Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 2671 (2026)[1]

Towards coherent policies on veterans in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly draws attention to the fact that Europe today faces the largest cohort of veterans since the Second World War, due to the full-scale war of aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which has already resulted in more than 2 million veterans.

2. Moreover, the geopolitical context and changes in the European security environment leading to increased defence spending and the reintroduction of military service in several member States mean that veteran populations are likely to increase across Europe in the coming decades.

3. The Assembly expresses its full respect and support for those who served in defence of Ukraine and the principles of democracy, sovereignty and international law in Europe. It calls for vigorous measures to be taken to ensure that as veterans of this war their human rights and dignity are placed at the forefront and respected.

4. It emphasises the importance of a strong veteran policy at national, regional and local levels as a pillar of social cohesion and stability, and as a matter of human rights protection.

5. The Assembly highlights the necessity for European countries to work together and take immediate steps to devise and co-ordinate a comprehensive, whole-of-life standard of support for veterans and their families, covering mental health, rehabilitation, employment, education, housing and recognition, as anchored in the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 5) and the European Social Charter (revised) (ETS No. 163, "the revised Charter"). It calls on member States of the Council of Europe to:

5.1. enact or update legislation defining "veteran" as including any person who has performed military service in the armed forces of their country – including military personnel, conscripts, reservists, peacekeepers, personnel of recognised resistance and territorial-defence formations;

5.2. guarantee a comprehensive minimum support package for veterans, with formal recognition of their status, designed around a well-being framework covering physical and mental health, relationships and recognition, vocation, material security, housing and the physical environment, and life skills. Such package should include physical rehabilitation and prosthetics, mental health and suicide prevention, social protection, access to employment and education/reskilling, housing assistance, and legal and financial support. It should include a system of personalised support provided by qualified specialists. It should also establish a defined recovery period of at least three years following discharge from military service, during which the State shall provide enhanced, co-ordinated support for veterans' physical, psychological, social, professional and everyday-life recovery;

5.3. introduce national legislation requiring public bodies to take due account of veterans' needs in the areas of health, housing, education and employment;

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1. *Assembly debate* on 29 September 2026 (31st sitting) (see Doc. 16473, report of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, rapporteur: Ms Lesia Zaburanna). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 29 September 2026 (31st sitting).
See also Recommendation 2311 (2026).
Provisional version subject to editorial review.

5.4. establish a single national contact point responsible for matters relating to veterans, with the power to co-ordinate between ministries, agencies and public bodies;

5.5. ensure that public registries and data systems track the multiplicity of statuses that a single veteran may hold simultaneously – such as veteran, internally displaced person, person with a disability, or person in difficult life circumstances – so that entitlements are co-ordinated and the individual is not treated as several separate cases;

5.6. build a digital, single window service ecosystem incorporating State and charitable sector organisations and a veterans' registry;

5.7. earmark dedicated budget lines for mental health and trauma services, prosthetics and rehabilitation, women veterans, and family carers, subject to annual parliamentary review;

5.8. facilitate return to work by taking all necessary measures to eliminate discrimination in employment, recognising military qualifications for the purposes of obtaining a civilian qualification, and supporting entrepreneurship and employment amongst veterans through grants and "veteran-friendly employer" certification;

5.9. ensure the portability of veterans' rights across member States of the Council of Europe by establishing agreements between States, in particular regarding the recognition of disability status, access to healthcare and transferability of pension rights;

5.10. provide mental health support to veterans and their families in order to prevent and combat domestic violence;

5.11. provide specialised pathways for former prisoners of war and survivors of torture, including documentation that can serve national or international accountability processes;

5.12. strengthen international co-operation, assistance and exchange of experience in veteran policy;

5.13. support Ukraine, currently absorbing Europe's largest veteran cohort, in consolidating its system for veterans across all levels of government.

6. The Assembly calls on member States to cover family members of the fallen and personnel missing in action in a parallel framework.

7. It calls on Ukraine and the Council of Europe Development Bank to step up their co-operation in operations to support reconstruction, social cohesion and inclusive growth as a part of the Bank's engagement in the country.

8. Finally, it calls on member States that have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the revised Charter, with a view to ensuring that the social rights of veterans and their families are fully protected.