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METHODOLOGY FOR ORGANIZING CULTURAL RECREATION ACTIVITIES IN OFFICERS' CLUBS OF THE ARMED FORCES OF UKRAINE

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The issue of moral and psychological support in the Armed Forces of Ukraine has acquired particular significance under the conditions of a prolonged war. The high level of psycho-emotional stress among servicemen, long-term exposure to stress, and combat losses create the need to establish a system of cultural and psychological rehabilitation aimed at maintaining resilience, cohesion, and internal motivation of military personnel (Osodlo, 2021; Prykhodko, 2020; Prykhodko & Osodlo, 2023).

One of the key tools of this system is cultural recreation — a form of organized activity aimed at restoring spiritual, emotional, and cognitive resources through culture, art, and creative interaction (Seligman, 2012; Lazarus, 2006). It integrates psychological, educational, and social components, forming an environment of spiritual support, moral uplift, and internal stability of the personnel (Concept, 2023).

Cultural recreation in the military sphere has three main levels: individual — when a serviceman restores emotional balance through creative activities, music, art therapy, or reading (Yatsenko, 2022); collective — through joint events, creative groups, studios, clubs of interest; and mass — which includes large-scale cultural events, concerts, festivals, memorial evenings, exhibitions, or family gatherings (Osodlo, 2021; Human Development Strategy, 2023). All these forms perform an important function of moral and psychological support for servicemen and their families, as they contribute not only to emotional relief but also to building trust, shared values, and the identity of the military community (Prykhodko, 2020; Concept, 2023).

A key role in the implementation of cultural recreation is played by Officers' Clubs — a historically established network of cultural institutions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (Osodlo, 2021). They serve as spaces that combine artistic, educational, social, and psychological functions (Yatsenko, 2022). In modern conditions, Officers' Clubs are being transformed into centers of cultural and spiritual rehabilitation, integrating elements of patriotic education, creative development, and social interaction between the army and the community (Prykhodko, 2020; Concept, 2023).

Their activities are aimed not only at leisure but primarily at developing moral resilience, adapting servicemen to peacetime conditions, and supporting military families (Prykhodko & Osodlo, 2023).

A vivid example of a modern approach is the Lviv Officers' Clubs, where in 2025 an immersive space "ART-42 m²" was created for military personnel, veterans, and children (Portal Lviv.ua, 2025). This space combines art therapy, educational workshops, interactive performances, and musical events, providing opportunities for emotional recovery and creative rehabilitation (Tvoe Misto, 2025). The project serves as a tool of psychological support, fostering cultural integration and interaction between the military and civilian environments (Prykhodko & Osodlo, 2023). In addition, the Lviv Officers' House holds regular cultural campaigns, family celebrations, thematic exhibitions, veterans' meetings, and charity events (Portal Lviv.ua, 2025; Tvoe Misto, 2025).

The Central Officers' Clubs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in Kyiv functions as the main cultural and educational center of the Ministry of Defence (Central Officers' House of the AFU, 2024). Its activities include the implementation of patriotic, rehabilitation, and educational programs, concerts of military ensembles, historical and cultural exhibitions, meetings with combatants, and digital cultural initiatives (Order of the Commander-in-Chief of the AFU No.177, 2025; Human Development Strategy, 2023). An important area of activity is the creation of a continuous information and cultural environment that maintains the moral spirit of the army, popularizes military history, and shapes the positive image of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (Concept, 2023; Prykhodko & Osodlo, 2023).

A significant moral and symbolic impact is exemplified by the Vinnytsia Officers' House, which was destroyed by a Russian missile strike in July 2022 but partially restored and reopened as a space of cultural memory and resilience (Suspilne Vinnytsia, 2023). It now hosts charity concerts, children's exhibitions, creative events, and psychological training sessions for servicemen and their families (Suspilne Vinnytsia, 2023). The "Art of Recovery" project, launched in 2024, united art, psychology, and social support, demonstrating that even after destruction, culture remains a key resource for rehabilitation (Prykhodko & Osodlo, 2023).

The analysis of the activities of Officers' Clubs allows identifying them as basic institutions of cultural recreation within the system of moral and psychological support (Osodlo, 2021; Prykhodko, 2020). They provide a comprehensive influence on servicemen, combining creativity, education, leisure, and psychological assistance (Yatsenko, 2022; Seligman, 2012). The key directions for further development should include institutionalization of recreation programs within psychological support systems, development of digital cultural platforms and partnerships between communities, veteran, and art organizations (Human Development Strategy, 2023; Concept, 2023; NATO, 2024).

Similar institutions of cultural and psychological support for the military exist in most NATO member and partner countries (NATO, 2024). In the United States,

functions similar to Ukrainian Officers' Clubs are performed by Officers' Clubs and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Centers under the Department of Defense (U.S. Department of Defense, 2023; U.S. Army MWR, 2024). Their activities combine cultural, social, and psychological functions (United States Army, 2023). The American model stands out for its high level of institutionalization: every military base has its own MWR center with a library, gym, and theater or music club (U.S. Department of Defense, 2023; U.S. Army MWR, 2024).

In the United Kingdom, a similar role is performed by the Officers' Mess — a cultural and social space for the officer corps (Ministry of Defence (UK), 2022). In parallel, Welfare Centres of the British Armed Forces organize cultural and psychological activities for servicemen and their families (Ministry of Defence (UK), 2024).

In Germany, Canada, France, and Poland, networks of military cultural centers such as Bundeswehr Familienbetreuung, Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, and Maisons des Armées operate (Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, 2023; CFMWS, 2024; Ministère des Armées, 2023; Armée française, 2024). They support the morale of servicemen through cultural, sports, and educational activities (Bundeswehr, 2024; Canadian Armed Forces, 2023). The French model is distinguished by the integration of "Army Clubs" into municipal cultural infrastructure, ensuring civil–military cooperation (Ministère des Armées, 2023; Armée française, 2024).

A comparative analysis shows that the Officers' Clubs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, by their content and functions, correspond to the trends of democratic armies worldwide (NATO, 2024). At the same time, the Ukrainian experience is unique — combining cultural recreation with the realities of war, psychological rehabilitation after combat, and support for the families of fallen soldiers (Prykhodko & Osodlo, 2023). This gives Officers' Clubs deep socio-humanitarian significance, making them an integral part of the national resilience system (Human Development Strategy, 2023; Concept, 2023).

Thus, cultural recreation in Officers' Clubs is not merely a means of leisure but a strategic component of moral resilience and the humanitarian potential of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (Osodlo, 2021; Prykhodko & Osodlo, 2023). It ensures psychological well-being, fosters creative thinking, strengthens internal motivation, and promotes the integration of servicemen into social life (Seligman, 2012; Lazarus, 2006). The experience of Lviv, Kyiv, and Vinnytsia demonstrates that Officers' Clubs act as centers of spiritual renewal, moral support, and national unity (Portal Lviv.ua, 2025; Suspilne Vinnytsia, 2023; Central Officers' House of the AFU, 2024).

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