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## Kamianske joins Ukraine's growing network of veteran-centric communities



[Heart of Azovstal](#) and the [Rinat Akhmetov Foundation](#) have signed a memorandum of cooperation with the community of Kamianske in Dnipropetrovsk region to develop veteran-centric policy. Kamianske joins Bucha as a pilot community in the "Veteran and Community" project, delivered with America's Warrior Partnership and the Kyiv School of Economics. The initiative is building an educational model to help

Ukrainian municipalities support veterans across mental health, education, employment and social adaptation.

## **What has been agreed in Kamianske?**

Heart of Azovstal and the Rinat Akhmetov Foundation have signed a memorandum of cooperation with the community of Kamianske to strengthen systemic support for veterans, as part of the "Veteran and Community" project. Delivered by Heart of Azovstal at the initiative of the Rinat Akhmetov Foundation, the project brings in America's Warrior Partnership (AWP) and the Kyiv School of Economics. Alongside Bucha, Kamianske is one of the first pilot communities. Heart of Azovstal was created to support the defenders of the Azovstal steelworks in Mariupol, a plant of our steel company Metinvest, and has since grown into a systemic veteran programme.

## **Why do communities matter for veterans?**

The initiative continues Heart of Azovstal's work on the post-traumatic growth of veterans. While those programmes support veterans directly, work with communities creates the environment in which such growth becomes possible.

*"Post-traumatic growth does not happen in a vacuum. It is possible only when a community is ready to welcome a veteran, support their development and create opportunities for it. Our task is not to substitute the state, but to share expertise and together create effective solutions that can be scaled across the country," said **Natalya Yemchenko, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer at SCM and Chair of the Supervisory Board of Heart of Azovstal.***

## **How will the pilot work?**

Drawing on Ukrainian veteran programmes, American expertise and its own experience, Heart of Azovstal is building an educational model for municipalities

covering mental health, education, employment and social adaptation. In practice, this means training for community representatives, analytical support and practical tools for working with veterans.

*"When our American partners from AWP visited Kamianske, they were impressed by how far the city has advanced in veteran policy and reintegration. We are confident this pilot will become the basis for scaling successful solutions across the country, above all for smaller communities that often lack resources or expertise," said **Ksenia Sukhova, General Director of the Rinat Akhmetov Foundation.***

*"Veteran policy is one of our most important priorities. We are developing veteran spaces, supporting rehabilitation and building sport and other opportunities, so that those who have returned from the combat zone can integrate into peaceful life," said **Andriy Bilousov, Mayor of Kamianske***

## **What comes next?**

Heart of Azovstal emphasises that communities are the key level at which veterans return to civilian life. Building a network of veteran-centric communities is an important step towards a systemic veteran policy in Ukraine — and a model that can be scaled to smaller communities nationwide.