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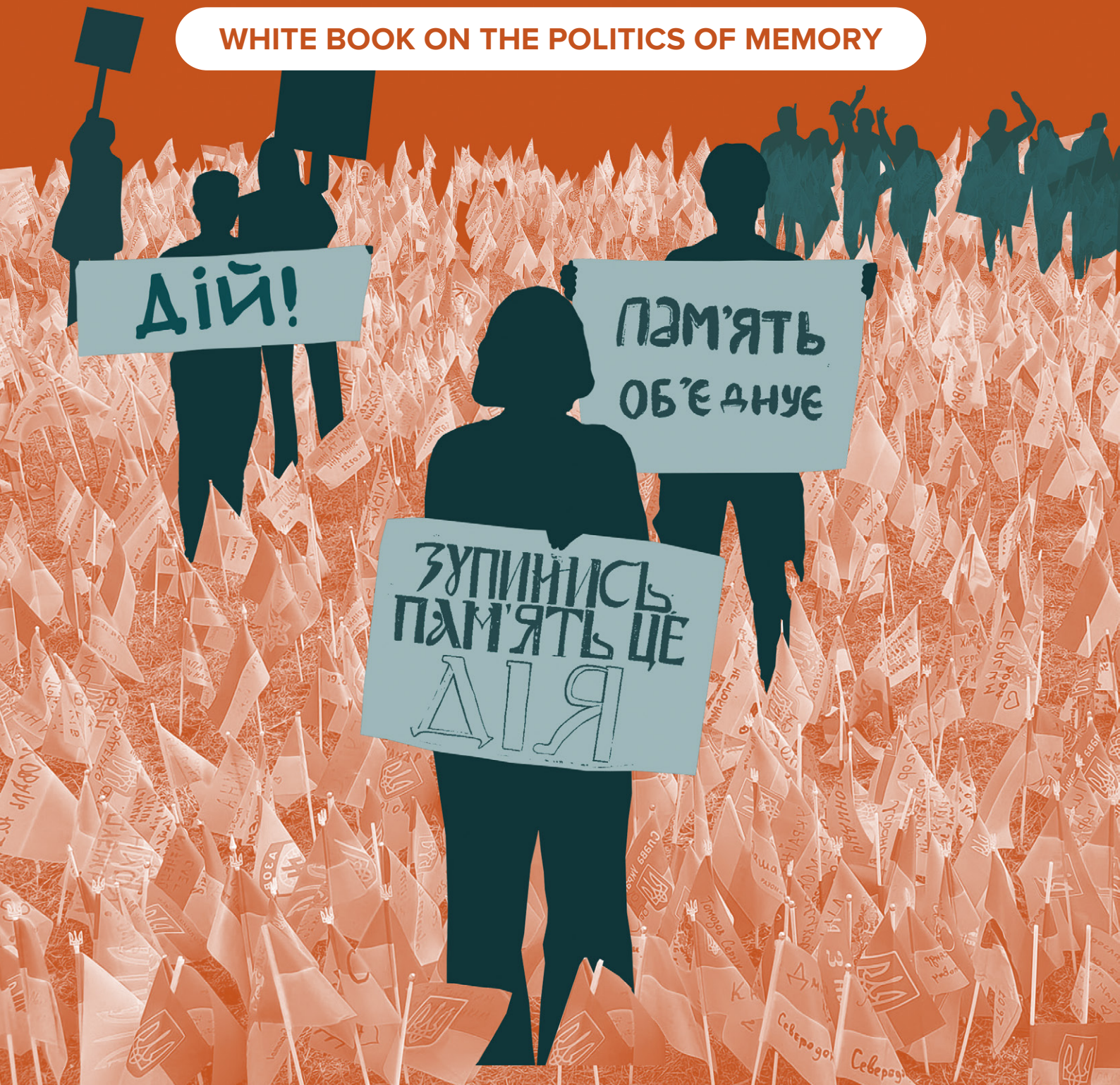
INTERNATIONAL RENAISSANCE FOUNDATION

# FROM DECLARATIONS TO PRACTICE.

## POLITICS OF MEMORY AS A MEANS OF ENSURING JUSTICE DURING WARTIME

**WHITE BOOK ON THE POLITICS OF MEMORY**



**From Declarations to Practice. Politics of Memory as a Means of Ensuring Justice During Wartime. White Book on the Politics of Memory.** — M. Ieligulashvili., D. Bielinska.; ed. O. Lunova. — Kyiv, 2025. — 32 p.

This document was prepared to provide a general vision and proposals for implementing the politics of memory in qualitatively new conditions – the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation and significant changes in relevant national legislation. It identifies the main forms that should help the state, civil society, and representatives of victims make comprehensive use of available resources and coordinate their efforts not only to honour the victims but also to ensure symbolic justice during the acute phase of the war.

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The International Renaissance Foundation is one of the largest charitable foundations in Ukraine. Since 1990, we have been helping to develop an open society based on democratic values in Ukraine. During its activity, the Foundation has supported roughly 20,000 projects. The funding amounted to over $350 million.

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# INTRODUCTION

Memorialisation in Ukraine plays a significantly different role and has a much stronger impact on the lives of ordinary Ukrainians than could have been imagined before the full-scale invasion. From history textbooks and symbolic acts, it has become an everyday activity, a ritual that helps people cope with the dramatic events of the present. At the same time, it has become the basis for "reassembling" the grand national narrative, combining ancient historical events and the present day into a single story. In the text of the Green Book on the Politics of Memory[1], we attempted to outline the main stages of developing a politics of memory in Ukraine as a continuous but fragmented process. However, the tasks that previously faced this area of public policy are complicated by the context of the ongoing armed aggression against Ukraine and the presence of Ukrainian citizens in various countries around the world as a result of the war. Consequently, the tasks of the politics of memory in Ukraine are significantly expanding, adding to the already familiar national canon of events and narratives about them, symbolic rituals, the task of ensuring symbolic justice, support and visibility for victims, as well as security aspects. The implementation of the politics of memory creates space for extremely rapid rethinking, reassembling of identity, and construction of a new social contract.

The analysis of the development of the politics of memory in Ukraine leads us to the conclusion that over more than 30 years, the country has accumulated significant experience in implementing this policy. Despite the fragmentation of the politics of memory across different spheres and the lack of synchronisation between the actions of the state and civil society, as of 2025, Ukraine has a system of social support for various categories of victims of armed aggression against Ukraine, approaches to working with memory are integrated into the spheres of education and culture, and the infrastructure of authorities responsible for the politics of memory at the national and local levels is being developed. Our task is to put this puzzle of experiences and policies together and reinforce it with global lessons that are relevant to the current context of our country. It is time to rethink our own experience and take action, creating institutional solutions and platforms that correspond to the existing practices and expectations of Ukrainian society.

However, there is another extremely important task – to create conditions for the effective involvement of different experiences of war, which were formed during its various stages, in different territories of Ukraine, including those temporarily occupied. Honouring the memory of the war, the deceased and the victims should become the responsibility of the entire Ukrainian society, all people who bear its burden and share the opinion that such remembrance is valuable. The experiences of military and civilian personnel, other social groups, communities and authorities in the process of recording, preserving, interpreting and disseminating historical memory are one of the key elements in ensuring its strength and continuity.

1 Commemoration and Remembrance in Contemporary Ukraine. Analysis of Legislation and Community Practices. Green Book on the Politics of Memory. — M. Ieligulashvili, D. Belinska; ed. O. Lunova. — Kyiv, 2025. — 44 p. https://zmina.ua/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2025/09/green_web-3.pdf

That is why we insist on the need to develop the politics of memory as part of a comprehensive approach to responding to the war and its consequences. Therefore, specific commemorative measures or support instruments must ensure the achievement of the strategic goal of "rebuilding" the country and society. It is necessary to increase capacity and resilience not only in response to armed aggression and the humanitarian challenges it provokes, but also to lay the foundation for a peaceful life after its end. This approach responds to key demands, in particular by ensuring:

- The tactical and therapeutic function of grief, which acknowledges loss and allows society to symbolically experience trauma and maintain stability in conditions of full-scale war;
- A sense of justice, even if in a symbolic dimension, while various mechanisms of justice are being developed and their capacity to ensure accountability of perpetrators is being built;
- A basis for social integration and support for people with different experiences of war — military personnel, civilians, volunteers, displaced persons, deportees, those who were under occupation or forced to leave the country because of the war;
- Practical, effective consideration and implementation of a paradigm that recognises that the traditional international slogan "never again" is not enough to prevent the recurrence of war without dialogue, prevention and tools for proactive protection of key democratic institutions and principles.

