

Comparative analysis of current strategies for financial and food support of military units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and NATO member states

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Abstract: The urgency of conducting the research is because, in the wake of the full-scale aggression of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine, one of the urgent problems is the issue of the material support of the army. Based on this, the work aims to conduct a comparative analysis of the modern policies of Ukraine and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries in providing the armed forces in the material and product aspects. For this, methods such as logical analysis, formal-legal, dogmatic, legal hermeneutics, and deductions were used. In the course of the research, it was highlighted that the introduction of NATO standards in Ukraine's security and defense sector is a difficult task, as post-Soviet principles are currently operating in it. For a successful transition to NATO standards, it is necessary to comprehensively revise and update the legal framework and develop and implement legal acts that will regulate the logistical support system of Ukraine's Armed Forces. It was determined that the foreign experience of providing social guarantees for military personnel shows that such guarantees are an important element of state policy in the field of defense. In NATO countries, social guarantees for servicemen and their family members provide a wide range of benefits and advantages that ensure a proper life and personal development. The practical value of the obtained results lies in the fact that they will contribute to increasing the efficiency of the use of state resources, improving the system of training military units, and increasing Ukraine's authority in the international arena.

Keywords: International standards, Material provision, Regulatory and legal acts, Functional components, Principles of formation.

Resumo: A urgência da realização da investigação deve-se ao facto de, na sequência da agressão em grande escala da Federação Russa no território da Ucrânia, um dos problemas urgentes ser a questão do apoio material do exército. Com base nisso, o objetivo do trabalho é realizar uma análise comparativa das políticas modernas da Ucrânia e dos países da Organização do Tratado do Atlântico Norte (OTAN) no fornecimento das forças armadas nos aspectos materiais e de produtos. Para o efeito, foram utilizados métodos como a análise lógica, formal-legal, dogmática, hermenêutica jurídica, deduções e outros. No decurso da investigação, foi salientado que a introdução das normas da OTAN no sector da segurança e da defesa da Ucrânia é uma tarefa difícil, uma vez que nele vigoram atualmente princípios pós-soviéticos. Para uma transição bem-sucedida para as normas da OTAN, é necessário rever e atualizar exaustivamente o quadro jurídico, bem como desenvolver e implementar atos jurídicos que regulem o sistema de apoio logístico das Forças Armadas da Ucrânia. Foi determinado que a experiência estrangeira em matéria de garantias sociais para o pessoal militar mostra que essas garantias são um elemento importante da política estatal no domínio da defesa. Nos países da OTAN, as garantias sociais para os militares e seus familiares proporcionam uma vasta gama de benefícios e vantagens que asseguram uma vida adequada e o desenvolvimento pessoal. O valor prático dos resultados obtidos reside no facto de contribuírem para aumentar a eficácia da utilização dos recursos estatais, melhorar o sistema de formação das unidades militares e aumentar a autoridade da Ucrânia na arena internacional.

Palavras-Chave: Normas internacionais, Fornecimento de material, Atos regulamentares e jurídicos, Componentes funcionais, Princípios de formação.

1. Introduction

Russian aggression against Ukraine has spurred a rapid development and consolidation of military law as a distinct branch of law, enhancing its role in safeguarding national security and state defense. Modern realities necessitate a set of measures to bolster Ukraine's defense capabilities. Accordingly, the current legislation has significantly improved the organization and operation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other military formations. However, implementing these changes has not always been systematic, resulting in several unresolved issues. One such issue is the legal regulation of social security for military personnel. It is essential to emphasize the regulatory potential

of the legal framework governing the implementation of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) standards in the support system of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

The war with Russia led to a significant deterioration of the economic situation in Ukraine. This could not but affect the nutrition of the population and service members of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. As Horodianska [1] points out, human health depends on $50-85\,\%$ of socio-economic conditions and lifestyle, the most important component of which is nutrition. She notes that nutrition should be adequate and balanced to provide the body with all the nutrients it needs. Over the years, funding for the food



supply of military personnel has decreased significantly, according to Tsyhanok [2]. The author does not consider the impact of food quality on the combat readiness of military personnel. Adequate and balanced nutrition allows military personnel to maintain a high level of physical and mental performance, an important factor in their combat readiness. This led to a decrease in requirements for the range of products, their quality, storage conditions, and terms. All these factors can negatively impact the military's fighting capacity and the functions of the immune and reproductive systems and lead to diseases of the cardiovascular and endocrine systems, as Bykov [3] rightly notes. In addition to these aspects, it is also important to consider the impact of nutrition on cognitive function. Poor nutrition can impair cognitive function, including memory, attention, and decision-making. This can significantly affect military personnel's performance, especially in complex and demanding situations. In recent years, integral indicators of the health of military personnel have been one of the priority areas of activity in Ukraine. This is due to the increasing complexity and demands of military operations and the recognition that good nutrition is essential for maintaining the health and operational readiness of military personnel.

