

# Overview of national measures regarding employment and social security of displaced persons coming from Ukraine

***Country Fiche – Bulgaria***  
**July 2022**

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# 1.0 Legal and institutional framework

## 1.1 Legal framework

### 1.1.1 List of the legal framework

- I. Legislation implementing the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD or the Directive)<sup>1</sup> and Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382<sup>2</sup>

[Asylum and Refugees Act \(ARA\) of 2007](#) transposes Directive 2001/55/EC; [last amendment](#), State Gazette No. 32 of 26 April 2022, in force from 26 April 2022.

[Decision No. 144 \(not promulgated\)](#): The Council of Ministers on 10 March 2022 adopted Decision No. 144, not promulgated providing temporary protection to displaced persons from Ukraine in accordance with the Decision for the implementation of the Council of the European Union (EU) 2022/382 establishing the existence of the mass entry of displaced persons from Ukraine within the meaning of Article 5 of Directive 2001/55/EC and for the introduction of temporary protection.

[Decision No. 180 of 30.03.2022 \(not promulgated\)](#): On 30 March 2022 the Council of Ministers decided to **extend until 15 April** the possibility for people with foreign citizenship or stateless persons, who left Ukraine as a result of hostilities and who entered and remained on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria, to receive temporary protection without their explicit will and registration of temporary protection.

Decision No. 318 (not promulgated): On 20 May 2022 the Council of Ministers decided to place displaced persons from Ukraine in rest centres and in centres for the prevention and rehabilitation, as of 1 June 2022.

The [Health Act \(HA\)](#) and the [Health Insurance Act \(HIA\)](#) were also amended in April 2022, promulgated in State Gazette No. 32 of 26 April 2022, in force from 26 April 2022. The purpose of these amendments was to reflect the need on regulating the health status of beneficiaries of temporary protection in Bulgaria (*see below Section 4.*).

- II. Legislation having an impact on the (access to) (self-)employment and social security/welfare for the displaced persons coming from Ukraine

#### Access to employment:

- ▶ The [Asylum and Refugees Act \(ARA\)](#) introduces the requirement of Article 12 of Council Directive 2001/55/EC on minimum standards for the granting of temporary protection that aliens enjoying temporary protection have the right to work and vocational training. It follows that displaced persons from Ukraine enjoying temporary protection can work in Bulgaria without a work permit, register as jobseekers at an

<sup>1</sup> Council Directive 2001/55/EC of 20 July 2001 on minimum standards for giving temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons and on measures promoting a balance of efforts between Member States in receiving such persons and bearing the consequences thereof, OJ L 212, 7 August 2001, p. 12-23, available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32001L0055>.

<sup>2</sup> Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 of 4 March 2022 establishing the existence of a mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine within the meaning of Article 5 of Directive 2001/55/EC, and having the effect of introducing temporary protection, OJ L 71, 4 March 2022, p. 1-6, available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32022D0382>.

employment office at their permanent or current address and benefit from employment services and vocational training.

- ▶ The [Employment Promotion Act](#) was amended in June 2022, promulgated in State Gazette No. 41 of 3 June 2022, in force from 3 June 2022. The purpose of these amendments is to ensure the possibility for persons with temporary protection to register with the Employment Agency and receive assistance in finding a job, means of transport and accommodation for the duration of the procedure for the validation of professional qualifications.
- ▶ The [Labour Migration and Labour Mobility Act](#) was amended in June 2022, promulgated in State Gazette No. 41 of 3 June 2022, in force from 3 June 2022. The purpose of these amendments is to ensure access to the labour market for displaced persons from Ukraine without a prior authorization procedure (Article 9, para. 5).

#### Social security:

- ▶ [Law on Amendments and Supplements of the Health Insurance Act](#) was adopted in order to reflect the need on regulating the health status of beneficiaries of temporary protection in Bulgaria, promulgated in State Gazette No. 32 of 26 April 2022, in force from 26 April 2022. This law provides that foreigners granted temporary protection by Bulgarian authorities have rights to health insurance, affordable medical care and medical services under the terms and conditions for Bulgarian citizens, with the exception of medical care provided in accordance with the rules for coordination of social security systems within the meaning of Section 1, item 22 of the Additional provisions of the HIA (See Section 4 below).
- ▶ [Decree № 69 of 05.05.2022](#) for health insurance of the persons with temporary protection under Art. 1a, para. 3 of the Asylum and Refugees Act and of the persons under Art. 39, para. 6, item 2 and Art. 40a, para. 3a of the Health Insurance Act, promulgated in State Gazette No. 35 of 10 May 2022.

