

Learning From the Best: Metinvest to Implement US Work With Veterans Experience

Last week, executives from Metinvest Group's production assets and the management company took part in a training tour in the United States to learn about the world's best practices in working with war veterans. The purpose was to further use the experience gained in developing the Group's ecosystem for working with former military personnel. The tour included numerous meetings with representatives of private business, government and non-government sectors in the US.



The choice of the US as the country for conducting the tour was driven by its longstanding practice of implementing veteran policies at all levels. The programme was developed together with America's Warrior Partnership.

Since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, more than 9,000 employees of Metinvest have been mobilised to the ranks of the Ukrainian armed forces. More than 500 veterans have already returned from the war and begun work. The Group is also engaging new employees: veterans of the Ukrainian armed forces who have not previously worked for it. As such, the main task for every Metinvest executive is to build a veteran ecosystem in the Group, implement global best practices for working with former military personnel, and help veterans to re-adapt to civilian life.

As part of the week-long tour, the Group's top executives had numerous meetings with representatives of large US companies, veterans' associations and the public sector, mostly former military personnel. They were also introduced to the Heroes MAKE America initiative; learned about public-private partnerships to overcome skilled workforce shortages and a programme for veterans' families; and studied J.P. Morgan's inclusive employment practices for veterans.

One notable event for the tour participants was visiting a modern community centre for veterans and learning about the experience of working with former military personnel at Walmart, CVS Health, Wells Fargo, Peraton and Northrop Grumman. At the end of the training, Metinvest executives met Thomas Bowman, CEO of TGB Strategies and a former Deputy Secretary of the US Department of Veterans Affairs, and learned about approaches to veterans' psychological and mental recovery from the Avalon Action Alliance and Cohen Veterans Network public organisations.

The meetings showed that Metinvest's ecosystem for working with former military personnel is already similar in key respects to American practices, which are based on the principles of responsibility, priority, consistency and fairness. The programmes involve partners at all levels: from the state and municipal sectors to businesses and NGOs. The main areas of work include physical and psychological rehabilitation, mental health and vocational training.



The American system prioritises the establishment of communities for veterans and reintegration into civilian life of not only former military but also their families. There is also a focus on retraining: more than 60% of US military acquire a new profession on completing service.

Tetiana Petruk, Metinvest's Chief Sustainability Officer, said: "While the training tour was intense, it was extremely useful for every Metinvest executive. The involvement of leading speakers from the US state and public sectors working with veterans allowed us to look at the long-term needs and business objectives in terms of veterans' integration into civilian life and teams from a different perspective. It helped us to deepen our understanding of their needs and forms of self-organisation. This experience will help us not only to launch the next stage, which will include training for the next level of management, but also to improve our veteran programmes with a greater focus on retraining and adaptation to civilian life for veterans' families. Moreover, we need to create an ecosystem within the Group aimed at uniting rather than delimiting the team. A system in which the heroes who return from the front line and the heroes of production who have continued to work despite rocket attacks and life threats to support enterprises, the economy and the Ukrainian armed forces will work together."



Metinvest's top executives concluded with a summary session to plan the further development of its veteran ecosystem.

To recap, oboz.ua has named Metinvest one of the best employers in Ukraine, recognising it among the recipients of its "Jobs for Heroes" award. The publication noted that big business should already be thinking about how not only to help mobilised employees, but also to create conditions for them to return to their existing work comfortably or retrain within the Group. The main criteria for determining Metinvest as a winner of the "Jobs for Heroes" award included retraining, creating veterans' communities and preparing teams for the return of demobilised employees, as well as caring for veterans and ensuring the right conditions for their return to work.