This document is a White Book on the Politics of Memory – an analytical note based on the key conclusions of the Green Book, containing proposals on the logic of building and developing politics of memory in Ukraine as one of the tools for overcoming the consequences of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation.

The structure of the White Book is built around several key sections that were updated during work on the Green Book, a series of dialogue meetings, and expert interviews.

**Section 1.** Functions of the politics of memory. In the context of full-scale armed aggression of the Russian Federation, these functions are ensured by relevant regulatory and legal acts, i.e. formalised, and based on public demand. Four main functions of memory have been formulated, which can be implemented on the basis of proper coordination, political will and active involvement of various sectors.

**Section 2.** Conditions and challenges for ensuring effective engagement of key stakeholders in the process of commemorating the events and experiences of the Ukrainian War of Independence[2]. The main dilemmas and "blind spots" of these processes are described, requiring a balanced and comprehensive approach to ensuring participation as the basis for the effective implementation of the politics of memory. Based on the proper involvement of interested actors, the framework for its implementation is determined. Namely, the development of a platform for the implementation of state politics of memory.

2 Law of Ukraine "On the Principles of State Policy on National Memory of the Ukrainian People" dated 21 August 2025 4579-IX https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/4579-20#Text

Recommendations for implementation in the main components, in particular:

- Algorithms and procedures;
- The formation of practice and communities of practitioners;
- Funding mechanisms;
- Strengthening institutions;
- Strategic communications and conflict resolution.

The White Book is based on an analysis of the regulatory framework, and the recommendations and proposals it contains were tested during regional research workshops held in July and August 2025 in Lviv, Kharkiv and Kyiv with the participation of representatives of the expert community in the field of memorialisation, military personnel and veterans, victims of war and their families, representatives of local authorities responsible for memorialisation at the community level, representatives of central authorities, artists and others. In addition, 10 in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted in July 2025 with key experts in the field of memorialisation, business, artists and military personnel at the national level. This made it possible to identify the main expectations and obtain feedback on the extent to which these requests are being met at the local level.

Section 1.

# FUNCTIONS OF THE POLITICS OF MEMORY IN THE CONTEXT OF FULL-SCALE ARMED AGGRESSION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

In the process of shaping the politics of memory, it is important to clearly distinguish between three interrelated but not identical concepts: commemoration, memorialisation, and the politics of memory.

**Commemoration** usually refers to individual or collective practices of honouring memory, which may have an informal, non-institutional character[3]. This includes actions such as a moment of silence, lighting candles, informal gatherings, or symbolic gestures that reflect the need to process shared or personal trauma.

**Memorialisation,** on the other hand, involves the institutionalisation of commemorative practices[4]. It is a process in which the memory of the past, an event or a figure, is given formal expression through the creation of monuments, official dates, state decrees, educational programmes or museum exhibitions. Thus, memorialisation is a socio-political commitment that integrates the experience of trauma into a shared narrative through the actions of the state, communities and institutions.

At the state level, these processes are integrated into the politics of memory. At present, the Russian armed aggression against Ukraine has received its official designation – the War of Independence – and the corresponding content of the politics of memory, namely the creation of legal, organisational, and economic conditions and guarantees for the restoration and preservation of the national memory of the Ukrainian people, as well as the research and promotion of the history of Ukraine[5]. In the Green Book, "Commemoration and Remembrance in Contemporary Ukraine. Analysis of Legislation and Community Practices"[6], we proposed, taking into account the analysis of the processes of developing politics of memory and supporting victims, as well as the processes of conceptualising

3 https://pastfutureart.org/glossary/#Commemoration

4 https://pastfutureart.org/glossary/#memorialization

5 Law of Ukraine "On the Principles of State Policy on National Memory of the Ukrainian People" dated 18 December 2024 No. 4579-IX: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/4579-20#Text

6 Commemoration and Remembrance in Contemporary Ukraine. Analysis of Legislation and Community Practices. Green Book on the Politics of Memory. — M. Ieligulashvili, D. Belinska; ed. O. Lunova. — Kyiv, 2025. — 44 p. https://zmina.ua/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2025/09/green_web-3.pdf

transitional justice[7], to take a broader approach to the politics of memory. In particular, we suggested focusing primarily on groups of individuals who, from the state's perspective, needed to be provided with proper documentation, the right to truth, compensation, and guarantees of non-recurrence. An analysis of legislation confirmed the conclusion that the politics of memory is scattered across various spheres and state institutions. Often, providing only one of the components of what is expected as a manifestation of dignified commemoration — social/material support, a court decision or symbolic justice, a specific object of remembrance or the absence of bureaucracy for the family — compounded by poor interagency cooperation, led to frustration, dissatisfaction and protests. Accordingly, the White Book proposes to consider the politics of memory as a set of tools and actions on the part of the state aimed at ensuring the satisfaction of victims, developing relevant institutions to support and ensure the right to truth now and in the future.

An illustrative example of the combination of all these terms (commemoration, memorialisation, politics of memory), as well as Ukrainian tradition in this area, is the practice of a daily minute of silence. It was initiated not by a grassroots initiative, which is typical for such processes, but by a Decree of the President of Ukraine[8]. However, without adequate support and institutionalisation, the ritual of a minute of silence subsequently became the responsibility of civil society, where, under the leadership of NGOs, in particular Vshanui[9], detailed substantive and organisational work began on both commemorating and institutionalising the practice at the community level and promoting it at the national level. Additionally, in April 2025, the Ministry for Development of Communities and Territories presented a Roadmap for the implementation of the minute of silence[10]. It is intended to assist local authorities in properly organising and communicating the ritual at the community level. The Roadmap contains step-by-step instructions, legal justification, as well as ready-made solutions: from algorithms for stopping transport to templates for texts and audiovisual support.

Based on the analysis of legislation, the results of in-depth interviews and facilitated discussions, we can systematise the main demands and expectations regarding the politics of memory in wartime. These demands significantly expand the traditional understanding and functions of the politics of memory, becoming a means not only of remembrance, but also of survival in wartime and preparation for post-war reconstruction.

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7 The national concept of transitional justice was to be developed by the Commission on Legal Reform established by Presidential Decree (Decree No. 584/2019 of 7 August 2019). Despite the existing draft, its text was not approved, while work began on the draft law "On the Principles of State Policy of the Transition Period". In addition, regional strategies were developed, and Presidential Decree No. 117/2021 of 24 March 2021 approved the "Strategy for the Deoccupation and Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol" and the corresponding action plan (Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 1171-r of 29 September 2021)

8 Presidential Decree No. 143/2022 of 16 March 2022 "On a National Minute of Silence for Those Who Died as a Result of the Armed Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine"

9 Vshanui https://www.instagram.com/moment_of_honor/

10 A roadmap for implementing a minute of silence was created for communities. https://mindev.gov.ua/news/dlia-hromad-stvoreno-dorozhniu-kartu-vprovadzhennia-khvylyny-movchannia

### Therapeutic.

By sharing one's story, recording a person's name and fate, and receiving support from others and from the state, we experience the pain and gain confirmation that this sacrifice was not in vain. This way of coping with trauma is universal. Accordingly, commemorative measures help to live through grief and cope with traumatic experiences, allowing people to unite in communities and initiatives of mutual support.

### Establishing Justice.

When a private story about a crime becomes public and documented, it receives the appropriate legal classification, investigation, and determination of the offender's degree of responsibility in court. It is no longer possible to erase or deny it, thereby ensuring the right to truth. Recording the events and names of victims and perpetrators makes it possible to satisfy the desire for justice, even when a court decision is still a long way off.