#### Social welfare:

- ▶ Foreigners who are beneficiaries of temporary protection have **the right to social assistance** (Article 39, para 1, item 4 of the ARA) and are included as a target group in **the Law on Social Assistance. Decisions No. 144 and 145 of the Council of Ministers** contain special provisions regarding social assistance and accommodation for displaced persons from Ukraine enjoying temporary protection.
- ▶ [Decision on taking measures in connection with the war in Ukraine](#) was adopted on 4 May 2022 by the National Assembly (Parliament), promulgated in State Gazette No. 35 of 10 May 2022. This Decision gives mandate to the Council of Ministers to discuss and implement a package of measures related to the war in Ukraine and its consequences in the following areas: providing assistance to Ukraine - humanitarian, financial and military-technical, according to the capabilities of the Republic of Bulgaria - assistance to displaced persons from Ukraine fleeing the war (legislative and organizational measures to improve reception capacity and integration opportunities until conditions are in place for their lasting return to Ukraine); providing an opportunity for export of Ukrainian grain to Varna; continuing the delivery of humanitarian aid, in particular medicines, clothing and foodstuffs.
- ▶ A new Program providing humanitarian assistance to people with temporary protection has been adopted. An Operational Coordination Group assists persons displaced from Ukraine to be accommodated in state, municipal and private rest centres, or in hotels at the expense of the state. The amount of funds has been reduced to BGN 15 (from BGN 40 until the end of May) per day for an overnight stay and three meals for each person accommodated. [Information](#) on the implementation of the program is available in Ukrainian, Russian and English languages.

All the possibilities having an impact on the employment and social security of the displaced persons coming from Ukraine are pointed out in instructions of the Council of Ministers, the State Agency for Refugees, the General Labour Inspectorate, the Employment Agency and the Agency for Social Assistance. Most of them are published [here](#).

### 1.1.2 Beneficiaries (persons covered by temporary protection)

Type of beneficiary	National regime of temporary protection for displaced persons coming from Ukraine
<p>Ukrainian nationals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Residing in Ukraine</li> </ul> <p>displaced from 24 February 2022</p>	Yes
<p>Family members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ of a Ukrainian national present or residing in Ukraine before 24 February 2022 and displaced from Ukraine on or after 24 February 2022</li> </ul> <p>of third-country nationals and stateless persons, who benefited from international protection or equivalent national protection in Ukraine before 24 February 2022 and were displaced from Ukraine on or after 24 February 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Under Article 1, item 3 of the Additional Provisions of the Asylum and Refugees Act (ARA) <i>'family members'</i> are: the spouse, the wife or person with whom he/she is in a proven stable and long-term relationship and their under-aged children who are unmarried; aged children who are not married and who are unable to provide their own maintenance for serious health reasons; the parents of each of the spouses who are unable to take care of themselves because of an advanced age or serious illness and have to live in the same household; the parents or guardian of the minor who is not married and to whom an international protection has been provided.</p>
<p>Third-country nationals and stateless persons beneficiaries of international or equivalent national protection in Ukraine until 24 February 2022</p>	Yes
<p>Stateless persons and nationals of third countries, legally residing in Ukraine before 24 February 2022 on the basis of a valid permanent resident permit and unable to return in safe and durable conditions to their country or region of origin</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>By Decision No. 144 of 10 March 2022 of the Council of Ministers (see item 3), the Republic of Bulgaria agreed to grant temporary protection to foreigners who are not Ukrainian citizens and to stateless persons who resided legally in Ukraine until the outbreak of the war if they cannot return safely to their home countries. In order to receive temporary protection, these categories of persons must be registered by 31 March 2022 in Bulgaria and declare a wish to use temporary protection. By</p>

