

## Legal basis and main technologies of socio-psychological work with vulnerable categories of the population in the community

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**Abstract.** The war in Ukraine has led to an increase in the need for social assistance among vulnerable populations, which requires strengthening the capacity of social services to respond to new challenges. The purpose of this study is to examine the legal and technological framework for wartime assistance and to demonstrate the effectiveness of modern methods through theoretical and empirical analysis. Data collection and analysis were conducted in compliance with ethical and legal standards for social research. Currently, Ukrainian policy makes it possible to support models such as the proposed Integrated Social Services approach. However, the findings of the study indicate a potential need for legal/regulatory reforms to further strengthen the capacity to respond to crisis situations. The results confirm that the implemented interventions successfully address the problems of displaced persons, veterans, most-at-risk families, etc. Individual case management and group social and psychological trainings contribute to capacity development, and the model of integrated services allows for quick resolution of acute problems. Comparative evaluations show that the integrated system is superior to individual methods in quickly addressing crisis situations. However, new groups that fall outside the scope of current legislation, such as victims of domestic violence, may require mandatory expansion of eligibility criteria. Laws could also include standards for interagency coordination to address fragmentation. This urgent

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relevance highlights how robust legal/ethical foundations uphold assistance models in turmoil. It was also concluded that the implementation of legal reforms that would create a unified system of cooperation could mitigate these problems. In particular, legislation could formalise requirements such as data and information sharing between service providers, common case management procedures, common reporting standards and interdisciplinary partnerships. The practical significance of the study lies in the possibility of using the results of the problem analysis to create accessible mechanisms to improve the quality of support for vulnerable demographic groups. Enshrining access to care as an inalienable guarantee creates an ecosystem that is resilient to modern threats

**Keywords:** social assistance; less protected categories of people; human rights; negative social factors; legal frameworks

## Introduction

In the modern conditions of the development of Ukrainian society, strict technological requirements are placed on social work and assistance. The most relevant today is the integration of all social forms and directions of social work into a single system that will contribute to effective changes and correspond to the progressive development of society and the individual in it. Social work should be understood as an integrated, universal type of activity aimed at satisfying the personal interests and needs of vulnerable sections of the population guaranteed by society (Semigina, 2020).

P. Smith *et al.* (2022) note that every year the number of people in need of social assistance increases, especially during the war. Also, the researchers note that thanks to radical reforms of the power system, which involves the transfer of powers and resources from the state level to the local level, social work is aimed at more effectively solving social problems and meeting the needs of representatives of various social groups. Analysing the experience of Canadian, American, and British public organizations, V. Kurylo *et al.* (2019) found that there are a number of problems in the provision of social and psychological services in Ukrainian communities that require immediate resolution. For example, budget legislation must comply with social principles, methodical provision of social work institutes in any community is the basis for providing high-quality social and psychological services, creation of a single register of recipients of social services to ensure the incorruptibility of public self-government bodies, creation of the latest models of social service systems (Polishchuk, 2020).

Formalizing the universal right to social services will significantly strengthen Ukraine's policy framework for supporting vulnerable groups. Enshrining this new right in law establishes basic standards, scope and procedures for public assistance, creating consistent expectations for citizens across the country. This could take the form of a broader "right to social security" amendment covering everything from health care to housing assistance to counseling services (Behrendt & Anh Nguyen, 2018). At the operational level, the law would require the maintenance of necessary infrastructure and human resources. For example, a requirement to maintain adequate staffing levels for social workers, shelters, and assistance programs. This proactive stance will allow Ukraine to have a specialized crisis response capacity that can quickly expand services in the event of disasters.

M. Hensmans *et al.* (2023) believe, that fiscally, budgets should allocate permanent funding solely to sustain this ecosystem of social services and meet local needs. Targeted pools calculated by rigid formulas prevent diversion of resources. In essence, legal law enshrines social services as an inherent civil guarantee, forcing the state to assist and provide for the vulnerable through regulation. These services are transformed from discretionary charitable policies into

unquestionable legal duties bound by strict legislative accountability. As a result, societal resilience is enhanced and at-risk populations become less vulnerable to crises of all kinds.