### Unifying.

The understanding that "I am not alone" allows us to unite, strengthen each other and together form a common narrative about what has happened and is happening to us, and therefore what may happen. It allows us to see where there is a need to develop qualitatively different solutions or approaches, and to scale up successful practices. In addition, shared memory allows us to define the value coordinates of "us and them" and strengthen national/regional resilience, bringing certain communities together. Furthermore, recording and scaling shared experiences, even tragic ones, often becomes the basis for national consensus and a coordinate system for determining vectors of development.

### Security and Preventive Function.

Collecting information about who supported and who betrayed during the war makes it possible to prevent certain individuals from influencing the lives of communities and the country in the future. This is our tool for preventing mistakes from being repeated: identifying vulnerabilities and finding ways to protect democratic institutions in order to prevent the destabilisation of the country from within.

Let's take a closer look at each of these functions.

## 1.1. Therapeutic function

In academic and political literature, memorialisation is considered at the intersection of transitional justice and restorative justice[11]. In the first case, it is seen as one of the components of full reparation — alongside prosecution, compensation, guarantees of non-recurrence and the establishment of the truth. In the second case, it is seen as a practice that helps to restore trust, move the conflict from a phase of silence to a phase of public dialogue and rethinking[12].

11 Clark, Janine Natalya (2008). "The Three Rs: Retributive Justice, Restorative Justice, and Reconciliation." Contemporary Justice Review, 11(4), 331–350.

12 United Nations – Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law (A/RES/60/147, 2005)

Memorialisation can act as a form of symbolic reparative justice — it does not provide material compensation, but fulfils its function on an emotional, moral and cultural level, becoming a means of healing and working through trauma. In addition, various instruments of support and assistance from the state help victims and relatives of the deceased to cope with and overcome the vulnerabilities they have experienced as a result of the Russian Federation's armed aggression. Through compensation, benefits or services, people receive support and assistance in regaining their self-reliance. At the same time, symbolic actions become particularly important in situations where other forms of compensation (e.g. financial or material) are absent or delayed. At the same time, in the humanitarian sphere, attention is drawn to the risk of secondary gain[13]; or competition between affected groups for visibility, recognition or priority in being included in the memory. This creates ethical challenges for designers of memorial policy, who must ensure inclusivity without hierarchising experiences of suffering.

Emotional healing and the gradual strengthening of the capacities of victims, their relatives, and society through memorialisation help to cope with collective trauma, grief, and loss. Commemorative events and memorials have a therapeutic function, promoting the emotional healing of communities. They create a space for expressing grief and support, allowing people to unite around shared experiences and form new bonds. In the context of war, this also helps communities find strength and solidarity to overcome difficult circumstances. Memory preservation processes should promote "dialogical truth".

That is why, during workshops and interviews, participants emphasised the need to develop an appropriate support programme for victims, which should assist, coordinate with other initiatives, and create conditions for the gradual strengthening of the individual's own capacity (increasing self-reliance).

## 1.2. Unifying function

Memory initiatives can and should become a means of bringing together representatives of very different communities or spheres, as they help to find a language and form for the symbolic embodiment and retelling of complex and painful experiences. At the same time, a separate direction of the politics of memory is its integration into the broader process of forming a new social contract, after traumatic events. Events for documenting, discussing experiences or developing memorialisation initiatives are not an endpoint, but a platform for public reflection, dialogue and the co-creation of a shared memory. This is particularly relevant in situations where society is faced with ambiguous moral choices, issues of collaboration with the aggressor, behaviour during occupation, or questions of personal and collective responsibility.

Memorial spaces — both physical and virtual — can serve as forums for discussing these complex issues while avoiding one-sided or politicised approaches. In this way, me-

13 A socio-psychological phenomenon in which groups in conflict seek to establish that their community has suffered more, with the aim of gaining symbolic recognition and moral authority. For more details, see: When Suffering Begets Suffering: The Psychology of Competitive Victimhood Between Adversarial Groups in Violent Conflicts / Masi Noor, Nurit Shnabel, [...], and Arie Nadler, Volume 16, Issue 4: https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868312440048

morialisation acts as a mechanism not only for recording the past, but also for preventing future conflicts, providing, along with other measures, guarantees of non-recurrence.

In addition, an important component of the politics of memory should be the formation of national identity, not so much as a mechanism for creating cohesive unity, but rather as a process of collecting, selecting and generalising narratives that form the basis of the canon of self-narrative — both within society and externally, in the international arena. The recognition of war heroes, civilian victims, volunteers and other participants in the resistance forms a set of central figures and events through which society articulates its own historical experience, values and vision of the future.

However, the formation of this canon is a deeply political and ambiguous process, as it involves not only the inclusion but also the exclusion of certain voices, versions of events and types of experience.

During the workshops, participants cited numerous examples of competition for memory and symbolic/real resources. Without a carefully considered and inclusive approach, memorialisation may lead to the instrumentalisation of memory, the imposition of a dominant narrative, or the repetition of past mistakes — when memory became a field of political struggle rather than a space for societal dialogue.

This issue becomes particularly relevant in the context of military conflict, when the need for heroisation and a clear division between "us and them" can drown out more complex, non-canonical stories — for example, the experience of occupation, the ambivalence of choice, the trauma of survival, or the moral complexity of resistance. Such narratives may conflict with the dominant framework of heroic resistance, but their recognition is necessary for a comprehensive reflection of the experience of war and to prevent the re-traumatisation of communities.

Therefore, memorialisation should be viewed as a dynamic process of shaping public memory, which requires broad and balanced discussion, participation and cultural sensitivity. In this sense, it does not simply record the past, but constructs a framework through which society understands itself — who we are, what we have experienced, what we consider important, and how we see the future.

## 1.3. Function of establishing justice

An important task of memorialisation is to record (document) the events of war and their impact on society while they are still fresh in the minds of eyewitnesses. This prevents the loss of details that may be distorted over time and creates a basis for passing on knowledge to future generations. In Ukraine, there is a deep demand for documenting war experiences, as evidenced by both government initiatives and public projects such as digital archives, video testimonies, and collections of eyewitness accounts.

Accordingly, the emergence of certain objects, rituals, and initiatives that ensure not only the collection but also the visibility and clear definition of events as crimes is critically important. Memorialisation begins to play a central role in the realisation of the right to

justice in the context of mass human rights violations accompanying war. It acts not only as a form of recognition and honouring of the victims, but also as symbolic compensation and public affirmation of the victims' dignity. Memorials, days of remembrance, commemorative events and spaces for reflection reinforce in the public sphere the obligation of society and the state not to silence the harm done, but instead to acknowledge it publicly and transform it into the foundations of a new civic coexistence.

In these processes, it is important to consider both "dimensions" of responsibility: the positive one is not only honouring heroes and the fallen, but also institutionalising and disseminating successful practices of survival, resistance and remembrance. For example, lustration is not seen here as a punishment, but as a preventive measure that makes it impossible to repeat past mistakes[14]. Additionally, a negative dimension – a guarantee of inevitable bringing to justice for denying or distorting the crimes that have been committed, the truth about the war and its consequences.

## 1.4. Security and preventive function

At the same time, memory is already publicly recognised, at the level of decisions by international institutions, as a "hostage" of hybrid warfare, a means of waging it. Russia's instrumentalisation of memory — to mobilise the population, legitimise aggression, incite hatred and undermine international solidarity — creates a toxic information environment in which no initiative exists in a neutral vacuum. Ukrainian efforts in the field of memory find themselves in a space of competing narratives, where they can either be supported or used against Ukraine itself. Memory is no longer simply a sphere of culture or ethics — it is becoming a battlefield, and any public act of memorialisation is a potential target for external or internal attacks.

In particular, the PACE Resolution of 23 January 2024 on "Russia's disinformation and historical falsification to justify its war of aggression against Ukraine"[15] directly points to the need to strengthen the historical resilience of Member States of the Council of Europe. Its recommendations include investing in education, supporting research, strengthening historical literacy, and integrating memory issues into public policy. This means that the formation of the politics of memory in Ukraine should include not only internal dialogue about different experiences of war, but also strategic positioning in the space of international discussions about memory, responsibility, and justice.

Information about the events of the war is stored as part of relevant proceedings by law enforcement agencies, civil society and international missions. According to the relevant state strategy, a network of archives is also becoming involved in these processes[16].