As Lototska-Dudyk et al. [4] write, dry rations of NATO countries have many advantages over the rations of the Armed Forces. For example, ready-to-eat (MRE) meals in the USA are produced in 24 variants for a single meal, do not require heating, and take into account ethnic, religious, and dietary restrictions. Individual Meal Pack (IMP) rations for the military in Canada contain 21 different menu items, and the Ration de Combat Individuelle Rechauffable or Combat Ration Individual Reheatable (RCIR) rations for French military personnel have less strict requirements for time and storage conditions but are also universal and easy to use, as highlighted in the works of Bosovsky [5]. According to Chorna et al. [6], today, the level of material support of service members does not meet their needs and risks of military service. This is a severe problem that has several negative consequences, including low motivation to serve in the Armed Forces (this can lead to a shortage of qualified personnel and a decline in the overall readiness of the Armed Forces) and outflow of servicemen (loss of experience and expertise, which can be costly and time-consuming to replace). This is one of the reasons for low motivation to serve in the Armed Forces and the outflow of servicemen.

Based on the above, the purpose of the study is a comprehensive analysis of the issue of monetary and food support for service members, which should be carried out taking into account the strategic goals of the state, in particular Ukraine's accession to NATO. To do this, it is necessary to perform tasks such as analyzing the normative legal acts of Ukraine and NATO standards and identifying problems and ways to solve them.

2. Materials and Methods

This study employed a range of analytical methods to investigate the functions of providing military food and finances, the essence of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in ensuring the functioning of this mechanism during a full-scale invasion, and the characteristic features and principles of military social welfare, particularly in terms of implementation and providing the military with the necessary conditions. Statistical analysis characterized data on the allocation of the defense budget for 2023, and comparative legal analysis identified similarities and differences in the modern defense policies of Ukraine and NATO member states. The abstraction method provided the opportunity to focus on a separate object of research, namely, the essence of social protection in ensuring the proper level of defense of the state. The analogy method was helpful in identifying the features of state regulation of the industry under study in Ukraine and foreign countries.

It is also worth noting that the formal-legal method was used, which involved the examination of legal norms, their content, structure, and legal technique. This helped to interpret legal norms, namely, to establish their content, meaning, and application, to combine them into specific groups and orders, and to evaluate normative legal acts from the point of view of their compliance with the principles of law and the needs of society. In particular, the Decision of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine No. 473/2021 "On the Strategic Defense Bulletin of Ukraine" [7], Law of Ukraine No. 2469-VIII "On National Security" [8], Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine [9], and STANAG 6001 [10] were considered. The dogmatic method enabled the study of the specified norms, specifically identifying the principal directions and tasks, the legal foundations of national security, and the requirements for the defense forces and means management and control system. The legal hermeneutics method was used to ascertain the true meaning of legal norms, considering the context in which they were adopted and their goals and objectives.

The deductive method allowed for the characterization of modern food and monetary support strategies of the Armed Forces of Ukraine based on the established foundations of the legislative framework. Conversely, based on the existing mechanism of providing troops in these aspects, the inductive method provided an opportunity to determine the essence, role, functions, and features of modern strategies in the context of a full-scale invasion. The synthesis method helped to develop recommendations based on the results revealed during the research.

3. Results

Russia's aggression against Ukraine has prompted accelerated reforms in the field of national security and defense, including the transformation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine to the model of leading countries. The primary objective of this transformation is to enhance Ukraine's defense capabilities and



ability to respond effectively to national security threats. This requires improving organization and operation and providing them with adequate material and technical support. One of the critical aspects of that transformation is providing adequate living conditions for service members. These individuals are in unique circumstances, with living conditions significantly different from those of the general population. Therefore, they should be eligible for social security, a system of measures designed to provide them with appropriate monetary, medical, housing, material, food, and other support to ensure their livelihood.

The Strategic Defense Bulletin of Ukraine [7] envisions developing a logistical support system, including material and food supplies. To achieve this, it is necessary to improve and implement the food supply system, considering the supply systems of NATO member states, and to implement NATO standards for tangible property items. These measures will help to enhance Ukraine's defense capabilities and ensure proper living conditions for service members.