N. Nazar (2022) believes that modern social technologies should be directed to help overcome life's difficulties. Modern social problems are relevant for many people, therefore, using methods of prevention of prevention of social risks and difficult life circumstances, mastering the skills of getting out of crisis situations, self-determination of circumstances in which social assistance is needed, clients of social services attract their strengths and resources for development solving problematic issues related to life activities. After all, a person's awareness that he can and should ask for help facilitates the process of establishing cooperation between vulnerable categories of the population and representatives of the provision of social and psychological services of various professional groups in the community (Yara *et al.*, 2021).

For a long time, social work in Ukraine was aimed at supporting and preserving optimal working capacity and social activity of people with disabilities (Rima *et al.*, 2020). Nowadays, the attention should be paid to the field of social work in Ukraine as developing. Thorough scientific research and practical experience for the implementation of the latest technologies are not enough for this branch to effectively fulfil its functional responsibilities. E. Dubois *et al.* (2022) define social work as performing public health care services that focus on the mental health of citizens and related adjustment disorders. Because according to the researcher, only a healthy society can form a healthy personality. In social work in Canada, much attention is paid to cultural and situational factors: ethnic origin, race, religion, gender, age, social class and position in society, sexual orientation (Khan, 2023).

Instead, M. de Chesnay and B. Anderson (2015) are convinced that in the coming years, individual psychotherapy will replace social work from social services. Because most social workers use psychological methods to provide effective care, thus losing their original meaning. However, there are types of social services that cannot be solved by psychotherapy. That is why the field of social work should pay attention to the restoration of its role as a social assistant and contribute to the improvement of society. Therefore, the purpose of this study is the development and implementation of the latest technologies for the organization of social work, as an organized, regulated subjectively determined influence on individuals to activate the internal potential for self-development of socially vulnerable population groups.

## Materials and methods

The following theoretical methods were used during the research: analysis, synthesis, specification of scientific and methodological literature on psychology, sociology, jurisprudence, philosophy. In the empirical part of the experiment,

such methods were used: semi-structured interview, observation, socio-psychological training. 30 people from among the vulnerable population of Khmelnytskyi, Khmelnytskyi territorial community participated in the experiment. After receiving consent from each experiment participant for the processing of personal data, anamnesis was collected and assigned to a low-security category of the population: internally displaced persons (30 people), of which 5 were children, 2 were victims of violence, families who found themselves in difficult life circumstances – 5, persons with special needs – 5, unemployed – 10, pensioners – 8. The study was conducted from August to December 2022.

A group of 10 people was formed for each of the methods. 2 innovative technologies were applied to the participants of the experiment, which, as it became clear from the analysis of the scientific literature, are currently the main methods of social work with a vulnerable population: the method of individual social work (Ravalier *et al.*, 2023) and the method of group social work (Neamtu & Faludi, 2021) and the model of the organization of social work “Integrated social services” (Horishna, 2019). The effectiveness of their implementation was determined and compared with the experience of using the “Integrated Social Services” social work organization model. The Casework method is a joint activity of a social worker and a user of social services in conditions of limited functioning of the latter. It is aimed at solving social, psychological and personal problems of the client at the place of residence, by address. A social services specialist can cooperate using this method with families who find themselves in difficult life circumstances, persons with special needs.

Social work with a case takes place in 5 stages: diagnostic – where a specialist, in accordance with normative documentation, assesses the state of living conditions of a family that finds itself in difficult life circumstances and persons who have special needs (conditions of their maintenance). The second stage is an assessment of the nature of the problem and the type of assistance (economic, psychological, medical, legal), the third is the development of a plan and provision of the necessary services; the fourth is the final stage of assistance; the fifth is an assessment of the success of actions. It should be noted that the third stage can last for years, until a person fully solves his problems. The method of group social work is intended for the development of spiritual and physical forces through the mutual exchange of group experience. The socio-psychological training in which the participants of the experiment took part was aimed at overcoming anxiety states, finding a resource and forming a support during the war in order to change the functioning of the group members.

