

WAPES European Regional Conference 2025

-

Defending the Future

Effective workforce development to deliver better recruitment, retention, and reintegration outcomes for the defence and security services



Co-funded by
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State
Employment Agency
Republic of Latvia



Opening Session



Mr Reinis Uzulnieks

*Minister of Welfare
Latvia*



TBC

*Ministry of Defence
Latvia*



Ms Evita Simsons

*Director General,
State Employment Agency of Latvia*



**Ms Greta Metka Barbo
Škerbinc**

*President of WAPES and Director
General of Employment Service of
Slovenia (ESS)*



Mr Mehmet Altun

*Vice President of WAPES to the
European Region and Head of
Foreign Relations and Projects
Department, Turkish Employment
Agency (İŞKUR)*



Keynote Speech

Mr Tomass Pildegovičs

Adviser to the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Plenary Session 1: Recruitment and Retention

Forecasting and Closing the Defence Skills Gap - Mapping, Mobilising, and Retaining Talent



MODERATOR
Mr Simon Schmid
Partner, SkillLab



Ms. Tilde Jacobsen

*Coordinator, OECD Centre for
Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions*



Mr Shawn Mendes

*Director for International Relations,
Swedish Employment Agency
(Arbetsförmedlingen)*



Ms. Elīna Egle-Ločmele

*Chairperson of the Board, Federation of
Security and Defence Industries of
Latvia and Member of the Board
of Women for Security in Latvia*



Mr Maximilian Ballwanz

Managing Director, Accenture



Jobs and Skills in the Defence Sector

Ms. Tilde Jacobsen

Coordinator, OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions



JOBS AND SKILLS IN THE DEFENCE SECTOR

Tilde Jacobsen, Deputy Head of Unit

Local Employment, Skills and Social Innovation Division (LESI)
Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities (CFE)

 @OECD_local

 www.linkedin.com/company/oecd-local

 www.oecd.org/cfe



Background



The new era of increased defence spending

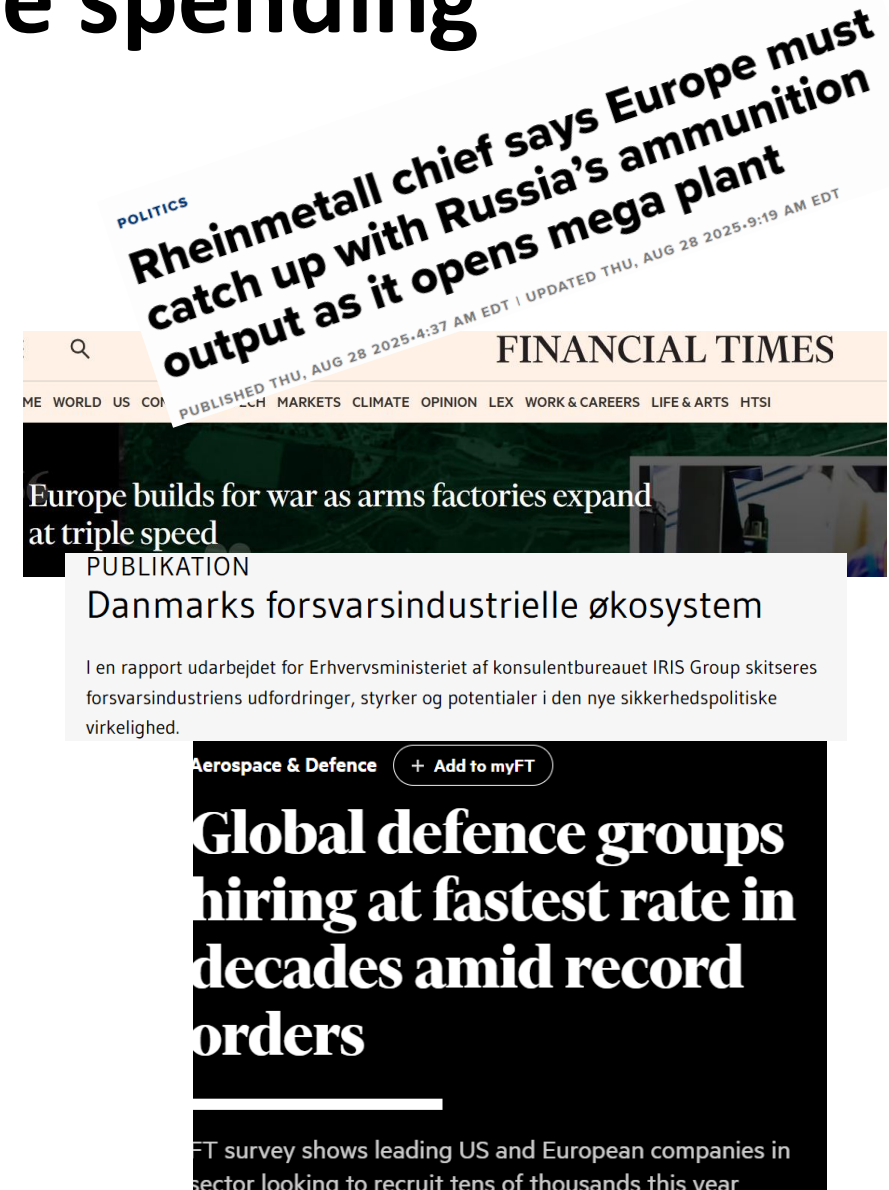
The international context has pushed **for extra attention in the defence sector:**

- Reprioritization of public funds towards defence spending
- NATO commitment of 5% of GDP by 2030

Are labour markets ready to absorb this spending and materialize it into what is needed?

- Several OECD regions are already experiencing labour shortages in several industries

How can insights of local labour impacts of defense spending guide PES policies in supporting transitions?





Labour market impact of increased defence spending - Where and who?

Geography of the defence sector

- **Where do defence-related activities** take place in Europe?
- How do these places compare/differ **from other areas**?

Labour composition and evolution

- What jobs are required by defence companies?
- What jobs are seeing an increase in these areas?
- What skills are needed?



Geography of the defence sector



Defence establishments are heavily concentrated in or around cities

The **geo-location of defence establishments** can be obtained from the *Aerospace and defence Industries Association of Europe* (Giacomello & Preka, 2023)

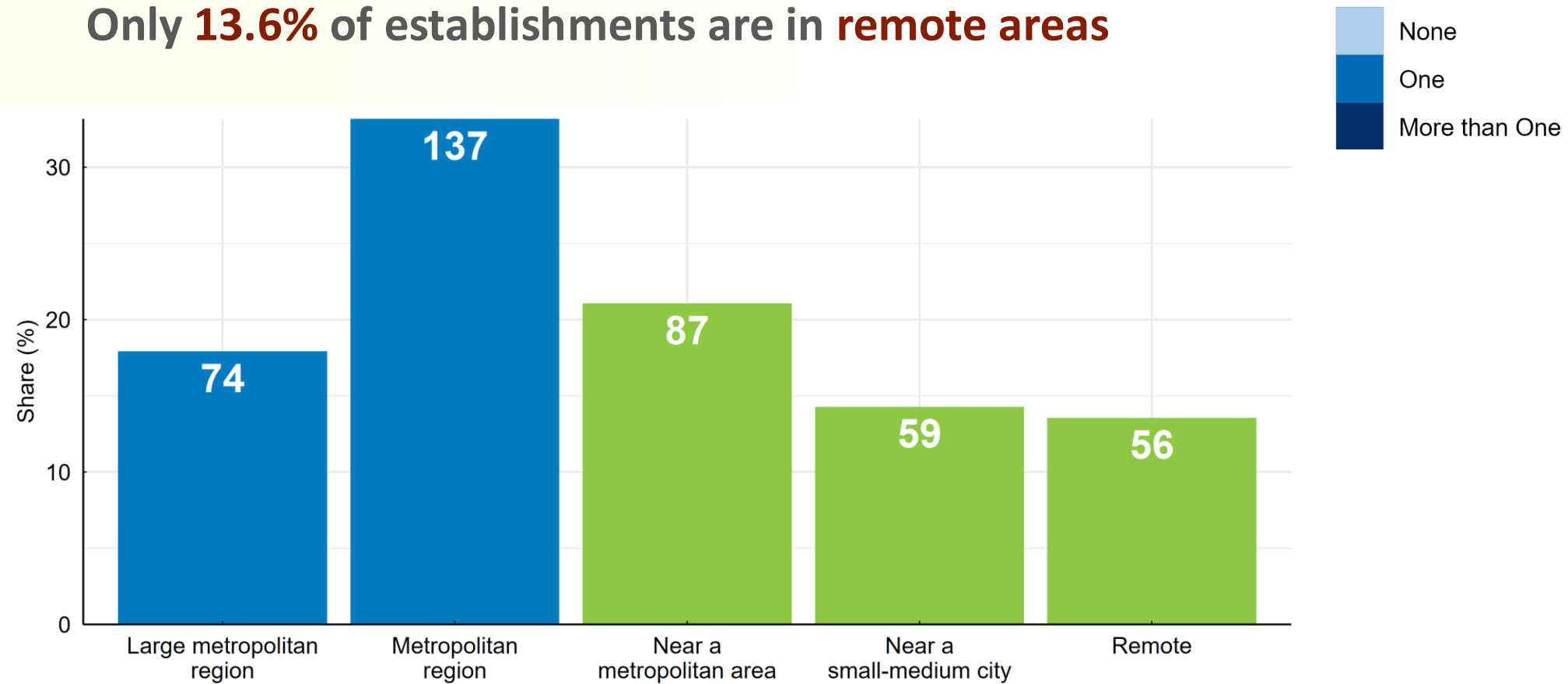
- ASD represents over 4,000 companies in over 21 countries
- Geo-location of companies is **web-scraped**
- Resulting data is **extensive but not exhaustive**
- Around 1800 coordinates at the **establishment level**

As a first approach, we examine **selected countries**

- Belgium, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden

Defence establishments are mostly in urban areas or near one

Only **13.6%** of establishments are in **remote areas**





Defence hubs come in all shapes and sizes



Functional Urban Areas (FUAs) are an ideal territorial level to approach this

- They provide closed, comparable and cohesive territorial areas

Most Defence Hubs (92%) have less than one defence establishment per 50 000 inhabitants

- ...but **13 of them have more than 1!**

Defence Hubs are 55% larger than the average FUA...