Type of beneficiary	National regime of temporary protection for displaced persons coming from Ukraine
	<p>Decision No. 180 of 30 March 2022, the Council of Ministers extended this period until 15 April 2021.</p> <p>By Decision No. 241 of 15 April 2022, the Council of Ministers adopted the Program for the Use of Humanitarian Aid to Persons Seeking Temporary Protection in the Republic of Bulgaria as a Result of the Military Actions of the Republic of Bulgaria to be applied to Bulgarian citizens in Ukraine and who were permanently established and residing on the territory of Ukraine before 24 February 2022 and do not have residential property on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.</p>
<p>Other persons who are displaced for the same reasons and from the same country of region of origin (Article 7(1) of TPD), including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ stateless persons and</li> <li>▶ nationals of third countries other than Ukraine,</li> </ul> <p>who are residing legally in Ukraine and who are unable to return in safe and durable conditions to their country or region of origin (Article 2(3) Council Decision).</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Any additional category of beneficiaries (i.e. persons who arrived from UA before 24 February 2022)</p>	<p>No</p> <p>However, based on the EU agreement with Ukraine on visa-free travel and more specifically on Regulation 2018/1806/EU, Ukrainian citizens who are holders of biometric passports can enter the territory of our country and stay for up to 90 days within 180 days. In addition, the Law on Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria in its Article 27, para 2 stipulates that the length of stay of persons who have entered the country under the visa waiver regime may be extended once by the services of administrative control of foreigners on humanitarian grounds related to exceptional circumstances or where public interest is present. Foreigners may submit in person an application before the expiry of the permitted term of stay, to which they shall attach: their passport or replacing travelling document; documents, evidencing present of extraordinary circumstances or humanitarian reasons; stable, valid, invisible and sufficient funds for maintenance, residence home; compulsory medical insurance for the term of the applied extension of the visa and the stay in the country.</p>

Type of beneficiary	National regime of temporary protection for displaced persons coming from Ukraine
	<p>The legal definitions concerning 'extraordinary circumstances', 'State interest' and 'Humanitarian reasons' are placed in Article 1 AP LFRB and state as follows:</p> <p><b>'Extraordinary circumstances'</b> - elemental and natural calamities, breakdowns, accidents, robberies and circumstances, which have led to providing emergency medical care, as well as other events having occurred beyond the will of foreigners which they could not have been able to foresee or prevent.</p> <p><b>'State interest'</b> exists when not allowing foreigners into the country or them not leaving it may seriously harm the international relations of the Republic of Bulgaria, and this to be confirmed in writing by the Minister of Foreign Affairs or by officials authorized by him/her.</p> <p><b>'Humanitarian reasons'</b> exist when not allowing foreigners into the country or them not leaving the Republic of Bulgaria shall create a serious danger to their health or life due to objective circumstances, or to the integrity of their family, or the best interest of the family or of the child require their admission or stay in the country.</p>

## 1.2 Institutional framework

- a) National competent authority(ies) providing assistance to the persons enjoying temporary (or adequate) protection coming from Ukraine.

Scope of work	Name of the authority (in EN)	Name of the authority (in national language)	Hyperlink
<b>General (including status change in question 2)</b>	Council of Ministers Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Interior State Agency for Refugees at the Council of Ministers	Министерски съвет Министерство на външните работи Министерство на вътрешните работи Държавна агенция за бежанците при Министерския съвет	<a href="https://www.government.bg">https://www.government.bg</a> <a href="https://www.mfa.bg/en">https://www.mfa.bg/en</a> <a href="https://www.mvr.bg/en/home">https://www.mvr.bg/en/home</a> <a href="https://www.aref.government.bg/en">https://www.aref.government.bg/en</a>



Scope of work	Name of the authority (in EN)	Name of the authority (in national language)	Hyperlink
<b>Employment rights</b>	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	Министерство на труда и социалната политика	<a href="https://www.mlsp.government.bg">https://www.mlsp.government.bg</a>
	General Labour Inspectorate at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	Главна инспекция по труда при Министерството на труда и социалната политика	<a href="https://www.gli.government.bg">https://www.gli.government.bg</a>
	Employment Agency at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	Агенция по заетостта при Министерството на труда и социалната политика	<a href="https://ukraine.gov.bg/access-to-the-labour-market-in-bulgaria-for-citizens-of-ukraine/">https://ukraine.gov.bg/access-to-the-labour-market-in-bulgaria-for-citizens-of-ukraine/</a>
<b>Social welfare and social security rights</b>	Ministry of Health	Министерство на здравеопазването	<a href="https://www.mh.government.bg">https://www.mh.government.bg</a>
	National Social Insurance Institute	Национален осигурителен институт	<a href="https://www.nssi.bg">https://www.nssi.bg</a>
	National Health Insurance Fund	Национална здравноосигурителна каса	<a href="https://www.nhif.bg">https://www.nhif.bg</a>
	Agency for Social Assistance at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	Агенция за социално подпомагане	<a href="https://asp.government.bg">https://asp.government.bg</a>

- b) Existence of a mechanism in place to coordinate the work of these national authorities with respect to persons enjoying temporary (or adequate) protection coming from Ukraine.

