Information for Ukrainian citizens fleeing Ukraine, for refugees recognised in Ukraine and for stateless persons and their family members

HUNGARIAN HELSINKI COMMITTEE

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This document provides you with important information if

- you are a Ukrainian citizen,
- you are a Ukrainian citizen's family member,
- you have been recognised in Ukraine as a refugee or as a stateless person,
- you are a refugee or stateless person recognised in Ukraine's family member,
- you lived in Ukraine prior to 24 February, and arrived in Hungary on 24 February or later. Persons fleeing Ukraine may enter Hungary at any border crossing without restrictions.

If you are a Ukrainian citizen who arrived in Hungary prior to 24 February, or you are a non-Ukrainian citizen who is not a family member of a Ukrainian citizen, but had resided in Ukraine with a residence permit, and arrived in Hungary in that status, please read our information documents https://helsinki.hu/en/prior-24-february-2022 and https://helsinki.hu/en/information-for-nonukrainian-citizens-fleeing-from-ukraine/. If you are a Ukrainian-Hungarian dual citizen, please refer to this document: https://helsinki.hu/tajekoztato-az-ukrajnabol-menekulo-ukran-magyar-kettos-allampolgaroknak/.

1. Entry restrictions at the border

New entry rules have been in effect since February 2023.

Arrival directly from Ukraine to Hungary:

- Ukrainian citizens can still enter without restrictions.
- Third-country nationals (i.e. non-EU and non-Ukrainian citizens) who have a Ukrainian family member may enter Hungary only if they have not left Ukraine after the outbreak of war. If they did leave Ukraine after the outbreak of war, they can only enter Hungary with a visa. In the absence of a visa, they are not allowed to enter Hungary, they receive a decision about this from the police at the border, and they have to return to Ukraine. An appeal can be filed against the decision, but you cannot stay in Hungary during the assessment of the appeal. If you receive such a decision from the police to refuse entry and you do not agree with it, contact us by e-mail (ukrainecrisis@helsinki.hu)

Arrival from Romania to Hungary:

- Ukrainian citizens who have a biometric passport can enter this border section. Those who have been issued a document (such as a visa) by the destination country other than Hungary to which they are traveling may also enter. Those with asylum status can also enter.

2. What kind of protection am I entitled to in Hungary?

The European Union has decided to provide temporary protection to those Ukrainian citizens, refugees recognised in Ukraine and stateless persons and their families who lived in Ukraine prior to 24 February 2022 and have had to leave Ukraine because of the war. This is called **temporary protection status** ("menedékes" in Hungarian) in Hungary. (This is different to refugee status, which is an option available to asylum seekers only in exceptional cases, following a lengthy and complicated process.)

This status is also provided to you if you did not arrive in Hungary directly from Ukraine but through another country. Note, however, that you may only request protection if you arrived in Hungary on or after 24 February 2022. **The following are considered family members: a married spouse, a partner, a child under the age of 18 and other relatives who had resided in the same household in Ukraine.** Family members are entitled to the same protection, even if they are not Ukrainian citizens, and even if they arrived in Hungary prior to 24 February.

Temporary protection status is valid until 4 March 2025.

3. How do I request temporary protection?

Temporary protection must be requested: no one is given the status automatically. **The application must be submitted in person at any of the customer service offices of the National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing (Országos Idegenrendészeti Főigazgatóság, OIF)**, during business hours. If you already have accommodation in Hungary, you must submit the petition at the OIF office nearest to you. Click here for the addresses of the OIF offices and customer service offices (oif.gov.hu). The petition does not need to be written ahead of time: you will receive a form that you must fill out at the OIF office. Note: if you come with a form filled out in advance, do not sign it ahead of time; it must be signed at the OIF office, in front of the official there. All applications must be submitted in person: you cannot send someone else to do so on your behalf, and you must have your children with you if you are seeking protection for them. This is necessary because the case-officer will take your photograph and fingerprints. Children over 16 may submit their own application; for those younger than 16, a parent or other legal representative (e.g. a guardian) must be present. If a child has travelled without their parents, a request may be submitted for the adult they travelled with to be their guardian.