14 More details on recommendations regarding the vetting mechanism - How can lustration become one of the tools to overcome the consequences of Russian armed aggression against Ukraine? Analytical note. — D. Svyrydova; ed. A. Lunova — Kyiv, 2025. — 32 p. https://zmina.ua/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2025/06/lustr_web-1-1.pdf

15 P10_TA(2025)0006 Russia's disinformation and historical falsification to justify its war of aggression against Ukraine https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-10-2025-0006_EN.pdf

16 Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 1349-r of 24 December 2024 "On the Approval of the Strategy for the Protection of Documentary Heritage as a Guarantee of the Preservation of National Identity and Statehood for the Period until 2027 and the Approval of the Operational Plan of Measures for its Implementation in 2025-2027": https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1349-2024-%D1%80#Text

The available data will require proper processing, investigation and analysis, which may be aimed at ensuring the right to truth and justice. However, considering the recurring mistakes outlined in the Green Book, events may be considered crimes at the societal level, but there is no process for bringing those responsible for committing these crimes to justice.

We are already saying that the Russian Federation's armed aggression against Ukraine is the most documented war of our time. At the same time, there are no mechanisms for using this data other than criminal proceedings. And reducing society's expectations to the issue of justice in its classical sense significantly limits the available options. For this reason, the function of the politics of memory should become a means of collecting and verifying information about our citizens' cooperation with the Russian Federation, discussing and defining the limits of compromising cooperation, and promoting transparent and proper post-war lustration procedures to protect democratic institutions from the negative influence of the Russian Federation.

Along with countering hybrid threats, supplementing judicial processes with vetting mechanisms as a means of restoring trust and securing the state and its institutions, an important function of the politics of memory should be to raise awareness of the causes, forms and consequences of violence – those mass and gross violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law that occurred as a result of the Russian Federation's armed aggression. The traditional and gradually losing its real, non-imitative meaning slogan "never again"[17] has long since exhausted itself and does not correspond to reality: without content, without critical reflection and without the involvement of new generations, it becomes an empty ritual that has no impact on preventing future tragedies.

Contemporary approaches to memorialisation are increasingly moving away from abstract condemnation of violence towards an understanding of the conditions in which violence becomes a legitimate means, in particular as a means of survival, self-defence or enforced loyalty. In this sense, it is not about denying force as such, but about understanding it in the social and political contexts that make violence possible. In the case of Ukraine, where the war is ongoing, this means rethinking the conceptual space between resistance, collaborationism and everyday survival.

Memorial spaces around the world — such as Villa Grimaldi[18] in Chile or the Srebrenica Memorial Centre[19] in Bosnia and Herzegovina — are increasingly being transformed into spaces for education, dialogue and peacebuilding, rather than just mourning. Their effectiveness is determined not by their architecture, but by their ability to create conditions

17 The slogan "Never Again" emerged after World War II and is inextricably linked to the memory of the Holocaust. It is believed that it was first used by prisoners of the Buchenwald concentration camp after their liberation in 1945. This slogan became a symbolic vow to remember the victims of genocide and to fight against ideologies that lead to mass violence in order to prevent such crimes from happening again in the future. It has since been adapted around the world to honour the victims of other genocides and crimes against humanity. Never Again / Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Never_again

18 **Villa Grimaldi** is considered the most important of the numerous complexes of the DINA (Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional) used for interrogating and torturing political prisoners during the rule of Augusto Pinochet (1973–1990). Located on the outskirts of Santiago (Chile), Villa Grimaldi became a symbol of large-scale human rights violations and brutal repression, and later turned into a place of remembrance and honouring of the victims of the dictatorship.

19 The Srebrenica Genocide Memorial, officially known as the Memorial and Cemetery of the Victims of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica-Potočari, is a memorial and cemetery complex in Srebrenica, created in honour of the victims of the 1995 Srebrenica tragedy. https://srebrenicamemorial.org/en

for reflection, participation and dialogue, including between generations. In the Ukrainian context, such spaces should play a critical role in restorative justice, addressing division and distrust in society, and reintegrating people from territories that have been occupied or destroyed as a result of Russian aggression.

To this end, memorialisation must be based not only on the rhetoric of commemoration, but also on principles of human rights, prevention of dehumanisation, and careful consideration of the social context and values of different generations.

Thus, the task of Ukrainian memorialisation policy is not to reproduce rhetorical models, but to develop living formats of memory that function as platforms for participation, rethinking and learning. This is not only an element of compensation, but also an effective tool for shaping a culture of preventing new conflicts.

## 1.5. Ensuring "tactical" and "strategic" aspects in the implementation of the functions of the politics of memory

One of the key challenges for implementing memorialisation measures is combining tactical actions to implement memory initiatives with maintaining a strategic focus on developing the overall architecture of the politics of memory and synchronising the approaches and actions of various state and non-state actors.

**Tactical memorialisation** focuses on immediate local actions that respond to the urgent needs of individuals, communities or societies. These efforts provide spaces for recognition, healing and protest, while supporting initiatives for victims and their loved ones right now. For example, one of the immediate tactical goals for Ukraine is to recognise the victims and participants of the ongoing conflict. Local, spontaneous memorials in frontline regions, such as temporary plaques or installations honouring fallen defenders, are vital. For example, memorials in cities such as Bucha and Irpin helped communities cope with their grief and pay tribute to their heroes.

Healing and reconciliation are also important components of tactical memorialisation. Community history-gathering initiatives that capture the voices of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and survivors of war crimes serve as powerful tools for rebuilding trust in divided communities. Such projects not only preserve individual stories, but also create platforms for dialogue between different groups, promoting mutual understanding.

Memorialisation in Ukraine also serves as a tool for protest and resistance. Temporary art installations and symbolic exhibitions, such as those displayed in Kyiv near St. Michael's Cathedral[20], illustrate the atrocities committed by Russian troops. These acts of tactical memorialisation both honour the victims and affirm Ukraine's sovereignty in the

20 A Russian "Pantsir" system was put on display at Mykhailivska Square in Kyiv / KYIV24 | Kyiv TV channel, 08.06.2022: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EQLjK-hhTWM
Exhibition of destroyed Russian military equipment at Mykhailivska Square in Kyiv / National Museum of the Revolution of Dignity, 27.05.2022: https://maidanmuseum.org/uk/node/2837

face of denial and aggression, helping to maintain the resilience of the population in the face of a full-scale invasion and mobilising support in Ukraine and abroad.

Therefore, the creation of memorials, monuments, memory alleys, mobile exhibitions, comics, rituals or commemorative events is initiated. While tactical initiatives respond to immediate needs, strategic memorialisation focuses on shaping collective memory and ensuring the long-term unity of the nation. These efforts tend to be larger in scale, deeply institutionalised, and intergenerational.

**Strategic memorialisation** is a long process and a serious commitment. Usually, a more comprehensive formulation of the strategic goals of the politics of memory is carried out after the end of an armed conflict. Transitional justice instruments, including international tribunals, and truth commissions, play an important role in this process. However, the existing practice and the architecture of politics of memory in Ukraine outlined in the Green Book already demonstrate that such activities have begun in various areas[21]. However, we cannot yet speak of a unified and coherent policy, but rather of the need for enhanced interagency coordination in the development of sectoral policies and the elaboration of a unified strategy. Additionally, the key task for all actors is to agree on strategic goals and select appropriate tactical steps that bring the strategic goal closer, the development of comprehensive politics of memory as a response to the challenges of war and potential future peace. Thus, reducing the risks of increasing chaos, frustration and disappointment in a sufficiently traumatised society.

Tactical steps in commemoration should be complemented by addressing the strategic challenges facing Ukraine in the field of politics of memory. For example, in addition to documenting events and facts, which is a tactical step, *the functions of security and justice* can be complemented by developing a lustration mechanism. In the context of overcoming the consequences of armed aggression, lustration becomes a means of restoring trust in the authorities and protecting them from the effects of armed aggression. Lustration can be a response to the demand for justice and security guarantees for the people of Ukraine[22].