- From around 70,000 (**Gouda, NL**) to over 13MM (**Paris, FR**)

...and make up 4.3% of the national GDP on average

- More than the average FUA (3%)



Labour composition and evolution

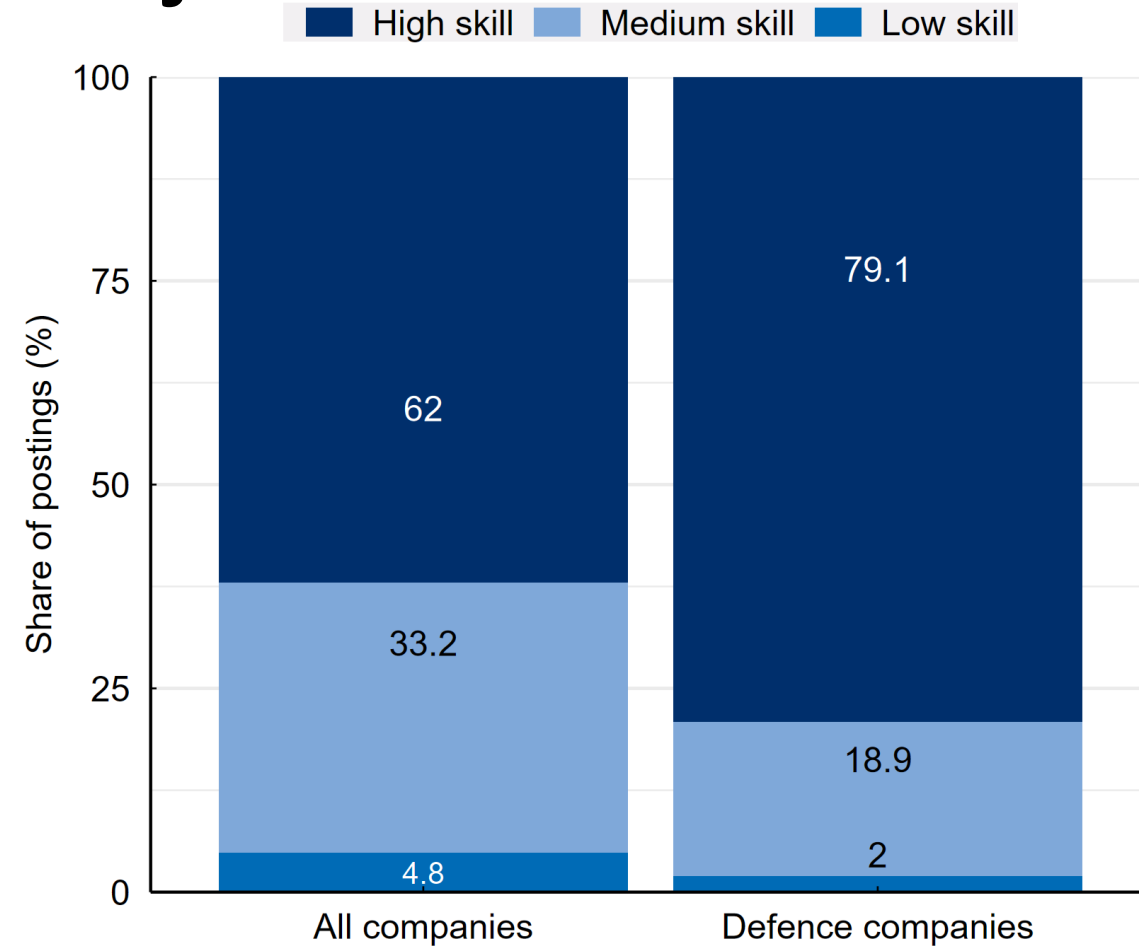
Defence companies in defence hubs require significantly more high-skilled jobs...

Almost **80%** of job posting made by defence companies are for **high skilled jobs**.

- Using Lightcast data we can characterize **labour demand of specific companies**
- The ASD dataset serves as a non-exhaustive list of defence companies

Defence hubs are dominated by roles in **engineering, aviation, telecommunications, and logistics ...**

- ...but also encompass a wide spectrum of occupations in **IT, security services, and industrial trades.**





.. but growth in jobs is mostly in medium skilled occupations and armed forces

Defence job postings **surged in 2021–22**, then returned to normal growth

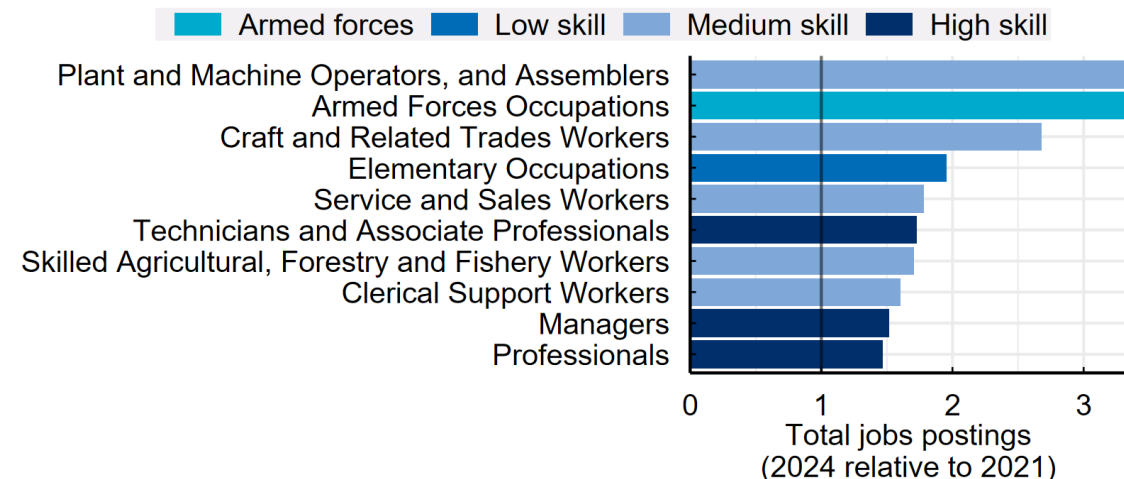
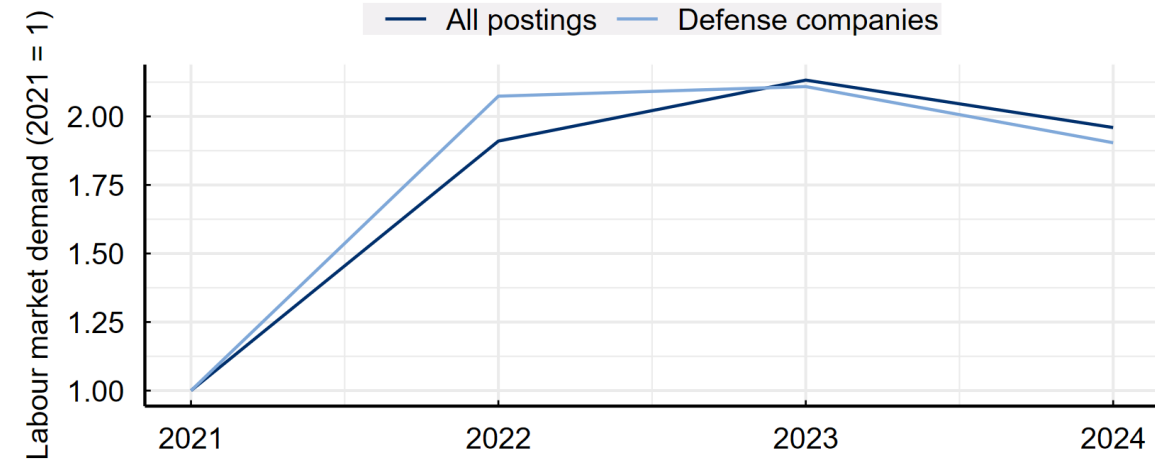
- The spike was likely conflict-driven with no further surges observed – yet...

High-skilled roles still dominate, but **middle- and low-skilled jobs are rising**

- Top-growing occupations are mainly middle- and low-skilled.

Armed forces roles are among the fastest-growing...

- ...partly due to their very small base in 2021



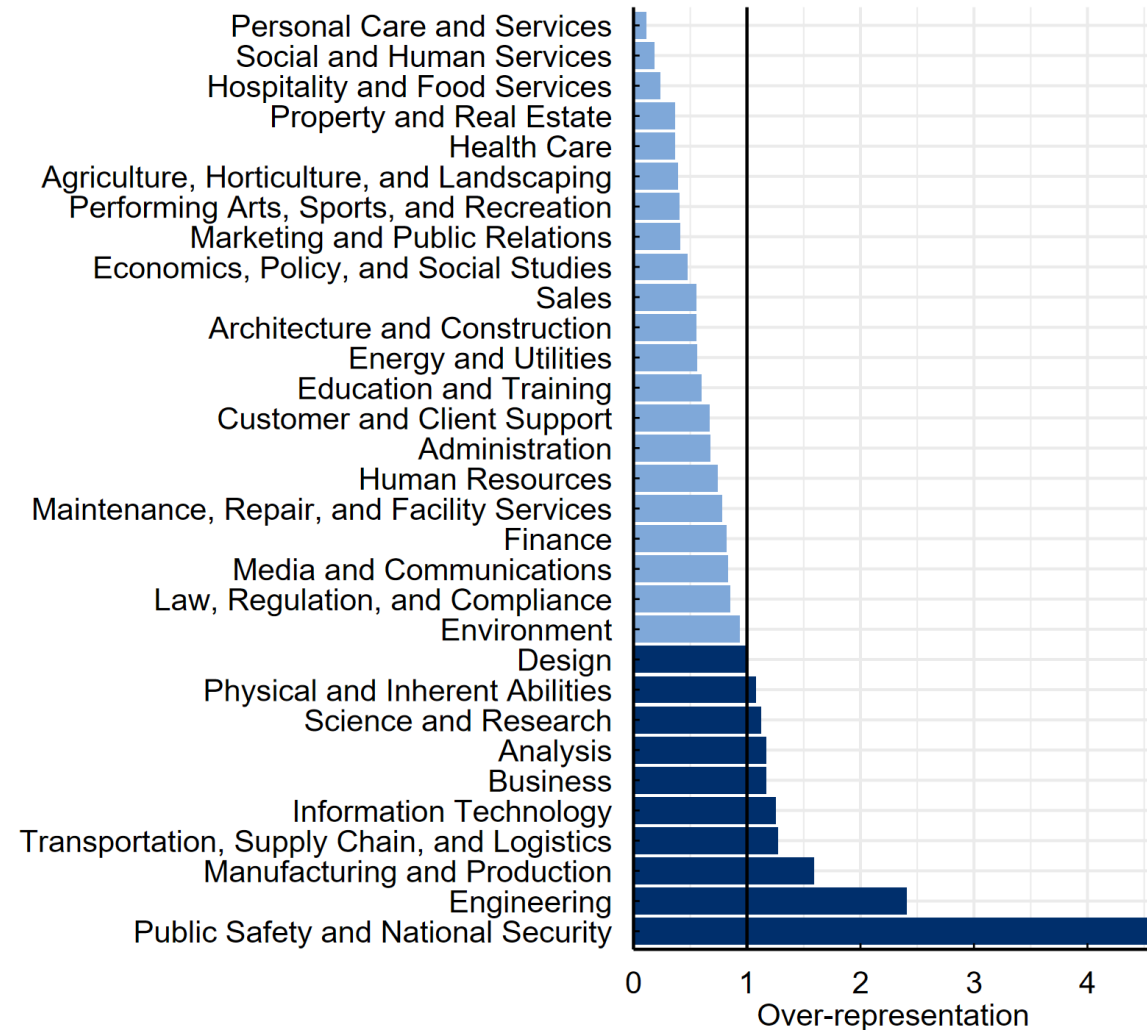
Defence hubs rely heavily on security and engineering skills

Skills in **Public Safety, National Security** and **Engineering** dominate jobs postings in defence hubs, far above the labour market average.

- These include skills in **safety and surveillance technology, aerospace, transport** and **intelligence**

Strong demand also in **Manufacturing, Logistics,** and **IT**

- Reflects the sector's the **technical and operational needs**
- In contrast, common market roles(e.g., sales, healthcare, education) are under-represented.