You can send the information for the application ahead of time to the OIF, **electronically (online)**, to make processing quicker. You can do so in one of two ways:

- you can download a mobile application (http://ukran2022.oif.gov.hu/docs/common/Menedekes-1.0-release.apk) and use that, or
- you can submit it from your computer at the following website: https://enterhungary.gov.hu. **Uploading your data to these online surfaces does not mean you have submitted your petition. Even in these cases, you must appear in person at an OIF office or at any Government Window** ("Kormányablak" in Hungarian). Click here to see their contact information: https://kormanyablak.hu/hu/kormanyablakok.

The authorities are required to make a **decision in your case within 55 days**. During the process, you must offer proof that you are a Ukrainian citizen, that you had been recognised in Ukraine as a refugee or a stateless person or that you are a family member of a Ukrainian citizen, refugee or stateless person. This is most easily accomplished using an official document, such as your personal identity card or passport, or other official document certifying your family status. You are still entitled to protection if you meet the criteria but have no official documents providing proof. In such cases, the authorities will ask additional questions. After you have submitted your application and the official has recorded all necessary information, you receive a laminated card, known as a humanitarian residence permit. While your application is being assessed, you can use this card to prove that you are in Hungary legally.

4. What rights do I have when requesting temporary protection?

When requesting temporary protection, you are entitled to support from the state:

- **Accommodation, meals:** After August 21, 2024, only those asylum seekers who came from counties of Ukraine, which according to the Hungarian government are “directly” affected by the war, are entitled to accommodation and food. These counties are currently (as of July 2024): Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, Donetsk Oblast, Zaporizhzhya Oblast, Kyiv Oblast and Kyiv City, Mykolaiv Oblast, Odesa Oblast, Sumy Oblast, Kharkiv Oblast, Kherson Oblast, Chernihiv Oblast, Luhansk Oblast, Zhytomyr Oblast , the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. The list of counties directly affected by the war is updated monthly, the new list is always published here: https://bit.ly/4cLa2y6 .

  As of May 2025, in addition to existing eligibility requirements, refugees must now request and take up access to accommodation within 90 days of being granted Temporary Protection or, if vulnerability arises later, within 90 days of the onset of that vulnerability.

- If your place of residence in Ukraine was in the counties listed above, you are entitled to accommodation as follows:

  If you are traveling directly to Budapest, you can ask for help at the Government windows at Nyugati Pályaudvar (1062, Budapest Teréz körút 55.) during opening hours. Information is also provided here on what other benefits you are entitled to in Hungary. Government window opening hours: Monday: 8:00-18:00, Tuesday: 8:00-16:00, Wednesday: 11:00-19:00, Thursday: 9:00-16:00, Friday: 8:00- 14:00. Those who arrive outside the opening hours and thus cannot ask for help that day, or who are just traveling through Hungary and do not want to be here for a longer period of time, can also receive temporary accommodation for one night. This is provided at the following address: 1117 Budapest, Galvani utca 44/A. The accommodation is operated by the Hungarian Maltese Charity Service. At the Nyugati Pályaudvar, the railway employees and the police officers working there can help you find out how to get to this accommodation.

  In order to receive permanent accommodation and three meals a day, it is important that you submit your asylum application within one month of your arrival in Hungary. In this case, until you receive the asylum card or the decision rejecting the asylum application, you are entitled to accommodation and meals. If you submit your asylum application more than 30 days after your arrival in the country, long-term accommodation and meals are only available if you are pregnant, a parent raising a child under the age of six, a person with a disability or the carer of such a person, over 65 years of age or 18 years of age below, who lives in a joint household with any of the people listed here.