Another example is that the tactical dimension of the therapeutic function of the politics of memory is already being implemented through the priority support of psychological assistance initiatives by donors and NGOs. At the same time, experience and tools are being developed that can help transform the existing system of social services at the national and local levels through institutionalisation into a single model of social services procurement. This creates a sustainable support mechanism that should ensure both the provision of services and stimulate forms of self-organisation, such as mutual support groups for groups of victims and their relatives. This, in turn, is a response to the strategic need for a permanent support system for victims of war.

*The unifying function* of the politics of memory is not limited to holding events or

21 Commemoration and Remembrance in Contemporary Ukraine. Analysis of Legislation and Community Practices. Green Book on the Politics of Memory. — M. Ieligulashvili, D. Belinska; ed. O. Lunova. — Kyiv, 2025. — 44 p. https://zmina.ua/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2025/09/green_web-3.pdf

22 More details on recommendations regarding the vetting mechanism - How can lustration become one of the tools to overcome the consequences of Russian armed aggression against Ukraine? Analytical note. — D. Svyrydova; ed. A. Lunova — Kyiv, 2025. — 32 p. URL: https://zmina.ua/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2025/06/lustr_web-1-1.pdf

commemorating anniversaries. Efforts must be directed towards supporting and, in the future, institutionalising agreed symbols and rituals that unite the country and strengthen the sense of a common purpose. For example, national monuments commemorating the 2014 Revolution of Dignity or the ongoing resistance to Russian aggression can serve not only as a reminder of Ukraine's commitment to freedom and democracy, but also as a place for people to interact to prevent future conflicts, which requires the lessons of the past to be woven into the fabric of society. Linking memorial sites with peace education initiatives can create spaces for reflection and learning, transforming sites of tragedy into sources of hope and resilience.

International cooperation is an important element of Ukraine's strategic approach to memorialisation. By participating in global networks of memory and justice, Ukraine can become a leader in the field of memorial work. Partnerships with organisations such as UNESCO and the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience can strengthen Ukraine in implementing its memorial practices in line with international standards.

Effective politics of memory for Ukraine must integrate both tactical and strategic goals to respond to both the immediate and long-term needs of society. Tactical initiatives, such as local memorials and community-led projects, provide necessary spaces for healing and recognition. At the same time, strategic efforts, including national monuments, education reforms, and international cooperation, ensure that memory is preserved and justice is promoted across generations. Given the limited resources of the state and society in the 12th year of the war, it is also very important to define strategic policy goals and focus on what can be achieved at this stage.

A balanced approach to memorialisation will enable Ukraine not only to honour its past, but also to lay the foundations for a united and sustainable future.

Section 2.

# SYNCHRONISATION OF MEMORIALISATION TACTICS AND ACTIONS WITH A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY OF THE POLITICS OF MEMORY

This section outlines the main proposals and approaches that should strengthen the processes of developing and implementing the politics of memory as a complex and strategic task for the state and society in wartime. The foundation is defined as approaches to ensuring an adequate level of stakeholder engagement, which should allow for the development of more inclusive, sustainable, context-sensitive, and trauma-sensitive solutions in this field. A Marketplace model is proposed as a framework capable of strengthening tactical initiatives, fostering cross-sectoral cooperation, and generating good practices that can subsequently be scaled up to the national and strategic level.

## 2.1. Format for engaging key stakeholders in the process of commemorating the events and experiences of the Ukrainian War of Independence

The absence of a systematic approach to involving different groups, in particular the families of the deceased, civil society organisations and local communities, limits the possibility of developing sustainable and context-sensitive memorialisation practices. However, the problem lies not so much in the absence of inclusion as such, but in the forms it takes. Experience shows that this inclusion is often either declarative or one-sided — without real involvement, with decisions imposed "from above" or lacking sufficient contextual vision. In such cases, decisions are fragmented and situational in nature, failing to take into account the complexity of experiences of loss and the importance of space for communities. As a result, memorial practices can turn into monotonous and standardised interventions that unify memory and transform cities into cemetery-like spaces.

During the research, especially during workshops and interviews, significant differences were found in the perception of the level of participation in commemorative events and initiatives. Some representatives of the professional or activist "memorialisation" community emphasise that the commemoration processes in Ukraine are open and inclusive

— in particular, based on their impressions of public hearings or consultations[23]. At the same time, memorialisation initiatives, particularly regarding the arrangement of honorary burial sectors[24], both at the local level and around the national complex[25], or museums (for example, in Yahidne[26]), are accompanied by conflicts. The reason for most of these conflicts lies in ignoring, failing to involve, or merely simulating involvement, when attempts to ensure the participation of those directly concerned by such decisions are merely formal...

According to the authors, this disproportion in perception is a consequence of the imperfection of existing engagement mechanisms. This does not necessarily mean that everyone's position must be fully implemented, but it is important to establish transparent boundaries for engagement and consideration of opinions and to explain which opinions were included and how. This approach will shift the focus from instrumental engagement to meaningful communication, in which commemorative events are seen as a space for participation, rather than just a list of decisions and objects.

When considering participation, it is important to highlight a feature of the Ukrainian model of the politics of memory, detailed in the Green Book[27], namely its traditionally decentralised nature. It is this feature that has led to significant regional differences in the commemoration of historical events and figures, and to the proactive and often leading role of civil society. This provides flexibility, as it allows for testing different formats and trying out innovative solutions or forms. However, it also requires a clear framework to prevent political instrumentalisation and ensure that commemorative practices are in line with democratic values.

A key aspect of this principle is ensuring that local memorialisation initiatives are contextually appropriate and at the same time integrated into broader national politics of memory. Local communities should be empowered to shape their own politics of memory that reflect regional histories and collective experiences, but within a framework that ensures respect for universal human rights.

Decentralisation also involves rethinking the role of state institutions involved in developing and implementing the politics of memory. International experience, particularly El Salvador's approach to documenting memory[28], shows that independent institutions responsible for ensuring access to historical archives, registering places of memory, and integrating historical education into school curricula can contribute to more systematic and transparent memory management.

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23 What you need to know about memorialisation: the concept of the institution of memory and the role of the state | Zi svoimy po suti https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1MlcoeTTAx0

24 Relatives of deceased soldiers filed a complaint-proposal to Yurii Vilkul https://1kr.ua/ua/news-94680.html

25 In Markhalivka, locals met Zelenskyy with a protest as he was on his way to a funeral at the National Military Memorial Cemetery: several people were detained https://zmina.info/news/u-marhalivczi-misczevi-zustrily-protestom-zelenskogo-yakyj-yihav-na-pohovannya-do-nmvk-ye-zatrymani/

26 There is no scandal with the residents of Yahidne, only a misunderstanding. When will the memorial to the victims of Russian crimes appear https://life.pravda.com.ua/culture/koli-pobuduyut-memorial-v-seli-yagidne-307007/

27 Commemoration and Remembrance in Contemporary Ukraine. Analysis of Legislation and Community Practices. Green Book on the Politics of Memory. — M. Ieligulashvili, D. Belinska; ed. O. Lunova. — Kyiv, 2025. — 44 p. https://zmina.ua/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2025/09/green_web-3.pdf

28 Report of the UN Truth Commission on El Salvador https://www.derechos.org/nizkor/salvador/informes/truth.html

Accordingly, we propose adapting the classic model of the "Ladder of Citizen Participation" developed by Sherry Arnstein in 1969. It is already a classic, adapted to various processes designed to ensure citizen participation in socio-political processes. Despite the full-scale invasion, Ukraine retains its basic democratic institutions, with examples of "pseudo-participation" often becoming a popular mechanism and source of conflict at the local or national levels.

**Arnstein's Ladder** (1969) describes eight levels of participation – from no public participation to complete control by citizens[29]. These levels (manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placation, partnership, delegated power, citizen control) reflect a gradual increase in public influence on decision-making. The model clearly illustrates the difference between genuine participation and processes that only appear to be inclusive. Lower levels (e.g., informing or consultation) often boil down to formal involvement, where people can express their opinions but have minimal influence on the outcome[30]. Higher levels (partnership or citizen control) mean joint decision-making or citizen-led processes where participants have real power.

