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**Інтеграція студентів-ветеранів у освітнє середовище країни:
досвід Сполучених Штатів Америки**

**Integration of Veteran Students into the Country's Educational Environment:
the Experience of the United States of America**

Розвиток STEM-освіти в Україні, формування виваженої політики в освітньому просторі країни в умовах воєнного стану, та створення сприятливого освітнього середовища для військовослужбовців при поверненні з військової служби до цивільного життя визначено в ряді нормативних актів та законів, викладених на офіційному сайті Уряду України, на сайті Міністерства освіти і науки України та на сайтах інших урядових установ. В нових реаліях України сьогодні, повернення військовослужбовців до цивільного життя потребує нових робочих місць, що є наслідком освоєння нових сучасних затребуваних професій, які в свою чергу є наслідком здобуття сучасної STEM-освіти. В цьому сенсі досвід Сполучених Штатів Америки може бути корисним для розробки Україною освітнього середовища та освітніх реформ, які відповідають потребам держави.

У результаті здійсненого теоретико-методологічного аналізу, спираючись на дослідження в галузі педагогічної освіти, філософії та управління, проаналізовано напрями реформ Уряду Сполучених Штатів направлених на підтримку студентів-ветеранів в контексті здобуття вищої освіти в другій половині XX – першій половині XXI сторіччя; розглянута система формування професійної компетентності майбутніх фахівців із числа студентів-ветеранів війни в закладах вищої освіти; визначені основні проблеми, з якими стикаються військовослужбовці вступаючи до закладів вищої освіти; з'ясовано рівень обізнаності, досвід користування та задоволеність державними програмами та пільгами, що спрямовані на підтримку студентів-ветеранів та їхніх сімей. Враховуючи потребу в єдиній та всеосяжній політиці інтеграції ветеранів в громадське життя країни, США запропонували концептуальну модель, яка враховує багатогранність інтеграції ветеранів, включаючи можливості здобувати вищу, та будь-яку іншу STEM-освіту, у кращій якості. Ефективна політика інтеграції ветеранів сприяє прогресу Сполучених Штатів на шляху до досягнення конкретних цілей у сфері сталого розвитку країни, зокрема в сфері STEM-освіта для всіх

Ключові слова: *STEM-освіта, вища освіта, Україна, США, студенти-ветерани, військовослужбовці, законопроект.*

The development of STEM education in Ukraine, the formation of a balanced policy in the country's educational space under martial law, and the creation of a favorable educational environment for military personnel upon returning from military service to civilian life are defined in a number of regulatory acts and laws set out on the official website of the Government of Ukraine, on the website of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, and on the websites of other government institutions. In the new realities of Ukraine today, the return of military personnel to civilian life requires new jobs, which is a consequence of mastering new modern in-demand professions, which in turn are a consequence of obtaining modern STEM education. In this sense, the experience of the United States of America can be useful for Ukraine to develop an educational environment and educational reforms that meet the needs of the state.

As a result of the theoretical and methodological analysis, based on research in the field of pedagogical education, philosophy and management, the directions of reforms of the United States Government aimed at supporting student veterans in the context of obtaining higher education in the second half of the 20th - first half of the 21st century were analyzed; the system of forming professional

competence of future specialists from among student veterans of the war in higher education institutions was considered; the main problems faced by military personnel when entering higher education institutions were identified; the level of awareness, experience of use and satisfaction with state programs and benefits aimed at supporting student veterans and their families was clarified. Given the need for a unified and comprehensive policy of integrating veterans into the public life of the country, the USA proposed a conceptual model that takes into account the multifaceted integration of veterans, including the opportunities to obtain higher, and any other STEM education, in better quality. Effective veteran integration policies contribute to the United States' progress toward achieving specific national sustainable development goals, including STEM education for all.

