of civil society organizations in the veterans' sphere has diversified thanks to those who have joined the work with veterans or their family members in an ad hoc mode. In particular, representatives of the civil sector believe that organizations lack communication among themselves, they need greater involvement in joint projects, exchange of experience and best practices. The current networks of NGOs working in the field of providing services to veterans are expanding gradually. This means that at the communal and state levels, a number of services provided by organizations may be duplicated, while other needs, on the contrary, may be covered partially, depending on the potential and capacity of organizations and service providers on the ground.
- Representatives of CSOs, who participated in the survey as key informants, for the most part, more positively evaluate the effectiveness of interaction with local self-government bodies in comparison with representatives of central state authorities. Thus, the quality of interaction with the latter is negatively affected, first of all, by the lack of coordinated work and communication with the civil sector by representatives of the central authorities, the negative reaction to the critical remarks by civil activists regarding the activities of the state authorities responsible for development and implementation of policies in the veteran sphere. Representatives of civil society feel that a systemic and veteran-centric vision of the work of such state authorities is lacking. In particular, respondents noted the need for increased activity, openness to dialogue, development of analytical and communication and information capabilities of state authorities, including during the interaction between various state departments.
- 81% cooperate with other veteran CSOs, 75% with local authorities, 62% with central authorities. We assume that the most active and "visible" organizations were among the respondents of this study. In addition, research respondents were also reached through the networks of state authorities, coalitions of civil society organizations, etc.
- The absolute majority of surveyed CSOs - 79% - consider their relations with other veteran CSOs to be cooperation. Only 2% talk about unhealthy relationships, although another 8% talk about healthy competition;
- At the same time 28% of veteran CSOs responded that they practically do not have relations with local authorities, however, the majority (58%) speak of the cooperation (8% speak of healthy competition, and unhealthy relations were mentioned by 2%). The same situation is with relations with state authorities. Thus, 36% of veteran CSOs do not have relations with central authorities, while 49% characterized their relations with the state as cooperation (6% consider them healthy competition, and 8% consider these relations to be unhealthy);

- Although 77-79% believe that it is important for them to cooperate with other veteran CSOs / local authorities / central authorities to achieve their goals, this cooperation is not critically important (only 17-30% see it as a critical need);

- 77% of CSOs believe that veteran CSOs complement the activities of central and local authorities, and therefore they will remain relevant in the future. While 23% believe that in the future the government should take over the performance of their functions;

- No more than 35% assess the effectiveness of state bodies/services as good or rather good. On the other hand, no more than 34% rate it as rather bad or very bad. Moreover, in almost all cases, the balance of evaluations is either positive (that is, those who evaluate positively are in majority compared to those who evaluate poorly), or close to 0. Only in the case of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, 21% rated its effectiveness as good, and 34% – as bad (respectively, the balance is noticeably negative).

- The results of the survey also correspond to expert assessments regarding the level of interaction within NGOs working in the veteran sphere. First of all, for the most part, we are talking here not about veteran organizations, but about those that provide assistance to veterans. The relatively low level of actual interaction between NGOs at the local level (due to the lack of information, resources, etc.) also affects the quality of the work of these organizations - the possibility of exchanging experience, best practices, complementing each other's work and avoiding duplication of invested resources. At the same time, all experts, without exception, note the high level of cooperation of all-Ukrainian institutionally developed CSOs, as well as regional organizations that work specifically with veterans at the oblast level.

- The relations between NGOs and the government, on one hand, cannot be called antagonistic - cooperation takes place at various levels. However, according to civil society organizations (key informants of the study), it is not effective enough at the national level. In particular, the study participants say that the relevant Ministry does not take into account local needs (it does not have the capacity, since the territorial branches of the Ministry have been eliminated or do not aim to analyze different regional contexts. Although in 2022, representatives of the Ministry visited various oblasts, actively interacted with local organizations and communicated with their representatives. Also, involvement of the public in the work of the Public Council under the Ministry of Veterans needs to be more open; the circle of NGO representatives among the members of this Council needs to be expanded. Despite the fact that the representatives of the specialized Ministry point to the work of public councils as a key tool of consultation and interaction with the public, experts from among NGOs note that currently 2 out of 3 public councils under the Ministry are not functioning.

- Among the research experts, there were no representatives of organizations that had experience in receiving state funds. At the same time, some of the respondents believe that the activity of the Ukrainian Veterans Fund can be considered successful from the point of view of carrying out informational work,

producing analytical materials on the topic and establishing cooperation with non-governmental sector. According to experts, improvements are required in areas such as, for example, registration of providers of psychological services (the procedure, according to experts, needs optimization and greater popularization among potential providers), as well as grant competitions from the Ukrainian Veterans Fund. Some respondents who are representatives of CSOs mentioned the complexity of the tendering procedure and the existing risks and limitations regarding the effective management of public funds. As a result, they are focused to a greater extent on cooperation with international organizations.



URGENT NEEDS OF ORGANIZATIONS AND THE SECTOR AS A WHOLE

- Most of the respondents of the quantitative survey talked about securing stable sources of funding (57%) and sufficient level of financing (51%). This is followed by the possibility of keeping a permanent staff of employees (42%), establishing cooperation with authorities (37%) and improving the qualifications of employees (31%). Other needs are urgent for a smaller number of veteran CSOs.
- The need for stable financial support of organizations, especially in the long-term perspective (which will help organizations to develop and be able to meet the needs of the target group during peak demand from veterans) was noted by all without exception respondents of the expert survey. Civil society organizations insist on the need for such support when taking into consideration the prospects of the state delegating the functions of social service providers to veterans (and the peculiarity of financing of these services by state authorities, when payment for services is made upon the fact of their provision and does not include advance payments for this work) to the NGOs.
- Also, representatives of both donor and civil society organizations point out the risks that stem from the fact that today grant support programs are initiated by donors who "enter" this field without getting properly familiarized with it beforehand. As a consequence, funds are allocated, most often, to thematic priorities developed without taking into account the needs of various organizations, or with a number of restrictions for NGOs (from the point of view of administrative, communication and other accompanying project requirements). For example, a significant part of donor organizations limits or does not support activities related to (any) assistance to military personnel. This negatively affects the opportunities for activity of organizations that help (future) veterans at all stages - from mobilization to participation in the armed forces, to the stage of returning to civilian life.
- At the same time, some representatives of donor organizations talk about the potential opportunity to start support programs for (newly created) organizations that work at the local level, thereby expressing their readiness to apply other, less formalized grant selection procedures.
- Regarding the needs of organizations, experts highlight the following: institutional support and training in project management, organizational

- development, prevention of burnout, development of professional skills and fundraising for implementation of the organization's activities.
It is important for both civil society organizations and donors that gradual specialization and professionalization of services takes place in the field of pro-veteran organizations (such services as legal assistance, psychological assistance and social support, work with various groups – veterans, relatives, children, etc. – rehabilitation services, etc.). Supervision of compliance with the quality of the services provided, development of protocols for such work may take place at the level of representatives of the community itself. Standardization and quality control should take place with the direct participation of responsible state authorities.
- However, it is necessary to emphasize that it is important to conduct and support training and development of professional skills of CSOs along with providing organizations with support for their operational activities.
- Even now, the donor community and state authorities should plan in advance the work on strengthening civic participation of veterans who will return from the war and will be able to participate in the creation of CSOs. Unique approaches to work with this category of organizations will be required, on behalf of the state, the donor community and representatives of the civil society.
- Special attention needs to be paid to the promotion at the state level of programs aimed at supporting families of the military, relatives of the dead, and orphaned children of the military. According to experts, these areas are currently partially covered by CSOs and donor programs, but it is fitting that the additional attention is paid to these issues at the state level now.
- Most of the respondents of the in-depth interviews evaluate CSOs (mainly, pro-veterans, that is, those that have previous experience in the field of social support, service provision, etc.) as capable subjects of providing such assistance to veterans and their families. However, experts point to the heterogeneity of professional capacity among representatives of the sector. That is why improving the quality of such work should involve standardization of services (by the state), a greater level of professional interaction between organizations and with other service providers, and unification of criteria for assessing the quality of such services. Regarding the capacity of veteran organizations in this area, the respondents more often perceive such organizations as associations of veterans with the aim of protecting their rights and interests. Consequently, for the best inclusion of veteran organizations in the pool of service providers in this sphere, it is necessary to provide targeted institutional and organizational support to such organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIZATIONS WORKING IN THE VETERAN SPHERE

The recommendations were developed based on the results of a sociological research of the opinions of representatives of the expert environment and CSOs related to the veteran sphere.

FOR STATE AUTHORITIES

Research experts emphasize the need to update and modernize the legal framework that regulates the social status and protection of veterans. We are referring to the Law of Ukraine "On the Status of Veterans, Guarantees of Their Social Protection" adopted in 1993 and other regulatory legal framework, which concerns the harmonization of determination of the status of veterans, the procedures for the creation of civil society organizations by veterans, etc. These changes in the development and modernization of legislation should be preceded by thorough discussions and approval of approaches to the formation of state policy in the veteran sphere that are based on a veteran-oriented paradigm of inclusivity and consideration of the needs and socio-demographic profile of contemporary veterans.