Social work in this case is directed to the group as a whole and to each of its members in particular. The model

of integrated social services for Ukrainian communities was created to ensure the social well-being of residents of territorial communities. The main concept of the model consists in the comprehensive provision of a wide range of social services that are concentrated in one place, taking into account gender, age, physical and other characteristics of vulnerable categories of the population. An individual can receive social services guaranteed by the state in a short time. The peculiarity of this approach is to treat the recipient of social services in such a way that the individual adapts to the community in which he lives as quickly as possible (Mialkowska *et al.*, 2023). After the implementation of the relevant services, a comparative analysis of the effectiveness of providing social services was conducted using individual and group methods and the “Integrated Social Services” model (Tokareva, 2019). A survey was administered to recipients of the services in each group, asking them to rate their satisfaction on a 5-point Likert scale (from 0.1 = very dissatisfied to 0.5 = very satisfied). After monitoring the quality of the provision of social services, the theoretical conclusions and practical results were clarified using mathematical statistics and graphical representation of the results. It should be noted that this study is rather a cross-section of data for a certain period, and it is expected to be repeated in the future. The survey was conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the Helsinki Declaration (1975). All persons who took part in the survey were informed about measures to guarantee their anonymity. They were informed about the purpose of the study, the use of the data they provided and obtained during the study, and the risks involved.

## Results

The model of providing social services depicted in Table 1 strengthens the role of local self-government in the organization of social services, which allows creating an effective system of technologies for social and psychological work at the local community level. The implementation of such technology in social work brings the sphere of social services to a higher quality level. Starting with registration and early identification of families and persons in need of social assistance, ending with timely provision of targeted social assistance. Socially vulnerable categories of the population have a high probability of increasing social problems in unstable times in society: economic crises, natural or man-made disasters, wars. The most vulnerable are pensioners, people with special needs, large families, orphans, unemployed internally displaced persons, the poor, homeless women, addicts of psychoactive substances – such population groups require increased state measures to solve the issue of their integration into society (Trubavina *et al.*, 2021).

**Table 1.** Model of “Integrated social services”

Parameters	Features of the implementation of the model
Purpose of activity	Addressing of social services
Recipients of social services and their role	Internally displaced persons, families who find themselves in difficult life circumstances, disabled persons, unemployed persons, persons with addictions
Problems with which the model works	Lack of housing and basic necessities, failure of parents or guardians to fulfil their duties, loss of documents, unemployment, disability
Action strategy	Identifying existing problems and mobilizing resources to solve them
Tactics of change	“Single window” policy, mediation
Liaison with local authorities	Cooperation with employers and funding entities

**Source:** compiled by the authors based on U. Tokareva (2019)

It is important that the provision of social services is underpinned by a human rights-based legal framework, especially in times of crisis or war when needs are heightened. However, current Ukrainian legal definitions defining eligibility for social assistance cannot fully cover all groups made vulnerable by contemporary threats (Taran *et al.*, 2023). For example, while displaced persons, veterans, the unemployed, pensioners and persons with disabilities are covered by the law, there may be gaps in the clear definition of victims of violence and military families (The right to state social..., 2005). Expanding legislation to designate these groups could strengthen response capacity. Possible mechanisms include amending existing laws that list vulnerable categories or introducing new directives that specifically target contemporary demographic groups at risk. For example, legislation defining eligibility criteria for social support programs could include special provisions for “internally displaced persons seeking asylum in armed conflict zones” and “families exposed to domestic violence or abuse during active hostilities”. This expansion of legislation incorporates modern aspects into the formal social assistance system. It allows institutions such as shelters, employment centers and community outreach programs to tap into special channels of assistance for victims of violence and military families when needed. The standardization of these new covered groups also introduces responsibility for addressing the unique needs of each.

The decentralization reform made it possible to expand the range of activities of social service specialists and placed on them a certain legal responsibility for the patronage of socially vulnerable segments of the population (Decentralization reform, 2014). However, it enabled specialists to develop, to cooperate with district inspectors, doctors, heads of neighbourhood committees, and psychologists. Social service specialists are developing technologies that will act with high efficiency in solving population problems. As a result, this would provide an opportunity to prevent the emergence of difficult life circumstances for some families, to provide patronage under proper conditions for the maintenance and upbringing of children, and to prevent the removal of children from disadvantaged families.

