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EXPERIENCE OF INTEGRATION AND SUPPORT OF VETERANS IN THE SYSTEM OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF UKRAINIAN COMPANIES

Abstract. *The integration of veterans is viewed as a multidimensional process encompassing social, economic, and professional components and includes restoring social ties, ensuring employment, retraining, and adapting military experience to labor-market requirements. Veterans represent a valuable resource for businesses due to their leadership, discipline, and resilience. Key components of integration include rehabilitation, training, mentoring, and corporate support. According to Work.ua, the demand for veterans is growing, with most offers concentrated in transportation, security, and logistics, which narrows the range of opportunities for highly qualified employment. Barriers include psychological challenges, infrastructural limitations, biases, and insufficient corporate programs. State policy focuses on veterans' professional adaptation, entrepreneurship development, digital services, and compensation mechanisms for employers. The programs "Veteran. Work" and the "Veteran Career" platform provide access to job opportunities and training. Businesses also implement their own initiatives: SoftServe, Intellias, MHP, and Valtech Ukraine offer mentoring, education, mental-health support, and workplace-adaptation programs. Veterans demonstrate effectiveness in IT, agriculture, logistics, security, and entrepreneurship. Key challenges include cultural differences between military and civilian environments, financial costs for companies, and fragmented program implementation. Improving integration outcomes requires strengthening HR competences, partnerships with veteran organizations, mentoring, and creating an inclusive corporate environment. Veteran integration is an important socio-economic task, whose success depends on combining rehabilitation, retraining, and corporate support.*

Keywords: *veteran integration; employment; corporate support programs; professional adaptation; rehabilitation; retraining; labor market; HR management; inclusive environment; public policy.*

ДОСВІД ІНТЕГРАЦІЇ ТА ПІДТРИМКИ ВЕТЕРАНІВ У СИСТЕМІ СТІЙКОГО РОЗВИТКУ УКРАЇНСЬКИХ КОМПАНІЙ

Анотація. *Інтеграція ветеранів розглядається як багатовимірний процес, що охоплює соціальні, економічні й професійні аспекти та передбачає відновлення соціальних зв'язків, забезпечення зайнятості, перекваліфікацію й адаптацію військового досвіду до потреб ринку праці. Ветерани становлять цінний ресурс для бізнесу завдяки лідерству, дисципліні, стійкості до стресу та здатності*

працювати в умовах невизначеності. Основні компоненти інтеграції включають реабілітацію, професійне навчання, менторство, розвиток навичок взаємодії у трудовому колективі та різні форми корпоративної підтримки. За інформацією Work.ua попит на ветеранів зростає, більшість пропозицій зосереджена у транспорті, охороні та логістиці, що звужує спектр можливостей для висококваліфікованого працевлаштування. Бар'єрами залишаються психологічні труднощі, інфраструктурні обмеження, брак спеціалізованих HR-процедур, упередження роботодавців та недостатність сталих корпоративних програм адаптації. Державна політика спрямована на професійну підготовку ветеранів, розвиток їх підприємницького потенціалу, цифрові сервіси, консультаційну підтримку та компенсаційні механізми для роботодавців. Зокрема, програма «Ветеран. Робота» та платформа «Кар'єра ветерана» забезпечують доступ до вакансій, курсів, індивідуального консультування та можливостей підвищення кваліфікації. Бізнес-структури також активізують участь: SoftServe, Intellias, МХП і Valtech Ukraine реалізують програми менторства, освітні проекти, ініціативи з підтримки психічного здоров'я, адаптації робочих місць і формування інклюзивної культури. Ветерани демонструють високу ефективність у сферах IT, агробізнесу, логістики, охорони та підприємництва. Підвищення результативності інтеграції потребує розвитку компетентностей HR-фахівців, партнерства з ветеранськими організаціями, удосконалення корпоративних політик і створення безпечного інклюзивного середовища. Інтеграція ветеранів є стратегічно важливим соціально-економічним завданням, успіх якого ґрунтується на поєднанні реабілітації, перекваліфікації та всебічної підтримки бізнесу й держави.

Ключові слова: інтеграція ветеранів; працевлаштування; корпоративні програми; професійна адаптація; реабілітація; перекваліфікація; ринок праці; HR-менеджмент; інклюзивне середовище; державна політика.

Formulation of the problem. The issue of veterans' integration into civilian life and their professional adaptation constitutes a relevant component of Ukraine's socio-economic development. Demobilized service members face a range of challenges, including social marginalization, insufficient civilian work experience, and psychological consequences of military service. In the context of a protracted armed conflict, this issue becomes particularly acute, as losses of human capital and low economic activity among veterans may adversely affect the competitiveness of the Ukrainian economy.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The topic of veterans' integration and support within the sustainable development systems of Ukrainian companies has been covered in the works of Kovalenko O. [11], Kossova-Silina H. [12], Kuzenkova Ye. [13], Yatsenko L. [21], Yurkivska-Oliiarnyk I. [22], among others. Significant contributions are also made by professional employment platforms [1, 2, 3, 20], official resources of the Ministry for Veterans Affairs and the Ministry of Social Policy, as well as materials from the Ukrainian Veterans Fund [6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17], and corporate sustainability reports. Despite existing developments, the issue of a comprehensive analysis of veterans' integration and support practices in Ukrainian companies remains relevant and requires further academic research.