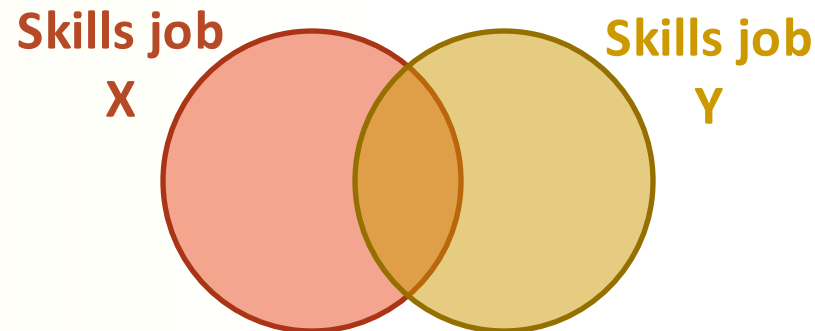


A skills-based approach to job transitions in places

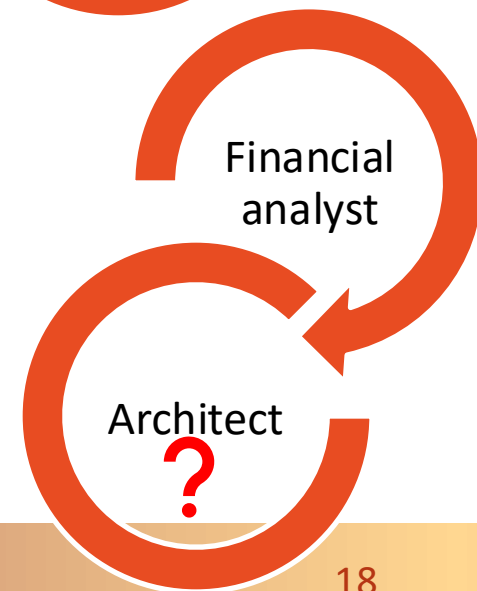
A measure of proximity **based on skills** can describe a large part of the dynamics behind career transitions:

- A **compatible skillset allows workers** to jump from one job to another
- The more **compatible the skills**, the **easier the transition**

If we can accurately **collect the skills** required for jobs, then we can **measure the skills proximity** between these



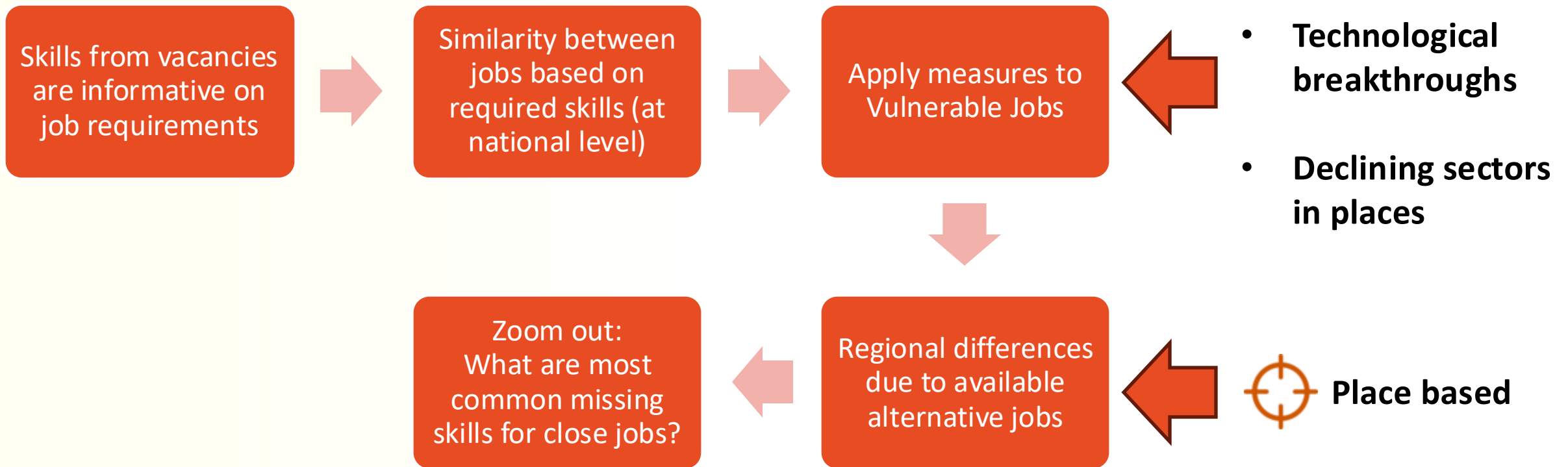
Skills and geography in career change in the green transition (OECD, forthcoming)





A skills-based approach to job transitions in places

A big data approach on skills, jobs and places



Skills and geography in career change in the green transition (OECD, forthcoming)



Going forward



Going forward

How can quantitative results guide policy action?

- Inform PES and training programs to enable the defence sector to scale
- Inform employers of skills gaps they might face to allow for in-job training
- Facilitate job transition opportunities to guide people into new types of work

Labour mismatch and job transitions – further analytical work

- Do local labour markets have the workforce with the necessary skills?
- A comparison of skills required and skills locally available may shed some light on possible skill bottlenecks
- Measure of occupational proximity can shed some light on a feasible career transition into the sector

Better quantitative tracking of the defence sector – further analytical work

- Identifying the defence sector in the data is not a straightforward task
- A granular definition of defence industry compatible with industry classifications (e.g. NACE)
- Full job posting text analysis can provide further insights on the needs of the sector

Thank you!



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Website: www.oecd.org/cfe

Blog: oecdcoquito.blog





Arbetsförmedlingen's role in total defence

Mr Shawn Mendes

*Director for International Relations, Swedish Employment Agency
(Arbetsförmedlingen)*

Arbetsförmedlingen's role in total defence

Shawn Mendes, 15 October 2025, Riga

Understanding Total Defence

Arbetsförmedlingen and Total Defence

- **Total Defence Model**

- Sweden's Total Defence integrates military and civil responsibilities to maintain national resilience in crises.

- **Societal Roles in Crisis**

- All sectors, including public bodies and individuals, have defined roles in supporting society during emergencies.

- **Arbetsförmedlingen's Preparedness Role**

- Arbetsförmedlingen maintains critical labour market functions to ensure economic security during national emergencies.

- **Strategic Importance**

- The authority's preparedness authority status highlights its key role in societal stability and resilience.

Importance of Preparedness

Why Preparedness Matters

- **Role of Employment Stability**

- Employment and income stabilize society during crises like wars and natural disasters, preventing social unrest.

- **Vulnerability of Social Services**

- Interruptions in job matching and benefit services impact vulnerable populations first, risking public trust.

- **Preparedness as National Resilience**

- Continuous service delivery under stress is vital for national resilience, requiring robust systems and planning.

- **Arbetsförmedlingen's Critical Role**

- Arbetsförmedlingen's preparedness safeguards Sweden's economic and social fabric within the Total Defence strategy.

Mandate and Responsibilities

Our Role as a Preparedness Authority

- **Crisis Continuity Planning**

- The agency develops and maintains plans to ensure uninterrupted employment services during crises and heightened alert periods.

- **Risk and Vulnerability Analysis**

- Regular assessments identify risks and vulnerabilities to strengthen preparedness and response capabilities.

- **Interagency Collaboration**

- Close cooperation with other government agencies ensures coordinated responses and operational efficiency during emergencies.

- **Wartime Placement Strategy**

- Reserving essential personnel for critical functions ensures authority duties are fulfilled under extreme conditions.

Challenges and Strategic Actions

Key Challenges & Actions

- **Modern Labour Market Vulnerabilities**
 - The interconnected and digital labour market introduces risks like cyber threats and supply chain disruptions.
- **Risk Analysis and Preparedness**
 - Biannual risk assessments and simulation exercises improve readiness against emerging threats.
- **Governance and Operational Continuity**
 - Structured governance with Region K activation ensures clear leadership during crises.
- **Proactive Communication**
 - Maintaining communication with stakeholders ensures clarity and readiness for contingencies.

**We defend Sweden, the country's
interests, our freedom and our right to
live as we choose.**



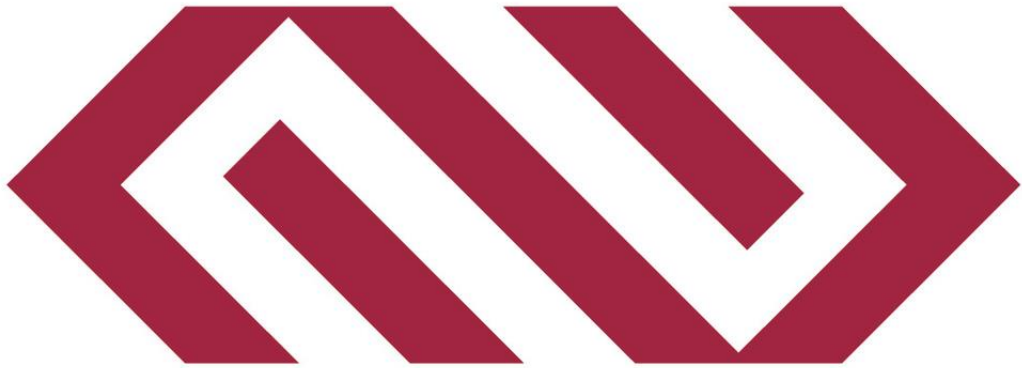
Targeting the Skills Gap:

A Strategic Vision for the Defence Industry

Ms. Elīna Egle-Ločmele

*Chairperson of the Board, Federation of Security and Defence Industries of Latvia and
Member of the Board of Women for Security in Latvia*

WAPES European Regional Conference
14 October 2025, Riga, Latvia



**Federation of Security and
Defence Industries of Latvia**

Defending the Future
#powerofpartnership

Elīna Egle,
Chairperson of the Board of FSDI Latvia
www.elinaegle.lv

Mission and goals of FSDI Latvia since 2013

to represent, promote and support the security sector of Latvia



To represent and defend the interests of members and partners in Latvia and abroad



To provide uniform information to members on procurements, events, qualification conditions



To educate the public about the importance of industry in the Latvian economy and its topicalities

Defence Skills

encourage, engage, enable

Engaging with educational institutions organising careers' days, lectures, hakatons

Encouraging upskilling workforce, organising common events with users and technology transfer

Enabling reserved officers to integrate in companies



**Latvian defence
and security
industry
capacities**



**Latvian defence
and security
research
capacities**



**Latvian defence
and security
industry
partnerships**



**International
cooperation**

**Thankful for your time.
Looking forward to build
partnerships to
defend the future!**

**E-mail: info@federacija.lv
Catalogue: www.cluster.lv**





Retention in the Defence Sector:

A Global Perspective

Mr Maximilian Ballwanz

Managing Director, Accenture

Retention in the Defence Sector: A Global Perspective

WAPES European Regional Conference - Riga

The global Retention Challenge: Competing for Digital Skills

The Challenge

- Defence needs same scarce digital skills as big tech
- High attrition drivers in defence: unmet expectations, work-life strain, limited career pathways, low morale and weak family engagement.
- Without retention → weaker ability to produce, defend, and respond

Defence Needs

- Digital warfare skills: cyber, drones, advanced targeting, air-force capabilities
- Plan & train integrated forces
- Production of essential military equipment
- Compete for top AI / big data / Analytics - Talents

Global Trends that need to be leveraged for the defence retention challenge in Europe

Global shortage of digital & technical skills threatens economic and defence resilience

Agentic AI – personalized support & skill augmentation

Learning platforms – modular training & Learning Paths

Digital journeys – portals, end-to-end career paths, automated engagement



Ministry of Defence Singapore (MINDEF)

Digital Workforce Portal Enabling Retention

Accenture helped the ministry build a digital portal that places people at the centre — empowering defence personnel to actively manage their careers and life events, thereby strengthening engagement and long-term retention.