Implementation of the method of individual social work took place in several stages. The first is getting to know each other, establishing a trusting relationship with research participants, diagnosing the needs of a family or an individual by drawing up an act of inspection of living conditions. During a semi-structured interview, the root cause of the problem is investigated and the necessary package of documents or an application for their creation is collected. If necessary, referral to narrow specialists: psychologist, doctors, lawyer. At the second stage of social work, the set of skills of the people who participated in the research was analysed. Meetings and conversations took place with each family individually once a week. Diagnosing the client’s personal problems is a long-term process, but it will fully help to assess his capabilities, especially since during the following conversations the client opens up and the consultant can get even more facts about the problem and help more effectively. At the third stage, there was a direct solution to the problem: finding a job, looking for housing and moving, involving a psychologist in order to establish parent-child relations, restoring documents for receiving financial assistance. All this time, the social worker accompanied the clients and encouraged

them to socialize based on their strengths. The final stage of the relationship between the client and the social worker within the framework of the method of individual social assistance begins with the complete resolution of the former’s problems. During the last session, a final semi-structured interview was conducted in which the quality of service provision by the employee and the effectiveness of problem solving were evaluated.

The next step of the experimental verification of the introduction of innovative methods in social work was the conduct of socio-psychological training. Implementation of the method of group social work also takes place in several stages. At the first, there was involvement of group members, formation of cohesion, difficulties in sharing experiences and feelings with group members, there was no sense of value of the group and its members. Anxiety, isolation, frustration, threat from the powerful are signs of group members at the initial stage. The group is suitable for those who seek a safe, comfortable atmosphere, without violating personal boundaries, where knowledge and understanding of the feelings and emotions of the group members is valuable and important. At the second stage, the coach of the socio-psychological group, having mastered the group process, stimulated the imagination of the participants, developing their abilities for social interaction. During this stage, the participants showed their individuality, competed, became leaders, that is, they learned to show their personality in society. This process served as a transition to the third stage: rationing. Roles were distributed among group members, subgroups were formed, and group norms appeared. It was at the 4<sup>th</sup> stage that the process of fulfilling the set goals began, each of the group members focused not on the process, but on the goal with which they came. The termination of the group’s work took place for some time, as some members of the group felt the need to continue the interaction.

On the basis of the implemented state program “Integrated social services”, a survey was conducted among the formed sample regarding the effectiveness of service provision (Models of integrated..., 2020). The model of integrated social services was developed for the purpose of joint planning and coordination of coordination actions and establishing the interaction of various units in the provision of services to privileged categories. Integration takes place through the formation of optimal connections between specialists in the social sphere, with their subsequent unification into a complete system of social assistance (Tokareva, 2019). Since the model is designed for a quick and high-quality solution to social problems of vulnerable categories of the population, coordination work on the provision of social services was carried out. So, the social worker is faced with the task of quickly assessing the client’s problem and redirecting it to the next specialist who can solve it or redirect it to another specialist.

Socio-psychological work with families who found themselves in difficult life circumstances was aimed at creating conditions for the safe and harmonious development of children, strengthening family relationships, preventing the disintegration of families and the removal of children from families. First of all, a set of classes aimed at the development of the child’s social and emotional sphere, parent trainings where, together with a specialist, parents receive knowledge and skills to overcome and mitigate life’s difficulties were held with the children. The vast majority of parents from families who have found themselves in difficult

life circumstances – candidates for deprivation of parental rights, must understand that help exists and how to get it. Therefore, they are under the constant support of specialists who visit children at home and observe their development, provide advice on education. By cooperating with the children's service, medical and educational institutions, comprehensive assistance is provided to such families.

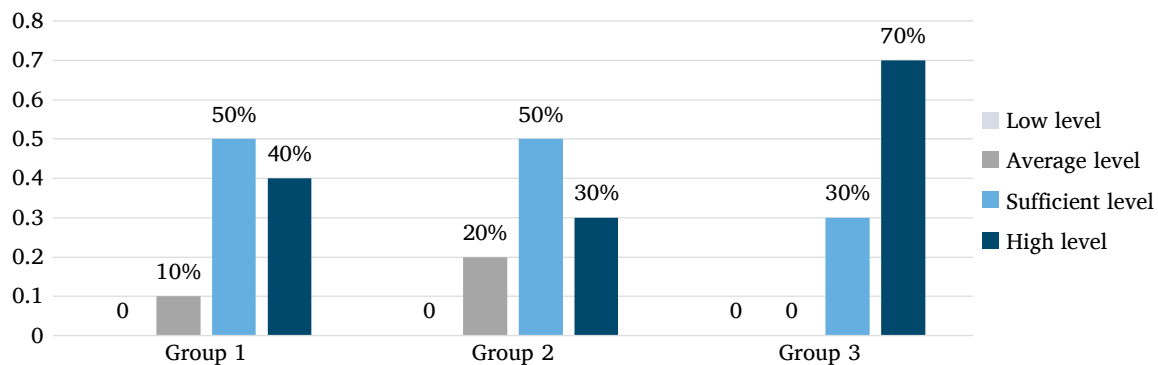
The problem of vagrancy, begging and various kinds of addictions need an immediate solution. It is obvious that with the loss of housing, a person loses the opportunity to exercise one of his civil rights – the right to work. In case of loss of housing with all property and documents, a person is deprived of the opportunity to receive all types of social services: payments, pensions, registration at the employment center, medical care, legal work. In addition, the lifestyle these people lead poses a risk to themselves and those around them. Therefore, solving the problematic issue of the homeless, vagrants, patients with alcoholism and drug addiction, persons released from prisons is an important process of social transformation in any community. Therefore, the referral of unemployed persons to the employment center made it possible to resolve the issue of temporary employment of the unemployed and employment. And social assistance of public, religious and volunteer organizations contributed to the rehabilitation of persons with various kinds of addictions.

