Temporary protection - Poland

Overview

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Relevant EU legislation

Poland transposed the Temporary Protection Directive in the Act of 13 June 2003 on granting protection to foreigners within the territory of the Republic of Poland | Ustawa o udzielaniu cudzoziemcom ochrony na terytorium Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej.

Temporary protection was activated by the Special Act of 12 March 2022 on assistance to Ukrainian nationals in connection with an armed conflict in the territory of that state | Ustawa z dnia 12 marca 2022 r. o pomocy obywatelom Ukrainy w związku z konfliktem zbrojnym na terytorium tego państwa, Akt prawny

The Special Act was most recently amended by the Act of 15 May 2024. Further information about this amendment can be found here.

National legislation

Legislation

- Law of 12 March 2022 on assistance to Ukrainian nationals with regard to the arm conflict on the territory of this country (Special Act) | Ustawa z 12 marca 2022 r. o pomocy obywatelom Ukrainy w związku z konfliktem zbrojnym na terytorium tego państwa

Amended by:

Act No 2024.854 of 15 May 2024, amending the law on assistance to citizens of Ukraine in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of that country and certain other laws | Ustawaz Dz.U.2024.854 dnia 15 maja 2024 r. o zmianie

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ustawy o pomocy obywatelom Ukrainy w związku z konfliktem zbrojnym na terytorium tego państwa oraz niektórych innych ustaw

The Act on granting protection to foreigners on the territory of the Republic of Poland of 13 June 2003 | Ustawa z dnia 13 czerwca 2003 r. o udzielaniu cudzoziemcom ochrony na terytorium Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Dz.U. 2025 poz. 223 z późn.zm.

The Act on Foreigners of 12 December 2013 | Ustawa z dnia 12 grudnia 2013 r. o cudzoziemcach, Dz.U.2021 r. poz. 2354 z późń. zm.

Implementing Acts

Regulation of the Minister of Education and Science of 21 March 2022 on the organization of education, upbringing and care for children and young people who are Ukrainian citizens | Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji i Nauki z dnia 21 marca 2022 r. w sprawie organizacji kształcenia, wychowania i opieki dzieci i młodzieży będących obywatelami Ukrainy
Amended by:

Regulation of the Minister of Education dated August 28, 2025, amending the regulation on the organization of education, upbringing, and care for children and youth who are citizens of Ukraine | Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji z dnia 28 sierpnia 2025 r. zmieniające rozporządzenie w sprawie organizacji kształcenia, wychowania i opieki dzieci i młodzieży będących obywatelami Ukrainy

Competent authority and stakeholders

Classification: Public

Area	Competent national authority	Assistance to the competent authority (if applicable)
Screening at the external border (if relevant)	Border Guard	Straż Graniczna	n/a

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Area	Competent national authority	Assistance to the competent authority (if applicable)
Biometric data (if relevant)	Border Guard | Straż Graniczna Local government units | Jednostki samorządu terytorialnego	n/a
Granting temporary protection	Local government units | Jednostki samorządu terytorialnego Office for Foreigners | Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców is responsible for providing temporary protection only within the scope of the Act on granting protection to foreigners	n/a
Issuing the residence permit	Ministry of the Interior and Administration Office for Foreigners | Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców is responsible for issuing the residence permit within the scope of the Act on granting protection to foreigners	Ministry of Digital Affairs

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Area	Competent national authority	Assistance to the competent authority (if applicable)
Providing accommodation	Voivodes | Wojewodowie Office for Foreigners | Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców is responsible for providing accommodation within the scope of the Act on granting protection to foreigners	Local government units / Jednostki samorządu terytorialnego
Medical care	Ministry of Health Office for Foreigners | Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców provides medical care to beneficiaries of temporary protection through the Act on granting protection to foreigners	n/a
Social welfare	Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy Office for Foreigners | Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców provides social assistance to beneficiaries of temporary protection through the Act on granting protection to foreigners	n/a

Eligibility

The Special Act on Assistance to Ukrainian Citizens sets out specific rules for legalising the stay of Ukrainian citizens (and their spouses, children and children of spouses who do not hold Ukrainian citizenship) who have come to Poland from Ukraine in connection with the Russian invasion and of Ukrainian citizens holding a Pole's Card who, together with their immediate families, arrived in Poland

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because of those military operations. It applies to persons who came to Poland from Ukraine and declared their intention to stay in Poland.

The Special Act does not apply to persons under temporary protection in another EU Member State. Also being a beneficiary of temporary protection in another Member State, granted due to hostilities carried out on the territory of Ukraine deprives a Ukrainian citizen of the possibility of obtaining temporary protection in Poland.