The recommendations are addressed, first of all, to the specialized Ministry of Veterans Affairs, relate to strengthening the institution's ability to coordinate the process of developing and implementing state policies in the field of veteran support, establishing more effective and inclusive work of advisory bodies with the participation of CSOs - the Public Council, the Council of Families of the Deceased, the Council of Veterans under the Ministry of Veteran Affairs. It is worth establishing an advisory institution with the participation of both representatives of CSOs and other central state authorities responsible for social policy, health care, information policy, etc.

The Ministry of Veterans Affairs is recommended to strengthen its work in building a network of partners among CSOs regarding systematic research and taking into account the needs of both beneficiaries (veteran community) and civil society organizations that represent their interests or work in this area. Coordination of such work with the involvement of the public and specialized experts can take place through the mechanisms of work of advisory and public councils under the Ministry.

It is appropriate to consider the possibilities of securing additional support from international organizations to build the capacity of the Ministry in the areas of strengthening analytical and communication components of its work, strengthening competences in establishing partnership relations and interaction with interested parties, etc. The sphere of communication of the needs of representatives of the veteran community in the public information space requires additional attention. Approaches to working with families of veterans, family members, and children of veterans need to be publicly communicated and coordinated at the level of state policies.

When developing a payment mechanism from the state budget for services provided to veterans by civil society organizations, it is necessary to determine the providers of social services out of non-governmental organizations, in accordance with the market value of these services. It is important to clearly define the requirements towards the providers of such services, as well as to develop mechanisms of quality control over the provision of such services. The responsibility for the provision of low-quality services (if detected) needs to be determined.

TO INTERNATIONAL DONOR ORGANIZATIONS

Forecasts regarding the reformatting of the field of veteran organizations after the end of the active phase of hostilities foresee the emergence of new CSOs founded by veterans or other community representatives - formal and informal associations, which will include various groups from among

representatives of the veteran community (veterans themselves, members of their families, children of veterans, etc.). This means that this pool of organizations - more often, local, newly created ones - will need targeted support – both at the stage of formalization of their activities (legal registration) and at further stages of the development of their activities. Grant programs designed for the development of the circle of organizations in the veteran sphere at the community level should provide for the diversification of partners and grantees; may take into account the possibilities of involving such organizations in existing mentoring programs for organizational development, raising funds for the organization's work, building cooperation at the local level etc.; support the creation of new organizations. Accordingly, the procedure for selecting and supporting grant applications will need optimized approaches and requirements that will be applied to newly created organizations. Systemic institutional support for organizations focused on providing services to the veteran community will be important at the initial stage, especially in light of the initiation of the mechanism of denationalization of social services for veterans and the purchase of these services from CSOs.

It is important to consider the possibilities of supporting or implementing activities related to the coordination or facilitation of cooperation between state authorities, CSOs and international organizations; start the work of an expanded group of participants of such coordination with the participation of donor organizations, state authorities and CSOs from among veteran and pro-veteran organizations.

There is a need to strengthen the coordination of activities supporting the work of CSOs in the veteran sphere between donor organizations to harmonize operations in various fields and niches of veteran-related topics in order to avoid or minimize the duplication of efforts and resources.

The previous stage of the activities of veteran organizations in the period between 2014 and 2021 demonstrated the need for long-term institutional support of CSOs in the veteran sphere - the provision of grant support for the organization's activities for a period of 12 months and longer. In particular, there is a need to support the operational activities of organizations, development of proper governance of organizations, strategizing and proper planning of their work.

Potential transformations in the field of veteran organizations will require strengthening the coordination of the donor community in matters of supporting networks of organizations, thematic areas of work, or individual target groups from among representatives of the veteran community. Proper coordination will also require monitoring of changes in the field of veteran organizations, systematization of information about existing initiatives and projects, as well as about projects that will need to be initiated in accordance with emerging needs.

There is a need to revise the policy of restrictions on providing international support to servicemen who have or do not (yet) have UBD status, taking into account the fact that "the needs of veterans already exist at the stage when they are still servicemen".

Development of the capacity of the field of veteran and pro-veteran organizations will be facilitated by more open communication with potential applicants, clarification of application procedures, program priorities, etc. Additional support will be needed for programs aimed at training professional personnel for CSOs in general and in the veteran sector in particular, projects aimed at psychological recovery and prevention of professional burnout among representatives of CSO teams.

FOR CSOS

On one hand, the development of recommendations for CSOs on activities aimed at strengthening organizations themselves face a limitation that concerns, first of all, the diversity of the field of organizations working in the veteran sphere. On the other hand, this field of CSOs is at the stage of its

transformation and this transformation will probably continue to intensify in conditions of the ongoing war, and, in particular, this field will change significantly with the end of the active phase of hostilities. Accordingly, the recommendations listed below are rather generalized in nature and are based, first of all, on expert assessments made during in-depth interviews with key informants.

In particular, CSOs are recommended to develop expertise and professionalize in the areas of their chosen activities. It is necessary to determine the areas of activity in the veteran sphere according to capacity and expertise - be it service provision, advocacy, research, analytics, etc.

Organizations are recommended to use existing networking tools (online and offline) to partner with other organizations, to study the experience of CSOs in other oblasts of Ukraine, to establish partnerships at the national level, and to study and apply the best relevant practices from international experience.

Organizations are to unite in networks or coalition groups in order to promote the necessary changes at the level of legislation or state policies - this is relevant, in particular, for providers of certain social services who in the future intend to provide these services at the expense of the state budget.

By studying the experience of successful practices of NGO cooperation with local authorities in various oblasts of Ukraine, CSOs can strengthen cooperation with representatives of local authorities and communal institutions working in the veteran sector.



CHAPTER I. PROFILE OF THE VETERAN CSOS

I.1 DIFFERENTIATION OF ORGANIZATIONS. LEGAL FIELD OF ACTIVITIES AND WORK PROFILE

There is no distinction or separation of veteran CSOs at the legislative level. Representatives of one of the organizations that took part in the survey note that from a formal point of view (from the point of view of legislation), a veteran organization is one whose founders include veterans, and the charter of the CSO states that the organization carries out its activities in interests of veterans; if the organization implements certain projects aimed at supporting veterans, but there are no veterans either in the statutory documents or among the founders, then formally it is not a veteran organization, but it is one that works in veteran sphere. A representative of one of the Ministries, who participated in the research as an expert, gave an example of such a (pro-veteran) organization, which, in his opinion, illustrates the work of a "civilian" organization in the interests of veterans.

"The most striking example of the second (pro-veteran) organization is the Legal Hundred. The organization was launched by civilians who had no experience of participating in combat operations, but in support of the military, in support of veterans. This is a vivid example of an organization that is not an association of veterans, but whose activities are aimed at supporting veterans. A veteran's organization is an association of veterans, where veterans have united to achieve some common goal, to help themselves and others." - Respondent 5

Almost all expert respondents – both representatives of NGOs and representatives of state authorities and communal institutions – for their part, point out the conceptual difference between these two types of organizations, but emphasize that at the legislative level, there is no distinction between these organizations now. The key feature, according to experts, is that in veteran organizations and associations, veterans are also the subjects of management of such organizations. While in pro-veteran organizations these positions may include business representatives, philanthropists, activists, social workers or psychologists who provide services directly to representatives of the veteran community.

However, as one of the research participants noted during the interview, veterans' organizations are mentioned in the Law of Ukraine "On the Status of War Veterans, Guarantees of Their Social Protection", but no clear definition is provided there for now. In its activities, when establishing cooperation with NGOs within the scope of its work, the Ministry of Veterans Affairs checks for the presence or mention of

veterans and activities aimed at their support in the statutory documents of the NGO. According to the experience of the activities of one of the organizations that works with veterans and for veterans, they "formally" come under the definition of a "veteran organization" by the relevant Ministry, since one of the tasks of their activity is work with veterans. According to this approach, an organization can be "veteran" because of its target group, while the organization may not have war veterans among its employees. At the same time, as another expert noted, even if the founder of the organization is a veteran or a group of veterans, this CSO does not necessarily position itself as "veteran". Among other definitions of organizations that are not founded by veterans, but work in this field, the respondents mentioned: "an organization that works in the field of veteran affairs", "a service organization", "an organization that provides assistance to veterans", etc.

"We distinguish between such organizations (created by veterans or those that provide assistance to veterans) due to the fact that unfortunately, veteran organizations that united veterans were often political projects in Ukraine. Veterans were gathered, divided, and often in the city there are 100 veterans and 20 organizations that are already fighting with each other, for forceful measures of some kind. It has been happening since 2014, because there are, as it were, people with status who wear uniforms, so why not use them for some mercantile purposes, that's how it was done. Unfortunately, I did not come across membership organizations of veterans, whose work I would consider effective, and the work of organizations that are oriented towards veterans and provide them with services, to a greater extent - these are precisely the organizations that work for veterans".
- Respondent 16.

Organizations working in the veteran sphere can be divided according to the structural and functional approach:

- 1) Organizations that can have representatives of the veteran movement in their structure and among the founders, that provide appropriate services to veterans, while at the same time performing an advocacy function - influencing politicians in the field of veterans, etc.;
- 2) Organizations that represent veterans as a community, provide services or contribute to the strengthening of the veteran environment, provide services based on the peer-to-peer principle and group in accordance with the interests and needs of veterans in Ukraine;
- 3) Organizations that perform a purely service function, were founded and made up of only civilians (may also include representatives of the veteran community to provide specialized services), and provide veterans with socio-psychological, legal or other services; veterans can be one of many target audiences of such CSOs.