Large-scale work is also being carried out to study the needs of internally displaced persons. Children and their parents were taken under socio-psychological support and provided with psychological support, rehabilitation, clothes, shoes, material assistance, housing and employment. By cooperating with volunteer foundations and public organizations, it became possible to resettle families in modular

houses, hostels of the social sector and privately owned houses that citizens give to the needs of the displaced. Preventive, therapeutic, rehabilitative social work with victims of violence is mandatory. Cooperating with social hotels, crisis centers, and social services, specialists conduct face-to-face or telephone consultations with people affected by violence, psychological relief training, and therapy.

The main areas of work with pensioners were aimed at identifying persons in need of social care at home or in special institutions. Therefore, during the conducted raids, specialists collected the necessary information to meet their needs, and also conducted explanatory work with relatives of the elderly regarding the biosocial essence of aging as a demographic process with all its consequences, with problems of loneliness and adaptation to old age, scope and opportunities labor, intellectual, creative activity. Instructed on the basics of caring for helpless old people with low socio-psychological and moral-ethical problems. The involvement of a specialist in the field of gerontology, who applies a number of psychotherapeutic methods, contributed to overcoming the syndrome of premature aging, solving family and household problems.

Specialists of social and psychological services perform the duties assigned to them in accordance with the requirements of state standards of social services and the challenges of today. Serving new categories of the population requires constant expansion of powers, improvement of competence and quality of provision of social services by specialists (Resolution of Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1124, 2023). The results of the survey among recipients of social and psychological services regarding the quality of the provision of these services according to the model of "Integrated social services" are presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Results of a survey on the quality of the implementation of innovative technologies of social and psychological work with vulnerable categories of the population

**Note:** Group 1 – those in which the method of individual social work was applied; Group 2 – application of the method of group social work; Group 3 – approval of the author's model of "Integrated social services"

**Source:** compiled by the authors

So, as can be seen in Figure 1, all methods have shown their effectiveness in working with socially vulnerable categories of the population. The "Integrated social services" model has a slight gap in the indicators of the quality of the provision of social services. As it turned out during the survey of clients, the quality of the provision of socio-psychological services using the model is higher: internally displaced persons solved their problematic issues within a week. However, the first two groups resolved their issues later, but first of all they received psychological support,

restored a sense of security, support and trust. Thanks to the results published in Figure 1, it can be concluded that the technologies of social and psychological work perform the tasks assigned to them.

The "Integrated Social Services" model demonstrated superior results because it provides comprehensive, coordinated support by linking recipients to the required specialists through a single point of access. The social worker acts as case manager to promptly assess needs and refer clients to address each issue specifically, from psychological

assistance to employment to paperwork. By streamlining access and leveraging expertise across domains, acute problems can be tackled rapidly. In contrast, the individual and group methods focused more on equipping clients with coping skills over a longer timeframe. While also valuable, they did not resolve immediate practical hurdles as quickly. The integrated model's ability to swiftly mobilize a customized, multi-pronged response explains its higher effectiveness ratings in the study. Formalizing this approach through policy and legislation can strengthen crisis response capacities.