Third-country nationals not covered by the Special Act, but who belong to the category of displaced persons mentioned in Article 2(1) and (2) of the Council Implementing Decision, may benefit from temporary protection under the Act on Granting Protection to Foreigners. This applies to:

- Stateless persons or citizens of third countries other than Ukraine who, before 24 February 2022, held a valid permanent residence permit in Ukraine, and are unable to return to their country or region of origin in safe conditions.
- Stateless persons or citizens of third countries other than Ukraine (and their family members) who, before 24 February 2022, enjoyed international protection or equivalent national protection in Ukraine.
- Family members of Ukrainian nationals residing in Ukraine before 24 February 2022 who are not covered by the Special Act.

The following persons are considered to be family members (if the family already existed and resided in Ukraine before 24 February 2022):

- Spouses.
- Minor and unmarried children, or children of the spouse, regardless of whether they were born in or out of wedlock or if they were adopted.
- Other close relatives who lived together as a single family at the time when the circumstances leading to the mass influx of displaced persons occurred and who were wholly or partly dependent on the above-mentioned person at the time.

Admission to the territory

All persons entering the territory of Poland undergo border controls and are registered at the border-crossing point by the Commander of the Border Guard Post (BGP Commander).

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A register of Ukrainian citizens entering Poland is kept on the ICT system of the Border Guard.

Border control involves a security screening, during which individuals crossing the state border are checked in the IT systems used by the Border Guard. Health screenings are not conducted routinely. Health status is assessed upon request of the third-country national.

Provision of information

Information platforms

- Government website for citizens of Ukraine
- Webpage on temporary protection - with information from the Office for Foreigners
- https://oferty.praca.gov.pl/ - with information about job vacancies from labour offices translated into Ukrainian language
- https://zielonalinia.gov.pl/pl - national call centre for unemployed persons and employers with a hot line and support in Ukrainian language
- Rynek pracy – pomoc dla obywateli Ukrainy (The Ministry of Family and Social Protection – help for citizens of Ukraine) – with information on the scope of assistance by the Public Employment Services
- Poland also participates in "EU Talent Pool" - pilot project aiming at supporting persons from Ukraine to find job in Poland and in the EU.

Leaflets

- On PESEL (Universal Electronic System for Registration of the Population) registration and relevant rights (page 1, page 2)
- "Living and working in Poland" (published in 2022), prepared by the Ministry of Family and Social Protection and available in English, Polish and Ukrainian
- Guide for people leaving their place of residence due to the threat of war (published in 2022), prepared by the Government Security Centre.

Dedicated contacts

Dedicated helplines provide information in several languages (PL, UA, RU, EN):

- The Office for Foreigners helpline can be reached on + 48 47 721 75 75.
- A 24-hour victim assistance helpline can be reached on +48 222 309 900.

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- Zielona Linia - hot line and support in Ukrainian language - can be reached on +48 22 19524

Information points

The information points for Ukrainian citizens are established at railway and bus stations according to needs, or run by local government units as the task is assigned by the Voivode. In addition, reception points for foreigners also provide information. Information is also available at the UNHCR Blue Dot Safe Spaces, Protection and Support Hubs.

EUAA booklets

EUAA Booklet on Temporary Protection in Poland also available in UA and RU

Procedural aspects

Procedure to register and be granted temporary protection

Ukrainian nationals and their spouses who left Ukraine on or after 24 February 2022 can stay in Poland legally until 30 September 2025 according to the currently applicable amendment to the Special Act. They must submit a request for obtaining a PESEL number (Universal Electronic System for Registration of the Population) to the municipality of their city of arrival.

Persons who are not covered by the Special Act (i.e. persons who belong to the category of displaced persons mentioned in Article 2(1) and (2) of the Council Implementing Decision), may request a temporary protection certificate by submitting a written declaration to the Office for Foreigners.