The purposes of the article to analyze veterans' integration and support practices implemented by Ukrainian companies, identify key sectors and job categories, and develop recommendations for forming effective policies and programs within the sustainable development framework.

The main material presentation. In academic literature, "veteran integration" is understood as a multidimensional process encompassing social, economic, and psychological components. Social integration involves restoring social ties and participation in community life. Economic integration focuses on securing employment, stable income, and opportunities for professional development. Professional integration is studied through the concept of reintegration, which refers to the adaptation of military-acquired experience to civilian labor market requirements.

An important aspect of integration is the recognition of veterans as a valuable resource for businesses, as their military experience equips them with competencies in demand within the civilian sector. In particular, leadership skills, stress resilience, discipline, and teamwork ability serve as key drivers of organizational productivity.

Scholarly sources identify core components of veteran integration: rehabilitation (medical and psychological), retraining, mentorship, and corporate support. Rehabilitation addresses physical and psychological consequences of service; retraining aligns veterans' skills with civilian labor demands; mentorship supports new veterans in adapting to civilian workplaces; and corporate support facilitates an

inclusive work environment.

According to estimates, the number of demobilized service members requiring integration into the labor market reaches 1.3 million individuals [9]. Despite an increase in job postings targeting veterans, many employers lack experience working with this group, creating employment barriers [13].

Key barriers to effective integration include psychological factors (such as perceived irrelevance of military skills), workplace infrastructure limitations, financial and organizational costs of adaptation programs, cultural and institutional biases, and insufficient engagement from state institutions [12].

Labor market analysis based on Work.ua data illustrates significant changes in the dynamics of “veteran-friendly” vacancies. According to the platform, in February 2022 there were 3,229 such postings, while by June 2024 the number increased to 12,334 an 82% growth [2]. Despite this substantial rise, veteran-specific vacancies still represent only 11% of all postings on the platform [2], indicating that while employer demand for veterans is growing, it does not yet dominate the labor market.

Structural analysis shows that most veteran-oriented vacancies remain concentrated in traditionally male-dominated sectors such as transportation, security, and communications (Fig.1-2). Underrepresented categories include top management (less than 6%) and beauty, fitness, and sports (about 3%) [20].

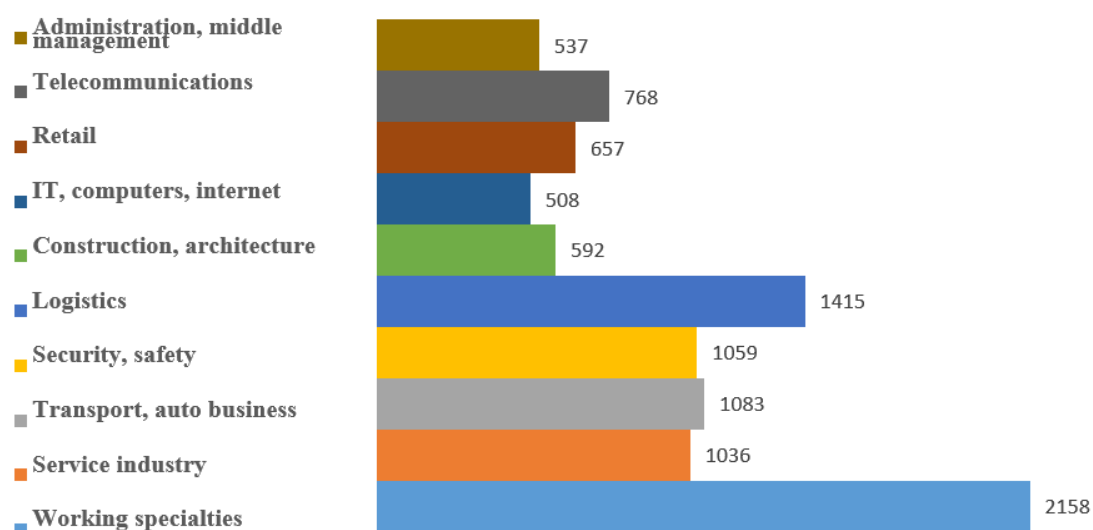


Fig.1. Vacancies with priority for veterans according to Work.ua, persons
Source: compiled by the authors