Keywords: *STEM education, higher education, Ukraine, USA, student veterans, military personnel, Bill.*

Introduction / Вступ. The formation of a balanced policy in the educational space of Ukraine under martial law, and the formation of the educational process for military personnel upon returning from military service to civilian life are defined in a number of regulatory acts and laws set out on the official website of the Government of Ukraine, on the website of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and on the websites of other government institutions (Law of Ukraine «On Higher Education», 2014), (Law of Ukraine «On Education», 2017), (On approval of the Strategy for the formation of a system for returning from military service to civilian life for the period until 2033 and approval of the operational plan of measures for its implementation in 2025-2027, 2024), (On Approval of Changes to the Features of Training of Applicants for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy and the Degree of Doctor of Sciences in Higher Military Educational Institutions, Military Educational Units of Higher Educational Institutions, and Scientific Institutions of the System of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, 2024). The importance of education for veterans upon returning to civilian life cannot be underestimated given the attendant benefits. More educated people get better jobs and have higher incomes. The importance of obtaining a higher level of education is enhanced by the «new global economy» (Manyika et al., 2017) taking into account advances in digital technologies, the development of robotics and e-commerce, startups and transformations in manufacturing, the development of artificial intelligence, etc. (Batyuk & Zhernovnykova, 2018). Education is also positively associated with more effective personal habits, better choice of place of residence and wider professional opportunities. Moreover, highly educated people tend to make better choices regarding health and the use of medical information and digital resources (Batyuk & Chovpan, 2021). In the new realities of Ukraine today, the return of servicemen to civilian life requires new jobs, which is a consequence of mastering new modern in-demand professions, which in turn are a consequence of obtaining modern STEM education (On approval of the action plan for the implementation of the Concept for the Development of Science and Mathematics Education (STEM Education) until 2027, 2021), (On the implementation of an innovative educational project at the all-Ukrainian level on the topic «Scientific and methodological support of STEM education in educational institutions» in September 2024 – December 2027, 2024). In this sense, the experience of the United States of America can be useful for Ukraine to develop an educational environment and educational reforms that meet the specific needs of the state, in the context of changing military conditions and the growing role of modern STEM technologies against this background.

Aim and Tasks / Мета та завдання. The purpose of the article is to study the integration of war veteran students into the educational environment of the United States of America, the acquisition of STEM education by students, and the integration of these students into the culture of STEM education for further use of experience in the development of STEM education in Ukraine. In accordance with the goal, the following tasks have been identified: to analyze the directions of reforms of the United States Government aimed at supporting veteran students in the context of obtaining higher education in the second half of the 20th – first half of the 21st century; to analyze the system of forming professional competence of future specialists from among war veteran students in higher education institutions; to identify the main problems faced by military personnel when entering higher education institutions; to find out the level of awareness, experience of use, and satisfaction with state programs and benefits aimed at supporting veteran students and their families.

Methods / Методи. To achieve the goal and perform the tasks, the article uses search and theoretical and methodological analysis (collection, analysis, systematization and generalization of the provisions of scientific and pedagogical, methodological, reference literature, regulatory documentation); system-structural (systematization of scientific facts about education and STEM education in the USA and Ukraine); statistical (collection, processing, analysis of educational statistics data in the USA and Ukraine); comparative analysis, theoretical-generalization method and interpretation method (for formulating and substantiating conclusions based on the results of the study).