In connection with the planning and organization of the actions of the state authorities for the evacuation and accommodation of persons arriving in Bulgaria from Ukraine an [Operational Coordination Group](#) has been established on 10 March 2022 (Prime Minister's Order). It consists of six working subgroups. In implementation of the state response plan, regional crisis centres have been established, where coordinated institutions and various civil and non-governmental organizations support the citizens of Ukraine.

## 2.0 Possibility of changing the status

- a) Difference between temporary protection status and other forms of adequate protection<sup>3</sup> under national law, in respect of third country nationals and stateless persons coming from Ukraine.

There is no specific status of 'adequate protection' under Bulgarian legislation. People who are beneficiaries of international protection (humanitarian or refugee status) and those granted temporary protection in Bulgaria within the meaning of TPD enjoy the same rights as it comes to employment, social assistance and health care.

- b) Possibility to file status change inside the territory without the requirement for the person to first leave the country or return to Ukraine from temporary protection or other forms of adequate protection to employment-based residence permit during the temporary protection regime and at the end of this regime (e.g. single permit for work, EU Blue Card for highly-qualified workers, seasonal workers, family reunification).

Not applicable.

- c) Relevant national legislation on changing the status (including the procedure to be followed).

Not applicable.

- d) Measures aiming to preclude registration of displaced persons in more than one Member State/EEA-EFTA country (see Article 26 of the Temporary Protection Directive).

There are no such special measures.

## 3.0 Access to labour market (Article 12 of the Temporary Protection Directive)

- a) Overview on how equal treatment on the labour market as regards working conditions is ensured for persons enjoying temporary (or adequate) protection from Ukraine.

Bulgarian employers who want to hire persons enjoying temporary protection from Ukraine should provide them with equal working conditions as for local nationals. Working conditions cannot be less favourable than the minimum set in the labour legislation (Article 8 Paragraph 3 of the Labour Code (LC)).

<sup>3</sup> 'Adequate protection' under national law is referred to in Article 2(2) of the Council Decision as a possible alternative that may be offered by Member States to temporary protection and therefore does not have to entail benefits identical to those attached to temporary protection as provided for in Directive 2001/55/EC. Nevertheless, when implementing the Council Decision, Member States must respect the Charter of fundamental rights of the European Union and the spirit of Directive 2001/55/EC. The respect for human dignity and therefore a dignified standard of living (such as residency rights, access to means of subsistence and accommodation, emergency care and adequate care for minors) has to be ensured in respect of everyone.

- b) Conditions applicable to persons enjoying temporary (or adequate) protection from Ukraine, (including the procedure to be followed):
- I. The conditions regulating work permits/work authorisation, if required

The [Asylum and Refugees Act \(ARA\)](#) introduced the requirement of Article 12 of Temporary Protection Directive that aliens enjoying temporary protection have the right to work and vocational training. Displaced persons from Ukraine enjoying temporary protection can work in Bulgaria without a work permit, register as jobseekers at an employment office at their permanent or current address and benefit from employment services and vocational training. According to the specific rules, persons displaced from Ukraine can gain [access to the Bulgarian labour market](#) in order to work under the following simplified procedures:

- ▶ Displaced persons from Ukraine *who have the necessary documents proving Bulgarian origin* (i.e. people of Bulgarian origin living in Ukraine whose ancestors are Bulgarian) can start working immediately (even before they have received a residence permit) only by registering with the Employment Agency. For this purpose, they must have an employment contract with a local employer for a period of at least six months. Additional information about the procedure can be found [here](#).
- ▶ Displaced persons from Ukraine have the *right to seasonal work of up to 90 days in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, hotels and restaurants in Bulgaria without interruption for 12 months*. For this purpose, registration with the Employment Agency is required on the basis of a declaration submitted by the employer. Additional information about the procedure can be found [here](#).
- ▶ Displaced persons from Ukraine *who have applied for international protection and the proceedings have not been completed within three months* of submitting the application for reasons beyond their control have the right to work in Bulgaria without a work permit until the procedure is completed. Declaring employment of such citizens to the [local directorates 'Labour Office'](#) shall be done by the local employer, who hired them under an employment contract. The information must be submitted within seven days. Additional information can be found [here](#).
- ▶ *Displaced persons from Ukraine and members of their families granted asylum or international protection in Bulgaria* have the right to work in Bulgaria without a permit to access the labour market. People who have refugee or humanitarian status can register as jobseekers with the Labour Office at their permanent or current address.

A hotline of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy at 0800 88 001 provides free consultations in Bulgarian, Russian and English to Ukrainian citizens on access to the labour market in Bulgaria and opportunities for social support for children and families.