Applying this model to the implementation of the politics of memory makes it possible to assess how much influence stakeholders – in particular victims, affected communities, and civil society – have in shaping memory projects. For example, if local/national authorities independently decide to establish a memorial and only inform the public about it, such an approach corresponds to a lower level (informing or even manipulation). In contrast, an initiative in which communities and victims' organisations jointly develop and manage a memorial project reflects higher levels (delegated power or citizen control). Thus, Arnstein's Ladder serves as a reference point for analysing models of participation: are decisions made for people, with people, or by people?

It is worth noting that researchers and practitioners have adapted Arnstein's Ladder to related fields such as urban planning and transitional justice. In the context of transitional justice, one of the key aspects of "full participation" is that victims and communities participate in all stages of the process – from conception and design to implementation – on equal terms. This highest level of participation, analogous to Arnstein's citizen control, means that those most affected by violence shape how that violence is remembered and understood. In contrast, merely formal involvement (providing information or gathering feedback without real influence) is a lower level of participation. Applying these principles to memorialisation shows that giving communities the opportunity to jointly determine the themes, forms and functions of memorials can transform them from state symbols into inclusive, society-wide spaces of memory.

## MODELS OF PARTICIPATION IN MEMORIALISATION

Using Arnstein's Ladder as a reference point, several models of public participation in memorialisation processes can be distinguished:

29 Arnstein, Sherry. *"A Ladder of Citizen Participation." Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35(4), 1969.
30 International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. *Strengthening Participation in Local-Level Transitional Justice: A Toolkit*, 2018.

- **Centralised (with minimal public participation).** In this model, governmental or political elites make decisions about memorials without significant public involvement. The public typically learns about the memorial project only after the key decisions have been made – this corresponds to Arnstein's "informing" level. The worst-case scenario is when officials simulate consultations, but the public has no real influence on the process.

- **Consultative Approaches (medium level of participation).** Many memorial initiatives operate in an intermediate format – organisers gather the opinions of victims and communities, but retain the final decision-making power. This corresponds to Arnstein's levels of consultation or placation. For example, the government may organise a competition for memorial designs, where the public can comment on the finalists, but the final decision is made by a state commission.

- **Collaborative or Delegated Memorialisation (high level of participation).** These approaches correspond to the upper rungs of Arnstein's Ladder – partnership, delegated power, or citizen control. Here, communities and civil society participate in all aspects of planning and implementing memorials. Examples include joint committees (with equal representation of victims and officials), memorials created through local workshops, or even community-led management of memorial sites.

- **Adaptive / Community-led Memorialisation.** These are cases where communities or victims themselves initiate the creation of memorials when the state fails to perform this function. Such initiatives often emerge in post-conflict settings, when official measures are delayed or ignored by the authorities. For instance, families of the disappeared in Nepal independently created local memorials to honour the memory of their loved ones[31].

## 2.2. Platform for implementing state politics of memory. Basis for introducing comprehensive changes

For a long time, the development of the politics of memory in Ukraine repeated a flawed model: the deinstitutionalisation of memory depended on the political will of the leadership, and memory itself became an instrument of polarisation. Under current conditions, the situation has changed — the topic of national memory is increasingly becoming part of the national consensus, as confirmed by the results of representative surveys (for example, by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, 2023–2024[32]), where the 2022 war is perceived as a continuation of the historical struggle for statehood and freedom. Accordingly, there is a basis for the implementation of a wide range of initiatives in the field of politics of memory, a certain readiness and demand from society to prioritise this area.

31 Constructing Meaning from Disappearance: Local Memorialisation of the Missing in Nepal – Simon Robins https://www.researchgate.net/publication/286156605_Constructing_Meaning_from_Disappearance_Local_Memorialisation_of_the_Missing_in_Nepal

32 Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, press releases and reports https://kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports

The data presented in the Green Book[33] the data shows a wide range of methods and measures used by various state bodies, local self-government and civil society to ensure visibility, support and demonstrate gratitude for the contribution made to the struggle for independence. The existing architecture of institutions, established ceremonies and list of services are being used to create and scale educational and cultural products, both in Ukraine and abroad. The documentation and preservation of information on the commission of international crimes, carried out by civil society organisations and law enforcement bodies, is becoming part of the strategy for the development of archives[34]. We can state the existence of a functional architecture of state and self-government bodies, although fragmented across different sectors of public policy, which are responsible for various components of the politics of memory, as well as the institutionalised status of civil society as part of this process.

The list of proactive actors involved in developing their own memory initiatives expanded significantly, new practices emerged, and the search for innovative solutions continued. Business became an active participant in memorialisation processes, testing a wide variety of means and tools. The example of DTEK — the creation of temporary sites[35], the production of documentary films, and the documenting of crimes[36] — illustrates how programmes to support veterans and their families are being developed[37]. A good example is the integration of different types of memorialisation activities into the "Run Ukraine" model — for instance, organising the annual Recruit Honour Run[38], or incorporating obligatory activities such as name recognition and commemoration of the fallen as a cross-cutting theme of every event organised by the business[39].

The sources of funding in this field have also become significantly diversified. Even established models have been substantially updated. At present, at the level of central authorities and local self-government, comprehensive programmes are being adopted to implement components of the politics of memory, or such activities are incorporated into the action plans of other thematic programmes. This established modality is now complemented by a tested mechanism of grant competitions for civil society institutions[40]. Permanent mechanisms exist to support initiatives in related areas – the Ukrainian Cultural

33 Commemoration and Remembrance in Contemporary Ukraine. Analysis of Legislation and Community Practices. Green Book on the Politics of Memory. — M. Ieligulashvili, D. Belinska; ed. O. Lunova. — Kyiv, 2025. — 44 p. https://zmina.ua/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2025/09/green_web-3.pdf

34 Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 1349-r of 24 December 2024 "On the Approval of the Strategy for the Protection of Documentary Heritage as a Guarantee of the Preservation of National Identity and Statehood for the Period until 2027 and the Approval of the Operational Plan of Measures for its Implementation in 2025-2027": https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1349-2024-%D1%80#Text

35 "Fight for light": destroyed transformer hit by Russia displayed in Kyiv Podil district https://suspilne.media/kyiv/839889-bitva-za-svitlo-na-stolicnomu-podoli-pokazali-zrujnovanij-rosieu-transformator/

36 The premiere of the film "Fight for light" took place, depicting the fight of Ukraine's Air Defence Forces, the State Emergency Service, and DTEK energy workers against Russia's energy terror https://dtek.com/media-center/news/vidbulasya-premera-filmu-bitva-za-svitlo-pro-borotbu-ppo-dsns-ta-energetikiv-dtek-z-energetichnim-tero/

37 Awards presented to the best employers and HRDs of 2025 https://delo.ua/news/nagorodzeno-naikrashhix-robotodavciv-ta-hrd-2025-roku-448859/

38 Recruit Honor Run https://recruitrun.runukraine.org/

39 An example of one of the objects of commemoration within the framework of the organised marathon https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1137328005089496&set=pb.100064369225291.-2207520000&type=3

40 Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 1049 of 12 October 2011 On Approval of the Procedure for Conducting a Competition to Select Programmes (Projects, Measures) Developed by Civil Society Institutions for the Implementation (Realisation) of Which Financial Support is Provided https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1049-2011-%D0%BF#Text

Foundation[41], the Ukrainian Youth Foundation[42], the Ukrainian Veterans Foundation[43]. Additionally, experimental procurement models are being tested, in which financing comes from international support but implementation is carried out by a state institution, thereby building the necessary capacity for future procurement not of projects but of services themselves[44]. Thus, at the level of the state and, accordingly, local self-government, we have a fairly wide range of possible modalities – from competitions (which raise concerns due to their one-off nature) to the establishment of relevant institutions, the integration of support for components of the politics of memory into the activities of existing bodies, or the development of unique mechanisms. Donor mechanisms also continue to play their role, but they do not always demonstrate readiness for long-term, sustainable, and multi-year support, for the institutionalisation of achievements, and for the appropriate involvement of state authorities and local self-government.