Results / Результати. Over the years of Ukraine's independence, the relationship between veteran military personnel in Ukraine and higher education institutions has changed significantly. According to the provisions outlined in the 2020 handbook, known as the «Fundamental Rights of Military Personnel,» which was developed by the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine as part of the «Strengthening Democratic Control over the Armed Forces of Ukraine» project, implemented by the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine and the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine, military personnel have the right to study (including postgraduate education) in military educational institutions, relevant units for training, retraining, and advanced training of military personnel (Lukichov et al., 2020). Military personnel of Ukraine who are accepted for military service under a contract of officers after obtaining basic or full higher education by state order are allowed to study in other higher educational institutions without separation from service after completing a term of service equal to the time of their studies for obtaining a previous higher education. Other categories of military personnel, except for military personnel in conscript military service and military service by conscription of officers, are allowed to study in other higher educational institutions without separation from service in the manner determined by the relevant provisions on military service by citizens of Ukraine. Children of military personnel at the place of residence of their families are given priority places in general education and preschool educational institutions and children's health camps regardless of the form of ownership (Article 13 of the Law of Ukraine «On Social and Legal Protection of Military Personnel and Members of Their Families»). Ukraine is currently facing the ethical challenge of supporting veterans who are returning to society, continuing their civilian lives, and often enrolling in higher education institutions. To understand the challenges facing our society, let us expand on the experience of the United States Government in supporting military veterans who enroll in U.S. higher education institutions to obtain STEM education.

Although military of the United States personnel entering higher education after service have not been studied as thoroughly as, for example, student-athletes, research suggests that many factors hinder a smooth transition from military service to college life for these students and that they face different challenges than regular students. (Elbogen et al., 2013).

About 200,000 veterans are discharged from the U.S. military annually, but of interest to the Ukrainian experience is a group of military veterans referred to as «9/11 veterans.» The number of such «9/11 veterans» is projected to exceed four million by the end of 2024 (National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, 2016), (Morgan et al., 2023).

Veterans affected by 9/11 are notable for several reasons. They are U.S. service members who have been on active duty since September 11, 2001, and who participated in the Global War on Terror (GWOT). The Global War on Terror was the first war in which the National Guard and Reservists were extensively used in combat operations. It is this group of veterans who are characterized by high rates of traumatic exposure and other mental health problems. This is due to the unexpectedness and rapid pace of military operations with repeated and prolonged combat deployments (a situation we are currently witnessing in Ukraine). These U.S. veterans have the highest rates of disability in military history. In addition, this group is the most diverse of any previous veteran group, with veterans of color accounting for 25.2% of veterans in 2020 and this indicator projected to increase to 35.3% by 2040. The overall percentage of female veterans was 9% in 2018 and is likely to increase to 17% of veterans by 2040 (National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, 2019). As a result of these various factors, post-9/11 veterans are believed to be at risk for difficult transitions from the military to the civilian sphere (Kintzle et al., 2014), (Elnitsky et al., 2017).

Research shows that more U.S. students who enter college or university after returning from military service are first-generation college students than their non-veteran peers; 60% of veteran students who responded to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) identified as such in 2010; this number increased to 40% in 2020. These students were the first in their families to attend college or higher education (Wurster et al., 2012). Research suggests that these students enter college with weaker academic preparation, lower educational aspirations, and a lack of knowledge about navigating the college environment (Tinoco, 2015). Many of them and their families who take advantage of veterans' educational benefits at colleges and universities often face veteran-specific challenges, such as delays in VA benefits payments and confusing paperwork. In addition, the transition from a regimented military lifestyle to structuring their own schedules, making their own decisions, and challenging the decisions of others requires a significant shift in mindset that has practical consequences, such as difficulty integrating with fellow students who are typically younger and may be unfamiliar with the realities of military service or critical of the conflict in which the former service members participated.

The United States Army's system of professional military education originated in the post-Civil War era of 1861–1865. Using the Prussian education system as a model, educators developed a system

that met the specific needs of the United States at the time. Over the years, the system underwent repeated reforms to respond to changing warfare and advances in technology. In the 19th century, the system began to lose its appeal. Veterans returning to civilian life were reluctant to pursue military careers and sought out modern, civilian occupations that were in demand in society. The pressures of change and other challenges facing the United States educational environment became particularly acute at the end of the Cold War, which led to some changes to meet the growing demands for a common education.