Displaced persons from Ukraine who have acquired "temporary protection" (with ID) can be employed on fixed-term and permanent employment contracts. There is no legal obstacle to concluding with them also civil contracts. Information on jobs can be found on the [website](#) of the Employment Agency as well as in its [territorial divisions](#).

#### **Necessary documents for persons enjoying temporary protection:**

##### **1. Identity document** (temporary protection card and personal document from country of origin)

An identity document is mandatory at the beginning of each job, and after checking the identity data, the document must be returned.

##### **2. Medical examination document** (issued by a doctor, payment might be required)

But only if the person has the opportunity to present such a document and the employer requires it.

### 3. **Occupational license**

If this is the first job, the employment record is provided by the employer, at his expense, within five days after the declaration submitted by the person. If the person has an employment record book (document containing information about where the person has worked, in what position and the period of work) and it has been translated, the proven length of service for the position brings additional payment.

**4. Document of completed education** - higher education diploma, qualification document, legal capacity or other certificate, if they are a condition for holding the position. Some documents should be recognized by Bulgarian institutions (regulated professions). Information can be found on the [webpage](#).

### 5. **Criminal record certificate**

If required by law for the position held. An application for a document replacing the criminal record certificate shall be submitted to the State Agency for Refugees. Information is available in Ukrainian, English and Russian, is available [here](#).

The employer is obliged to notify the General Labour Inspectorate (notification under Article 10 Paragraph 1 of the Labour Migration and Labour Mobility Act) within seven days of starting work. The form of notification can be found on the General Labour Inspectorate [website](#) in Bulgarian and English.

There are no special rules on **self-employment** in Bulgaria for displaced persons from Ukraine.

## II. Recognition of qualifications/diplomas

Concerning the recognition of vocational qualifications there is a distinction between occupations that are regulated in terms of necessary education and those who are not regulated.

**Regulated professions** are those whose exercise explicitly requires the possession of a diploma or other educational certification. Examples of regulated professions in the healthcare sector are: doctor, dentist, etc.; for the maritime transport sector are: navigator, ship mechanic, ship electrician, etc. The full list of regulated professions in Bulgaria by categories, as well as the contacts of the competent authorities for each profession can be found on the National Centre for Information and Documentation (NACID) [website](#). There are specific requirements on the procedure of acknowledgment of such professions according to the EU rules.

Holders of foreign professional qualifications in **non-regulated professions** in Bulgaria have direct access to the labour market. The recognition of such professional qualifications is within the competence as an employer in compliance with the relevant Bulgarian legislation.

As many displaced persons from Ukraine do not have all the necessary documents to start working, it was decided on a declarative basis to accept their qualifications. Exceptions to this are regulated professions. This was stated on May 11 by the Minister of Innovation after a meeting with employers' organizations, the Agency for Small and Medium Enterprises, the Employment Agency and the Coordination Centre for refugees from Ukraine.

## III. Eligibility to receive assistance for job seekers (e.g., career counselling, skills assessment, locating appropriate job openings, etc.)

According to Bulgarian legislation, the matching and mediation services provided either by public or private bodies are free of charge for the job seekers. Information about the job vacancies, announced at the local labour offices, is available on the official [website](#) of the Employment Agency of Bulgaria. As a public mediator on the Bulgarian labour market, the Employment Agency offers a wide range of services to help people who want to work, as well as those who want or need to be prepared for work through various forms of training. That is why the Employment Agency through an electronic form conducts a study of the needs and attitudes of citizens arriving from Ukraine to work in Bulgaria. The electronic form can be completed in any language using Google's toolkit. For convenience, a brief guide has been [published](#). Job seekers can find their job and assistance for work in the [electronic form](#). Information on simplified procedures for access to the labour market in Bulgaria for the citizens of Ukraine is [published](#).

As of 6 June 2022, the Employment Agency started the implementation of the project '[Solidarity](#)', financed through the Operational Program 'Development of Human Resources' 2014-2020. Support will be provided for the rapid labour integration of displaced persons from Ukraine with guaranteed access to the labour market, who arrived in Bulgaria after 24 February 2022. The grant for the project is in the amount of BGN 46.594.860.

Joining the project Ukrainian citizens will provide the opportunity to:

1. Receive psychological support, professional guidance, labour counselling and motivation for starting work.
2. Be included in full-time or part-time subsidized employment based on minimum wage for a period of up to 3 months.
3. Receive support at the workplace through a mentor appointed by the employer.
4. Receive an integration supplement including rent, overheads and internet in the amount of BGN 356,00 per month for a period of up to 3 months.