1. Developed user-centric portal for workforce stakeholders
2. Enabled personnel to manage service info and career resources
3. Provided access to parents, employers, and stakeholders
4. Enhanced engagement and retention through data control
5. Ensured scalability and security for sensitive information



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Q & A



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Managing Director, Accenture

Plenary Session 2: Recruitment through Collaboration

PES-Defence and Security Strategic Collaboration



Ms Živa Štiglic

Senior Advisor

*International Department, Employment
Service of Slovenia (ESS)*



Mr. Andris Segliņš

EURES Adviser

State Employment Agency of Latvia (NVA)



Mr Christoph Hempel

Key Account Manager

German Federal Employment Agency, (BA)



MODERATOR

Mr Shawn Mendes

*Director for International Relations,
Swedish Employment Agency
(Arbetsförmedlingen)*



Bridging Institutions, Engaging Youth: Collaboration Between the ESS and the Police

Ms Živa Štiglic

Senior Advisor

International Department, Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS)

Cooperation Between the Employment Service of Slovenia and the Slovenian Police

**An Innovative
Partnership
for the Future**



Labor Market Situation

Fewer young people entering
the workforce

Aging population & skill mismatch

Uniformed jobs face stricter rules



Why Police Careers Matter

More than a job – a mission
to ensure safety

Essential for trust, order,
stability



HOW IT STARTED

2024: ESS Regional office Ljubljana & Police started intensive cooperation and signed partnership agreement

Goals: motivating jobseekers & promoting police force

2025: Cooperation extended nationwide



HOW ITS GOING

Motivating

Promotional activities

Outreach to
jobseekers, parents,
students

Creating inspiring
events





Partnering for Talent:

How the State Employment Agency Supports
Defence Sector Recruitment

Mr. Andris Segliņš

EURES Adviser, State Employment Agency of Latvia (NVA)



Līdzfinansē
Eiropas Savienība



Nacionālais
attīstības plāns



Nodarbinātības
valsts aģentūra

PARTNERING FOR TALENT: HOW THE STATE EMPLOYMENT AGENCY SUPPORTS DEFENCE SECTOR RECRUITMENT

The State Employment Agency of
Latvia, EURES adviser
Andris Segliņš

www.nva.gov.lv

Latvian National Armed Forces (NBS)



The national armed forces consist of **three military formations** – the **regular forces**, the **National Guard (*Zemessardze*)**, and the **reserves**. They are composed of a militarily organized, trained, and armed part of the population – soldiers who serve under state protection, with their lives, freedom, honor, and dignity safeguarded by law.

7870 - Professional service soldiers, 10,000 - national guards,
38,000 - reserve soldiers and trained reservists.

ATTRACTING JOBSEEKERS TO THE DEFENCE SECTOR

- Highlight **purpose-driven careers**: security, peacekeeping, disaster relief, humanitarian work.
- Showcase **transferable skills**: tech, logistics, leadership, cyber – valuable in civilian careers.
- Offer **clear career pathways**: training, lifelong learning, re-skilling opportunities.
- Stress **modern, inclusive workplaces**: diversity, equal opportunities, flexible roles.

OVERCOMING STEREOTYPES

- Defence work is not only soldiers, but also **digital, medical, engineering, intelligence, and support roles.**
- Communicate through **real-life stories** of diverse personnel.
- Counter image of rigidity by showing **innovation, technology, and teamwork.**
- Frame service as an **opportunity to contribute to society while building a career.**

ADVERTISING & OUTREACH

- **Modernized channels:** social media, PES and partners websites.
- **Local PES offices** to target jobseekers' and employed groups.
- **Distribution** of posters and flyers of the National Armed Forces.
- Presence at **universities, schools, and job fairs.**

BUILDING COLLABORATION

- **Joint meetings** with PES and defence stakeholders.
- Shared **mapping of labour market needs** and recruitment barriers.
- **Workshops for PES staff** to understand sector-specific requirements.
- Continuous feedback loops with employers & jobseekers.

RECRUITMENT SUPPORT IN PRACTICE

01

Registration of job vacancies in the PES CV and Vacancy Portal

03

Organization of meetings with jobseekers (on-site / online)

02

Recruitment and candidate selection for open positions

04

Organization of jobfairs (on-site / online)



Līdzfinansē
Eiropas Savienība



Nodarbinātības
valsts aģentūra

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATENTION!

www.nva.gov.lv



From Agreement to Action:

Federal Employment Agency and Armed Forces
Securing the Future

Mr Christoph Hempel

Key Account Manager

German Federal Employment Agency, (BA)

FROM AGREEMENT TO ACTION

**FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT
AGENCY AND ARMED FORCES
SECURING THE FUTURE**



BUNDESWEHR



bringt weiter.

FROM AGREEMENT TO ACTION

FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT AGENCY AND ARMED FORCES SECURING THE FUTURE

- 1. THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT**
- 2. IMPLEMENTATION**
- 3. SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES**
- 4. QUESTIONS**

THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

**Signed on 6 November 2024 by
Andrea Nahles (Chairwoman of the
Executive Board of the Federal
Employment Agency) and Boris
Pistorius (Minister of Defence of the
Federal Republic of Germany).**

THE AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE

2010 Cooperation Agreement

- Recruitment in the civilian sector
- Integration of former military personnel into the civilian labour market
- Financing of training measures in civilian professions



2024 Framework Agreement

- Recruitment in the civilian and military sectors
- Career information events organised by the German Armed Forces
- Regional exchange formats
- Mutual work shadowing
- Consolidation of the contents of the 2010 cooperation agreement

IMPLEMENTATION

- Communication with the Federal Ministry of Defence
- Nationwide coordination of the implementation of the basic agreement
- Nationwide career information events
- Information materials for employees
- Networking with the Federal Employment Agency's university
- Management of job vacancies

Key Account Management

- Monthly regional exchange with the German Armed Forces
- Organisation of troop visits and work shadowing
- Regular reporting to key account management on regional cooperation

Regional Directorates

- Advice on the subject of the German Armed Forces
- Registration with the German Armed Forces career counselling service
- Military service as an alternative to training and study
- Consideration of the Armed Forces at events
- Provision of premises
- Integration of former military personnel

Employment agencies

IMPLEMENTATION

Technical

- Over 550 job listings with over 16,000 vacancies
- Technical import into the system
- Alternative civilian occupation

During the counselling session

- Employees receive information
- Unemployed persons, employees, and young people receive advice
- Placement without legal consequences in military positions
- Referral to the Armed Forces career counselling service

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

Successes

- Acceptance by the Federal Employment Agency
- Empowerment of Placement and Career Guidance Counsellors
- Visible increase in job applications

Challenges

- Internal regulations are being formulated
- Focus is currently on monitoring success
- New military service regulations from 2026

Q & A



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International Department, Employment
Service of Slovenia (ESS)*



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MODERATOR
Mr Shawn Mendes
*Director for International Relations,
Swedish Employment Agency
(Arbetsförmedlingen)*

Interactive Parallel Sessions: Recruitment, Retention, and Reintegration

How it works: Participants are divided into two groups **(A and B)** — indicated on your badge.

Each group attends both sessions in rotation.

14:00 – 15:00 Group A → Plenary Room

Best Practice Focus – Ukraine

(Moderator: Anton Eckersley | Speakers: Simon Schmid, Micha Weiss & Vira Rodionova)



Group B → Room D

Strategic Skills-Based Recruitment: The Culture Transformation That Comes With It
Facilitator: Emma Monster | Presenter: Representative of the Ministry of Defence of the Netherlands

☕ 15:00 – 15:30 Coffee Break – Lobby

15:30 – 16:30 - Groups switch rooms!

Group B → Plenary Room (Ukraine Session)

Group A → Room D (Recruitment Session)

Interactive Parallel Sessions on Recruitment, Retention and Reintegration

Best Practice focus: Ukraine, Plenary Room



MODERATOR
Mr Anton Eckersley
*Director of
International Relations
APM-Ingeus*



Mr Simon Schmid

Partner, SkillLab



Mr Micha Weiss

Operation Manager, Ingeus Zürich



Ms Vira Rodionova

Senior Coach, Ingeus Zürich



Insights from User-Validated Skills Data

Mr Simon Schmid

Partner, SkillLab

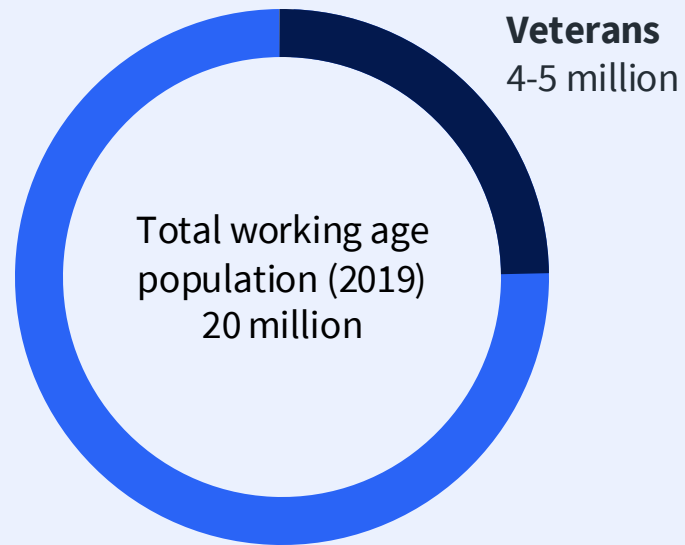


- **Insights from User-Validated Skills Data**

Unlocking the Workforce Potential of Veterans

An Economic and Social Imperative

Up to 5 million Ukrainian veterans and their families will require reintegration support.



Reintegration is essential for national recovery and economic stability.

The Power of User-Validated Skill Data

Підтримка народу та роботодавців України
(Supporting the People and Employers of Ukraine)

Project

SkillLab and the World Bank are working with the State Employment Service of Ukraine to support the people and employers of Ukraine.

Context

SkillLab is providing the State Employment Service with a skills-first skill profiling and career guidance solution to **connect people in need with jobs and education.**

Data

14.000+ Job Seekers
1.000.000+ Skills Identified
50.000+ Occupations
28.000+ Career Interests
100.000+ Career Matches

Boosting Confidence and Career Clarity

Indicators on impact of skills-first approach on users

Users reporting meaningful SkillLab interactions

96%

Users reporting increased skill discovery and confidence

53%

Users reporting increased confidence in communicating skills

54%

Users reporting increased knowledge of career pathways and required skills

53%

More Than a Uniform: A Rich Mix of Skills

Veterans have added over **10.000 skills**. The word cloud below shows the rich tapestry of skills added by veterans.

Military Occupations

Military Skills

Military Skills Match the Civilian Labour Market

80% of veteran profiles have strong compatibility with jobs outside of the Armed Forces and 69% of veteran profiles match at least one in-demand non-military profession.