Although many higher education institutions in the United States continue to offer Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC) programs, the United States government's current focus is on retraining returning military personnel. Successful retraining depends on the persistence of veteran students and their ability to complete their chosen STEM major. To better understand the factors that influence degree attainment among veterans in the United States, it is essential to first understand the goals and challenges facing military personnel in these realities of life.

The Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 and the National Defense Act of 1916 established the initial relationship between the U.S. military and higher education in the United States. The combination of these two laws provided the primary impetus for the education of young men before entering the military. The Morrill Act required that military training be part of the curriculum, and the National Defense Act provided the primary impetus for the creation of the Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC). During World War II, the Department of Labor estimated that 15 million men and women who had served in the armed forces would be unemployed after the war. The passage of the Reserve Forces Act (SRA) in 1942 changed the relationship between the military and higher education, and the concept of «military retraining» emerged (Crossland & Currie, 1984). At the end of World War II, millions of service members returned home, and the need for education for these individuals became a top priority for the United States government. In response, Congress passed the Soldier Reserve Act (SRA) to mitigate the potential economic impact of such a large number of individuals (Hammond, 2017), (Gerald et al., 2005). The SRA provided military veterans with financial benefits and financial assistance, including unemployment benefits, home and business loans, and access to higher education in the form of loans, credits, and advances (Rumann & Hamrick, 2009). The educational benefits associated with the SRA became known as the first veterans' bill, the GI Bill.

The reason for the emergence of this law was a number of factors. To reduce the likelihood of a post-war depression caused by widespread unemployment, in 1942 the National Resources Planning Board, a White House agency, studied post-war labor needs and, as early as June 1943, recommended a number of programs for the education and training of future military veterans. The main provisions and norms of the law were developed, which later became the Serviceman's Readjustment Act. This law was passed through the US Congress, where in the spring of 1944 this Bill was unanimously passed by both houses of Congress. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed it on June 22, 1944, just a few days after the invasion of Normandy, on the so-called D-day invasion of Normandy (Dwight D. Eisenhower, 2025). American Legion publicist Jack Cejnar called it «the GI Bill of Rights» because it offered federal assistance to veterans to help them adjust to civilian life in areas such as hospitalization, private business, home and business purchases, and especially education. The law provided tuition, room and board, books and supplies, equipment, and counseling services for veterans so they could continue their education in school or college. From 1942 to 1949, about eight million veterans received educational benefits.

Under this proposed «GI Bill of Rights» plan, there was no obstacle to the education of soldiers even while in military service. The problem of the soldier's release during training was viewed from the perspective of the soldier who would not want his fellow soldiers to think that the soldier was evading service, evading his patriotic duty. The Army developed plans to establish in foreign countries, when and where the military situation permitted, courses of training for soldiers, including courses in science and technology. The U.S. government ensured that these courses were the best and most modern that could be offered. If this did not harm the soldiers undergoing training, the Armed Forces Institute had a set of modern instructions at the highest levels, involving the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the California Institute of Technology, the Ryerson Laboratory of the University of Chicago, and others who could not be transferred abroad but who helped in the establishment of such courses. Public Law 346, Seventy-eighth Congress, commonly known as the Military Bill of Rights, provided for the education of veterans under certain conditions at the expense of the federal government. Among the soldiers and sailors returning to civilian life were many who had pronounced academic talent, which was developed through further education for the national good of the United States.

Thanks to the benefits provided by the GI Bill of Rights, from 1945 to 1960, about 2,300,000 people attended colleges and universities, 3,500,000 people received schooling, and 3,400,000 people received on-the-job training. Between 1940 and 1950, the number of degrees awarded by U.S. colleges and