In order to strengthen the civil participation of veterans and improve their access to social protection services, the Ministry of Veterans Affairs is currently trying to regulate the issue of founding civil society organizations by war veterans at the legislative level. The explanatory note to the Draft Law of Ukraine, in particular, states that its purpose is to strengthen the capacity of veteran civil associations, which can influence the adoption and implementation of government decisions. As noted by the research expert representing the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, it is planned to develop criteria that will help to distinguish between "civil association, veteran civil association or civil association whose activities are aimed at the implementation of veteran policy." Also, the Ministry currently needs to create a register of organizations that represent, in the opinion of the expert, a fairly wide segment of CSOs, which are not those founded by veterans, but provide a wide range of services and support to the veteran community. Representatives of state authorities evaluate this legislative initiative positively. In particular, clarifying the criteria for distinguishing veteran organizations, in their opinion, can help distinguish those organizations that provide qualified or certified assistance to veterans, strengthen institutionally the veteran community, and ensure peer-to-peer and inclusion principles in civil work for the veteran community.

"The formalization of work is very important, and this is lacking, because they, in fact, really work using a residual principle, they do what they have enough of strength, resources, and so on left. If they are registered, they will be trained, they will know that they can go and get money for carrying out activities, they will be more effective. Yes, I believe that it is necessary to separate this policy into a separate category. So that the policy for the veterans' organization could be distinguished from the policy for other civil society organizations working for veterans." - Respondent 10

Representatives of the international donor community also support the legislative regulation of the sphere of work of civil society organizations, which would not deny the existence of informal unions or networks, but will contribute to the professionalization and greater expertise of such veteran associations. However, the same donors note that for the effective work of NGOs, it is necessary, first of all, to strengthen their capacities in allocating resources and implementing projects.

"NGOs have nowhere to learn project management, financial management, they don't have normal accountants. I'm saying that many of them have low institutional capacity, there is no access to resources. What does imperfect legislation mean? Well, there is legislation, you can register, what else do you need. You get a non-profit status so go and work." - Respondent 10

Experts representing the civil sector and, in particular, well-known powerful organizations that work with veterans note that the formalization of the work of veteran NGOs is an important, but not the only sufficient condition for the further successful functioning of veteran and pro-veteran organizations. In particular, experts insist that such work on the "formalization" of civil society organizations should take place in parallel with the development of policies in the veteran sphere and the standardization of the provision of services to veterans by civil society organizations. This, in turn, requires institutional development from the organizations themselves and the availability of resources and capacity to raise funds and undergo training. That is, the general recommendation "development of policies in the veteran sphere" in turn involves a complex multistage work on:

- improvement of legislation regarding the status and social protection of veterans and combatants;
- support of the veteran civil movement, including institutional support, which would provide opportunities for organizations to not only to register, but also work consistently in one or the other field;
- standardization of services provided to veterans by CSOs. This aspect acquires special importance with the prospects of "denationalization" of social services provided to veterans. Here, among the issues that come to the fore, is the regular assessment of the needs of the target group itself, and the study of the field of providers of such services by the state - who already provides services, who can teach how to provide them, whether it is necessary to support additional services or providers or whether this or that niche of services meets all the demand;
- harmonization of available information from different sources about the different services available. Such information can be available both to the veterans, and presented in more detail for service providers;
- developing a cross-sectoral systemic approach in working with veterans. Experts have repeatedly spoken about the lack of interaction not only at the level of the civil society (to a certain degree, there is an effort to establish networks, thanks to donor support or based on the own initiative of CSOs), but also at the level of state authorities. An illustrative example is the pilot project of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs for the implementation of the position of mentor or veteran's assistant, while at the same time, the Ministry of Social Policy is implementing a case manager training system. According to representatives of civil society, currently there is a lack of understanding of who is responsible for the implementation of this pilot program and how its implementation is coordinated between all the parties involved.

"Who does a veteran turn to if he needs to have some issues resolved? You don't have to conduct a survey; in 99% cases he will turn to his brother in arms. And this brother will share with him his own experience. And that's what I said – it is necessary to standardize, because each person has his own experience, either positive or negative but different, and he passes it on to the next. That's why we need these case managers, so that they know the standard, how a person can build his own movement, which authorities to attend to get a certificate, where he should get all the documents, how he should go through all the agencies in order to satisfy his needs". - Respondent 19

According to experts, the key challenge currently is not so much the regulation (or formalization) of the work of civil society organizations that represent the veteran community, but the coordination of approaches and quality standards of service provision. Here, it is appropriate to highlight several initiatives and achievements that could help veterans and their family members understand the various types of services offered and meet their needs. For example, the "Guide for veterans and members of their families", published by the Ukrainian Veterans Fund in 2023, provides information on the algorithm of actions (or "road map") for receiving psychological, medical-psychological or psychiatric help for veterans with point of entry into this system through the Crisis Support Hotline¹². Information products developed by civil society organizations are also helpful, including digital products, the development of which is announced by CSOs¹³.

According to respondents representing the civil society and international organizations, if we look at the sphere of work with veterans from a more general perspective, then at the social level and at the level of political decision-making, the need to change the "veteran discourse" has already crystallized. This means that both at the level of public opinion and at the level of political decisions, the attitude to veteran issues requires a change in approaches.

"It seems to me that the social policy and support for veterans should be radically revised. The portrait of a veteran has changed, these are young, active people, while we, in my opinion, still have an approach to veterans as towards some social dependents." - Respondent 8

For example, some experts believe that it is wrong to consider veterans' issues as purely a question of social subsidiaries as this may lead to the perpetuation of the negative image of a veteran and the reduction of this image to a "recipient" of social assistance; while ignoring the question of supporting the potential and developing the capabilities of the military who will return to civilian life after the end of the war.

The experts of the in-depth interviews mostly mentioned organizations "visible" at the national or local level, umbrella organizations that unite representatives of various organizations, oriented to work with veterans and their family members (both organizations targeting only veterans and the ones who have many target groups). All-Ukrainian or powerful regional organizations were the ones that were named most often, including the following CSOs:

All-Ukrainian and oblast veteran organizations

The Movement of Veterans of Ukraine is an organization that united more than 400 veteran civil society organizations throughout Ukraine.

Councils of Veterans at Oblast State Administrations

Coordinating unions of ATO participants/veterans in different oblasts (36 unions across Ukraine)

Veteran unit of the Azov regiment

¹²A guide for veterans and their family members within the system of providing psychological, medico-psychological, psychiatric care. A collection of works and adapted materials from the experience of the Ukrainian Veterans Fund Crisis Support Hotline / authors O. V. Lashko, T. V. Varenya, V. G. Tymofiev, I. V. Koshova, E. M. Petrushko, N.m Orlovska, G. Yu. Tsyhankova., I. D. Ternopolska, O. V. Didenko - 2023. - XX. See: <https://veteranfund.com.ua/doc/putivnik.pdf>

¹³For example, a legal navigator for military personnel, veterans and their relatives. Source - a post on the Facebook network of the founder of the NGO "Pryncyp"

Union of families of the deceased
Women's veteran movement
The first women's veteran space "Rehab" (Lviv)
NGO of veterans and disabled ATO participants "Rapira"

Communal organizations (which also have registered civil society organizations)¹⁴

Communal institutions "Veterans' space" in the regions of Ukraine
Lviv center for providing services to participants in hostilities
Mykolayiv center for providing services to participants in hostilities

All-Ukrainian "umbrella" or well-known regional organizations

Veteran HUB (Kyiv, Vinnytsia)
"Space of opportunities" - unites a coalition of 21 organizations
YARMIZ Center for rehabilitation and readaptation of ATO and JFO participants - a space for veterans and their families
Veterans Hub Odesa
Charitable Foundation "Come Back Alive"
NGO "Free choice"
NGO "Pryncyp"
NGO "Blue Bird"
NGO "Forpost"
NGO "Poruch"
Ukrainian NGO "Sich"
Association of families of missing persons "Nadiya"
NGO "Heart of Azovstal"
NGO "Legal Hundred"
"Fenix" ATO Veterans Assistance Center (Lviv)

Private initiatives that also exist in the form of NGOs or charitable foundations and deal, first of all, with rehabilitation services - the Superhumans center, Next Step Ukraine, etc¹⁵.

Donor organizations that work in the field of supporting veterans

International Renaissance Fund, USAID programs (implemented by the PACT project), International Organization for Migration, United Nations Development Program, Human in Need Organization, IREX, Ukrainian Veterans Fund, National Democratic Institute (NDI), ISAR Ednannia, The International Fund for Social Adaptation, UN Women, the Embassy of Canada, the Embassy of Great Britain, the Embassy of Israel, the Foundation for Local Initiatives, Freedom House, etc.