To receive these services, displaced persons from Ukraine should register with the 'Labour Office' Directorates. Employers wishing to join the 'Solidarity' project and hire persons from the target group can submit an application for inclusion in the project only through an electronic [Platform](#). During the period of subsidized employment, employers will receive funds to cover the remuneration of employed persons displaced from Ukraine in the amount of the minimum wage (BGN 710,00) and insurance at the expense of the employers, as well as incentives covering the costs of all due contributions at the expense of the employer, according to the requirements of the Labour Code and the Social Security Code.

#### IV. Availability of vocational training/educational opportunities for adults/practical workplace experience.

There are opportunities for professional training and gaining practical experience in the workplace. General education and training opportunities are available for all jobseekers.

The Employment Agency assists jobseekers (unemployed and employed) in their professional choices and related vocational training, which enables them to increase their chances of employment. Adult education is provided to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to fill vacancies, to meet future labour market needs for skilled labour and to maintain the employment of employees. Adult education includes: literacy training; training for acquiring professional qualification; training for acquisition and improvement of key competencies.

Free [Bulgarian language courses](#) are provided for persons enjoying temporary protection.

#### V. Any exceptions to the general law in force in the country applicable to remuneration and other conditions of (self-) employment

There are no specific issues or salient points identified for this question.

## 4.0 Social security, social welfare and means of subsistence assistance, as well as medical care (Article 13 of the Temporary Protection Directive)

### I. Types of benefits with description and coverage

#### **Social security:**

[Decree No. 69 of 05.05.2022](#) provides that rules for health protection of the persons with temporary protection include:

#### **1. The obligation to health insurance:**

- a) for persons with temporary protection, from the date of granting temporary protection;
- b) for the persons under Article 39, para 6, item 2 and Article 40a, para 3a of the HIA -- from the date of their arrival in the Republic of Bulgaria;
- c) for the persons under Article 40a, para 3a of the HIA, the provisions of Article 40a, paras 1 and 2 of the HIA.

#### **2. Health insurance rights:**

- a) for persons with temporary protection - from the date of granting temporary protection;
- b) for the persons under Article 39, para 6, item 2 and Article 40a, para 3a of the HIA -- from the date of their arrival in the Republic of Bulgaria.

#### **3. The health insurance contributions are:**

- a) for persons with temporary protection up to 18 years of age and aged 63 and over for women and over 65 for men - at the expense of the state budget for the period of temporary protection, unless they are subject to health insurance on other grounds under Article 40, para 1 of the HIA;
- b) for persons with temporary protection aged 18 and over and under 63 for women and under 65 for men - at the expense of the state budget for a period of 90 days from the date of granting temporary protection, unless subject to of health insurance on other grounds under Article 40, para 1 of the HIA and by the order of Article 40 of the HIA - after the expiration of this term;
- c) shall be paid at the expense of the state budget by the 10th day of the month following the month to which they refer;
- d) for the persons under Article 39, para 6, item 2 and Article 40a, para 3a of the HIA - by the order of Article 40 of the HIA for the period of their stay in the Republic of Bulgaria.

4. The amount of the health insurance contributions of the persons with temporary protection, which shall be paid from the state budget, shall be determined by the order of Article 40, para 4a of the HIA, and

to the persons under Article 39, para 6, item 2 and Article 40a, para 3a of the HIA - by the order of Article 40 of the HIA.

5. The health insurance contribution of the persons with temporary protection and of the persons under Article 39, para 6, item 2 and Article 40a, para 3a of the HIA shall be submitted by the order of the Health Insurance Act and the by-laws on its implementation.
6. The State Agency for Refugees shall submit data to the National Revenue Agency for the health insurance of the persons with temporary protection, who shall be insured at the expense of the state budget. The data shall be submitted in the manner, order and within the terms provided for the persons under Article 40, para 3, item 7 of the HIA in Ordinance № H-13 of 2019 on the content, deadlines, manner and procedure for submission and storage of data by employers, insurers for their insured persons, as well as by self-insured persons.
7. The medical aid to the persons with granted temporary protection and to the persons under Article 39, para 6, item 2 and Article 40a, para 3a of the HIA, provided until the entry into force of the Law for amendment and supplement of the Health Insurance Act of 2022, shall be paid under the conditions and by the order applicable to Bulgarian citizens, unless it was not paid or is not subject to payment by another order determined by law or another act of the Council of Ministers. The funds for the medical aid, which shall be paid by the National Health Insurance Fund, shall be provided by transfer from the state budget through the budget of the Ministry of Health by an order determined between the Minister of Health and the manager of the National Health Insurance Fund.

