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## Metinvest funds Free Waves swimming rehabilitation programme for veterans



Our steel company [Metinvest](#) is financing the Free Waves rehabilitation programme, an initiative providing essential physical and psychological recovery for veterans injured in the war with Russia. The programme, recently highlighted in a dispatch by the French newspaper La Depeche, operates heavily in Zaporizhzhia and offers specialised swimming sessions for military personnel returning from the front lines.

Developed by Ukrainian swimmer Denys Sylantiev, a 1998 world champion and 2000 Olympic silver medallist, the programme addresses the complex needs of

veterans dealing with combat stress, concussions, and amputations. Water therapy allows participants to regain mobility and reduce physical pain, while also offering a crucial mental break from the realities of the ongoing war. Instructors note that the water provides a pressure-free environment where veterans can push their own boundaries and rebuild their confidence.

Since its inception, Free Waves has been coordinated by the non-governmental organisation Zaporizhzhia Platform for Joint Actions. The initiative has already assisted almost 400 service members free of charge in facilities across Kryvyi Rih, Kamianske, and Zaporizhzhia. Currently operating across four swimming pools, the programme is set to expand with two additional locations in Zaporizhzhia. These new facilities will be fitted with specialised equipment, including mechanical lifts to assist individuals with limited mobility to enter the water safely and independently.

The importance of this initiative extends far beyond physical therapy. It provides a community space where veterans can reconstruct their social lives in a supportive environment, overseen by trained physiotherapists. Despite the persistent challenges of operating just 20 kilometres from active combat zones, including regular air raid sirens and power outages that affect water heating, the rehabilitation sessions continue to operate.

Providing comprehensive and systematic support for defenders is a fundamental priority for SCM companies. Across our businesses, we implement corporate programmes that include psychological support, expert advice, and physical rehabilitation. This deep commitment is central to the long-term vision of our shareholder [Rinat Akhmetov](#). His ongoing support for defenders, such as the UAH 1.5 billion (\$40 million) allocated to the Heart of Azovstal project to help Mariupol defenders and their families, forms the foundation of a wider care model. This systematic approach to veteran reintegration and support is currently being formalised as a central pillar in the upcoming 10-year strategy of the Rinat Akhmetov Foundation.

Through initiatives like Free Waves, SCM companies remain dedicated to ensuring that those who have defended the country receive the respect, care, and practical

support they require to recover and rebuild their lives.