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Registration	Different registration procedures apply to: 1) Applicants covered by the Special Act, who can register for a PESEL number in person before any municipal authority. To apply for a PESEL number, it is necessary to present an identity document and a photograph. Fingerprints are taken during the application. It is also possible to obtain a 'trusted profile' which serves as a digital identity document and allows to handle several official matters online (a working Polish mobile phone number and an e-mail address are necessary). Applications must be submitted in person and a video with information on the procedure is available. Additionally, applicants are obliged to register their address at the municipal office of their place of residence through submitting a temporary residence declaration form. 2) Applicants covered by the Act on granting protection to foreigners may obtain a temporary protection certificate by submitting a declaration to the Office for Foreigners. This can be done: • By post to: Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców (Office for Foreigners), Taborowa 33, 02-699 Warsaw, Poland, • By e-mail to: ochronaczasowa@udsc.gov.pl, • Electronically through ePUAP, • In person at the Office's registry office at Taborowa 33 in Warsaw. Along with the application, the following documents must be submitted: • A copy of a travel document with the confirmation of entry to Poland on 24 February 2022. • A copy of a document confirming the right for protection or a legal stay in Ukraine based on a valid certificate for permanent residence, • A declaration on the lack of possibility to

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Residence permit	1) Persons who are covered by Special Act will be provided with a PESEL number and a trusted profile by the administration of any commune in order to use services in the field of health care, social assistance or set up a company in Poland. The trusted profile is a digital tool that allows to perform certain official matters online. An electronic version of an identity document is available through the mObywatel mobile application. As of 1 April 2023, beneficiaries of temporary protection in Poland who have a PESEL number with UKR status may apply for temporary residence permits for work or business purposes. Specifically, they may apply to the following types of permits: • Temporary residence permits for work • Temporary residence permits in order to perform work in a highly qualified profession • Temporary residence permits for the purpose of conducting business activities 2) Persons who are covered by the Act on granting protection to foreigners can request a certificate from the Office for Foreigners. It serves as an exclusive proof of entitlement to temporary protection in Poland during the period of its validity and certifies the holder's right to stay on the territory of Poland. This certificate issued entitles beneficiaries to access social assistance through the Office for Foreigners. This includes the possibility to receive accommodation and meals in one of the centres of the Office for Foreigners or a financial benefit to cover costs of stay outside the centre.
	Free medical care is provided. The certificate allows to legally work in Poland during its validity. Renewal of certificates is automatic, so persons

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Legal aid	All persons staying in Poland, including foreigners, who are unable to afford legal aid can access free legal aid, as well as consultation and mediation services. A list of institutions providing assistance can be consulted online.
Appeal	Persons who do not receive a certificate from the Office for Foreigners can apply for reconsideration to this same body and can make a further complaint to the Voivodship Administrative Court in Warsaw.
Exclusion	On the grounds of Article 109 of the Act on granting protection to foreigners, temporary protection may be refused if: 1) There are reasonable suspicions that the applicant: a) Has committed a crime against peace, war crime or crime against humanity; b) Committed, outside Poland, and prior to their arrival in the territory in order to benefit from temporary protection, a crime of a non-political nature, c) Has committed acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations; 2) The applicant's entry or stay may jeopardise the security of the state; 3) The applicant was convicted by a final judgment for a crime whose nature indicates that their presence in Poland could pose a threat to its citizens. Decisions to refuse temporary protection are final.

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Termination/Withdrawal	According to the Article 11(2) and (4) of the Special Act, temporary protection will be terminated if beneficiaries leave Poland for a period of more than 30 days or if they are granted temporary protection by another Member State of the EU.

Reception and accommodation

Overview

Beneficiaries of temporary protection through the Special Act: The coordination of assistance activities falls under the Voivode's responsibility. In this regard, the Voivode can provide:

- Accommodation;
- Full-day meals;
- Transport related to accommodation or medical assistance
- Other activities necessary to provide assistance, after obtaining the consent of the competent minister

Beneficiaries of temporary protection through the Act on granting protection to foreigners can request the Office for Foreigners to access medical care and assistance, either in the form of accommodation and meals, or as a financial allowance. Individuals been granted temporary protection under the above-mentioned Act are entitled to stay in asylum reception facilities designated for asylum applicants. Under Article 112 of the Act, they may also be eligible for social assistance, which can be used to access the private housing market.

Third-country nationals who benefit from temporary protection and are entitled to social assistance under the Act on granting protection to foreigners can participate in Polish language classes, receive materials necessary to learn this language, and attend orientation courses.

Social assistance, in accordance with the provisions of the Act on granting protection to foreigners, is provided upon request by a person holding a certificate of temporary protection in the territory of the Republic of Poland. Applicants are required to attach a declaration of income to their application.

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Municipalities may organise local reception initiatives for beneficiaries of temporary protection. Organized forms of accommodation and reception assistance are the responsibility of the Voivode.

Organisation of reception and accommodation

Initial reception: Reception points have been opened across Poland. Persons who need support in finding initial accommodation can contact the reception points' reception desks, where they can access information about their stay in Poland, and be provided with accommodation, meals and medical assistance. Additional smaller structures managed by local governments funded from the Relief Fund are also available.