Experts already note "turbulence" in the field of veteran organizations. What does it mean? First of all, compared to the period before the full-scale invasion, the number of veteran (veteran-founded) active organizations has significantly decreased, mainly because the founders and members of these organizations are currently in the ranks of the Armed Forces at the frontline and because most of these

¹⁴Most often, the respondents referred to the communal centers for providing assistance to veterans in a general way - "regional", not always specifying a specific area. One of the respondents noted that he considers such centers to be the most powerful in the Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Khmelnytsky, Mykolaiv, Dnipropetrovsk, and Rivne oblasts

¹⁵The list of organizations is based on the responses of experts who participated in in-depth interviews and is not exhaustive and includes only those organizations that were mentioned by more than 1 expert

organizations did not have time to strengthen institutionally. Analyzing approaches to the distinction between veteran and pro-veteran organizations, some respondents expressed critical assessments of the work of "veteran" organizations in particular. So, for example, the principle of creating a "veteran" organization only by people who have this status does not guarantee that the organization will act effectively in this area - such organizations or their members (founders) may act in the interests of a narrow circle of persons or lack professional capacity to help a wider circle of veterans, be not sufficiently aware of the needs of representatives of the veteran community. Among the public risks of this activity, we can name possible participation in political or civil projects in the interests of third parties, which to a certain extent can affect the perception of veterans by broad sections of society. It is worth noting that although this opinion was expressed only by one of the respondents of this study, it nevertheless illustrates existing public sentiments or cautions, which are occasionally articulated in social networks or the media.

"This very strong turbulence is problematic. Organizations are created and they disappear. As was the case with the Association of ATO Veterans – in three months (they grew) to 73 units and in another year (reduced) to zero, to a small handful. There was, for example, a very large organization, the Kyiv City Union of Veterans, but then they became very concentrated on the Municipal Guard project of the city of Kyiv, then the Municipal Guard itself got into a series of public scandals. In the end, the organization disintegrated." - Respondent 5

Among CSO interviewed within the scope of the quantitative research, 25% are located in the West, 27% - in the city of Kyiv, 30% - in the Center/North, 18% - in the South/East.

The vast majority (73%) were founded between 2014 and February 24, 2022. 5% were founded after February 24, 2022, and 22% before 2014.

By geography of activity, 38% operate at the national level, and another 11% operate at the level of several oblasts. The remaining 51% are concentrated either (mostly) at the level of one oblast, or (less often) at the level of a separate settlement or community.

FIGURE I.1.1 TIME OF ESTABLISHMENT OF CSOS AND GEOGRAPHY OF ACTIVITY here and further, all indicators in the figures are given as percentages (%)

Time of establishment

After February 24, 2022

Between 2014 and February 2022

Before 2014

Geography of Activity

Within one settlement or community

Within one oblast

Within several oblasts

Within whole of Ukraine

Finalizing the topic of the profile and legal framework of the activities of civil society organizations working in the veteran sphere, we can offer several additional criteria for classification of such organizations (regardless of whether the organization was founded by veterans or not):

- types of services (complex services, legal assistance, psychological assistance, employment/retraining/business/career guidance, education, humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation/prosthetics, patriotic education/sports and education/development of youth, advocacy, fundraising for the needs of the army, preparation of dry rations/food/grocery, etc.)

- target audience (veterans and their families, children of veterans, prisoners of war, missing persons, women, etc.);
- legal form (NGO, charitable foundation, union, etc.);
- geography of activity (all-Ukrainian, regional, local, etc.)
- sources of funding (charitable contributions, grants, business income, paid services, etc.);
- the number of members of the organization;
- level of institutional capacity (beginners and those with grant history or project implementation history)
- resources of organizations (availability of premises, funds, transport, material or immaterial resources, etc.)

I.2 CATEGORIES OF THE POPULATION CSOs WORK WITH AND MAIN SERVICES PROVIDED BY THEM

One third of the surveyed CSOs (30%) refused or could not answer the question about how many people contact them on average per month, and with how many of them CSOs continue to work. At the same time, the information that was provided by the CSOs indicates a significant variation in the scope of activities.

Thus, among CSOs that provided information, the monthly number of those who contact them and with whom they continue to work varies from 1 to 1000. In general, 30% speak of the number of up to 25 people per month, 20% - 26-50 people, 18% - 51- 100 people, 20% - 101-200 people, 12% - more than 200 people. The median value is 55 people per month.

Regarding the categories of target groups with which the surveyed CSOs work, this issue can be approached from different angles. Thus, 88% of CSOs work directly with representatives of 5 categories of veterans (on average – with 3 different categories) (the remaining 12% work in almost all cases with certain other categories). Among all CSOs, the most frequent answer was that they work with veterans of the current war (78% work with them), with families of fallen servicemen (72%) and with families of veterans of the current war (68%). 48% mentioned working with the families of those who have gone missing in action, and 44% – with the families of those who are in captivity.

Figure I.2.1 Categories of population do CSOs work with

Veterans of current war with Russia (2014-2023)

Families of servicemen who died during the current war with Russia (2014-2023)

Families of veterans of the current war with Russia (2014-2023)

Families of servicemen missing in action during the current war with Russia (2014-2023)

Families of servicemen who were imprisoned during the current war with Russia (2014-2023) and still remain imprisoned

Internally displaced persons (IDPs)

Other categories of population

% CSOs that work with this category

However, if we talk about the percentage of people with whom the surveyed CSOs work in each category, then 34% are veterans of the current war, 19% are families of fallen servicemen, 14% are families of veterans of the current war. The families of those who are missing in action account for 3%, the families of those who are in captivity account for 5%. The remaining 25% are either other categories or (much less frequently) IDPs.

It is important to note that 75% of the surveyed CSOs have one category, which accounts for 50% or more of those who contact them. That is, the vast majority of CSOs, despite working with different

categories, still have a certain "specialization".

Most often, CSOs provide such services as psychological support / adaptation (79%), information and educational activities (73%), legal support (64%). More than half (55%) also organize activities for children. Other types of services were mentioned less often (from 40% in the case of medical support to 30% in the case of material support).

Figure I.2.2 Main services provided by CSOs

- Psychological support, psychological adaptation
- Informational and educational activities
- Legal support
- Organizing activities for children
- Medical support (helping to access necessary medical services, rehabilitation)
- Help with employment
- Help with education, retraining, etc.
- Material support/ providing money etc.
- Other

Among the categories of the population that, according to experts, are not sufficiently represented in support programs in the veteran sphere today are women, children of military personnel, families of veterans, and children of veterans orphaned as a result of the war. In particular, research experts insist that organizations probably cannot reach a sufficient number of representatives of these groups due to limited resources, therefore their targeted support should be initiated by state authorities and included in the package of social assistance that is being developed in the veteran sector.

"I don't see any support or changes in the work with the families of the soldiers, with the families of the killed soldiers. In general, the situation with orphans, military orphans is a huge challenge. In fact, these are failed directions [of activity], so a radical revision is needed here. This is a question not only for the Ministry of Veterans. The issue of veterans is divided between different ministries. This is the Ministry of Health. There is a very problematic situation with rehabilitation, disability and so on. This is a question for the Ministry of Social Affairs, this is a question for the Ministry of Defense, this is a question for the Ministry of Economy and Finance, and the Ministry of Education." - Respondent 8

I.3 PERSONNEL CAPACITY OF ORGANIZATIONS

Among the surveyed CSOs, 68% provided answers about the number of full-time, part-time and volunteer employees who do not receive a salary. If we take the total number of employees provided as 100%, then 80% falls on volunteers. Those who are partially employed account for 13%, and those who are fully employed - 7%.

The graph below provides general information on what % of CSOs have at least one employee of the corresponding category. Considering that a significant share of CSOs did not answer the question about employees (22% did not provide an answer about full-time employees, 26% did not answer about part-time employees, 15% did not answer about volunteer employees), it is appropriate to look at results from the following angle. At least 39% of CSOs do not have a single employee in fully paid employment. Also, at least 44% do not have a single part-time employee. If we look at these two categories together, at least 33% of the surveyed CSOs do not have a single full-time or part-time employee.

Figure I.3.1 Do CSOs have certain categories of employees

- Have such employees
- Do not have such employees
- Did not answer the question

Employees with full time paid employment
Employees with part-time paid employment
Volunteers/ employees who do not get paid

These data eloquently illustrate the opinions of experts, who claim that today the field of organizations that work in the veteran sphere or represent the interests of veterans in communities need resources to support and develop their institutional capacity. This issue will become most urgent when the provision of services to veterans will be delegated by the state to non-governmental organizations - how many of local organizations will be able to work steadily and professionally and have the ability to operate with funds from the state budget?

CSO experts already anticipate that there will be problems with finding qualified personnel in the future, in particular, if it comes to the principle of providing peer-to-peer assistance, and involvement and retention of specialists who provide social services and support.