Taking into account the relevance of social services today, the training of specialists in the social and psychological sphere in order to improve the lives of citizens should be at the highest level. A social worker should act as a coordinator of social support, perform a key role as a provider of social services. Therefore, the network of social services in Ukraine is undergoing a process of modernization in accordance with the requirements of the times and the needs of society. This study proved that the transition to the optimal model of providing social services will help in solving a number of problems that affect the lives of socially vulnerable categories of the population.

### Discussion

Techniques, methods and influences that are used to achieve the set goals of social development and are technologies of social and psychological work with vulnerable categories of the population. Increased emphasis on social assistance and support in a crisis situation in society becomes especially important. Most often, when contacting a social worker, a person has more than one problem. The complexity of the client's problem, the complexity of transformations, the need to achieve an effective result within a limited time frame requires the development of innovative technologies from social work. Such diversity of social assistance requires specific, narrowly directed, practice-oriented models of social work. Therefore, increasing the emphasis on targeted assistance will allow to objectively assess the needs of the family and fulfil all functions of social protection.

For example, the problem-solving model, which is purely applied in nature and is used to solve the problems of individuals, groups, and communities, is quite widespread in the USA (Beddoe, 2020). The model is focused on the elimination of negative factors through awareness of the root cause of one's problem, the activation of personal resources through the analysis of alternatives, increasing the level of motivation to implement the most effective way of solving specific tasks. A social worker uses a basic technique in working with a client – “partnership relations” in which he acts as a consultant, teacher, educator (Spytska, 2023). A similar method was used in the course of this study – the method of individual social work. The effectiveness of these methods lies in the appearance in the life of a person from among the vulnerable population of a mentor who takes care of the client's life problems.

Another effective model of working with a vulnerable population in the community is the task-centred model (Beddoe, 2020). The concept of this model consists in the development of a planned mechanism for the social worker's intervention in the client's problem. To do this, the specialist transforms the client's problematic situation into tasks that will be easier for him to cope with, and such a step-by-step instruction will lead to a solution to the request of the

recipient of social services. The advantage of this model in the fight against social problems is the transformation of the client's awareness of his problem. By breaking it down into small tasks that are easier to deal with, a person will no longer be so intimidated by the scale of his problem.

The crisis intervention model works well in dealing with psychological crises, stress and emotional strain (Beddoe, 2020). Just as in the study of this article, during the application of the group social work method, the specialist in crisis intervention works on reducing the damage from an acute psychological and emotional crisis in order to build stress resistance. The specialist must understand the peculiarities of the deep course of the crisis. A person, facing various obstacles in his life, gets injured. Therefore, a specialist who knows the model of crisis intervention should help the client overcome these obstacles and face stressful situations in a state of acute or chronic crisis. This is exactly what the participants of the social-psychological training in the experiment conducted within the framework of this study were engaged in. And as the results of the quality of the introduction of the method of group social work showed, 30% of the respondents improved their standard of living.

After analysing the regulatory documentation regarding the definition of needs and the implementation of social and psychological patronage in Ukraine, it turned out that some technologies are cumbersome and do not ensure the full fulfilment of the tasks set for social work by society (Polishchuk, 2020). The methods, criteria and indicators characterizing the effectiveness of social services and satisfaction on the part of recipients are insufficiently developed. The coordination network of institutions among themselves is imperfect, as well as the level of professionalism of social workers. Social technologies play an important role in the social work of a specialist, for whom it is important to determine the priority directions of his work, to outline effective ways and forms of solving people's social problems, to coordinate the activities of various social institutions, to take into account the features of the socio-economic development of the state and to create conditions for raising the level life of citizens (Rima et al., 2021). Therefore, the creation of innovative models of providing social services is a promising direction for improving the functioning of the social service system.

O. Polyanychko and A. Kyrylyuk (2020) describe in their study the experience of implementing social work technologies at the place of residence and claim that such a system is the key to maintaining a healthy microsocial climate, gives positive results and deserves to be followed. Confirmation of this fact is demonstrated by the indicators of the quality of the implementation of the method of individual social work in this study. Targeted social assistance is an effective technology for social and psychological work with the disabled, pensioners, and large families. L. Beddoe (2020) implemented in his practice the model of providing social services based on the “single window” principle. The primary tasks of the social services model are the simplification of the procedure for obtaining services, the introduction of automated document flow. According to the results of the monitoring study of the implementation of the social service model based on the “single window” principle, a survey was conducted among the recipients of social services, according to which 98% of the respondents improved their emotional, psychological, spiritual, creative and intellectual state.