universities doubled. A careful analysis of the problem of recruiting and training future scientists to the Ph.D level was made possible by undergraduate and predoctoral fellowship programs. In 1945, 4.6% of Americans had a bachelor's degree. By 2000, 25% of Americans had a bachelor's degree. The need for scientists during the Cold War was one of the most pressing that the US government, industry, and economy faced, because the heart of any successful country is the stability of a strong corps of highly qualified specialists. As researchers of that time believed, future scientific and technical leaders in the United States were mostly in military service. As Vannevar Bush, an American scientist, engineer, developer of analog computers, methodologist and organizer of scientific research and the scientific community, science advisor to President Franklin Roosevelt, wrote: «If exceptional measures are not taken to recruit and train talented military personnel at the time or before the end of the war, the future will reveal that this country is seriously deprived of scientific and technological leadership. In peacetime or war, this handicap may prove fatal to our standard of living and our way of life» (Bush, 1945).

Adequate funding can be of immense value, providing a large number of qualified individuals with the opportunity and tools to receive the necessary training and education. Providing undergraduate and predoctoral fellowships and grants has helped the U.S. government to produce the necessary number of specialists who will contribute to the future productive scientific research conducted in universities and government agencies. In addition, each additional graduate student increases the efficiency of senior staff. The National Research Council, with funds from the Rockefeller Foundation, provided a series of fellowships from 1960 to 2000 to scientists who had recently received degrees and wished to continue their research for one to two years to gain a solid footing in research before taking on teaching duties. An unusually high proportion of recipients have gone on to successful careers in science or one of its related fields, particularly medicine. One of the most important aspects of these fellowships was that their holders often used them to work at institutions other than those where they had received their degrees. Thus, military personnel who received degrees not only expanded their own training but also made a major contribution to the exchange of ideas and methods between different laboratories. In the immediate postwar period, an increase in the number of these fellowships would have been especially important in re-establishing in scientific work the many men who had completed their formal education before entering the armed forces and thus would not have been eligible for assistance under the US «GI Bill of Rights». The fellowships became useful in certain fields of applied science, known today as STEM science, where a combination of skills and competence was required.

Unfortunately, black veterans were unable to take full advantage of most of the benefits of the GI Bill. They were often unable to obtain bank mortgages; they faced prejudice and discrimination; they could not obtain loans to buy homes in black neighborhoods, much less in «white» suburban neighborhoods. By 1956, when the first GI Bill expired, the cost of education and training had brought veterans \$14.5 billion in benefits, but the Veterans Affairs Administration estimated that the increase in federal income taxes alone had paid for the bill several times over, as 4.3 million home loans had been issued by 1955, with a total face value of \$33 billion. Veterans were responsible for purchasing 20 percent of all new homes built after the war. The results had unexpected repercussions for the rest of the economy; This did not lead to another depression, but rather to unprecedented prosperity for the next generation. The GI Bill of Rights was extended several times. Nearly 2.3 million veterans participated in the program during the Korean War and more than 8 million during the Vietnam War.

Following the success of the SRA, the GI Bill has undergone several adaptations and modifications over the years, with the most recent version of the GI Bill being the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008. The Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 was signed into law by President George W. Bush on June 30, 2008 (The White House, 2025). This sweeping new legislation updated the Veterans Act and significantly enhanced its value (Martorell & Bergman, 2014). The law mandated that veterans' college costs be paid at the same rate as the original GI Bill after World War II. The key provisions of the law are 100% funding for in-state four-year undergraduate tuition for veterans who have served three years of active duty since September 11, 2001. The law also gave veterans the ability to transfer benefits to family members or children after ten years of service (or consent to service). Records released in 2015 by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs show that nearly 800,000 veterans have taken advantage of the GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, which has resulted for payments in over \$11 billion in education and other benefits to support student veterans (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2025).

During the period 1951-2020, the U.S. education system underwent many dramatic changes. In essence, this led to the firm establishment of a STEM philosophy that dominated the system for the next thirty years. Of course, changes in curricula occurred in almost all educational institutions, as technology, tactics, methods, and doctrine underwent changes. A noticeable trend of this period, mainly in higher education, was the increasing inclusion of STEM educational disciplines in the curriculum.