As a result of the full-scale aggression of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine, in 2022, expenditures on security and defense needs were increased by approximately 812 billion hryvnias [11]. It is worth considering the statistical data in more detail (Table 1).

Table 1. Data on expenditures for security and defense needs.

Direction of expenses	Sum, billion UAH
Ensuring the activities of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, training personnel and troops, medical support for personnel, military service veterans and their family members, war veterans	268
Development, procurement, modernization, and repair of weapons, military equipment, means, and equipment	92
Ministry of Defence	360
National Guard	4.8
State special transport service	4.4
Security Service of Ukraine	3.7
The Main Directorate of Intelligence of the Ministry of Defence	3.2
State service for emergency situations	3.0
State border service	2.0
The State Service for Special Communications and Information Protection	1.3
	1 1 5443

Source: compiled by the authors based on Zarazhevska [11].

The data shows that a significant amount of funds is currently allocated to providing state authorities, structural units, and organizations in the military sphere. Notably, each indicator exceeds the 2022 figures by 4.85 times. This demonstrates the rapid development of the state's policy to provide military personnel with the necessary conditions.

The main task of material support is to provide service members with everything necessary to perform official duties. These are uniforms, shoes, underwear, equipment, special clothing, personal protective equipment, and other items and property required to conduct hostilities successfully. Modern legal acts on food and physical safety do not meet the requirements of international standards. Therefore, reviewing the administrative and legal regulations regarding these issues is necessary while adapting Ukraine's military legislation to NATO standards. Reforming the legislative framework is one of the most important steps on the way to creating a modern Armed Forces of Ukraine capable of adequately performing the tasks set before them. However, the rapid pace of reform led to accelerated changes in primary laws. This, in turn, led to certain shortcomings in the legislation, which must be eliminated.

The military-political partnership of Ukraine and NATO is developing in various directions and forms. By the beginning of 2021, a particular system of normative and legal support for implementing NATO standards has been formed in Ukraine. The legal framework can be divided into three levels: general legislative, strategic normative, and operational sub-legal. At the general legislative level, the implementation of NATO standards is determined by the Law of Ukraine No. 2469-VIII "On National Security" [8]. The basis of the operational sub-legal level is the Comprehensive Assistance Package (CPA) in support of Ukraine, approved due to the Ukraine-NATO Summit [9]. The approval of the CPA was an essential step in developing the domestic Armed Forces. The most important and challenging task is the transition of the Armed Forces of Ukraine to NATO standards.

STANAG 6001 [10] is an international agreement, the provisions of which regulate general rules and material parts of the NATO armed forces. NATO standards are combined into a complex system of normative documents, which contains administrative, operational, and logistical components. The implementation of STANAG takes place mainly around the following five strategic goals:

- creation of a unified system of management of the defense forces of Ukraine;
- · effective policy of planning and use of resources;
- increasing the combat capacity of units and units according to world standards;
- compatibility of logistics with NATO;
- medical care system.

Military personnel is the basis of the country's defense capability. They risk their lives and health to protect our freedom and security. Therefore, they must receive adequate social protection. Social protection of military personnel includes



material and non-material assistance. Material assistance to military personnel in the USA and Germany is one of the most developed in the world. It consists of the basic salary, which depends on the military rank and years of service; extra payments and allowances paid for the performance of special tasks, for service under challenging conditions, or other merits; food and housing allowance, which compensates for food and housing costs; one-time payments upon discharge from military service for the adaptation of service members to civilian life [12].

Non-material assistance to military personnel in the USA and Germany has also been quite developed. It includes education and vocational training that enable military personnel to acquire a new profession or improve their qualifications; health care, free medical care, health insurance and sanatorium treatment; and social benefits, housing, transport, and other services. The social protection system of military personnel in the USA and Germany is one of the most developed in the world. Such a system provides high material and non-material assistance to military personnel. In the USA, the social protection system for military personnel is based on the principle of "comparative justice". This means military personnel receive the same benefits as civilian employees in similar positions. In Germany, the social protection system for military personnel is based on the principle of "social protection" [13]. This means that military personnel receive benefits that compensate for the risks and limitations of military service. Social protection of service members is an important component of the country's defense capability. This contributes to the motivation of servicemen to serve, increases their combat capacity, and contributes to their social adaptation after discharge from military service.