The relevant information is provided on the webpages of the voivodeship offices.

Accommodation: Beneficiaries of temporary protection through the Special Act can access free accommodation for 120 days from their entry into Poland. After 120 days, and if the beneficiary has a PESEL number, the Voivode may cover 50% of the costs of assistance (up to PLN 40 per day). The remainder should be covered by the beneficiary. After 180 days, the beneficiary should cover 75% of the costs. These provisions do not apply to vulnerable groups (e.g. persons with disabilities, pregnant women, elderly, minors).

Beneficiaries of temporary protection through the Act on granting protection to foreigners can access accommodation in one of the centres of the Office for Foreigners. In cases where the Office for Foreigners cannot provide accommodation, cash assistance may be provided.

Provision for means to obtain housing: Beneficiaries of temporary protection may receive financial assistance to access private accommodation through different schemes. Those covered by the Act on granting protection to foreigners who have applied for social assistance to the Head of the Office for Foreigners and do not reside in a centre for foreigners may receive social assistance in the form of a monthly cash allowance that can be used to access the private housing market.

Ukrainian citizens fleeing from the war and residing in collective accommodation centres may benefit from the Project "Together to Independence" funded with PLN 93,499,172.60.

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The project is led by the Ministry of Interior and Administration, which is responsible for the coordination and supervision of the entire initiative. The partners are the Polish Red Cross and the Polish Center for International Aid, two experienced non-governmental organizations who are responsible for identifying project participants and providing them with direct support.

The project was selected for funding by the European Commission under the "Specific Action MS under pressure - Support for Ukraine" call for proposals. The EC allocated PLN 84,149,255.34 for its implementation, representing 90% of the project's budget.

The activities within the project are intended to support the process of becoming independent and finding housing outside the centers for 6,000 people, including through assistance in finding housing, organizing language courses, and providing integration and career counselling. The assistance is two-fold: financial support for renting accommodation; and support with social integration and job acquisition through individual career counselling and funding for Polish language courses. More information is available here.

Other types of accommodation: There are no additional types of accommodation.

Rights of people granted temporary protection

Rights	Description

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Access to the labour market	**Beneficiaries of temporary protection covered by the Special Act** do not need a work permit to access the labour market. Employers must report the fact of employing a citizen of Ukraine to the district labour office. More information, including vacancies and links to job portals, is available here. Job offers can also be found on the Central Job Offers Database and on the mobile applications ePraca (for Android and iOS) or MojaPraca (for Android). Ukrainian citizens can undertake and conduct business activities on the same terms as Polish citizens, provided that they obtain a PESEL number. Information on procedures, right to allowances and other benefits of unemployed persons can be accessed on the help line 19524 or on: • government portal under Work • https://www.praca.gov.pl • https://zielonalinia.gov.pl **Beneficiaries of temporary protection through the Act on granting protection to foreigners** do not need a work permit to access the labour market, during the validity of their temporary protection certificate (up to 4 March 2027). Measures to withdraw or limit assistance for those who have additional income are in place.

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Access to medical care	**Beneficiaries of temporary protection covered by the Special Act** are entitled to free public health care under the same conditions as Polish citizens with exception of spa treatments and access to medical treatment abroad. More information is available here. **Beneficiaries of temporary protection through the Act on granting protection to foreigners** can access medical services through an external provider contracted by the Office for Foreigners, including basic medical care, special medical treatment, dental treatment, medicines and medical supplies. More information is available here. Persons who have medical insurance which allows access to public health facilities will not be granted additional medical assistance through the Office for Foreigners. The Ministry of Health has also launched the LikarPL application to facilitate the provision of medical advice to citizens of Ukraine. The application allows to quickly diagnose the patient's health, as well as facilitate communication between the patient and a doctor who does not speak Ukrainian. The application is available at: https://likar.mz.gov.pl Information on children's vaccination is also available.

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Social welfare assistance and means of subsistence	**Beneficiaries of temporary protection covered by the Special Act** are entitled to: • Family benefits aid for education • Basic sickness benefits The Act of 15 May 2024 linked the payment of the 800 PLN (approximately 187 EUR) monthly child benefit and the annual 300 PLN (approximately 70 EUR) school supplies subsidy to compulsory schooling. The monthly benefit is granted provided that the child attends a Polish educational institution. **Beneficiaries of temporary protection through the Act on granting protection to foreigners** accommodated in a reception centre can access additional cash support for the purchase of cleaning and personal hygiene products and to cover children's food. More information on social assistance and medical care for Ukrainian citizens is available here. Additionally, until December 2023, UNHCR implemented a cash assistance programme accessible to both categories of beneficiaries. That programme is currently closed (see more information here).