Career Matches to All Careers

Career Matches to In-Demand Careers

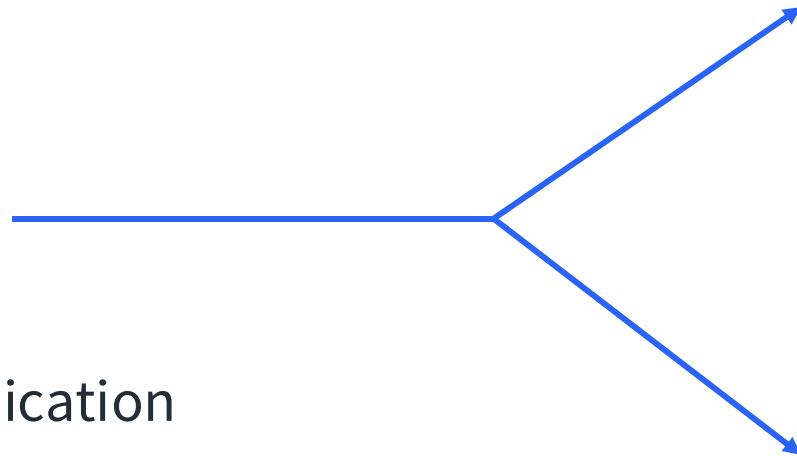
Veterans' Ambitions are Broad and Diverse

Veterans expressed interest in 33 different industries from Logistics, to IT, to Healthcare services.

Interactive Session: Let's Translate

What are two civilian careers where this skill would be a high value asset?

Skill:
Use different communication
channels



Occupation 1

Occupation 2

Interactive Session: Let's Build a Pathway



Taras Melnyk



PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

May 2023 - February 2025

Artillery Officer - Armed Forces of Ukraine - Luhansk, Ukraine

Devise military tactics | Handle surveillance equipment | Lead military troops | Adapt to changing situations | Use different communication channels | Carry out inventory planning | Maintain logistics databases | Adhere to organizational guidelines | And +15 more skills

Based on the profile shown above, what is one non-obvious career recommendation you could imagine. What would a training program look like that could support any gaps?



From Data to Strategy: A Call to Action for Veteran Integration

Actionable Strategies to Support Veteran Employment

Unlock the Workforce Potential of Veterans



Champion a Skills-First Approach

“Translate” for Employers

Design Data-Informed Upskilling

Train counselors to look beyond military titles and identify the full spectrum of a veteran's skills to unlock a wider range of opportunities

Support the translation of military experience (leading a platoon) into the language of industry (project management, team leadership)

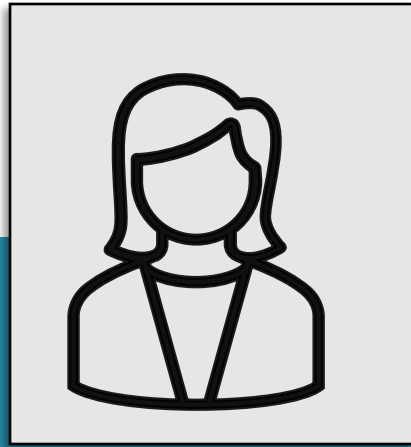
Use skill data to pinpoint precise gaps and create targeted, efficient training programs that meet real labour market needs.

SkillLab

Connecting **People. Jobs. Education.**



Reintegration through holistic Coaching



Mr Micha Weiss and Ms Vira Rodionova

Ingeus Zürich



Reintegration Through HOLISTIC Coaching

Let's explore how proven innovation from Switzerland can empower reintegration efforts in Ukraine—by turning lived experience into action.

Micha Weiss, Operations Manager Ingeus Zurich
Vira Rodionova, Senior coach Ingeus Zurich

WAPES European Regional Conference
Riga, October 13th-15th 2025

Ласкаво просимо!





Ingeus Switzerland - Global Experience, Local Impact



Part of a values-driven human services group in 11 countries

35+ years of impact in employment, health, youth & education

Proven co-design & scale-up of services for vulnerable groups

Ingeus CH: Specialist for peer coaching by displaced Ukrainians for Ukrainians





Ukraine labor market: challenges or opportunities

- 17 million people can benefit from holistic support services.
- About 13 % of population need support to find the right job.
- Employment is right way to reduce levels of poor mental health (PTSD, depression and anxiety) for veterans and displaced people.
- Definition of hidden skills will elevate the training infrastructure.
- Match between employers/employee resources.
- Strengthening PES capacity can unlock scalable support for veterans and displaced populations.
- Need to secure strong models for adaptation of coach's qualification.



Ingeus Zurich - How Our Coaching Model Works

- Skills and competencies are key to building accurate predictions about the future.
- Ingeus Zurich's refugee coaches leverage natural behaviors, past experiences, and transferable skills.
- A **'whole person'** and trauma-informed approach forms a core part of coaches' training.
- Our **'Turbo Training'** model is fast, modular, and cross-culturally adaptable.
- **'Plug-and-play'** flexibility allows easy customization to meet local PES requirements.

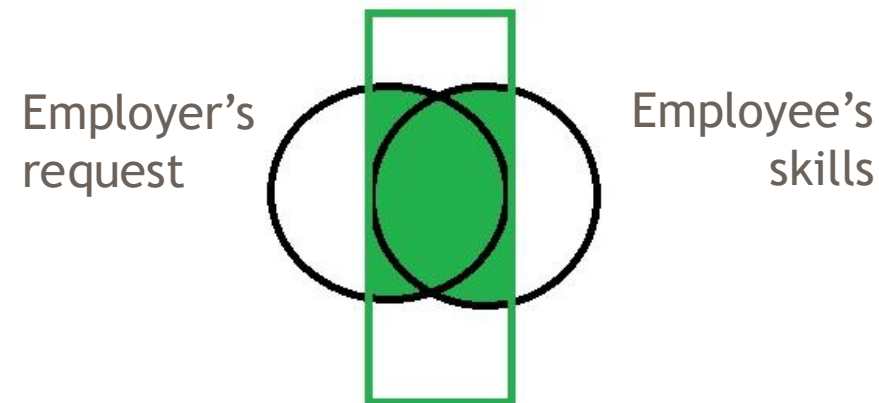
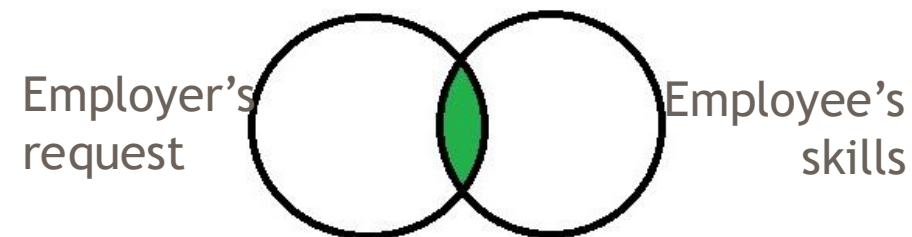


Ingeus Zurich for a better tomorrow: Job first

- Proven holistic programs combine employment support, mental health and community integration.
- Ingeus Zurich focus on employment tailored to mental health conditions (PTSD, anxiety, depression) via:
 - Trauma-informed training for coaches
 - Strong partnerships with specialist health and social services
- Strong emphasis on finding suitable occupation: evidence that employment is a **stabilizing factor** for mental wellbeing and community integration.

Employers gain through Inclusive Reintegration

- **Employers as key actors** in successful work and social reintegration
- Inclusive workplaces improve retention and team cohesion
- Veterans and returnees bring valuable experience, but may face misunderstanding within the team
- Ingeus Zurich equips employers with tools for inclusive hiring and team awareness
- Coaching helps unlock hidden talent and expand access to skilled candidates (job carving)



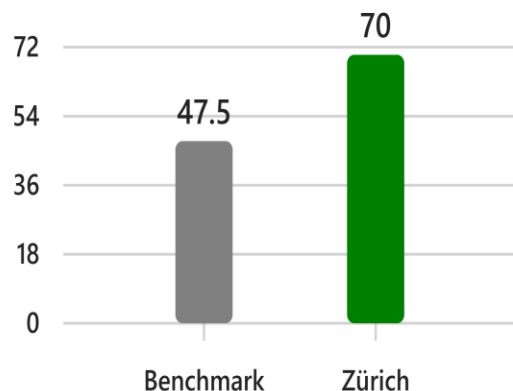
More
success via
Coaching



Swiss learnings that might be relevant

- **10 years of impact:** Proven employment & inclusion results (D + CH)
- **Coach expertise:** Mental health, trauma support, job placement
- **Serving all communities, all ages:** including vulnerable populations & socially excluded
- **Extended support:** Longer and intensive coaching for sustainable success

Ingeus job placement



Client satisfaction



From Ukrainians for Ukrainians new experience for new achievements

- Displaced Ukrainians trained to coach peers - fast & effectively
- Focus on transferable skills enables scalable local recruitment
- Holistic model supports employment, mental health & integration
- Modular training available in Ukrainian; adapted with ILO and PES
- Veteran program content from Canada & Australia available
- Proven ability to scale across borders & cultures

Q & A



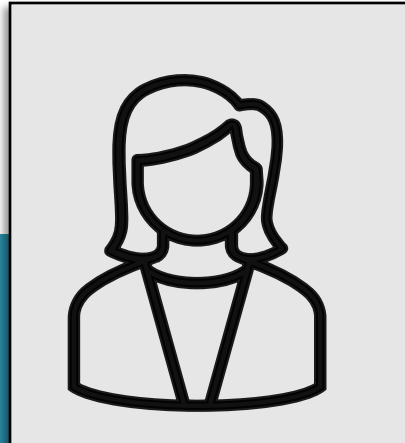
Mr Simon Schmid

Partner, SkillLab



Mr Micha Weiss

Operation Manager, Ingeus Zürich



Ms Vira Rodionova

Senior Coach, Ingeus Zürich



MODERATOR

Mr Anton Eckersley

*Director of
International Relations
APM-Ingeus*

Closing Remarks

Ms Amandine Moignard

Executive Secretary at WAPES



WAPES European Regional Conference 2025

Day 2

-

Defending the Future

Effective workforce development to deliver better recruitment, retention, and reintegration outcomes for the defence and security services



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State
Employment Agency
Republic of Latvia





Master of Ceremony

Ms Evita Simsone

Director General

State Employment Agency of Latvia (NVA)



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Welcome to Day 2

Ms Eva Lapsina

Representative of International Relations

State Employment Agency of Latvia

Plenary Session 3: (Re)Integration and Opportunities

From Service to Civilian Life: Reintegration and Reskilling to Meet Labour Market Needs



Ms Gillian Russell

Director at Bold Mariner Consulting



Mr Dario Rosic

*Retired Sergeant Major (SMA), Croatian Army
Senior Military and Corporate Leader*



Mr Charles Terrell

*Strategy Manager for Public Sector
Accenture*



MODERATOR
Ms Nicole Clobes
Consultant, WAPES



Military Recruitment through the Employer's Lens

Ms Gillian Russell

Director at Bold Mariner Consulting



Defending the Future Reintegration An Employers View

Gillian Russell

Bold Mariner Consulting



STEREOTYPES

“ All men“

“ All in the Army“

“ Unskilled“

“ Can only do one job“

“ Shouting“

“ Marching“

“ Following orders“

“ Veterans? They are all old“

~~“All men”~~ → Mostly yes, but 10-15% women

~~“All in the Army”~~ → Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines

~~“Unskilled”~~ → Highly Skilled and Trained

~~“Can Only do one job”~~ → Experience in many different roles

~~“Shouting”~~ → Only when it is noisy!