The study of the quality of the model of providing social services based on the “single window” principle showed the advantages of forming a single database based on the social passports of vulnerable population groups; reduction of instances; reduction of the package of documents, which shortens the time for decision-making and speeds up the possibility of receiving social services from the moment of application; the possibility of reaching a larger number of population groups as a result of applying to one service; consideration of the problem as a whole and each member separately. That is, improving the quality of providing social services based on the “single window” principle, due to accessibility, timeliness, comprehensiveness, addressability and compliance with needs, flexibility, and preventive measures.

The structural and functional model of socio-psychological work with vulnerable categories of the population should become a practical embodiment of any territorial community. However, as evidenced by A. Seifert *et al.* (2019), a universal model of providing social services that will be developed for all segments of the population does not exist. The authors emphasize that each community should form its own model of providing social services, taking into account the principle of expediency of financial and human resources. When developing technologies for social and psychological work, it is possible to use the experience of Western countries (Great Britain, Germany, the USA) in which the state only takes responsibility for creating favourable conditions for the provision of social services, and business and civil society independently solve social problems of vulnerable groups population (Vulnerable and at-risk..., 2022). While in Ukraine the guarantor of the provision of social services is the state, in Great Britain, Germany and the USA the state partially provides financing for social services, public organizations (Kuran *et al.*, 2020). In Ukraine, the state regulates and finances the system of providing social services in its entirety. However, recently there have been certain shifts in the involvement of public organizations and private enterprises in the provision of social services (Polishchuk, 2020).

For several decades, in international practice, the content of social work has been reduced to the implementation of targeted qualified care based on the principle of prolonged care (Gabel, 2019). That is, the fact that the specialist independently visits the client at the place of residence allows to obtain comprehensive information about the specifics of people’s needs and problems and to provide qualified assistance at the local level within the community, where the social representative is perceived as “help” and not as “punishment”. Social work in these countries at the level of the territorial community is aimed at meeting the needs and solving the problems of vulnerable categories of the population through the involvement of a qualified specialist, cooperation between external institutions and community members, assessment of needs for social services, their planning and ordering, monitoring and evaluation the quality of these services.

In Great Britain, Canada, Germany, the USA, France, and Switzerland, community and information centers are active in communities, which cooperate with various categories of the population to organize education, leisure, and health improvement (Torpan *et al.*, 2021). Also, since the 1980s, centers of community education have proven themselves well in Great Britain, which work with the aim of socializing teenagers and young people through the organization and holding of various social and cultural events

(Kamara *et al.*, 2019). In France, cultural and leisure centers are actively functioning, the activities of which are aimed at the self-development of young people through creativity (Beddoe, 2020). In Denmark, Poland, the USA, and Sweden, a variety of interest clubs and interest groups for different segments of the population and age groups have been created to meet musical, artistic, behavioral, sports, leisure, and educational needs and interests (Seifert *et al.*, 2019).

The study identified shortcomings in the way different agencies providing social services currently interact and concluded that the overall coordination network is sub-optimal and fragmented. However, legal reforms that establish a unified system of cooperation could alleviate these problems. Specifically, legislation can formalize requirements such as data and information sharing among providers, joint case management procedures, uniform reporting standards, and cross-directional partnerships. For example, laws should require shelters to share victim profiles with their assigned social workers or hold monthly coordination meetings between social service agencies in each neighbourhood.

Common minimum requirements for cooperation would increase consistency, transparency, and integration between parties. Common protocols will reduce duplication, utilize complete victim information, and harmonize responses to provide comprehensive support. In addition, collaborative laws can establish ground rules that oblige ethical behavior, such as maintaining confidentiality when sharing data. They can also create joint governance structures between agencies, such as interagency councils to coordinate high-level strategic responses. In essence, codified collaboration mandates alleviate identified logistical bottlenecks. They eliminate friction between disparate organizations through defined legal duties of alignment and collaboration. The result is an ecosystem of mutually accountable institutions that are more responsive to emerging social challenges through improved coordination. The process of Ukraine’s accession to the European Union involves the introduction of European standards and approaches for social work with different layers of the population, because the level of social status of a country’s citizen is the face of the state.