Junior commanders play a vital role in the armed forces of NATO countries. They are responsible for the training and management of units and the execution of combat missions. To encourage junior high-ranking service members who do not have the opportunity to obtain the rank of officer, some NATO countries provide the same salary level as an officer. This means that junior commanders receive the same salary as officers who hold military ranks from second lieutenant to captain. In addition to the monetary support system, military personnel in NATO countries are entitled to tax benefits. For example, in the US, military personnel are exempt from paying federal tax on certain benefits, such as food, housing, financial support, and family separation assistance. Compensation to military personnel serving abroad is also tax-free. Tax benefits can significantly increase the "net" income of military personnel. German service members who serve under a contract for more than 12 years are entitled to additional benefits. First, they receive a certificate that guarantees them an appointment to the position of an official in the state apparatus or economic and administrative bodies of the Bundeswehr after dismissal. Secondly, within ten years after discharge, they receive a salary supplement in the amount of cash support for the last month of service in the army [14].

To improve the social protection of military personnel, particularly in the housing sector, it is possible to develop and approve the Program for providing military personnel in Ukraine with official housing for the period of military service and own housing on preferential terms as part of a long-term contract. The program will contain the following provisions:

- service members will be able to choose housing in any settlement of Ukraine, regardless of the place of service;
- housing allowance will be accumulated, that is, service members will be able to use it at any time, regardless of years of service and whether the serviceman has other housing;
- service members will be able to receive service housing during service or compensation for its absence, regardless of the right to receive their own housing on preferential terms.

To improve the mechanism of providing social guarantees to military personnel, it is possible to introduce an electronic system for managing food processes and a new food system using a catalog of food products, considering the characteristics of the types of troops; to automate the system of accounting for needs and balances in the field of material support. These processes also require legal regulation through the development of doctrinal documents following NATO standards and principles by the relevant military authorities.

To prepare Ukraine for NATO membership, the Armed Forces of Ukraine must implement many NATO standards. Despite specific successes, this process faces certain challenges. For example, Ukraine's policy on the standardization of military products differs from NATO's policy. In addition, the lack of financial resources and qualified specialists slows down the necessary transformations. Ukraine has created the primary regulatory framework for the implementation of these standards. Currently, the most important task is the development of regulatory and legal mechanisms for accelerating technical rearmament, optimizing the military management system, and determining the needs for logistical support and re-equipment of the military-industrial complex.

4. Discussion

The issue of social protection for servicemen and their family members has always been relevant in Ukraine. Insufficient social protection of military personnel can decrease their fighting capacity and deterioration of professional training and moral qualities. Therefore, developing and implementing an effective social protection system for military personnel that would meet EU and NATO standards is vital.

Scientists interpret the concept of the legal provision of social protection of military personnel in different ways. Dieng [14] believes that the protection of the rights of military personnel



is a state-coercive activity aimed at restoring violated rights and fulfilling legal obligations. From Mills's point of view [15], social protection is a system of state that guarantees the rights of citizens to material support in the event of loss or disability, loss of a breadwinner, unemployment, old age, and other circumstances. Based on the above interpretations, the following signs of social protection can be distinguished:

- comprehensiveness this means that social protection should include various types of assistance, both material and nonmaterial;
- legal certainty this means that social protection must be enshrined in legislation;
- social necessity this means that social protection should be aimed at satisfying the basic social needs of a person.

Implementation of an effective system of social protection for military personnel is an important task for Ukraine. This will help strengthen the Armed Forces of Ukraine and ensure the country's protection from external threats.

Analysis of world experience shows that the state's social guarantees can be divided into three main areas: ensuring an acceptable level of welfare for working citizens, which is achieved through the level of the minimum wage, its indexation, moderate taxes, and non-interference in business activities; meeting the priority needs of society, which are met at the expense of the funds of the state and local budgets in the form of providing free services; support of citizens in difficult and unpredictable circumstances, which can be provided in connection with the birth of a child, illness, job loss, pension provision, as noted in the works of Semenenko et al. [16]. It is worth agreeing with this position since it is state social guarantees that have to ensure a sufficient standard of living for citizens and promote the development of their abilities regardless of their financial situation, salary level, and the influence of economic and other external factors.