For foreigners with temporary protection from Ukraine according to [Decision No. 144](#) on granting temporary protection to displaced persons from Ukraine and amending the National Action Plan for Temporary Protection in the Republic of Bulgaria (amended by Decision № 180 of 2022) and for the persons under Article 39, para 6, item 2 and Article 40a, para 3a of the HIA, which have arrived in the Republic of Bulgaria before the entry into force of the Law for amendment and supplement of the Health Insurance Act of 2022, the obligation for health insurance arises from the date of entry into force of the Law for amendment and supplement of the Health Insurance Act.

#### **Social welfare:**

Foreigners who are beneficiaries of temporary protection have **the right to social assistance** (Article 39, para 1, item 4 of the [Asylum and Refugees Act \(ARA\)](#) and are included as a target group in **the Law on Social Assistance**. [Decision No. 144](#) and [145 of the Council of Ministers](#) contains special provisions regarding social assistance and accommodation for displaced persons from Ukraine enjoying temporary protection.

Social benefits, to which the Ukrainian citizens are entitled to include (Decisions No. 144 and 145 of the Council of Ministers):

- ▶ One-time social assistance in the amount of up to BGN 375 (192 EUR) to meet urgent needs, including to cover the costs of food, clothing, footwear, personal hygiene products and housing taxes. The Social Assistance Directorate organises the preparation for an individual assessment of the support needs of the persons who wish to benefit from this measure;
- ▶ Monthly social assistance;
- ▶ Targeted heating aid.

Social services include:

- ▶ Temporary shelter. Bulgaria provides accommodation in hotels as well as in places included in the national in state-owned facilities;
- ▶ Tourist Register or in the Register of places for accommodation which was created based on ***the Programme for the Benefit from Humanitarian Aid by Persons Seeking Temporary Protection in the Republic of Bulgaria as a Result of the Military Actions in Ukraine***. The government grants financial compensation to private hotels and resorts in municipalities and government agencies with a fixed amount of BGN 40 (EUR 20) per day for each Ukrainian refugee accommodated. This humanitarian aid has so far been granted for a period of three months - until 31 May 2022;
- ▶ Information and consultation;
- ▶ Advocacy and mediation;
- ▶ Therapy and rehabilitation;
- ▶ Day and resident care.

Suitable social services within the meaning of the Bulgarian legislation are organized by Crisis Centres, Day Care Centres, Centres for Social Rehabilitation and Integration, Centres for Public Support, Mother and Baby Unit and Homes for the Elderly. Detailed information can be [here](#).

On-call information in Bulgarian, Russian, Ukrainian and English about the opportunities for social protection of children and families can be received every day 09:00—17:30 at telephone No 0800 88 001 of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. Information can be found at the special [webpage](#) of the Social Assistance Agency.

## II. Eligibility conditions

### **Social security:**

Persons granted temporary protection by Bulgarian authorities have the right to health insurance, affordable medical care and medical services under the terms and conditions for Bulgarian citizens, with the exception of medical care provided in accordance with the rules for coordination of social security systems within the meaning of Article 1, item 22 of the Additional Provisions of the HIA.

The State Agency for Refugees shall submit data to the National Revenue Agency for the health insurance of the persons with temporary protection who shall be insured at the expense of the state budget. The data shall be submitted in the manner, order and within the terms provided for the persons under Article 40, para 3, item 7 of the HIA of Ordinance No. H-13 of 2019 on the content, deadlines, manner and procedure for the submission and storage of data by employers, insured persons, as well as by self-insured persons.

The medical aid to the persons with granted temporary protection and to the persons under Article 39, para 6, item 2 and Article 40a, para 3a of the HIA, provided until the entry into force of the Law for amendment and supplement of the Health Insurance Act of 2022, shall be paid under the conditions and by the order applicable to Bulgarian citizens. The funds for the medical aid, which shall be paid by the National Health Insurance Fund, shall be provided by a transfer from the state budget through the budget of the Ministry of Health by an order determined between the Minister of Health and the manager of the National Health Insurance Fund.

### **Social welfare:**



For social assistance persons may refer to the relevant Social Assistance directorates. The address, contact phone number and e-mail of the Social Assistance Directorates at the current address or place of residence can be found [here](#).