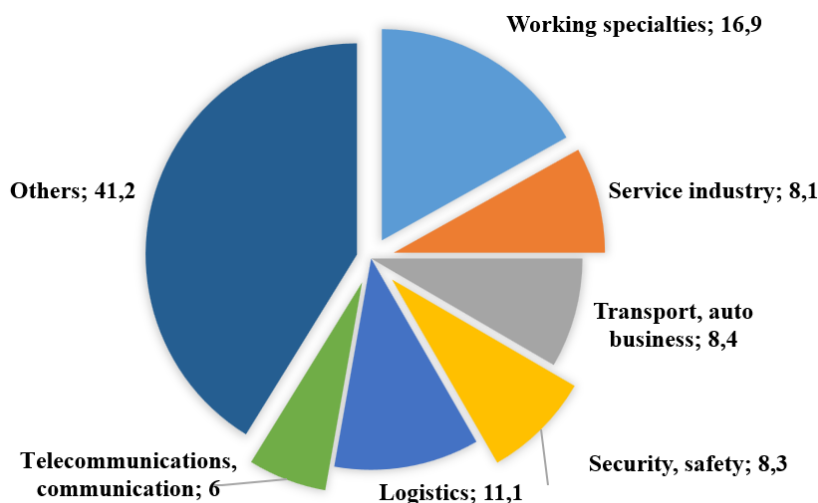


Fig. 2. Structure of distribution of vacancies with priority for veterans according to Work.ua, %
Source: compiled by the authors

Regarding employment format and work experience requirements, 51% of veteran-targeted vacancies

do not require prior experience (Biz.nv.ua, 2024). Approximately 15% offer part-time employment, while 7% support remote work [11]. Around 70% are simultaneously marked as suitable for persons with disabilities, which may indicate partial overlap of social categories or employer biases.

Within Work.ua's "Nazustrich" initiative, a survey of companies showed that 60% of employers reported having positions where preference is given to veteran candidates [2]. However, only 8% provide medical or psychological support programs for veteran employees [20]. Overall, the statistical analysis highlights growing demand for veterans in the labor market but also reveals structural barriers and insufficient corporate readiness for comprehensive veteran support.

In the presented study, we identified the key aspects of state policy in the field of veteran employment. Ukraine's state policy in the field of social and professional veteran integration establishes a comprehensive approach to safeguarding veterans' labor, educational, and social rights. Key priorities include employment, retraining, entrepreneurship promotion, and adaptation to civilian life. One of the central initiatives is the State Target Program "Veteran. Work" (through 2027), approved by the Cabinet of Ministers [17]. It aims to build a support system that includes digital tools for job search, workplace adaptation mechanisms, and cooperation between government, business, and civil society to facilitate effective integration.

The State Employment Service implements measures such as career guidance, résumé and interview consultations, and financial support for veteran entrepreneurship. Employers hiring veterans may receive compensation for wage expenses and workplace adaptation, incentivizing job creation [15, 16].

Ukrainian legislation provides legal guarantees for veterans, including priority employment in positions aligned with medical and social assessments and preferential retention in cases of staff reduction or company reorganization.

The Ministry for Veterans Affairs promotes "veteran-friendly business" principles, which involve workplace adaptation, accessibility, mental and physical health support, and participation in training programs. These mechanisms support veterans' social integration while facilitating their participation in economic activities.

Entrepreneurial development is a significant policy priority. Through grant programs and investment initiatives of the Ukrainian Veterans Fund, veterans receive financial and mentoring support for launching businesses. State policy also encourages veteran-owned enterprise participation in public procurement, enhancing economic independence and labor market integration.

Digital tools are an essential component, such as the "Veterans' Career" platform, which provides access to job postings, retraining opportunities, and employer contacts. Developing a unified digital system for tracking integration outcomes improves evaluation of public programs' effectiveness [10].

We also examined the corporate sector's practices in veteran-related policies. Businesses play an active role in facilitating veterans' integration through corporate social responsibility programs and targeted employment initiatives. Companies across various sectors create adapted positions and offer training and mentorship to ensure effective use of military-acquired competencies.

SoftServe, a leading Ukrainian IT service company, implements the "Veterans at SoftServe" program, offering comprehensive support to demobilized service members [5]. The program includes job retention during service, adaptation leave, and medical and psychological support. Professional training is a key element, with initiatives such as EmpowerU providing courses in DevOps, system administration, IT project management, and other specialties. A veteran community within the company facilitates peer support and inclusion. HR staff receive training on the specifics of working with veterans, supporting adapted recruitment and onboarding processes.

Intellias implements a comprehensive IT-sector veteran support system, including internal veteran communities, the Military Buddy Program, and extensive medical and financial assistance [22]. The company ensures accessible office spaces and support for veterans with disabilities.

Agricultural company MHP Agribusiness engages veterans through the "MHP Poruch" program, offering support for professional adaptation, social and sports initiatives, and flexible conditions for individuals with physical limitations [4].

Valtech Ukraine, recognized with the Veteran Friendly Award, adopts a systemic approach to veteran support, providing specialized equipment, remote work possibilities, workplace adaptation, mentorship, and career planning initiatives [19].

Small and medium-sized businesses, supported by veteran NGOs, also implement training modules and retraining programs to improve employers' competencies in hiring veterans [19].

An important part of the study involves examining the labor market challenges that may be caused by

Major integration challenges involve psychological and physical limitations, cultural differences between military and civilian environments, financial costs of integration programs, and the instability of certain initiatives. Insufficient systemic coordination may reduce program effectiveness, indicating the need for a comprehensive corporate strategy.

Overall, the findings highlight the need for a balanced, evidence-based approach to integrating veterans into the workforce - one that combines effective public policy instruments with proactive corporate initiatives. This integrated approach can help ensure equal employment opportunities for veterans while supporting labor market stability and organizational development.

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