Military service has a unique character that distinguishes it from civilian life, as noted by Shea and Jaroszewicz [17]. According to researchers, this uniqueness manifests in the social status of military personnel, the conditions and content of their work, and the value-normative regulation of their social and professional behavior. Trebesch et al. [18] argue that military personnel constitute a distinct social stratification group with its characteristics. It is worth agreeing with this position, as military personnel have a high level of education, professional training, and military socialization. The latter point is essential for understanding the features of social security for the existence of the Armed Forces, as Zaharia [19] emphasizes. It is worth noting and adding to the specified positions that a formalized and normative environment characterizes military service. Within this environment, a system of value regulation of officers' behavior has formed. According to Jacuch [20], this system reflects the peculiarities of military activity. It is related to satisfaction with one's status, the content of the activity, the level of adaptability, learned examples of effective behavior in the professional sphere, and the system of social relations mediated by military activity.

It is worth noting the author's position that the specifics of military professional activity require professional retraining and additional training of military personnel. Solving the task of professional training of officers is provided by organizational and methodological conditions. However, as noted by Berejikiam and Justwan [21], there is no clear-cut technology for solving the tasks of socio-psychological adaptation of service members to military service and supporting their career orientation. The integration process is ambiguous and non-linear, and its optimality is affected by the individual's level of socialization and the conditions of military service, as observed by Samaras et al. [22]. It is appropriate to add to the stated position that military personnel have a legal position as citizens who undergo a particular type of public service (military service). This status is determined by features of its passage established by the state.

The provision of troops in the Armed Forces of Ukraine is generally timely and complete, but problematic issues need to be resolved. Food and logistical support of the Territorial Defence Forces at the beginning of the large-scale armed aggression of the Russian troops had many problematic issues in connection with their recent creation and subsequent acquisition of combat capability. At the start of the war, the provision of territorial defense troops was insufficient since they had been created recently and were not yet fully staffed. Solving the issue of ensuring the combat capability of the defense forces requires vast funds, especially during wartime, when the economy is destroyed and the need for material resources for defense exceeds production capabilities. In this connection, the question of their effective spending arises, which does not always occur in the process of material support of troops (forces) [23]. War requires large expenditures on defense, but these expenditures are not always spent efficiently, as noted by Trad [24]. It is worth agreeing with this statement, as there are facts of irrational spending of funds directly in the army and the whole defense sector.

Some of the main problems in meeting the needs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine are:

- the uncertainty of priority directions for the development of the defense industry;
- the low level of functioning of the system of military-technical cooperation with foreign countries, which does not ensure the complete assimilation of the latest technologies to expand the capabilities of the national defense industry;
- lack of domestic defense industry partners among private and foreign structures;



 the need to improve interaction with volunteer organizations and private enterprises and monitor needs directly in the combat zone (possible combat clashes).

Several challenges hinder the adequate supply of troops (forces) of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. These include a lack of an effective management and coordination mechanism, unclear priorities for developing the defense industry, insufficient military-technical cooperation with foreign countries, lack of partners in the domestic defense industry, and insufficient interaction with volunteer organizations and private enterprises. It is necessary to improve the parliamentary and public control system over Ukraine's state security and defense. Control over the use of funds allocated for defense and the activities of state authorities in the security and defense field must be strengthened. These measures will increase the efficiency of the Armed Forces' material and food supply.

Conclusions

This study aimed to analyze the policies of Ukraine, NATO, and selected NATO member states regarding food and financial support for service members. It highlighted that the social security system for servicemen and their family members should meet international standards, particularly NATO standards. It determined that implementing those standards in Ukraine's security and defense sector is a complex and multifaceted process requiring significant efforts and resources. This would improve the standard of living and well-being of military personnel and strengthen the country's defense capabilities.

Ukraine has achieved some successes in this area, such as establishing the basic regulatory and legal foundations for implementing those standards and maintaining a steady trend of continuing work in this direction. However, several problems slow the process of introducing those standards, including the discrepancy between the policy of standardization of military products in Ukraine and NATO, a shortage of financial resources, and a qualified personnel shortage. To solve these problems, it is necessary to develop regulatory and legal mechanisms to accelerate the technical re-equipment of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, optimize the military management system, re-equip the domestic military-industrial complex, and ensure the systematicity and legal regulation of the material support. Further resolving the problems of introducing NATO standards requires a radically new format to ensure the effective use of available resources and achieve the desired results.

Therefore, improving the management of the system of providing troops (forces) with military property and services of the Armed Forces of Ukraine will lead to increased timeliness and efficiency of this system, reduced costs, and optimized management of material, information, and human flows. Further research will examine the logistics system of the defense forces of Ukraine and foreign countries.

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