Persons with a temporary protection status can apply for a one-time assistance. The aid amounts to BGN 375 (EUR 192) and is granted to the family (single or with several members). Displaced persons from Ukraine must provide a Registration Card proving temporary protection, their personal document from the country of origin and an Address Card of a foreigner (issued to them by the Migration Directorate at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Interior or the hotel where you reside). An application is filled in, in which personal data of the applicant and his / her family members are declared. The assistance can be received in the post office serving the area where the applicant lives, or transferred to a personal Bulgarian bank account.

If the applicant is staying in a hotel and the costs of his/her stay are paid by the Bulgarian state, there is no obstacle to apply for a one-time social assistance.

Unemployed persons with refugee or humanitarian status or temporary protection must register with the Labour Office Directorate within three months of issuing their residence permit in Bulgaria. No registration is required: for pregnant women after three months; for mothers of children up to three years of age; for a person with a permanent disability; for a person caring for a seriously ill family member.

For monthly social assistance persons must work four hours of community service for a period of 14 days each month. Persons with granted refugee or humanitarian status or temporary protection who participate in programs and projects containing measures for the integration of foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria are exempt from performing community service for the respective period. Persons with a permanent disability, the degree of permanently reduced working capacity or the type and degree of disability must be determined in accordance with the legislation in force in the Republic of Bulgaria.

In order to be able to use the services of the Social Assistance Agency, persons must:

- ▶ have a valid status document issued by the Bulgarian authorities;
- ▶ have a registration at the current address from the municipal administration in the settlement where they have settled or an address registration at the place of residence;
- ▶ contact the Social Assistance Directorate at their current address.

Entitled categories are persons with asylum status, refugee status, humanitarian status, temporary protection, long-term or permanent residence permit in the Republic of Bulgaria. People with dual citizenship, one of which is Bulgarian, can use their rights to social protection as Bulgarian citizens.

All these issues are regulated in the Social Assistance Act.

For social services persons can submit an application for the use of social services to the Social Assistance Directorate at the place of residence. The Directorates provide them with complete information on the types of appropriate social services, the terms and conditions for their use. Stateless persons and persons seeking protection, as well as homeless persons and persons who due to health and/or mental problems cannot for objective reasons certify their current address, are directed by the DSP to their place of residence.

- III. Any exceptions to the general law in force in the country to access to social security systems or social welfare system relating to employed or self-employed activities

No differences have been identified.

## 5.0 Public support instruments

Overview of other public support instruments facilitating labour market participation, information about and enforcement of rights and entitlements for displaced persons.

The most important support instruments in Bulgaria are described on the special [online portal](#).

The General Labour Inspectorate offers a [brochure](#) in Bulgarian, Ukrainian, English and Russian with information about the basic labour rights. The bodies of the General Labour Inspectorate are ready to advise Ukrainian citizens on their labour rights. For this purpose, an email has been created through which they can ask their questions related to Bulgarian labour legislation, as well as submit signals if they are already employed and believe that their rights have been violated. The [e-mail](#) is published on the [website](#) of the General Labour Inspectorate- sections “Contacts”, “For employers and workers”, “Work of foreigners on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria”.

Since mid-March 2022, the Employment Agency has been advising Ukrainian citizens throughout the country. The consultations are given by the specially created mobile teams in the places where the Ukrainians are accommodated. There are about 100 mobile teams available, which can go to any municipality and visit the accommodation places of Ukrainians and survey them on their education, qualifications and desire to work.

In the employment offices, experts consult with citizens of Ukraine who are interested to work.

At the phone number 0800 88 001 the call center of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy provides free consultations in Bulgarian, Russian and English to Ukrainian citizens on access to the labour market in Bulgaria and opportunities for social support for children and families every working day from 09:00 to 17:30. Information is available [here](#).

In connection with the planning and organization of the actions of the state authorities for the evacuation and accommodation of persons arriving in Bulgaria from Ukraine, an Operational Coordination Group has been established on 10 March 2022 (Prime Minister’s Order, information available [here](#)). It consists of six working subgroups. In implementation of the state response plan, regional crisis centres have been established, where coordinated institutions and various civil and non-governmental organizations support the citizens of Ukraine.

A National [portal](#) was created () where full information is provided in Bulgarian, English, Russian and Ukrainian. Information is also provided at the border and at the places for registration. Relevant Ministries, Agencies, NGOs have a section on their websites providing information to Ukrainian nationals in Bulgarian, Russian, English and Ukrainian.

There is a crisis hotline and email address ([crisis@mfa.bg](mailto:crisis@mfa.bg)) for inquiries created in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.