Relatives and close ones of the deceased are becoming a separate target group and, in fact, clients. In the process of living through their loss, they are seeking various means to preserve the legacy and name of the deceased. They also have access to a relevant resource – payment of one-time financial assistance in the event of the death of a servicemember[45]. Relatives and loved ones of those who died or went missing often find themselves alone in their search for appropriate forms and means of remembrance. They express a need for support and counselling in this regard, trying to bypass established and increasingly controversial/blocked forms of remembrance - such as memorial plaques, renaming of toponyms, and similar practices.

## 2.3. Marketplace model: supporting tactics in achieving strategic goals

Relatives, victims and survivors need a place and symbolic actions to honour and ensure justice right now. They seek and sometimes implement “spontaneous” solutions so that what happened to them and their loved ones will not be forgotten. In this search, they are unfortunately often limited by their existing experience and practices familiar from the past, triggering competitive dynamics and conflicts. In a context of traditionally low trust in institutions, this often leads to chaos and conflict. Local self-government bodies and state authorities at all levels are trying to find solutions within the existing regulations and specificities of governance in a state of martial law.

41 Ukrainian Cultural Foundation https://ucf.in.ua/

42 Ukrainian Youth Foundation https://uyf.gov.ua/

43 Ukrainian Veterans Foundation https://veteranfund.com.ua/

44 Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of 17 January 2025 No. 40 On the implementation of a joint project with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to provide financial assistance in the form of small grants for social services to families with children and children and/or early intervention services https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/40-2025-%D0%BF#Text

45 Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of 28 February 2022 No. 168 On certain payments to servicemen, persons of the rank-and-file and commanding staff, police officers, and their families during martial law https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/168-2022-%D0%BF#Text

Given the architecture of memory, the political context, and the continuation of full-scale war, it is difficult to determine what the final form of politics of memory will be in the context of overcoming the consequences of armed aggression against Ukraine. There are attempts to develop strategic decisions, but mostly in specific areas—education, culture, veteran or youth policy. At the same time, the foundation has already been laid to begin supporting relevant initiatives in the field of memorialisation preventively rather than reactively, to develop good practices and to create a basis for scaling them up. This approach will ensure the full implementation of each of the four functions of the politics of memory.

Based on the results of a detailed analysis of the existing mechanisms and instruments for implementing the politics of memory that have been developed in Ukraine since independence, we propose applying the Marketplace model.

**The Marketplace model** is a single platform that consolidates the necessary financial and human resources, posts requests/needs, and provides appropriate support for commemoration and memorialisation initiatives. In the future, thanks to support, generalisation and popularisation, the components of the Marketplace will help transform spontaneous, tactical memorialisation into comprehensive politics of memory.

The Marketplace Model can be implemented thanks to the opportunities provided by the Law of Ukraine "On the Principles of State Policy on National Memory of the Ukrainian People" and the demand from key target audiences, including relatives and loved ones of those who died, went missing, or were injured, as well as the expanding professional community. Given the change in status and expansion of the capabilities of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory in 2025, this model may receive appropriate "support" at the state level, which will be able to ensure the necessary level of coordination and expert support under conditions of appropriate institutional and professional support.

The Marketplace model envisages:

- Collection and analysis of examples and practices of commemoration/memorialisation of events of the War of Independence, experiences of victims of armed aggression against Ukraine; compilation and dissemination of a list of "good practices";
- The introduction of a transparent and accessible funding mechanism for stakeholders across different sectors — local communities, military units and veteran groups, civil society, business — which will allow the scaling up of existing good practices and the promotion of memorialisation principles;
- Mandatory cross-sectoral cooperation and the consideration of the 10 Principles of War Memorialisation[46], as well as the trauma-informed approach and an adequate level of participation;
- Establishment of networks of experts and practitioners who may be engaged at the stage of designing and implementing commemoration/memorialisation initiatives;

46 10 Principles of War Memorialisation. URL: https://uinp.gov.ua/memorializaciya/9-pryncypiv-memorializaciyi-yakoyu-mozhe-buty-pamyat-pro-viynu

- Mediation and facilitation support for controversial and conflict situations arising during the implementation of initiatives.

Based on the data obtained during expert interviews, workshops, and discussions, we can identify four sets of recommendations that should ensure the implementation of the Marketplace model. Among them:

- The introduction of a sustainable system for the procurement of services and the financing of commemoration and memorialisation activities across different sectors and by various stakeholders, which would meet the demand for preserving memory and ensuring justice for the diverse experiences of the Russian–Ukrainian war;
- The development of appropriate algorithms and procedures that would not only provide financial, organisational and professional support, but also guarantee an adequate level of participation;
- The promotion of practitioner networks by involving them in the implementation of commemoration and memorialisation initiatives, ensuring expert support, documenting and generalising practices, and developing a catalogue;
- The institutional strengthening of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory (hereinafter – UINM) as the state authority responsible for inter-agency cooperation and for implementing the Marketplace model, which will subsequently serve as a basis for the development of a national politics of memory.

The following sections focus on the measures within each of these blocks in more detail.

**Algorithms and procedures** – activities aimed at developing necessary mechanisms and adjusting existing coordination mechanisms, as well as the actions of various participants in the implementation of the politics of memory.

- Conduct an audit of the regulatory framework governing the politics of memory, align approaches and steps to enhance the functional and financial clarity of policy implementation by different actors (central executive authorities), including synchronising the current regulatory framework and mandates, and eliminating duplication.
- Develop algorithms, methodological recommendations and ensure the provision of consulting, and where possible, expert/mediation support for conflict situations arising around issues of commemoration;
- Establish an expert group (groups) within the UINM to provide expert opinions on problematic and contentious issues related to commemorating the War of Independence, with the possibility of providing further expert/consultative support if the parties to the conflict are willing;
- Develop methodological recommendations on the application of a trauma-informed approach in working with groups of victims and participants of the War of

Independence in the implementation of measures aimed at commemoration and honouring;

- Develop recommendations and algorithms for interaction between various participants (state and non-state) in the process of preparing and agreeing on a model for comprehensive politics of memory at the local level (educational institutions, cultural institutions, public spaces, businesses, and civil society organisations);
- Develop recommendations for organising and conducting comprehensive events at the local, regional, interregional, national and international levels to commemorate the events and participants of the War of Independence;
- Update the procedure for architectural and urban planning competitions, which should provide for a series of mandatory consultations with organisations and initiatives of victims and participants of the war; ensure that their recommendations are taken into account when determining the theme, type and timing, composition of the jury and format of further consultations, and involve the local community and participants of the war in the selection process;
- Develop and implement recommendations on the algorithm of interaction between state authorities, local self-government bodies, business, organisations representing victims and participants of the war, and the community regarding the development and implementation of measures, and the establishment of facilities dedicated to the War of Independence.

**Funding mechanisms** – establishing a sustainable system for purchasing services and funding initiatives aimed at commemorating various experiences and events of the War of Independence in accordance with the 10 Principles[47].

- Introduce a model for the state procurement of services aimed at implementing commemoration initiatives, developing a comprehensive memory infrastructure, or integrating commemorative aspects into existing initiatives;
- Ensure systematic information dissemination regarding the procurement mechanism in regions and relevant sectors (local self-government, NGOs and relevant initiative groups, and business);
- Ensure sustainable funding for national and local initiatives and various types of events – artistic, cultural, educational, media, sports, research, and informational.
- With a focus on intangible practices and interaction between different segments of the population around issues of commemoration. It is also important to support projects and initiatives that honour different experiences, places and areas related to the War of Independence, presenting the spectrum of Ukrainian military and civilian resistance as a means of preventing an exclusive narrative that could foster competition in the field of commemoration;
- Develop a format for incorporating memorialisation components into existing par-

47 ibid

ticipatory budgets and other forms of co-financing at the local level, with competitive justification of the effect on the community.

**Formation of practice and communities of practitioners** – the establishment of a permanent network of specialists from various fields who can ensure a politics of memory in line with the 10 Principles[48] and scale the acquired experience into other areas and to the national level.