~~“Marching”~~ → Only on parade

~~“Following orders”~~ → Yes, but also thinking independently

~~“Veterans? They are all old”~~ →

Veterans struggle to find meaningful civilian employment – 71% of organisations would *consider* employing veterans, however **only 39% would employ someone with no industry experience**

66% organisations that do not employ veterans think they have poor communication skills. However, identified as a key strength by organisations that do!

87% organisations with ex-military recruitment programmes would positively recommend employing veterans

50%+ organisations report veterans promote more quickly than their general workforce

Veterans fill skills gaps – strategic planning, managing and motivating staff, team-working, positive attitude and listening skills

SKILL CROSSOVER

Accelerated learning curve

Leadership

Teamwork

Efficient performance under pressure

Respect for procedures

Technology and globalisation

Integrity

Adaptable

ACTION PLAN

Identify existing veterans in your business

Educate Recruiters / Hiring Managers


Identify roles

Attend or host events

Dedicated interview with a veteran on the panel

Post hire support

- **Onboarding**
- **Military Employee Resource Group**
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing**



“We actively seek leaders, who can
**Invent, think big, have a bias
for action, and deliver results** on
behalf of our customers.

These **principles** look very familiar to men and women who have served (their) country in the armed forces, and we find that their experience leading people is invaluable in our fast-paced work environment.”

- Jeff Bezos





From Combat Boots to Cloud Computing

A Reintegration Success Story

Mr Dario Rosic

*Retired Sergeant Major (SMA), Croatian Army
Senior Military and Corporate Leader*

REINTEGRATION

“the action or process of integrating someone back into society.” – Oxford Languages

Veterans Transition into Civilian Employment

My Story



Dario Rosic

Sergeant Major of Croatian Army SMA (RET)



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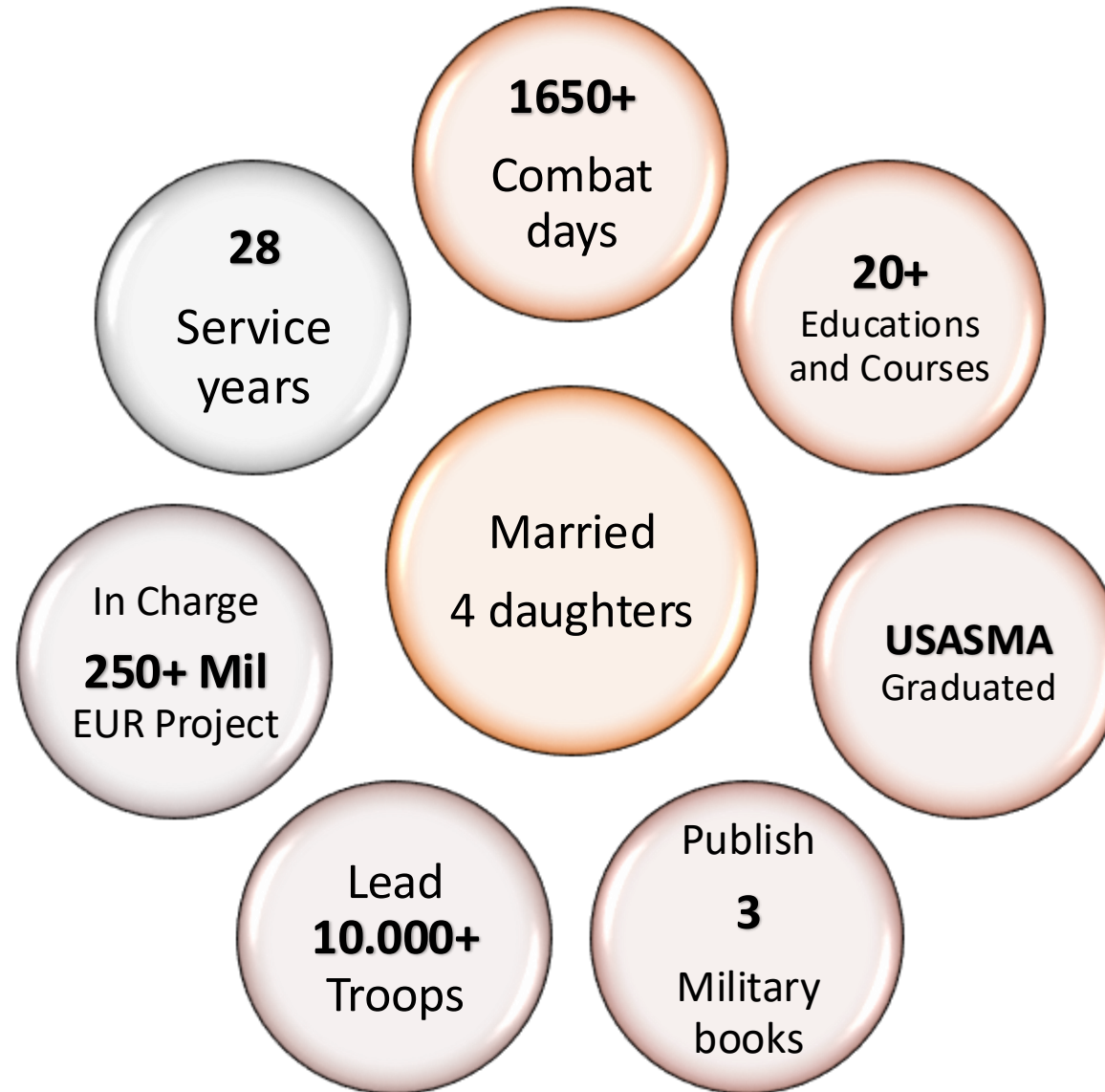
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AGENDA

- ❑ Introduction
- ❑ Valuable Skills Acquired During Military Service
- ❑ Challenges Faced During Transition
- ❑ My Personal Transition Experience
- ❑ Recommendations for Public Employment Services (PES)

Introduction



Valuable Skills Acquired During Military Service



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1991

MILITARY

- Combat experts
- Technical Expert
- Proven leader
- Leading teams in high-pressure environments
- Commitment to mission success
- Strategic level management
- Training in specialized fields
- Rapid assessment of situations, development of solutions and adaptation to changing circumstances.

2018

CIVILIAN

- Stress resistance
- Team Work
- Problem-solving
- Critical thinking and adaptability in unpredictable situations.
- Reliability
- Conflict resolution
- Management roles
- Project leadership
- Ability to meet deadlines
- Cross-functional team collaboration
- Project management roles
- Strategic planning
- Crisis management
- Innovation in business environments

2019

SMA Retired

Senior Military Leader with 28+ years of expertise

Quickly mastered technical and leadership skills

Proven track record for achieving target goals and meeting deadlines.

Proven operations expert:

- operational planning
- project management
- resource maximization
- financial management
- staff development.

Strong ability to build partnerships

Respected leader with core values of respect, integrity, and dedication.

Results-oriented with a keen focus on organizational mission and goals.

No valid Diploma for Civilian Employment

Not confirmed in Corporate environment

Skills need to be proven

Knowledge need to tested and verified

How Old are you?

Low payed jobs offers

PTSD issue?

Anxiety?

Government support? **(SPECTRA program?)**

Challenges Faced During Transition



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Transitioning from military to civilian life is challenging, as veterans face personal, professional, and emotional adjustments.

Challenges

Cultural Shift

Identity and Purpose

Skill Translate

Mental Health Barriers

Network

Communication Styles

Loss of Identity

Resume Writing

PTSD

Lack of Civilian Networks

Decision-Making

Purpose and Motivation

Interview Skills

Anxiety and Depression

Unfamiliar with Networking

Workplace Norms

Community and Brotherhood

Misalignment of Skills

Stigma

Translating Military Connections

S

G

J

1

2

3

4

6

Data Analyze

Project management

Cyber

Human resource

Logistics



Personnel

1

Human resource

Intelligence

2

Data Analyze

Operations

3

Project management

Logistics

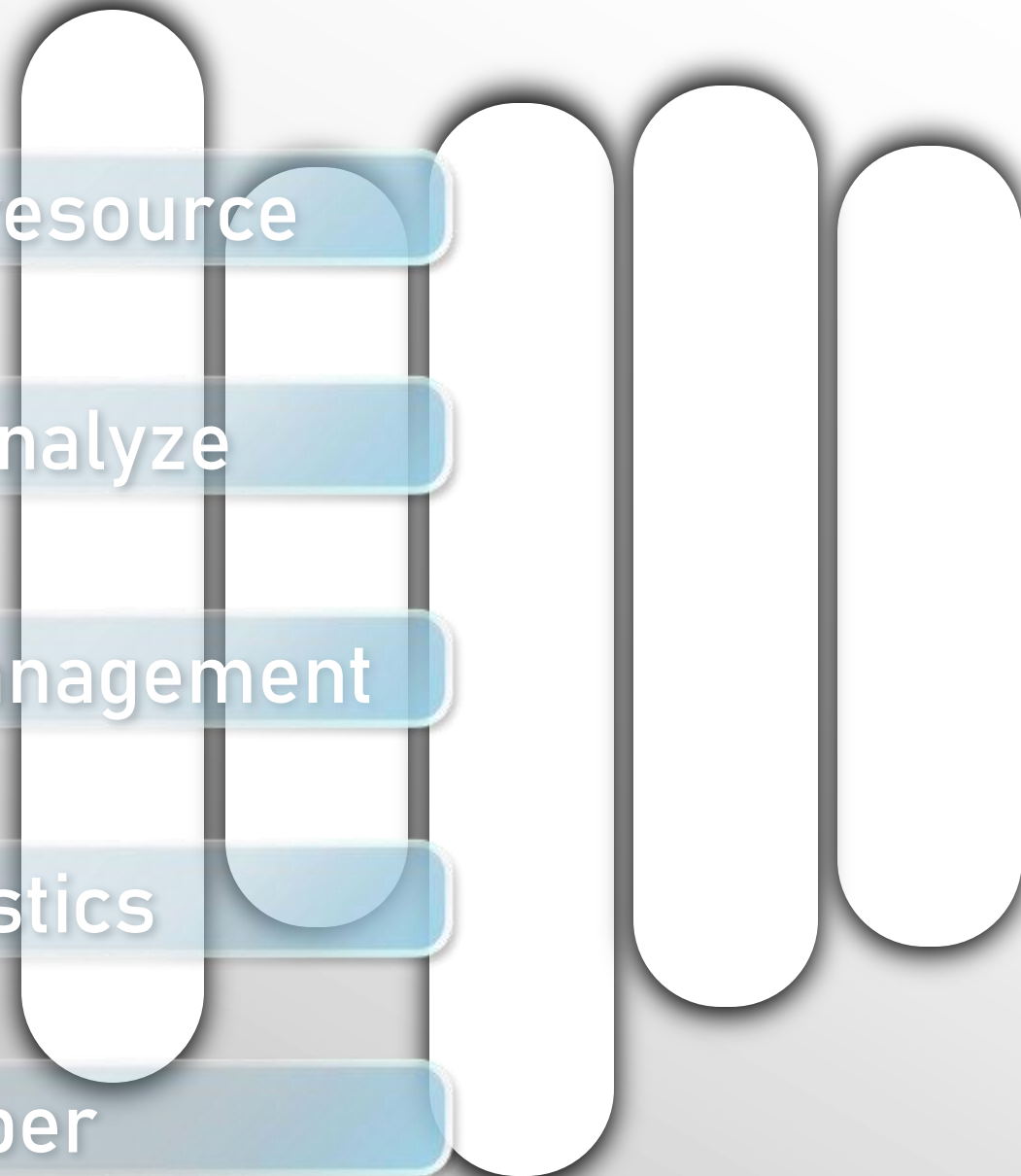
4

Logistics

CIS

6

Cyber



My Personal Transition Experience



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<https://www.military.com/hiring-veterans/military-to-civilian>



<https://www.onetonline.org>

2019

Scared? Insecure? Lacking self-confidence? Stressed?

ooo YES!!!