During this period, an ever-increasing number of war veteran students attended civilian institutions to obtain bachelor's and master's degrees. This practice has caused much debate about the appropriateness of the programs, given the financial costs.

Today, educational institutions in the United States, both private and public, are further strengthening their collective desire to serve veteran students. They unite student veterans, create a variety of student organizations.

While many military veterans would like to shed their military past and enjoy «just being a student,» others still crave the companionship they once had. To address this dilemma, universities are creating specialized safe spaces from which to provide services and support to such students. «Rituals» are being developed to honor veterans and make them feel valued, including Veterans Day celebrations and Veterans Week programs that involve coordination with the Career Center, the Center for LGBT Equality, counseling centers, and student union colleagues. Many universities are going even further, featuring veterans' stories in video clips and other informational networks (Schlossberg et al., 1989), (Lim et al., 2018), (Morris et al., 2024).

One of the important problems that teachers and educators of higher education institutions, both in Ukraine and in other countries, may face is the problem of the complex influence of military culture, which veterans-students of higher education will bring with them to receive higher education by the military. Student veterans who have returned to society bring with them a culture that values the minimization of individual self-expression, self-sacrifice and group security over individual well-being or personal development. This will become a counterbalance to receiving STEM education in higher education institutions, which encourages students to value their individuality and discover for themselves the qualities that distinguish them from their classmates. Military personnel, accustomed to following established procedures and obeying clearly defined lines of command, may face a student life for which they will not be prepared. The multicultural competences between military culture and academic culture can create difficulties for such students and lead to stress, during the transition from one reality to another, which does not allow to admit weakness and seek help, which can lead to anxiety states, alcohol and drug addiction, as well as other conditions that may be undiagnosed. Since such students are not inclined to seek help, the responsibility for them falls partly on the teachers and staff of higher education institutions who work with such students.

Developing curriculum-based, STEM-relevant programs that bridge the gap between military culture and higher education norms and practices is essential for the successful transition of veteran students to higher education. For example, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has developed the VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) program to help veterans, service members, and their families complete their education on time, gain professional competence, and prepare for the workforce. In the VSOC program, the VA Vet Center Outreach Coordinator is also available to provide peer-to-peer counseling and referral services through coordinated outreach and counseling to veteran students regarding benefits on campus. This support is designed to help veterans complete their education, prepare for a competitive workforce, secure employment, and build successful and distinguished careers. The VSOC program is currently available at more than 100 colleges and universities in the United States (Morgan et al., 2023).

On many campuses, veteran students are forming organizations that are designed to address pressing issues such as housing shortages, to provide opportunities for veterans to discuss their military experiences, and to help veterans adjust to college life (Vest, 2024). Veteran-friendly campuses typically have a veterans affairs office and an active veterans student organization. These veteran-focused organizations are integral to the success of all students in higher education (Whiteman et al. 2013).

The experiences of military personnel during their transition to college and university education have attracted attention, thanks to the U.S. government's understanding of veterans' needs. Using transition theory (Schlossberg et al., 1995), a study (DiRamio et al., 2008) was published in 2008 describing the transition experiences of male and female veterans at three universities. The study authors describe three phases that veteran students go through: 1) enlistment; 2) completion of their military service, completion, and discharge; and 3) the beginning of the transition phase to higher education. Within each transition phase, several subphases and distinct areas of study emerge that require further research. Understanding these areas, which are related to the challenges and stressors that veteran students face when entering higher education institutions, can be particularly traumatic. These findings have already been confirmed by modern research (Vest, 2024). To choose a modern educational vector of STEM education, higher education institutions should accept these findings and heed the call to more consistently open their doors to students who are war veterans, since it is obvious that as future education seekers, such students are more interested in obtaining higher education than the general cohort of their peers. Research on the number and graduation rate of veteran students in US higher education institutions has become an indicator of what has worked and what needs to be

addressed in terms of academic achievements of education seekers.