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Education	Children aged 7-18 years old must attend compulsory education, which is free of charge, including one year of pre-school preparation (*zerówka*). The list of schools is available in the Register of Schools and Educational Institutions. Information on education can be consulted here: • Studying in Poland - enrolment in school. • Education and research in Poland. • Information on the possibility of continuing university studies at a Polish higher education institution (medicine and dentistry). • Free psychological assistance to students from Ukraine. **Beneficiaries of temporary protection through the Act on granting protection to foreigners** can access Polish language courses and materials, and teaching materials for children enrolled in schools.
Family reunification	Beneficiaries of temporary protection covered by the Act on the protection of foreigners can apply to the competent Voivode to be reunited with their spouses or children. The Office for Foreigners is responsible to undertake actions to reunite the family.
Other	**Persons covered by the Act on granting protection to foreigners** can apply for financial support for journeys on public transport for accessing medical treatment, vaccinations, as well as in other particularly justified cases. **Driving licence:** Ukrainian driving licences are valid in Poland until 31 December 2023, even if they have expired. To replace a driving license, an application should be submitted to the competent Department of Communications of the District Authority (*Wydział Komunikacji Starostwa Powiatowego*).

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Assistance to unaccompanied minors

According to the Special Act on assistance to Ukrainian citizens, unaccompanied minors should be assigned a temporary guardian to represent them and exercise custody over their person and property. Temporary guardians will need court authorisation to decide on any major matters.

Unaccompanied minors covered by the Act on granting protection to foreigners should be appointed a legal guardian.

Legal guardianship

According to the Special Act, unaccompanied minors should be assigned a temporary guardian to represent them and exercise custody over their person and property, needing court authorisation to decide on any major matters. Temporary guardians are appointed by the competent guardianship court within 3 days, taking into account the child's best interests.

The guardian may be the child's relative or another person who can guarantee a proper performance of a caregiver's duties. There are no requirements regarding citizenship, knowledge of Polish or Polish law. Both Polish and Ukrainian citizens can be appointed. A single temporary guardian may be appointed for several children if there is no conflict between their interests, and siblings will preferably be appointed to the same guardian.

Legal guardianship procedures may be initiated upon request or *ex officio*. Article 25(11) of the Special Act lists the entities entitled to initiate these proceedings. There are no fees to be paid for the procedure.

When temporary guardians cannot be appointed, the concerned children can be placed in foster care.

Detailed rules for providing care to unaccompanied minors are regulated by the Family and Guardianship Code (Kodeks rodzinny i opiekuńczy, z dnia 25 lutego 1964 r.).

Accommodation:

Foster care for Ukrainian children in Poland is regulated under Article 27 of the Special Act. Article 25(a) of the same Act specifies that Ukrainian minors who arrived in Poland without a caretaker, those who were placed in foster care in

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Ukraine before arriving in Poland, and those who came as part of Ukrainian institutional foster care are entered into a register for minors which is maintained by the Minister responsible for family affairs and the District Family Support Centers (PCPR).

The organization of foster care in Poland is based on the Act on Family Support and the Foster Care System (Ustawa o wspieraniu rodziny i systemie pieczy zastępczej z dnia 9 czerwca 2011 r.). The system is administered at a district level, either by the local District Family Support Center (PCPR) or by another entity to which the task has been delegated, and encompasses family foster care and institutional foster care.

Assistance to people with special needs

The Special Act provides beneficiaries of temporary protection with special needs access to free accommodation and care, and entitles them to social and medical benefits on the same terms as the citizens of the Republic of Poland.

Beneficiaries of temporary protection under the Act on granting protection to foreigners are not subject to the vulnerability screening established in the act.

Trafficking in human beings: The Border Guard and the Ministry of Interior and Administration developed a leaflet with information on human trafficking, which is also available in Ukrainian. More information can be accessed on the Border Guard's website.

People with disabilities: The rights of beneficiaries of temporary protection with disabilities have been clarified through case law.

Solidarity (relocation of people who are eligible for temporary protection)

There are no specific provisions for the relocation of people entitled to temporary protection.

Impact of simultaneous application for international protection

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According to Article 2 of the Special Act on Assistance to Ukrainians, its provisions do not apply to Ukrainian nationals who:

- Have applied for international protection in Poland or on whose behalf such applications have been made;
- Have declared their intention to apply for international protection in Poland or to whom those declarations of intent refer to.

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