## Conclusions

The introduction of innovative forms of socio-psychological work with vulnerable categories of the population has shown its effectiveness in the conditions of the territorial community. A monitoring study of the quality of the provision of social services using the method of individual social work, group social work and the “Integrated Social Services” model showed that all technologies are effective in solving problematic issues of vulnerable categories of the population. However, the “Integrated social services” model, as shown by the survey of recipients of these services, better coped with solving the problem situations of vulnerable categories of the population. After analysing the responses of clients, it became clear that the author’s model helped the participants of the experiment to overcome their life difficulties in the shortest possible time. Using the services of one or another specialist referred by the social worker and following all his instructions. Instead, the first two methods were aimed at developing skills that will help overcome obstacles in crisis situations.

The demonstrated effectiveness of innovative social work methods suggests they comply with existing legal frameworks. Their successful implementation supports

current policy and legislation enabling intervention models like “Integrated Social Services”. However, the emergence of new vulnerable groups implies potential need to expand legal definitions and eligibility criteria for social assistance. Veterans and displaced persons may require explicit legal recognition to ensure support access. Legal reforms could also mandate standards for inter-agency coordination and cooperation in social service delivery, addressing suboptimal fragmentation. As well as minimum benchmarks for capabilities and capacity. Quality assurance mechanisms grounded in legislation may further reinforce monitoring and evaluation rigor in this sector. Binding reviews to strict statutory requirements can enable accountability. Accessibility of services could be cemented by legally codifying a “right to social welfare” for citizens. This obligates the state to deliver assistance through regulation, budget assignments, and infrastructure.

The emergence of new, poorly protected categories of the population among the military and internally displaced persons who need social protection creates a perspective for further research. It consists in the development of additional mechanisms, measures to reduce the number of persons of vulnerable categories of the population, as well as improvement of the methodology of assessment and monitoring of the quality of the work of the Centers for the provision of social services. The main strategy of which is to ensure the availability of social services for the population.

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### Conflict of interest

None.

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## Правові засади та основні технології соціально-психологічної роботи з вразливими категоріями населення в громаді

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**Анотація.** Війна в Україні призвела до зростання потреби в соціальній допомозі серед вразливих верств населення, що вимагає посилення спроможності соціальних служб до реагування на нові виклики. Мета цього дослідження – дослідити правові та технологічні засади надання допомоги в умовах воєнного часу та продемонструвати ефективність сучасних методів шляхом теоретичного та емпіричного аналізу. Збір та аналіз даних проводився з дотриманням етичних та правових стандартів проведення соціальних досліджень. Наразі українська політика дозволяє підтримувати такі моделі, як запропонований підхід «Інтегровані соціальні послуги». Однак результати дослідження вказують на потенційну потребу в правових/регуляторних реформах для подальшого посилення спроможності реагування на кризові ситуації. Результати підтверджують, що впроваджені інтервенції успішно вирішують проблеми внутрішньо переміщених осіб, ветеранів, сімей з груп ризику тощо. Індивідуальний кейс-менеджмент та групові соціально-психологічні тренінги сприяють розвитку потенціалу, а модель інтегрованих послуг дозволяє швидко вирішувати гострі проблеми. Порівняльні оцінки показують, що інтегрована система перевершує окремі методи у швидкому вирішенні кризових ситуацій. Однак нові групи, які випадають з-під дії чинного законодавства, такі як жертви домашнього насильства, можуть потребувати обов'язкового розширення критеріїв прийнятності. Закони також можуть включати стандарти міжвідомчої координації для подолання фрагментації. Ця нагальна потреба підкреслює, наскільки міцні правові та етичні засади підтримують моделі допомоги в умовах нестабільності. Також було зроблено висновок, що реалізація правових реформ, які б створили єдину систему співпраці, могла б пом'якшити ці проблеми. Зокрема, законодавство могло б формалізувати такі вимоги, як обмін даними та інформацією між надавачами послуг, спільні процедури ведення справ, загальні стандарти звітності та міждисциплінарні партнерства. Практичне значення дослідження полягає у можливості використовувати результати аналізу проблеми у створенні доступних механізмів для покращення якості підтримки вразливих демографічних груп. Закріплення доступу до допомоги як невід'ємної гарантії створює екосистему, стійку до сучасних загроз

**Ключові слова:** соціальна допомога; найменш захищені категорії населення; права людини; негативні соціальні чинники; правові засади