“As we expand, I suspect we will have a problem with staff. Because, indeed, this peer-to-peer principle must be observed. And in the current labor market, it is very difficult to find such specialists as lawyers, psychologists willing to work for the salary of a social worker. Our psychologists, for example, do not work full-time because they are trying to find other part-time jobs. Lawyers, respectively, are only legal advisers, while it would be great to have a lawyer, of course. Well, the problem is, really, after all, that this is a social sphere and it is quite low-paid these days.” - Respondent 25



CHAPTER II. SELF-ASSESSMENT BY ORGANIZATIONS OF THEIR OWN POTENTIAL. SOURCES OF FUNDING

II.1 SELF-ASSESSMENT BY ORGANIZATIONS OF THEIR OWN POTENTIAL

As part of the quantitative survey, CSOs had to rate themselves according to 8 different characteristics. According to the results of this evaluation, the following three groups of characteristics can be distinguished. There are three characteristics by which the vast majority of surveyed CSOs rate themselves rather well or very well: prospects for the future (85% positive assessments, including 54% who assessed themselves very well), qualifications of employees (74% positively assessed themselves, including 45% assessed themselves very well) and employee motivation (72% positively assessed themselves, including 56% assessed themselves very well). Only 3-5% assessed their CSOs rather poorly or very poorly when it comes to these characteristics.

Then there are three characteristics which were positively evaluated by the majority or a significant part of organizations, while a small part of organizations evaluated themselves negatively. However, in this case, no more than a quarter of respondents assessed their organizations very well (that is, these positive ratings are "less confident"). These characteristics are: effectiveness of meeting the needs of the population categories with which they work (67% assessed this positively, including 26% that assessed this characteristic very well), capacity (57% assessed this positively, including 24% that assessed this characteristic very well), sufficient number of employees / volunteers (44% assessed this positively, including 25% that assessed this characteristic very well).

And then there are also two characteristics where most CSOs rated their organizations negatively. We are talking about the stability of funding sources (56% rated their organizations rather poorly or very poorly against only 11% who assessed themselves rather well or very well) and about the sufficiency of financial resources (57% against 11%).

Figure II.1.1 Self-assessment by veteran CSOs of their organizations according to individual characteristics (scale from 0 to 10, where 0 - very bad, and 10 - very good)

Very well (9-10)

Rather well (7-8)

Neither well nor bad (4-6)

Rather bad (2-3)

Very bad (0-1)

How do you see future prospects of your organization?

Qualification of employees / availability of necessary knowledge and skills

Motivation of employees/ volunteers in your organization

Efficiency of meeting the needs of target groups that your organization works with

Capacity of your organization

Sufficient number of employees / volunteers for implementation of goals of your organization

Stability of sources of funding of your organization

Sufficient financial resources of your organization

The majority of CSOs, which did not rate the efficiency of meeting needs by their organization by 9-10 points, primarily explain this by the lack / instability of funding (55%). Other barriers were mentioned less often, but it is pertinent to point out that the top 3 needs also include problematic / unestablished relations with the authorities (19%) and lack of employees (18%).

Figure II.1.2 What exactly is a barrier or prevents or prevents you from meeting the needs of your target group more efficiently

Lack of funding/ unstable funding / lack of necessary resources

Problematic or unestablished relationships with the authorities, lack of support on behalf of authorities, corruption

Lack of employees (both in general and specialists), employees currently are serving in the army or have emigrated

War, Russia

Imperfect legislation, bureaucracy

Lack of time (in particular, because of combination with other professional activity)

Resources are located close to battle lines/ were destroyed/ are on the occupied territories

Key informant experts corroborate quantitative survey data. At the same time, among the barriers to effective work, they cite the peculiarity of the state policy on interaction with CSOs working in the veteran sector, and the varying level of ability of local authorities to establish cooperation with organizations, provide appropriate support, etc.

"Each local authority in the region has its own characteristics. And in each region, the relationship between local civil society organizations and local authorities is different. Regarding the all-Ukrainian context, I would say that the topic of veterans is currently very hot and quite quickly all our local councils, local authorities, are trying to adapt and also be hot. And there is a story when the local authorities themselves contact civil society organizations, how to communicate, how to interact" - Respondent 22

II.2 SOURCES OF FUNDING

92% of surveyed CSOs have at least one source of funding for their activities; among them, on average, 2 different sources were named (the remaining 8% answered that the activities of their organization are

not financed in any way). Most CSOs - 50% among all - named donations of ordinary residents. This is followed by donations from businesses (26%), funding from international organizations (26%) and funding from the local budget (25%). 19% of CSOs finance their activities from their own funds or at the expense of membership fees, 16% - at the expense of other Ukrainian NGOs. 5% of CSOs talk about the state budget.

Respondents were also asked what percentage of funding comes from each of the sources. Thus, on average, 30% of funding comes from donations from ordinary residents, 16% from international organizations, the local budget, and own funds. Business donations account for 12%, other NGOs - 8%, and the state budget - 2%.

Among CSOs with at least some funding, 96% receive 50% or more of their funding from one specific source. At the same time, 49% receive all 100% of funding from one specific source.

Figure II.2.1 Sources of funding of activities of the veteran CSOs

Donations of ordinary residents	
Donations of Ukrainian business people/ entrepreneurs	
Financing from international organizations	
Financing from local budgets	
Other: own costs/ membership fees	
Financing from other Ukrainian NGOs/ grant organizations	
Funding from the state budget	
Other: from abroad	
Other: there is no funding	
% CSOs receive from this source	
Median % of funding that comes from this source	

At the same time, among the surveyed CSOs, only 7% answered that they would cease to exist immediately in case of termination of funding. At the same time, 6% could still exist up to 1 month, 17% - from 1 to 3 months, 10% - from 4 to 6 months, and 60% - for more than 6 months.

"There is a local government that allocates separate funds for the statutory activities of an organization that works with veterans. Some cities have approved individual city target programs to support the families of veterans, participants of the ATO/JFO. It is not available in all cities, but it exists." - Respondent 22



CHAPTER III. COOPERATION WITH OTHER VETERAN CSOS, LOCAL AND CENTRAL AUTHORITIES

III.1 COOPERATION AND ASSESSMENT OF RELATIONS WITH OTHER CSOS, LOCAL AND CENTRAL AUTHORITIES

First of all, key informants representing civil society organizations point out the principle of participation of representatives of both the veteran community itself and civil society organizations working in the veteran sphere.

"Civil society organization should be included everywhere, especially it should be included in the activities of the amalgamated territorial communities, separate communities. There is a saying, nothing for us without us. Nothing for veterans without veterans." - Respondent 21

One of the ways to ensure the principle of participation is precisely the opportunity for civil society organizations to join public councils - a collegial advisory body under state authorities. In the veteran sphere, the relevant body that develops and implements policy in this field is the Ministry of Veterans Affairs.

The surveyed CSOs are characterized by very widespread cooperation with other CSOs / local authorities / central authorities. Out of 117 surveyed CSOs, only 5 (4%) currently do not cooperate either with other CSOs or with the authorities.

In total, 81% cooperate with other veteran CSOs, 75% with local authorities, and 62% with central authorities.

Figure III.1.1 Cooperation with other veteran CSOs, local and central authorities

- Cooperate now
- Cooperated earlier
- Do not cooperate
- Other veteran CSO
- Local authorities
- Central authorities

III.2 ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPORTANCE OF COOPERATION WITH OTHER CSOs, LOCAL AND CENTRAL AUTHORITIES

Although 77-79% believe that it is important for them to cooperate with other veteran CSOs / local authorities / central authorities to achieve their goals, they do not deem this cooperation to be critically important. In the case of veteran CSOs, 17% consider this cooperation to be critically important (61% chose the answer “rather” important), in the case of local authorities – 30% (50% chose the answer “rather” important), in the case of central authorities – 28% (49% chose the answer “rather” important)

Figure III.2.1 How important is cooperation with other veteran CSOs, local and central authorities

- Critically important
- Rather important
- Rather unimportant
- Totally unimportant
- Other veteran CSOs
- Local authorities
- Central authorities

III.3 PERCEPTION OF FUNCTIONING OF VETERAN CSOs

The absolute majority of CSOs - 77% - believe that veteran CSOs complement the activities of central and local authorities, and therefore the need for their existence will remain relevant in the future. Instead, 23% believe that in the future the government should take over the performance of their functions.

Figure III.3.1 Functioning of veteran CSOs in the future

These functions should be performed first of all by central or local authorities. Ours and other veteran CSOs perform tasks that the authorities cannot perform at the moment for a number of reasons. In the future, the authorities should take over the performance of these functions.

Functions performed by the veteran organizations rather complement the activities of the central and local authorities. For a number of reasons authorities will not be able to perform these functions fully, therefore the veteran CSOs should exist in the future.

III.4 EVALUATION OF PROVISION OF SERVICES TO VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES BY STATE BODIES AND SERVICES

The surveyed CSOs have neither a distinctly optimistic nor a distinctly pessimistic view of the provision of services to veterans and their families by government bodies and services. Rather, it can be said that they have an average / uncertain / "slightly" positive assessment of government bodies and services.

Thus, on the one hand, no more than 35% respondents assess the effectiveness of state bodies / services rather well or very well (including no more than 15% who assessed them very well). On the other hand, no more than 34% evaluate them rather poorly or very poorly (including no more than 21% that evaluate them very poorly). Moreover, in almost all cases, the balance of evaluations is either positive (that is, the number of those who evaluate well is larger than those who evaluate poorly), or close to 0.

It is appropriate to pay attention only to the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, since this is the only case where the balance of evaluations is clearly negative. Thus, 21% of the surveyed CSOs rate the effectiveness of providing services to veterans and their families well, while 34% rate it poorly.

