

SECTION 2. MECHANISMS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS THE INSTRUMENT OF SOCIAL REINTEGRATION OF VETERANS IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

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Ukraine is undergoing difficult times of facing direct military aggression of russian federation, which, among other aspects, has negative impact on the country's economy, demography, creates new social groups as internally displaced persons and veterans, puts the system of self-government of territorial communities under great pressure to deal with these issues on the local level. Therefore, it is obvious, that local self-government bodies require support and collaboration with various stakeholders, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), business, social groups, educational institutions, international organizations etc. to face the existing challenges and function effectively.

One of the instruments that can be used by local self-government jointly with partners is the development of social entrepreneurship, that is being now in the focus of attention as a complex phenomenon, capable of bringing high value under current conditions. Bytsiura Yu.V. highlights that the main difference between social and commercial entrepreneurs lies in the different motivation of their activities. Thus, the main goal of entrepreneurial activity is to maximize profit (economic effect), while social entrepreneurship is aimed at achieving a social effect from its activity. That is, social entrepreneurs are innovators who use innovative ideas and production resources to accelerate social change and solve social problems [1, c. 113].

Among the specific benefits that social entrepreneurship may bring to a community are the following:

- creation of new jobs and forms of entrepreneurship;
- including socially vulnerable groups of the population in economic activity;
- attracting citizens to volunteer activities, uniting them around social issues;
- promoting the development of services that are socially significant, but are neglected by commercial businesses due to low profitability;
- reducing the financial burden on local budgets in solving social issues [1, c. 119].

Therefore, it is agreed, that effective development of social entrepreneurship may reduce social tension in the country during martial law, as it is part of the global movement towards a more sustainable and just world. Adhering to this vector, social entrepreneurs inspire others to follow their example, creating a ripple effect that catalyses positive changes in various sectors of the economy and the lives of Ukrainians [3, c. 64]. In particular it may serve as the instrument of state support and social reintegration of veterans, the number of which is increasing every day. Researchers point out that due to the systematic mobilization into the ranks of the Armed Forces of Ukraine since 2022 and till present, an extraordinary load on the social sphere is expected in the future. So, to adapt the social security system to the real needs of veterans is extremely important and state policy on supporting social entrepreneurship development may be beneficial in this regard [4].

Meanwhile, in the absence of a legal base for social entrepreneurship on the state level, local self-government bodies may be the ones initiating the process of creation and development of business entities that will be social enterprises in their essence. This is because local self-government bodies often have direct contacts with various stakeholders needed. For example, they may address educational institutions for expertise and help with the information campaign on social entrepreneurship. Having data and often links with local business, they may lobby mentoring programmes for young entrepreneurs or even ask for financial support to the entrepreneurs whose ideas come first in the result of business plans pitching or community voting. Obviously, having the status of an official state representative, self-government bodies may launch or support with their approval crowdfunding campaigns, gather community meetings to discuss current issues and the ways of solving them, promoting social enterprises etc. Last, but not

the least, state bodies may offer their premise as a public space for NGOs, business and other interested parties to negotiate and come up with joint decisions, supported by the self-government. Moreover, since nowadays it is difficult to find a community without veterans, they should become an integral part of this process, both as clients – the social group needing a developed ecosystem of support (including, but not limited to state support) [2, c. 129–130], and as a valuable human resource – many present and future veterans had a civil career before joining the Armed Forces, or have gained valuable skills during their service; they are members of the social group with strong interpersonal ties that may support their future business, as well as often have the need for social recognition and high social status, that can also be a part of becoming a social entrepreneur (see Fig. 1).

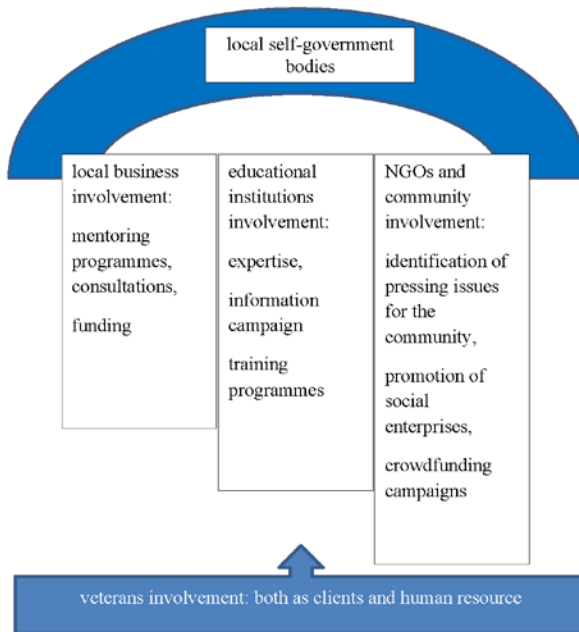


Fig. 1. Instruments of self-government bodies influence on social entrepreneurship development

Source: developed by the author

Thus, it may be concluded that under the current situation in Ukraine, local self-government bodies, may become the leading force, uniting stakeholders and bringing positive changes to their communities. In particular, their support of social entrepreneurship development, may help to mitigate the negative influences to the economy and social sphere brought by the war, as well as improve the support provided to vulnerable social groups. In particular, there is a high potential of veterans' social enterprises development, since veterans are the social group with strong social support, often having necessary education, or being eager to learn to gain necessary knowledge and skills to become valuable members of civil community, having special experience that is connected with team work, stress resistance, personnel management and other soft skills necessary in business activity. However, it is important that the efforts of local self-government bodies are supported by various stakeholders, like educational, business and non-governmental sector to achieve the best results and address the question in a comprehensive manner.

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