On 20 January 2026, the Council of Ministers adopted a draft law, which was subsequently signed by the President on 19 February 2026 and will come into force on 5 March 2026, that implements a staggered approach to phasing out the current support system established under the 2022 Act on Assistance to Citizens of Ukraine in Connection with the Armed Conflict in that Country, transitioning to a single system for all foreigners under temporary protection (TP), regardless of nationality.

Under the draft act, TP applicants will be required to submit a PESEL number application within 30 days of arrival. TP beneficiaries who already have a PESEL with UKR status will automatically fall under the new system when the draft act comes into force. Those who obtained a PESEL solely on the basis of a declaration will need to verify their identity with a valid travel document; otherwise, they will lose temporary protection status after 31 August 2026. TP for Ukrainian beneficiaries with a PESEL UKR status will continue until 4 March 2027.

The draft act envisages a gradual transition to healthcare and social benefits based on insurance and contributions, limiting access to free healthcare for uninsured individuals, while maintaining exceptions for children, pregnant women, victims of violence, injured soldiers, and emergency cases. Access to social assistance will be restricted to benefits available to foreigners staying in Poland for humanitarian reasons or under tolerated stay.

The draft act also confirms the recently enacted rules for collective accommodation, generally limiting stays to 60 days, with long-term accommodation provided by the Ministry of Social Security only for those considered particularly vulnerable, such as elderly or disabled individuals, patients after hospitalization, pregnant women and caregivers of children under 12 months. The Ombudsperson for Children has expressed concern that many families with children will lose entitlement while noting that, in the absence of adequate housing infrastructure and practical support mechanisms for local governments, the alternative housing scheme “Together to Independence” does not fully ensure the protection of the interests of families with children.

Source(s)

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Related development(s)

New legislations extends legal stay of Ukrainians and imposes new requirements to access benefits

Date of development

20.01.2026

Country

Poland

Thematic area(s)

Reception, Accommodation, Material reception conditions, Rights, obligations and limitations, Integration, Applicants with special needs, Unaccompanied minors, Persons with disabilities, Temporary Protection

Development type

Legislation

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