- Establish a system of coordination of actions and support between government bodies, local self-government, civil society and volunteer communities regarding initiatives to ensure the politics of memory;
- Launch systematic work on collecting, describing, algorithmising and further popularising measures, approaches and instruments of commemoration, primarily aimed at interaction between different population groups, victims and participants of the war;
- Develop a typology of memorialisation practices that will allow systematisation of existing formats, identification of their target audience, function (symbolic, social, educational) and potential for scaling up;
- Establish an expert base and define a mechanism for providing expert and methodological support and consultations to initiatives aimed at countering falsifications of the events of the War of Independence as part of Ukraine's humanitarian security;
- Initiate scholarship programmes to acquire practical knowledge in developing and implementing solutions and local policies on commemorating the War of Independence;
- Carry out an analysis of educational programmes, textbooks and methodological recommendations developed for institutions of culture, sports, and tourism, concerning the inclusion of memorialisation principles and approaches to commemorating the War of Independence;
- Develop and implement educational programmes for representatives of local authorities and activists interested in building a local "memory architecture" of the War of Independence, with the possibility of receiving mentoring support – strengthen the expert capacity of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory with specialists in the fields of art, education, dialogue facilitation and conflict transformation, and the trauma-informed approach;
- Create and disseminate a catalogue of events, initiatives and formats of commemoration developed by various sectors in response to the need to honour the memory of the events and participants of the War of Independence;
- Organise regular discussions on problematic, contentious issues and dilemmas arising in the field of politics of memory of the War of Independence. Where necessary, based on their results and findings, prepare professional conclusions, recom-

48 Ibid

mendations or algorithms to assist interested organisations and individuals in the process of dignified commemoration of the War of Independence.

**Strengthening institutions** – steps to ensure the strengthening of the UINP as a state institution that provides adequate organisational and professional support for the implementation of the Marketplace model and the further transformation of the tactical experience gained in memorialisation into appropriate politics of memory.

- Hold parliamentary hearings on ensuring a comprehensive approach to implementing the politics of memory as part of security and stabilisation policy in the context of full-scale invasion, on the coordinating role of UINP in these processes, and on the opportunities offered by the Marketplace model;
- Ensure adequate financial and organisational support for UINP in the process of integrating the theme of the War of Independence into curricula, training and retraining programmes, including for institutions of education, culture, sports, and public administration, as part of shaping historical memory and national identity, and influencing social cohesion and national security; prepare recommendations on training and professional development programmes for teaching staff in the fields of "Languages and Literature", "Social Sciences", "Arts", and "Health and Physical Education", in line with the 10 Principles;
- Develop international partnerships with organisations and institutions in other countries that specialise in social integration measures in countries with traumatic historical memories, to promote the Ukrainian experience and transform existing approaches to the politics of memory, integrating the Ukrainian context into global decolonial studies;
- Develop and agree on a clear set of criteria and procedures for including War of Independence sites in the State Register of Immovable Monuments of Ukraine and for amending it (removal from the Register, change of monument category), followed by their promotion and explanation at the regional and community levels;
- Facilitate the creation of an archive of materials on the War of Independence within the National Archive Fund, with access and use for various aspects of ensuring the right to truth, including mechanisms of lustration;
- Establish a permanent mechanism within UINP for providing expert opinions and a platform to facilitate essential professional and public discussions on complex, sensitive and conflictual issues in the field of memorialisation, such as the rethinking and reappropriation of "Soviet" and independence-era visual forms and instruments of memorialisation in the politics of memory, or addressing the memorialisation of experiences of occupation and war crimes;
- Develop UINP's regional representation by strengthening existing structural units, expanding them, and formalising partnerships with local administrations, civil society organisations, museums, and others.

# CONCLUSIONS

1. The formation of a national politics of memory of the Russian–Ukrainian war is a complex and multifaceted process that requires consideration of social, political, and cultural factors, as well as the international context. The challenges Ukraine faces in developing its politics of memory are not only technical or administrative, but also tied to fundamental questions: how to ensure inclusiveness without diluting national identity, how to combine heroisation with critical reflection, and how to avoid the political instrumentalisation of memory while maintaining the strategic unity of society.

2. The political instrumentalisation of memory remains a serious risk, as memories of war can be used as a political resource. In Ukraine, it is already evident that memory is becoming a subject of contention between political forces and civil society groups, and is being amplified by the media and social networks. In the future, this could lead to conflicts between different groups with differing views on commemorating the heroes and victims of the war.

3. The media coverage of the process creates another challenge: in the age of social media and rapid news dissemination, memory can become a field of manipulation, where individual events or groups receive disproportionate attention. This requires a more responsible approach to the politics of memory and avoiding short-term decisions that may have long-term consequences.

4. Decentralising memorialisation processes opens up opportunities for local initiatives, but without a clear national framework, it can lead to chaos and conflict. It is important to find a balance between local initiatives and national strategy to ensure equal representation of different groups and regions in the overall field of memory.

5. Approaches to the politics of memory, which traditionally focused on working primarily with the distant past and understanding its impact, have been significantly supplemented by issues of security and justice since the start of Russia's armed aggression, both for those living through these events and for future generations. The number of victims, the limitations of the justice system, and the need to overcome hybrid challenges "in real time" require a fundamental rethinking of the nature of the politics of memory. That is why, when formulating a comprehensive policy, we must take into account the significantly updated demands and expectations of the politics of memory. In particular, we are talking about its therapeutic and security components, the need to ensure symbolic justice. Given the active phase of the war and the uncertainty of the post-war future, it is advisable to focus on developing a system to support commemoration/memorialisation practices. These practices can respond to existing demands and needs, creating a basis for collecting and summarising the experience gained as a foundation for future strategic goals of the politics of memory. This will make it possible, by combining various instruments of remembrance of the war, to ensure a sense of justice for the victims and to build a more viable and secure system of democratic institutions and human rights protection.

6. Developing a Marketplace model that will not only include flexible financial support models but also promote the practical implementation of memorialisation principles will make it possible to build the necessary prevention of threats that may accompany this area. Firstly, proper facilitation and mediation, which are part of the model, will not only ensure the necessary level and quality of participation of victims and interested parties, but will also help resolve conflicts, strengthening the resilience and cohesion of communities. Secondly, it will help to deal with the growing competition between narratives in a situation where different population groups have different experiences of war. Historical memory can become a source of tension, particularly due to discrepancies between the state's patriotic narrative and local or individual experiences. Individual support, the possibility of involving experts from different fields and sectors, and prioritising cross-sectoral interaction as a condition for receiving support will increase the chances of taking into account different voices and experiences of war, while preserving social unity and building a common language of dignified commemoration. Thirdly, providing financial and expert support, programmatic guidance and prioritisation of certain topics through the Marketplace model will minimise the risks of trauma and silencing. This is a rather serious problem, because selective memory, as international experience shows, can lead to the escalation of conflicts and political manipulation in the future. It is important for Ukraine to determine which events and experiences should be discussed, as well as to find a balance between memory, justice and social stability.

7. Ukrainian memorialisation is important not only for domestic policy, but also for the international community. Memorial events help draw the world's attention to the crimes of the aggressor and the scale of the tragedy that has occurred in Ukraine. This helps mobilise humanitarian and economic support, and most importantly, political support. Building an understanding of the Ukrainian experience in the global context will encourage essential support from the international community for holding the aggressor accountable and for the public recognition of the Russian Federation's responsibility for crimes committed on Ukrainian territory. Thus, memorialisation in Ukraine is not only a way to honour the memory of the dead, tragic events, and resistance, but also a powerful tool for strengthening society, ensuring justice, and building lasting peace. It simultaneously satisfies the public demand for recognition and restoration of justice, leaving a significant mark on the formation of the country's future. In doing so, it rethinks international approaches and instruments that already need reflection and renewal in line with the new context of the international system.

8. In general, the formation of a memorialisation strategy in Ukraine requires clear mechanisms for public engagement, balancing patriotism with critical reflection on history, taking into account the international context and integrating new forms of memory. The war continues, and the final forms of memorialisation have not yet been defined. However, laying the foundations of inclusivity, strategic planning, and consideration of long-term consequences now can help create politics of memory that will be not only about the past but also about the future of Ukraine.

The Human Rights Centre ZMINA is a Ukrainian human rights organisation working to protect freedom of speech, combat discrimination, prevent torture and cruel treatment, support human rights defenders and civil society activists, document international crimes, and protect the rights of victims of war.