Figure III.4.1 Evaluation of the effectiveness of the provision of services to veterans and their families by state bodies and services (scale from 0 to 10, where 0 - very bad, and 10 - very good)

- Very well (9-10)
- Rather well (7-8)
- Neither good nor bad (4-6)
- Rather bad (2-3)
- Very bad (0-1)
- Do not know about services
- Pension fund
- Local authorities
- Social services
- Ministry of Defense
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- Employment center
- National police
- Ministry of Veterans Affairs
- Ministry of Internal Affairs
- Ministry of Social Policy
- National Social Services
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Experts point out the need for a gradual differentiation of social support functions and service provision between state authorities and civil society organizations. It seems organic to delegate the provision of services to veterans to civil society organizations. In this case, the state plays the role of a developer of

standards, procedures and policies that correspond to the level of proper quality of services and guarantee the availability of such services for all who need them.

"It seems to me that it is not the role of central executive bodies to directly provide services, their role is to develop policy. Develop approaches, standards, quality control. Here, a lot falls on local self-government bodies, in particular, they will provide these social services. And they can absolutely delegate a part to civil society organizations." - Respondent 8

Representatives of the Ministry of Social Policy, in turn, say that their Ministry is currently actively involved in the development of a comprehensive mechanism for the system of social support for military personnel and veterans - at all stages of military service. Representatives of civil society organizations are also involved in this development process, and they share their achievements and experience in this area.

"The Ministry of Social Policy envisions the creation of a system of social support for conscripts, military servicemen, and veterans at all stages of military service... And it is very important that we see civil society organizations as providers of such services. We now want to pilot two processes. On one hand, new services for the military, and on the other - a funding mechanism. That is, we want to denationalize the market for the provision of social services so that non-state providers who can provide this service entered it." - Respondent 2

However, the challenge in this situation will be the selection of the appropriate capacity of service providers, and their (providers') institutional preparedness to work in the financial conditions offered by the state. As the experts themselves say, these costs are below market prices, the payments are made after provision of services. There is a number of other points related to the operation of state funds - reporting, responsibility, etc. So far, the state's argument for CSOs and their involvement in this process is "political will", that is, the organization's willingness to provide quality services in conditions of a lower level of funding and fairly strict reporting. Entry into this system will be possible only for institutionally stable and developed organizations that have additional sources of financing for their activities and will be able to ensure uninterrupted work and provision of services for the period until payment is received from the state. According to key informants from among representatives of CSOs, this is the biggest challenge for the mechanism of denationalization of social services to work.

Regarding the work of the specialized ministry - the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, a large part of the key informants note that they cooperate with the Ministry quite sporadically. For example, the declared consultative and advisory bodies coordinated by the Ministry - the Public Council, the Council of Veterans, the Council of Families of the Deceased and War Veterans - so far, according to experts, have not established their stable work and, accordingly, it is still too early to talk about the results of cooperation with the public. Although, in turn, representatives of the Ministry, say that it is precisely through the mechanism of the Public Council that projects are being discussed, the consultations are held and expertise is provided.

"That is, they take part in making management decisions precisely in the context of direct interaction, through consultative and advisory bodies; also, the official website of the Ministry of Veterans publishes all draft laws and resolutions so that everyone, every citizen and public unions, organizations that are not involved in the work of consultative and advisory bodies, had the opportunity to express their opinion on one or the other issue". - Respondent 21

It is worth noting that CSO representatives stated that 2 out of 3 public councils under the Ministry are currently not functioning. Until recently, the Ministry of Veterans Affairs carried out its activities in the regions through its regional divisions, which were terminated and have now ceased their activities. Individual representatives of regional CSOs noted successful cooperation and support from the regional offices of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs in the regions, in particular, with establishing cooperation with local authorities, etc.

Among other areas for which the Ministry of Veterans Affairs is responsible, the following were named by its representative: ***"Benefits (to veterans), starting from the granting of status, ending with some benefits both at the state level and at the regional level, accompanying the provision of psychological assistance, psychological rehabilitation. This direction is carried out, in particular, within the framework of the implementation of the budget program for which the Ministry of Veterans Affairs is responsible. Also retraining, educational direction, this direction is also financed at the expense of budget funds and within the framework of the budget program, the Ministry of Veterans is responsible for them. Assistance in obtaining residential premises, i.e., residential premises also within the framework of the budget program. Financial support of civil associations is within the framework of tenders for projects."*** - Respondent 21

Experts of in-depth interviews, who evaluated the implementation of state policy by the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, emphasized the fact that despite the importance of the issues for which it is responsible, it still has a rather limited mandate of its influence within the limits of other central authorities. This, according to experts, is the reason for the largest number of complaints or criticism from representatives of CSOs of the relevant Ministry.

"The Ministry of Veterans should provide assistance standards, that is, they should be confirmed specifically for veterans and control and supervision should be carried out. That is, [they should] have an influence on it. This applies, for example, to the Ministry of Social Policy. The Ministry of Social Policy actually releases this money and so on. But the Ministry of Veterans Affairs should have an influence on this. The Ministry of Veterans Affairs should have more weight within the cabinets. Because they are shouting, they come to the Ministry of Veterans, and the Ministry of Veterans cannot actually do anything, because it does not have a mandate, it cannot tell the Ministry of Health what to do, or tell what the Ministry of Defense should do, or tell what the Ministry of Social Policy should do." - Respondent 10

Separately, it is worth highlighting the activities of the Ukrainian Veterans Fund, which distributes grant funds on a competitive basis - to stimulate the economic activity of veterans, support civil associations, etc. It also conducts activities specifically in the direction of providing grants on a competitive basis, both for business and for the support of civil associations in particular. Some experts consider the activity of the Ukrainian Veterans Fund to be a successful example of the activity of state organizations, which, in addition to grant work, conducts active informational and educational activities. In turn, the expert from the Ukrainian Veterans Fund noted during the conversation that in working with civil society organizations, their institution relies, in particular, on the Council of Veterans of Ukraine, which has its branches throughout the country. She also noted that she does not yet see consolidation among veteran and pro-veteran organizations, probably due to the fact that she perceives them rather as competitors among themselves for the resources of different donors.

Regarding support from donor organizations, despite large-scale programs for psychological, social and other types of support for veterans, organizations that are engaged in systematic work with veterans and accompany them since their military service (and sometimes even at the mobilization stage), they see the impossibility of working with military personnel as the biggest limitation.

"I will say very briefly, give money for the military. That is, donors do not want to give money for [the work with] the military. They force us to sign documents stating that your project will not involve the military in any way. But a veteran begins with military service. The veteran begins when he enters the assembly center. You cannot solve veterans' issues by dealing with veterans after they have received their status... We don't give them, I don't know, help, explanations on how to shoot a Stinger there. We give them help with how to get rehabilitation, how to get some kind of social protection, for when they are a military employee, it will later affect their physical condition, I don't know, moral condition, when they become veterans. Therefore, what we need is the cancellation of this ban on working with the military." - Respondent 13

Indeed, we are talking about such a completely open ban on the part of international donors precisely because of the international obligations of organizations that work on the territory of foreign countries. However, the ban on working with the military in matters of their education, social or other support does not apply to the military activities of the beneficiaries. Therefore, an important request to donors from specialized CSOs that provide legal and informational assistance to veterans is the opportunity to work with the target group at various stages. Several representatives from CSOs and state authorities spoke about these aspects, which significantly limit the potential of donor support for veterans in Ukraine during the war.

"Because they (donor organizations) cannot finance those who will later become military. That's great, of course, but you're still funding, you haven't closed the COVID program. Well, what kind of nonsense is this? That is, it has been two years here in Ukraine (there is a war), so we kind of have something more important than COVID." - Respondent 10



CHAPTER IV. URGENT NEEDS AND PROSPECTIVE AREAS OF ACTIVITY

"Many new organizations will be created. And, in fact, this is the beginning of the process, not everyone should become a grant organization or a super-advanced organization, not everyone should change state policy. There will be those who will represent sports interests, some trips, tournaments, club on interests. This may be what veterans need, so not all of them should become large, stable [organizations] with million-dollar budgets, but at the same time, it would be great if they were created not only in large cities, but at the regional level, the level of amalgamated territorial communities, and for this we need some tips, on how civil society organizations operate, what a social project is, where to get funding, something like that." - Respondent 8

This opinion expressed by one of the research experts is shared by a large part of other respondents. Currently, donors and CSOs have a need to reformat their approaches to their work, taking into account how the field of NGOs will change in connection with the development of the veteran movement, the return of veterans to civilian life, etc. In addition to targeted work with representatives of the veteran community, programs for the development of CSOs that work at the level of amalgamated territorial communities, i.e., at the most "local" level, should be unfolded separately.

"And these small civil society organizations, at the level of amalgamated territorial communities, they should start working. We need to develop them. They don't know English, they don't have access to funding and so on. Yes, yes, yes, but we need to go there. And we need more, more, and to complete the practice, well, it's just a very stable practice, financing the same NGOs, new ones are coming, they have no chance to compete with the ones the donor is used to. Because the donor is also comfortable. It is simply convenient for the donor. And then the quality drops, because everyone is already used to this and just does everything automatically, and new initiatives then have no way to enter this market." - Respondent 16

According to research experts, an important need that should be met through work with CSOs in the veteran sphere are reintegration projects through communication within the community, development and support of communities already formed (on the frontline), which can later turn into powerful civil initiatives or movements. An example of the creation of such an opportunity presenting communication networks are already created veteran spaces. And these models need to be further developed.