After you receive the temporary protection card, you are entitled to accommodation and food for 30 days. Pregnant women, children under the age of 18 and one parent living in the same household as them, people with disabilities and their caregivers, as well as people over 65 years of age can receive accommodation and meals for an unlimited period of time beyond 30 days after obtaining the asylum card.

If you received a temporary protection card, accommodation and meals are only available for 30 days after obtaining the card, if you take up work and your employer signs a contract with your accommodation provider. If you do not have a job, you are unfortunately not entitled to a free meal and accommodation (unless you belong to the group of beneficiaries defined in the previous paragraph).

If your place of residence in Ukraine was not in the counties listed by the government, you are unfortunately not entitled to state-insured accommodation after August 21, 2024. Those who did not previously live in the listed counties, but were accommodated in state-financed accommodation before August 21, could submit a request for fairness until July 10, 2024, in which they requested that they be able to receive accommodation after August 21. If you submitted such a request for fairness, but it was rejected, we recommend that you contact us at the email address ukrainecrisis@helsinki.hu .

- **Medical care**: After you received your temporary protection status, you are entitled to Hungarian medical care regardless of where you are living (in state-provided accommodation or elsewhere).
- **Translation of personal documents, free of charge:** The OIF will pay the cost of having your personal documents translated into Hungarian, if you request it. Such documents include your birth or marriage certificate, or official documents attesting to your education or professional skills.
- **Employment:** From the time you submit your petition, you are entitled to work within Hungary without any special permit.
- **Schooling for children, preschools and day-care and 6 months of free meals for children;**
- **Discounted travel tickets:** Ask the OIF to issue the certificate necessary for this. You may, however, travel on Hungarian trains and Budapest public transport vehicles free of charge even without such a certificate. The only document you need is your Ukrainian passport, Ukrainian personal identification card or Ukrainian residence permit.

5. What rights do I have if I have received temporary protection (“menedékes”) status?

With temporary protection status, you remain entitled to the above support: accommodation, food, medical care, employment, reimbursement of translation costs, school support and preschool or day-care placement, free meals and travel discounts. You also have the right to the following:

- **Temporary protection residence permit:** This will be mailed to you once your application has received a favourable decision and you have been recognised as a beneficiary of temporary protection. This will be mailed to the accommodation address you provided to the official when submitting your application. If you hold a valid passport, you may use your temporary protection document, along with your passport, within 180 days, to travel without restrictions for up to 90 days to any country in the European Union.

- **Monthly subsistence support:** You are entitled to 22,800 HUF in support each month. Children receive 13,700 HUF in support each month. Be sure to let the OIF know if this is something that you need. To do so, fill out the form provided at the OIF. You can submit the petition either at the OIF office, or if they will not take the form there, then you must submit it at the Government Office (local district office, which is called “járási hivatal” in Hungarian) with responsibility for your residential address. Each month, prior to receiving this support, you must appear at the employment section of the Government Office with responsibility for your residential address, and must register there as a jobseeker. You are only entitled to this support as long as you are unemployed or you are unable to receive your pension. If, after 45 days following the first payment, the Government Office offers you an appropriate job and you do not accept it, then you will not receive subsistence support. Click here for the addresses of the Government Offices: https://jarasinfo.gov.hu/.
- **Family reunification:** If one of your family members has received temporary protection in another EU member state, you have the right to reside in the same country.

For questions regarding employment, healthcare services and education, contact Menedék, the Hungarian Association for Migrants: menedek@menedek.hu (www.menedek.hu).

6. What obligations do I have once I have been granted temporary protection?

If you move out of your accommodation, you must register your new address with the OIF. You must abide by the laws of Hungary, and you must cooperate with the OIF. Should you lose your passport or other official document, or if it is stolen, you must report the fact immediately to the OIF. You must receive the immunisations that are mandatory in Hungary if you have not received the same vaccines earlier.

The Hungarian Helsinki Committee stands by those fleeing from Ukraine.
Contact us **for free legal assistance**.