BUT.....using the following approach!

Challenges/Disadvantages

- Language barrier (German on the job)
- Translating military skills to civilian terms
- Recognition of qualifications & certificates
- German bureaucracy & paperwork
- Local job market fit (Duisburg/Ruhr area)
- Cultural shift from military to civilian workplaces
- Gaps or non-linear career history
- Security & Defense sector limits
- Network and references

Find a job is your Mission / Develop few Course of action / Develop steps / **GO!**

Registration at the Labor office

Create new CV and open profile on Indeed.de

Daily search open jobs position

Language course

Open LinkedIn profile and create network

Interview trainings / How To present yourself / Translate Mil to Civ language

Don't be picky! Take a job what is offer to you!

Try to learn as much as you can / diversify your knowledge / interests

Improve your skills and abilities through Online learning

Keep up with new technologies / market demands

Few months / few temp jobs later / My journey started !

2019

Bilingual Company
1,5 years HR (Hiring Assistant (English))
2 years Outbound Team lead (Thank you Gillian!!!)

2024

Bilingual Company
1 year Acting Area Manager

2025

Interim Workforce Consultant (IWC) for
NATO Communication Information Agency (NCIA)
Acquisition (ACQ) – Contracting
Business Intake Account management (BIAM)
Account manager and NCIA NATO Software POC

Outcome

- German language
- Develop new sets of skills
- Certifications for German labor environment
- Warehouse operations knowledge
- Usage of Warehouse management system (WMS)
- GEMBA / SCRUM proficiency
- Management skills improved
- Projects management skills
- Customer management skills
- Regal Inspector Certificate
- EHS Safety officer certificate

Recommendations for Public Employment Services (PES)



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Pre-Retirement Support

Action

Launch pre-retirement transition programs 6–12 months before discharge

Offer career counselling & skill mapping during active service

Provide training, certifications, and digital skills programs

Organize early job fairs & connect veterans with employers

Benefit

Helps veterans plan career paths before leaving

Prepares veterans early reducing uncertainty

Builds competitiveness in the civilian job market

Secures opportunities before retirement

Transition Support

Action

Tailored Career Counselling – Veteran-focused advisors, resume & interview workshops

Skill Mapping Tools – Match military experience with civilian job requirements

Mentorship Programs – Pair veterans with industry professionals

LinkedIn & Digital Training – Teach profile building, networking, and personal branding

Mental Health Support – Counselling, stress workshops, identity coaching

Employer Education & Partnerships – Train companies on veterans' value

Benefit

Smooth skill translation into civilian roles

Faster job placement and role alignment

Personal guidance & stronger professional networks

Improves visibility and competitiveness

Improves emotional well-being and readiness

Builds veteran-friendly workplaces

Veterans bring unique, high-value skills but face cultural and psychological challenges when transitioning.

Early preparation + targeted PES support CAN significantly improve employment outcomes

BUT...

Only if:

- **Inter-ministerial cooperation (State level) – Mandatory***
- **Industry (primary Military but not only)**
- **Right Projects/programs created/implemented**
- **Common funding on EU level (European Social Fund (ESF+))**
- **Including Veterans in projects/programs**

Succes is granted !



USA and Global Perspective on Recruitment

Mr Charles Terrell

Strategy Manager for Public Sector

Accenture



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United States Veterans Hiring Programs: *Government and Corporate Perspectives*

Charlie Terrell, Accenture
Riga, Latvia

“Serving those who served”


accenture

Agenda

- 01** Historical Overview of Veterans Employment Initiatives
- 02** Key Government Programs: JVSG, LVERs, and DVOPS
- 03** US Chamber of Commerce: Hiring Our Heroes Program
- 04** Corporate Best Practices: Accenture's Veterans Hiring Approach
- 05** Corporate Veterans Hiring Success Stories
- 06** Challenges and Opportunities in Veterans Hiring
- 07** Future Trends and Recommendations for Veterans Hiring Programs



Veterans Demographics in the US and Leading Economies: Population, Age, Gender, and Support Systems Compared

Aging, gender shifts, and support disparities define the veteran experience in advanced economies.

<p>The US veteran population is declining but remains the largest due to ongoing military operations and a large standing force.</p>	<p>Veterans face unique socioeconomic challenges, including higher rates of disability, mental health issues, and homelessness.</p>	<p>Tailored support and proactive policy measures are essential to ensure veterans' well-being and societal contribution.</p>
<p>The US leads with 16.2 million veterans, representing about 4.8% of its population, the highest among major economies.</p>	<p>Veterans in all countries are aging, with over 44% above 65, driving demand for geriatric and mental health services.</p>	<p>Male veterans dominate, but female representation is growing, especially in countries with recent gender integration.</p>
<p>Female veteran representation is rising, especially in the US, UK, and Australia, due to expanded military roles.</p>	<p>Veterans in the US and Australia benefit from comprehensive healthcare, education, and housing programs.</p>	<p>Australia's support programs include health, education, and housing, addressing diverse veteran needs.</p>
<p>Veterans' age and gender profiles are shifting, with older cohorts dominating and more women joining the ranks.</p>	<p>Female veterans remain a minority, but their numbers are increasing, highlighting the need for tailored support.</p>	<p>Japan's veteran population is the oldest, with a median age of 68 and 60% over 65, reflecting post-WWII demographics.</p>
<p>Support systems vary: the US and Australia offer robust healthcare and education, while Europe focuses on pensions.</p>	<p>Veterans' support needs are evolving as populations age and gender diversity increases in armed forces.</p>	<p>Recent service eras shape veteran needs; post-9/11 US veterans have distinct requirements from older cohorts.</p>
<p>Veterans' median age ranges from 59 (Australia) to 68 (Japan), reflecting the end of conscription and fewer recent conflicts.</p>	<p>The US Department of Veterans Affairs is the world's largest integrated healthcare system for veterans.</p>	<p>European countries emphasize pensions and social integration for veterans over large-scale healthcare systems.</p>

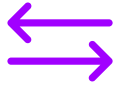


Comparing Government and Corporate Veterans Hiring Programs: Key Differences and Shared Values

Government mandates preference; corporate programs focus on DEI and flexibility in veteran hiring.



Veterans bring leadership, discipline, and teamwork; both sectors offer support for civilian transition.



Consider integrating government-style standardized processes with corporate flexibility for better outcomes.



Review hiring policies, evaluate support programs, and analyze recruitment and onboarding practices for veterans.



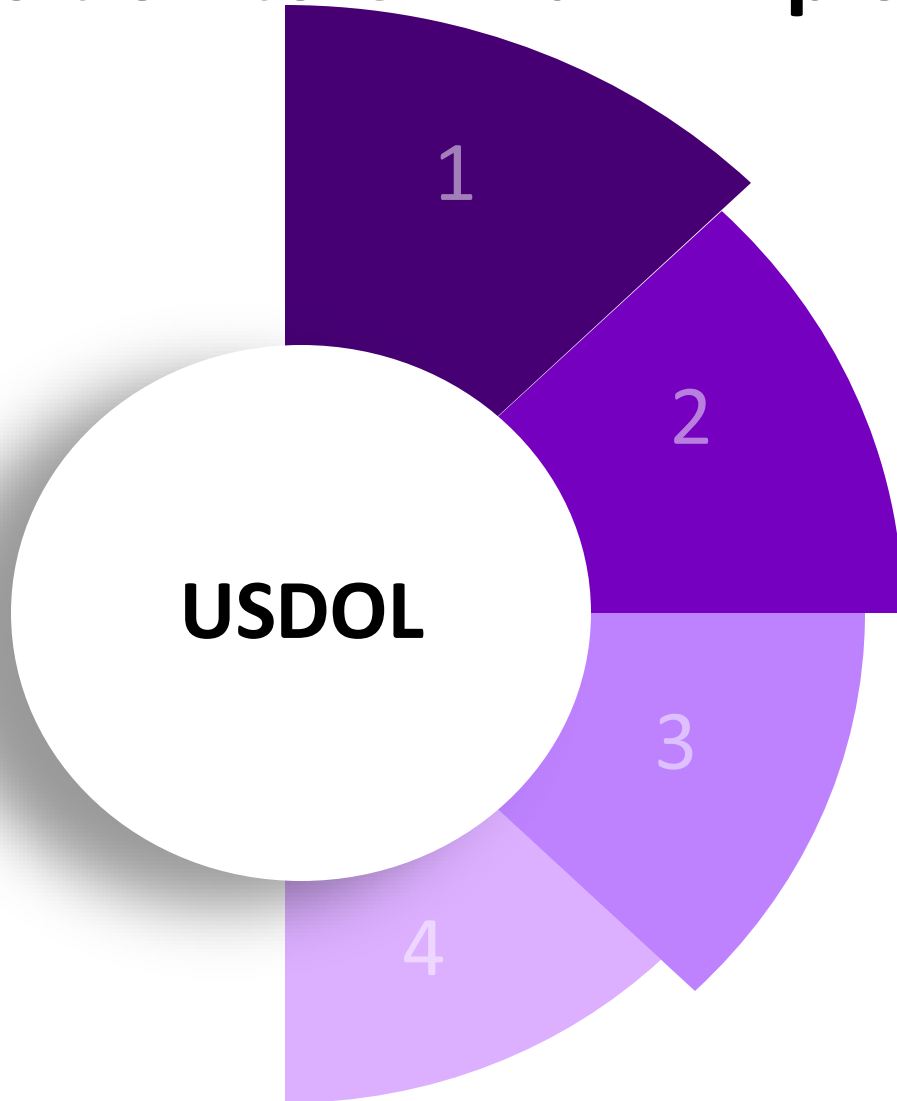
Government hiring is regulated and mandates preference; corporate programs are voluntary and tailored to business needs.



Blend mandatory preference with flexible, targeted support to maximize veteran hiring and successful transitions.



Federal Support Programs Empower Veterans in Their Transition to Civilian Employment



Veterans receive preference in federal hiring, giving them a significant advantage in job applications.

Federal agencies prioritize eligible veterans for most competitive and some excepted service positions.

VETS offers job search assistance, career counseling, and training programs for veterans.

Programs like **Jobs for Veterans State Grants** and Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program support employment.

TAP provides employment workshops, resume help, and career planning for transitioning service members.

TAP is a joint effort by the Department of Defense, VA, and Department of Labor to aid civilian transition.

Federal policies and programs ease veterans' transition to civilian employment.

Veterans' service is recognized through hiring preference and specialized support services.



JVSG, LVERs, and DVOPS: Empowering Veteran Employment – US Department of Labor

Federal grants and specialized staff connect veterans to jobs and overcome employment barriers.