Given the need for a unified and comprehensive policy for the reintegration of veterans into the public life of the country, the United States proposed a conceptual model (GI Bill of Rights) that takes into account the multifaceted integration of veterans, including economic integration, mental health, favorable relations in society, constructive civic participation of veterans in the life of the country, opportunities to obtain higher education, and any other STEM education, in the best quality. Successful reintegration of veterans is possible only if all these outcomes are achieved. They are interdependent and influence each other, and in the aggregate, they are influenced by a number of social, economic, cultural, individual and societal factors that can both facilitate and hinder the progress of military personnel's return to civilian life. Effective veteran reintegration policies since 1942 have contributed to the United States' progress toward achieving specific sustainable development goals, including Gender Equality, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Justice and Effective Institutions, and STEM Education for All.

Discussion / Обговорення. Studies show that Ukrainian military personnel returning to civilian life face significant difficulties in various areas of reintegration into society (Nazarenko et al., 2019), (Kolosok & Tsymbaliuk, 2024). These difficulties range from the biased attitude of employment centers and social services, where veterans face bureaucratic obstacles in obtaining combat or disability status, and receiving benefits, to persistent prejudices and stereotypes in society regarding their mental health. The lack of work upon return, which is often a result of insufficient qualifications, or lack of education, limits their access to services, forcing many veterans to struggle with unemployment, psychological disorders, and various types of addiction. Despite laws on veteran support, fragmented implementation between institutions prevents more than half of veterans from receiving medical care and social benefits, hinders assistance in employment, and resources for entrepreneurship. According to the survey, about half of veterans need financial assistance, and more than 50% suspect that they will need help with health care in the future. Although many veterans would like to start a business, factors such as hostilities, limited capital, limited access to credit, and bureaucratic obstacles hinder their entrepreneurial efforts.

Unlike Ukraine, in the United States of America, the Government, since World War II, has realized the need for coordinated assistance and has enacted key laws to support a comprehensive state policy for military veterans, which guarantees employment, improves access to social support, simplifies obtaining veteran status, supports veterans' family members, etc. One of the key provisions of these laws is the provision on education, improving the reintegration of veterans into the country's educational environment through national programs, specialized training, psychological screening, a registry of veteran associations, and various modern tools for finding work in the field of STEM technologies. To promote the employment of veterans, the United States Government has created incentives for employers, introduced quotas, organized support for veteran students, national and regional programs, tax breaks, and easier access to grants and government contracts. Additional offers of the STEM educational environment include student campuses, veteran organizations, centers focused on the STEM economy, educational quotas, benefits, and advertising of successful veteran students. Accordingly, we can argue that Ukrainian higher education institutions are only partially adapted to the education of veteran students, because during the years of military aggression by the Russian Federation, there has been no full and systematic transition to the education of veteran students as a new group of students, which carries certain challenges and difficulties for educators. And here we have not only problems of funding, lack of technical resources, access to licensed software, but also adaptation of training courses and effective teaching methods, and insufficient awareness of teachers with the problems that such groups of students bring with them.

Conclusions / Висновки. In fact, most military personnel, upon returning to civilian life, remain soldiers rather than «remembering» their professional skills and returning to their previous job, the work they did before being drafted into the army. The competencies and professional skills acquired in the army in the field of artillery, engineering, fortifications, and other areas of military affairs often have no application in peaceful life. Obtaining STEM education provides the applicant with the opportunity to obtain qualifications, take training courses to prepare for the performance of their professional duties in peacetime. Currently, Ukraine is faced with the ethical task of supporting veterans who return to society, continue their civilian life, and often enter higher education institutions. Our study of the United States Government's experience in supporting military veterans who enter U.S. higher education institutions to obtain STEM education is aimed at providing educational institutions in Ukraine with the opportunity to understand the situation and prepare to support the future cohort of veteran students in our country.

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