At the same time, returning to the most urgent needs of CSOs, these are the answers provided to an

open question about the most urgent needs. The majority - 56% - name the lack / instability of funding for activities. Related to this need are the lack of other resources, such as an office, transport, etc. (15%) and the lack of staff (10%). Along with this, 15% talk about improvement of communication / cooperation with the authorities and more support from the authorities.

Figure IV.1 What are the most urgent needs for veteran CSOs

Open question, top answers

Lack of funding / unstable funding, lack of necessary resources

More effective communication / cooperation with the authorities, support from the authorities

Lack of other resources (office, transport)

Lack of employees, involvement of volunteers

Implementation of legislation by the authorities, introducing relevant changes to legislation

Victory of Ukraine, de-occupation of certain territories

Education of employees

Additionally, the respondents were shown a list of 8 possible needs and the respondent had to choose the 3 most urgent from them. **Most of the respondents talked about ensuring stable sources of funding (57%) and sufficient level of funding (51%).** This is followed by the possibility of keeping a permanent staff of employees (42%), establishing cooperation with authorities (37%) and improving the qualifications of employees (31%). Other needs are urgent for a smaller number of veteran CSOs.

Figure IV.2 Which three needs from the proposed list are the most urgent

Ensuring stable sources of funding

Ensuring sufficient level of funding

Possibility of keeping a permanent staff of employees

Establishing cooperation with local or central authorities

Training of employees, improvement of skills and knowledge

Establishing cooperation with other veteran organizations

Ensuring the stability of employment, motivation of employees, preventing burnout

Increasing the number of employees/ volunteers

APPENDIX 1. NGO DATABASE

Here you can view the database of CSOs working in the veteran sphere



APPENDIX 2. LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY

Respondent №	Institutions	Direction
1	Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine	Executive power
2	Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine	Executive power
3	Ministry of Health of Ukraine	Executive power
4	State Employment Service	Executive power
5	Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine	Executive power
6	IREX Ukraine	Donor
7	International Renaissance Foundation	Donor
8	ISAR Ednannia	Donor
9	Chemonics International	Donor
10	Ukrainian Veterans Fund (Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine)	Executive power / Donor
11	Come back alive	NGO
12	Veteran Hub	NGO
13	Pryncyp	NGO
14	Space of Opportunities	NGO
15	Free Choice	NGO
16	All-Ukrainian Association of Communities	NGO
17	The first women's veteran space "Rehab" in the city of Lviv	NGO
18	Veterans Space	Municipal institution
19	Center for Rehabilitation and Readjustment of ATO Participants - "YARMIZ"	NGO
20	Center for ATO veterans and their families "Nearby"	NGO

Respondent №	Institutions	Direction
21	"Lisova Polyana" Mental Health and Rehabilitation Center (Ministry of Health of Ukraine)	Municipal institution
22	Veterans HUB ODESA	NGO
23	Legal Hundred	NGO
24	Kyiv Military Hub	Municipal institution
25	Lviv center for providing services to combatants	Municipal institution
26	Women's veteran movement	NGO
27	Expert on issues of memory and commemoration of veterans	Expert

APPENDIX 3

STAKEHOLDER SURVEY GUIDE

(Study "Civil society organizations working in the veteran sphere")

INTRODUCTION (10 minutes)

Good afternoon,

My name is _____. I represent the research company VoxPopuli, and we are conducting a study of "Civil society organizations working in the veteran sphere" (ordered by ISAR Ednannia).

This research takes place within the framework of the Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity, implemented by ISAR Ednannia in a consortium with the Ukrainian Independent Center for Political Studies and the Center for Democracy and the Rule of Law, thanks to the generous support of the American people, provided through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Today, we will talk about the experience of your organization/institution's cooperation with veteran and veteran-related movements and initiatives, and in particular about the needs and challenges of such organizations.

I would like to inform you that this interview is confidential (your personal information will not be indicated or used anywhere). But with your permission, we will record the interview so that my colleagues can process the material (obtain consent).

If you want to receive the results of the study, please provide your email and we will send it to you when the results are ready.

Please tell me how I can address you.

Block 0. SPHERE OF VETERAN ORGANIZATIONS IN UKRAINE

- 0.1.** We would like to begin our conversation by defining the concepts of “veteran organizations”, “organizations working in the veteran sphere”. Could you please share, how do you personally understand these concepts? Is there a difference between them?
- 0.2.** Could you please name the veteran organizations and organizations working in the veteran sphere that you know of? (working on national and local levels). Moderator, please write down everything mentioned (ask about private initiatives, international donors).
- 0.3.** What is your opinion on the subject of increased formalization of the work of veteran organizations? Is it necessary? Is there a need to introduce new policies in the veteran sphere?

Block 1. COOPERATION WITH CSOS WORKING IN THE VETERAN SPHERE

- 1.1.** Please tell us how your organization/ institution cooperates with CSOs working in the veteran sphere (which topics your cooperation covers). How are you related to this activity personally? What is the sphere of activity of your organization / institutions, and what do you do as a representative of it?
- 1.2.** In your opinion, which demand/ need of the veterans does the activity of your organization/ institution cover?

Block 2. ACTIVITIES OF CSOS WORKING IN THE VETERAN SPHERE

- 2.1.** Please tell us in which sphere these organizations work? How can they be classified? (E.g., service providers, advocacy oriented. If they provide services - what kind of services?)
- 2.2.** Results of work of what state institutions, donors or civil society organizations do you consider to be significant?
- 2.3.** In your experience, how do CSOs cooperate between themselves? Can you name veteran events that you know of? In your opinion, is networking of veteran organizations providing any added benefits?
- 2.4.** What does cooperation between NGOs and government look like? What about central and local authorities? Please, provide examples of such successful or unsuccessful cooperation.
- 2.5.** Do you cooperate with the Ministry of Veterans Affairs? Have you participated in competitions or received costs from them?
- 2.6.** Sometimes veteran organizations belong to public councils – do you know of any examples of this? If yes, how would you evaluate such interaction?
- 2.7.** What would help such organizations to work more effectively? In what sphere do NGOs need help with?
- 2.8.** In your opinion what could be an obstacle to effective work of the veteran organizations?

Block 3. NEEDS AND ACTIVITY OF CSOS WORKING IN VETERAN SPHERE

- 3.1.** Which veterans' needs are not met yet? What is still needed and what NGOs can do? And what should the state be doing?
- 3.2.** What are the biggest challenges that your organization/ institution is facing now in the sphere of working with veterans? What could make your veteran-related activity more efficient? (ask probing questions: political will, human resources, imperfect legislation, etc.)

3.3. Which topics or directions in work with veterans are still not covered today? Do you think that it is necessary to carry out this activity now? Is anyone doing this currently? What projects/ directions does the veteran milieu need now?

3.4. Can you name the most and the least efficient organizations/ institutions working in the veteran sphere?

3.5. If we are talking about services for veterans - are they provided on an adequate level? (Note to moderator - ask about psychological and medical help, social services: employment, etc.)

3.6. Which initiatives and projects targeting veterans and their families are you planning to implement in the near future?

Thank you! In general, I have asked all previously prepared questions, but if you think it is important to add anything – please do it now!

APPENDIX 4

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ONLINE SURVEY IS SENT OUT SEPARATELY

APPENDIX 5

Verbatim answers of respondents:

TABLE IV.1 WHICH OTHER PROJECTS OR DIRECTIONS OF ACTIVITY DO YOU DEEM PERSPECTIVE OR IMPORTANT FOR THE FUTURE/ OR THE ONES THAT YOU WOULD DEEM IMPORTANT TO WORK ON?

- Rehabilitation through employment (own business). Consultation services (benefits, housing, land, etc.) Creation of the single expansive electronic database and electronic certificate of UBD (+ plastic chipped card with this certificate).
- Physical and psychological rehabilitation, return to civilian life via learning, retraining or employment.
- Adaptation to peaceful life, medical and social support, advisory activity, creation of business projects, obtaining grants, development of private business
- Veteran business
- Support groups for wives, partners and relatives of veterans, imprisoned and killed soldiers. Teaching how to meet and wait for soldiers. Rehabilitation tours or restorative trips (also for relatives of soldiers, their wives and mothers). Rehabilitation of veterans through sports. Camp projects for children of military personnel and veterans. Support and mentoring for children of deceased Heroes and those who went missing in action or are imprisoned
- To make sure that the Cabinet of Ministers increases pensions for rehabilitated persons in accordance with the Law of Ukraine "On Pension Security" by the amount of 50% of minimal old age pensions. To make sure that the Cabinet of Ministers increases pensions for persons who are recognized as victims of repressions by the amount of 25% of minimal old age pensions.
- There is a need to create veteran spaces in communities of Poltava region. I am helping them by providing advice and education. I am working with the colony, where convicted veterans are imprisoned (communication with the management and with the prisoners themselves, we are exploring their needs together; I am organizing online lectures on Ukrainian history; curating a collection of valuable Ukrainian movies, looking for projects that could help with contemporary Ukrainian books). I am paying a lot of attention to the national patriotic education of the students

of the university, where the space is located. I am helping the wives of defenders of Ukraine to create their own communities. There is a demand for strategic planning of development of the community that would take into consideration the needs of the veteran community. Together with the Ministry of Veterans we are discussing the possibility of cooperation aimed at opening the Center of Veterans Development, where one will be able to get professional education as a "Veteran's Helper". All these projects currently are being implemented using my own resources, which are currently being depleted (both financially, and in terms of my own personal capacities, because I have no opportunity to involve additional employees).