<p>Specialized support helps veterans overcome barriers and access meaningful employment opportunities.</p> <p>Deliver individualized employment services and employer outreach for veterans.</p>	<p>JVSG, LVERs, and DVOPS provide targeted assistance, maximizing veteran job placement success.</p>		
	<p>Focus on veterans with significant barriers, connecting them to jobs and support services.</p>		
<p>Enable veterans to secure meaningful employment through specialized support.</p>	<p>Fund and deploy LVERs and DVOPS to deliver tailored veteran employment services.</p>	<p>JVSG funding, LVERs, DVOPS, career services, employer outreach, veteran advocacy.</p>	<p>Non-JVSG programs, unrelated employment services, non-veteran job placement.</p>
<p>JVSG funds state agencies to hire LVERs and DVOPS, who deliver individualized career, training, and support services to veterans, focusing on those with significant barriers to employment and connecting them with employers.</p>	<p>Implement JVSG-funded programs with LVERs for employer outreach and DVOPS for intensive support, ensuring veterans receive tailored job placement and training services.</p>	<p>Federal funding, hiring of LVERs and DVOPS, individualized career services, employer outreach, advocacy, and support for veterans facing employment barriers.</p>	<p>Any services or programs not funded by JVSG, or not directly related to veteran employment support through LVERs and DVOPS.</p>



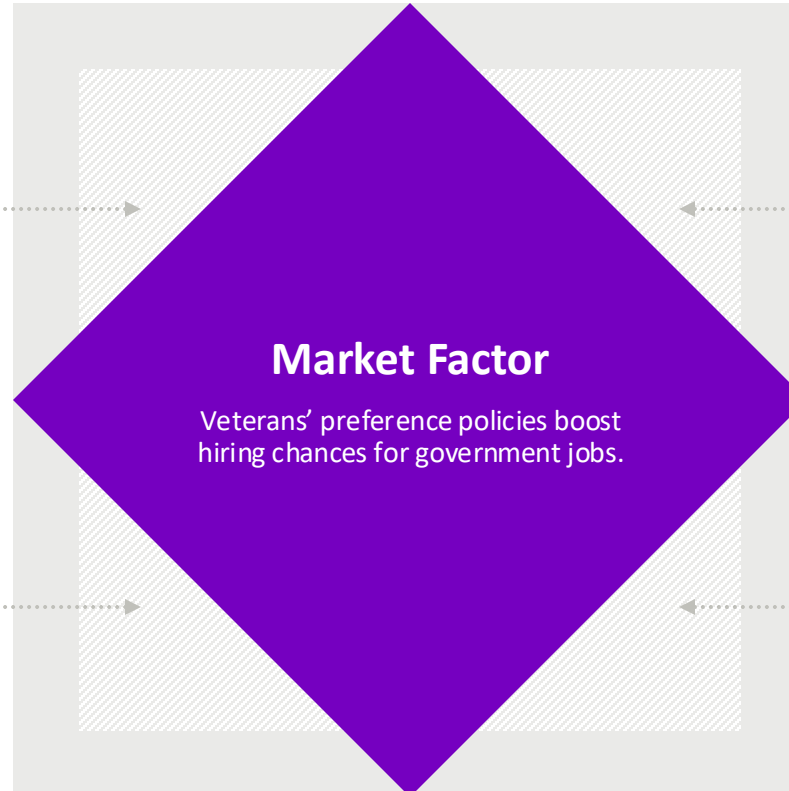
Veterans Market Analysis – Case Study

Industry factors

State and local government jobs offer stability, competitive benefits, and advancement, making them attractive to veterans seeking economic security and workforce integration.

Threats

Without continued support and targeted programs, veterans may face challenges translating military skills to civilian government roles, risking underemployment.



Market Trends

States and municipalities increasingly implement veterans' preference policies and support programs, enhancing veterans' access to public sector employment and career development resources.

Opportunity

Veterans benefit from targeted recruitment, transition assistance, and specialized training, helping them translate military skills to civilian government roles and supporting long-term career growth.



Accenture's Veteran-Focused Recruitment, Skills Mapping, and Inclusive Support Drive Successful Civilian Transitions

Targeted Campaigns

Accenture partners with Veteran Affairs and Raytheon Technologies to design veteran-specific recruitment campaigns.

Skills Alignment

Proprietary tools map veterans' skills to high-demand roles in cybersecurity, AI, and engineering.

Ongoing Support

Mentorship, learning platforms, and resource groups foster inclusion and professional growth for veterans.

Consulting, Technology

Accenture operates in consulting and technology, focusing on innovative talent and workforce solutions.

Veteran Inclusion

Accenture excels in veteran inclusion through tailored recruitment, skills mapping, and ongoing support.

Personalized Pathways

Personalized transition pathways and upskilling recommendations help veterans succeed in civilian roles.

Broader Outreach

Expanding immersive technologies and partnerships can further enhance veteran recruitment and support.

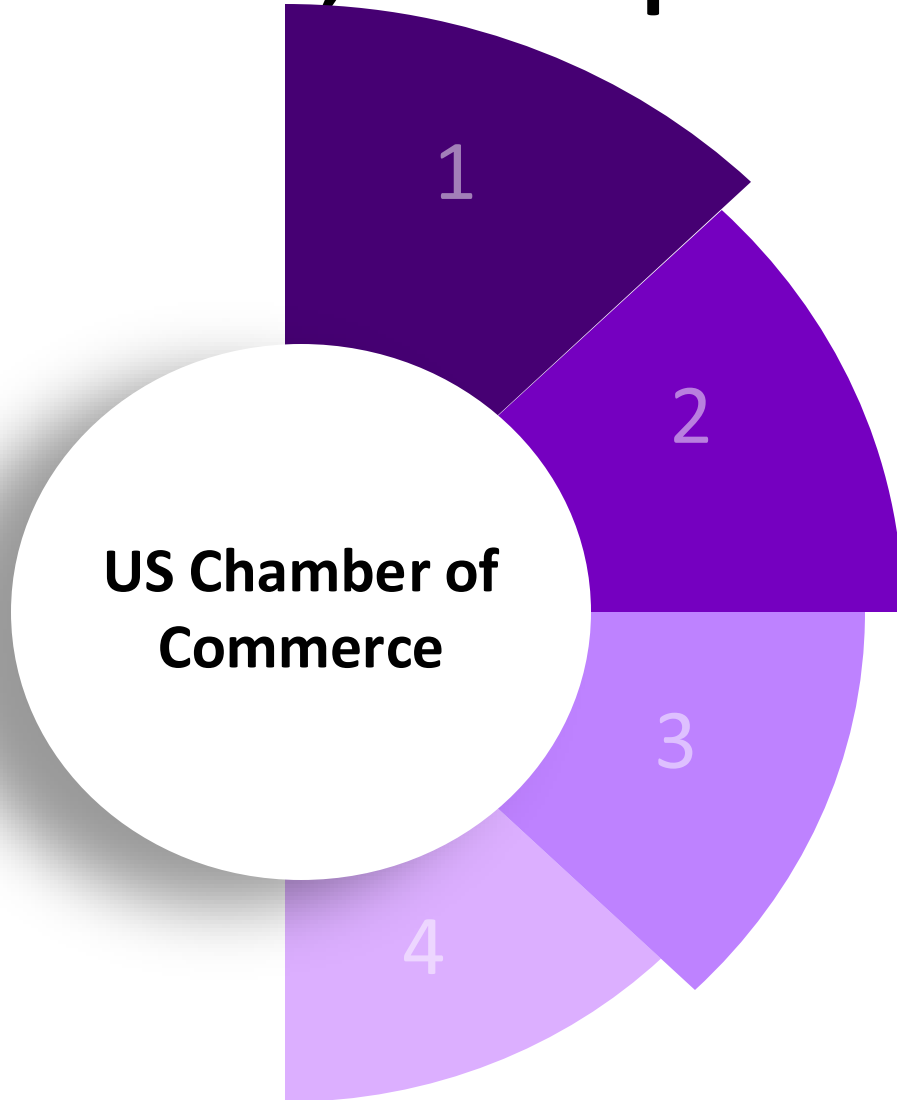


Corporate Hiring Support of Veteran's

	VetWorks	Amazon	Starbucks
Program Structure and Industry Focus	VetWorks is industry-specific, focusing on semiconductors and collaborating with research organizations for best practices.	Amazon's initiatives are broad, targeting multiple sectors like operations, logistics, and technology for veteran roles.	Starbucks targets retail and management, integrating veterans and spouses through specialized training and support.
Onboarding and Career Development Support	VetWorks provides tailored resources for both employers and veterans, enhancing onboarding and transition.	Amazon offers structured onboarding, mentorship, and career growth, recognized for supporting military families.	Starbucks emphasizes leadership development and support networks, integrating military experience into management.
Partnerships and External Collaboration	VetWorks partners with IVMF at Syracuse University to inform best practices and improve veteran hiring outcomes.	Amazon partners with organizations supporting military families, strengthening its veteran hiring initiatives.	Starbucks builds internal support networks but less emphasis on external research partnerships compared to others.
Commitment to Military Spouses	VetWorks focuses primarily on veterans, with less emphasis on military spouses in its program description.	Amazon supports military families, including spouses, through partnerships and dedicated hiring initiatives.	Starbucks explicitly pledges to hire both veterans and military spouses, integrating them into its workforce.
Recognition and Industry Impact	VetWorks is recognized for research-driven best practices in the semiconductor industry's veteran hiring.	Amazon is widely recognized for its commitment to veteran employment and partnerships with military organizations.	Starbucks is noted for its large-scale hiring pledge and leadership development for veterans and spouses.



Hiring Our Heroes: Empowering Veterans with Career Connections, Development, and Advocacy



Connects veterans and employers through job fairs, networking events, and online platforms.

Directly links veterans, service members, and military spouses with employers seeking their skills.

Provides career development resources like resume workshops, interview coaching, and mentorship.

Helps veterans translate military experience into civilian careers and improve job readiness.

Advocates for veteran hiring by collaborating with businesses and government agencies.

Promotes veteran-friendly hiring practices and tailored employment pathways.

Nationwide support for veterans' career transitions.

Job fairs, mentorship, and advocacy help veterans succeed in the civilian workforce.

Veterans Face Stigma, Skill Translation Challenges, and Limited Support in Civilian Workforce Integration

Bias, skill misalignment, and lack of outreach hinder veterans' transition to civilian careers



6-Step Plan for Veterans Employment Programs in the United States

A Sequential Approach to Supporting Veteran Workforce Integration



In Summary...Veteran Talent: A Strategic Asset for Workforce Excellence

Veterans: Driving Workforce Diversity and Innovation

Diversity and Inclusion: Embracing Veteran Perspectives

Veterans offer unique leadership and technical skills, enriching organizations and supporting diversity initiatives.

Companies like Raytheon and Accenture actively invest in veteran career development and skill matching.

Skills Alignment and Upskilling for Veterans

Federal and private programs provide targeted hiring, upskilling, and transition support for veterans, ensuring their successful integration into the workforce.

Leveraging Technology for Veteran Integration

Veteran-focused initiatives foster professional growth, networking, and career advancement, benefiting both employers and the broader community.



QUESTIONS?

Charlie Terrell, Strategy Manager

Washington, D.C.

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“Serving those who served”

Q & A



Ms Gillian Russell

Director at Bold Mariner Consulting



Mr Dario Rosic

*Retired Sergeant Major (SMA), Croatian Army
Senior Military and Corporate Leader*



Mr Charles Terrell

*Strategy Manager for Public Sector
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Closing Remarks



Ms Greta Metka Barbo Škerbinc, President of WAPES
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Ms Evita Simsone, Director General
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