- We developed and tested the Safety Course for community leaders in Poltava region. Therefore, we undertook work in this direction at the strategic session of the Coalition of Veteran Spaces. We are currently working to provide this knowledge to leaders in other areas, in partnership with other veteran spaces. Since there are many de-occupied communities in our native Donetsk region, we cooperated with many of them even before the full-scale invasion; of course, we continue to support them even now, we consider this an important direction of our activities. Our organization participated in the adaptation to Ukrainian realities of the IPC Guidelines on mental health and psychosocial support in emergency situations. We have certified trainers for the implementation of this Guide. Even on the cover of the Guide there is a photo of our beneficiaries. Therefore, we continue to implement the principles of this Guide in our work and teach others to do it
- Vocational guidance of veterans. Rehabilitation, prosthetics for veterans. Financial support for families of veterans and families of the dead Heroes
- By 2025, create opportunities to restore the health of veterans in every community of Zhytomyr region. By 2025, create opportunities for the reintegration and development of veterans in every community of Zhytomyr region. By 2025, every family of a veteran, the families of those who defend and those who died will receive the necessary support. By 2025, the veteran space will acquire the characteristics of community resilience centers by involving veterans. Services provided by the Union: psychological assistance, work with the families of the deceased, legal consultations, conducting art therapy activities for veterans and their family members, organization of children's leisure activities for children of veterans and female veterans, military personnel, for children of the deceased; business trainings for veterans who plan to open their own business, sites for volunteer projects, holding conferences and trainings
- Adaptation and medical and psychological rehabilitation of soldiers (veterans) of war. Support of families that have lost their relatives to war
- Advocacy of needs of veteran community, including needs of members of their families, and families of the deceased and missing in action
- Advocacy of rights of people with disabilities, retraining and employment of people with disabilities
- Analytical work and advocacy
- More support to families of killed soldiers from Zhytomyr region
- Development of the Ukrainian Navy
- Any kinds of veteran businesses. Physical and psychological rehabilitation. Legal support
- Veterans' business (development, education, realization of the projects, creation of the favorable conditions for business), rehabilitation, adaptation, etc.
- Veteran business, careers for veterans, Veteran as a leader of public opinion
- Recognition of veterans as participants of struggle for Ukrainian independence in XXI century, completion of the process of dehumanization and russification in Cherkasy region

- Military and patriotic education of the youth; consolidation and coordination of efforts of veterans of war (participants of the hostilities, people who were disabled during the war), members of families of the deceased (killed) participants of the military actions; implementation and protection of their rights and freedoms; meeting their social, economic, cultural and other interests; also, national and patriotic education of children and youth
- Heroization and commemoration of the killed in action; pensions and medical support, psychological rehabilitation, legal support
- Humanitarian needs
- Victory in war with Russists
- Friendly relations with community and businesses
- A lot of directions
- Providing psychological personnel for rehabilitation of soldiers
- Completion of building of the Museum of Lemkiv Culture in Monastyrskia; Organization Of the International Festival of Lemkiv Culture
- Involving psychology students as volunteers so that they can gain practical experience; conduct research
- Preservation of mental health of the population of Ukraine
- Increasing the number of services that the organization can provide, attracting new recipients of services, establishing Ukrainian and international cooperation
- Direction of Inclusivity
- Innovation and digitization of agriculture, clustering of rural economy, veteran farming and cooperation, development of rural areas, farming-friendly governance, implementation of the LEADER approach in the practice of rural communities, learning through demonstration, demonstration farms
- Integration of IDPs into the host community. Promotion of the principles of gender equality
- Case management
- Control over the purchase of vouchers for the treatment and psychological rehabilitation of combatants and their family members. Business Development Grant Programs for Veterans. Provision of housing for veterans who are in need of improved living conditions
- We have a plan to create a project in which any of our participants (or participants of other organizations) will be able to participate, which will develop various directions of business and production, which will have segments of rehabilitation, recovery, treatment, and legal assistance. It should be centralized and work for the benefit of all participants
- Training of veterans in anti-corruption activism. Training of veterans in demining territories
- Training of FPV drone operators, Anti-drone protection
- Provision of permanent medical and psychological assistance to veterans of the war with Russia. The most important thing is psychological assistance and rehabilitation of wounded servicemen and families of fallen Defenders of Ukraine.
- Establishing relations with local authorities
- Direction of assistance to families of missing persons, families of IDPs
- Joining efforts and developing initiatives for the implementation of projects, which in turn are aimed at the development of a self-sufficient, patriotic community. Coordination of efforts and joint activities to achieve a common goal – this should be carried out through the preparation and implementation of joint activities

- Education
- Healthcare of veterans
- Partnerships with international organizations, while maintaining our own values
- Transfer of experience to the state, training of other specialists, transfer of experience at the international level
- Convert old buildings into rehabilitation centers
- Support for the families of fallen defenders of Ukraine, Participation in local self-government
- Construction of housing for IDPs
- Return from war, mental health, socialization
- Strengthen educational activities among target groups regarding opportunities. Preparation of employers for the return of veterans, preparation of various service providers to work with veterans
- Posttraumatic growth of veterans and family members of the dead or missing. Organization of summer camps for children and veterans. Garden therapy
- Employment of veterans
- To take an active part in various state events, defense of the rights of families, comprehensive support
- Projects on educating the younger generation aimed at the formation of the Ukrainian nation, projects related to the commemoration of the memory of the fallen defenders of Ukraine
- Projects related to the memory of soldiers who died in the Russian-Ukrainian war and assistance to families
- Crime prevention among veterans, society's readiness to meet those returning from the war
- Psychological assistance to members of the organization and their families
- Psychological support for families of fallen defenders, rehabilitation of mothers and fathers, legal support
- Psychological support, employment, training and retraining
- Psychological rehabilitation of PTSD, etc.
- Rehabilitation of veterans
- Rehabilitation of veterans and assistance to them before returning to a peaceful life
- Rehabilitation and psychological assistance
- Rehabilitation of people with disabilities and war veterans
- Rehabilitation in any direction. This is a very large amount of work for many organizations
- Responding to the challenges of time
- Implementation of projects for medical and psychological rehabilitation of defenders and families of fallen Defenders
- Implementation of projects
- Rehabilitation for the families of the victims
- To do everything possible for our Victory
- Work with veterans
- Working with the military/PTSD
- Work with children of the dead and wounded. Work with the consequences of PTSD and rehabilitation of boys, work with families of IDPs, ecology
- Business development of veterans

- Development of civil society
- Development of school-age children, military-patriotic clubs, where veterans join and teach the youth who will replace us, holding camps, field meetings, training in military affairs using modern technologies, make regional authorities responsible for this important youth development
- Development of local media, environmental projects, cultural projects
- Expand the list of services necessary for the rehabilitation of combatants and people injured by the war.
- Socialization and adaptation during and after the war, holding events (lectures, seminars, trainings), creating children's camps, activities aimed at rehabilitation
- Social adaptation and rehabilitation of a veteran, employment and assistance
- Social protection of veterans
- Social protection, psychological support and rehabilitation of combatants, support of families of fallen soldiers
- Social, residential, medical projects.
- Socio-psychological assistance to veterans, in particular of the Russian-Ukrainian war. Ukrainian war
- Socio-psychological rehabilitation of: veterans of the war with Russia, disabled as a result of the war, family members of fallen servicemen; national-patriotic education of pupils and students, perpetuation of the memory of fallen servicemen in the Russian-Ukrainian war
- Cooperation with public organization of this war
- Sports rehabilitation of veterans, supporting circles for families of veterans, supporting families of fallen heroes
- Creating an interactive and supportive component. For example, conducting hippotherapy, creating a sports club or interest group for veterans, English language courses or other educational courses. That is, the creation of an environment of group interaction that will allow veterans to get a sense of shared experience, to unite in a veteran community, to return to civilian life while being in a circle of people with similar experiences
- Creation of medical support for effective physical rehabilitation on the basis of an institution
- Creation of an online English language school in cooperation with an American university for children of military personnel who are currently at the front and for veterans
- Creation of a modern rehabilitation center. Creation of sports centers for veterans. Centers for online consultations and psychological assistance
- Structuring of places of death of veterans. Creation of conditions for retraining during a peaceful life. Work with children of veterans, their education.
- Health care and social sphere
- The topic of social and affordable housing for the population of Ukraine
- First of all, psychological support for veterans of the Russian-Ukrainian war, providing veterans, especially the disabled, with free and proper rehabilitation, which is in a very deplorable state
- The Law of Ukraine "On the Status of War Veterans and Their Social Protection" is actually not in effect
- Physical rehabilitation of veterans (opening of gyms), strengthening of promotion of employment, creation/development of own business by veterans
- Legal support, historical and educational activities, upkeep the graves of fallen soldiers.



