

EU member states agree to extend temporary protection for refugees from Ukraine

Today, the Council voiced its unanimous support for a proposal to extend the temporary protection for the more than 4 million Ukrainians fleeing from Russia's war of aggression until 4 March 2027.

While Russia continues to terrorise Ukrainian civilians with indiscriminate air strikes the EU continues to show its solidarity with the Ukrainian people. We will continue to offer protection for millions of Ukrainian refugees for another year. The Polish presidency also initiated discussion on a strategy to phase out temporary protection once a just peace is achieved. In the near future, we will work towards common, EU-wide solutions in this area, including in the context of returns to Ukraine.

Tomasz Siemoniak, Polish Minister of the Interior and Administration

Since March 2022 the EU has given safety and shelter to over 4 million refugees from Ukraine on the basis of the temporary protection directive. Temporary protection is due to run until 4 March 2026 and will now be extended until 4 March 2027.

The temporary protection system alleviates the pressure on national asylum systems because persons falling under this type of protection do not need to apply for asylum on an individual basis. The extension until March 2027 is a signal to displaced people from Ukraine that is not necessary to apply for asylum.

The extension does not change the terms of the March 2022 decision as regards the categories of persons to whom the temporary protection applies or the rights they enjoy.

Durable solution for Ukrainian refugees

In addition to the extension of temporary protection member states are discussing a Council recommendation to prepare for a coordinated transition out of temporary protection (exit strategy from the temporary protection). The recommendation will address matters such as switching to other legal (residence) statuses, paving the way for a gradual return to Ukraine and stepping up the provision of information about available options.

What is temporary protection?

Temporary protection provides immediate and collective protection to a large group of displaced persons who arrive in the EU and who are not in a position to return to their country of origin.

People benefitting from temporary protection enjoy the same rights across the EU. These rights include:

- residence
- access to the labour market and housing
- medical assistance
- social welfare assistance
- access to education for children

The EU's temporary protection law sets minimum standards of protection. The actual level of assistance can vary from one member state to another.

Next steps

The Council will formally adopt the decision to extend the temporary protection at one of its upcoming sessions.

Background

Temporary protection is an EU emergency mechanism which is activated in exceptional circumstances when a mass influx of refugees takes place. The EU directive on temporary protection was adopted in 2001, in the aftermath of the large-scale displacement due to the armed conflict in the Western Balkans, in particular from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. It was triggered for the first time in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

If the circumstances change in Ukraine, allowing for a gradual return and sustainable reintegration, the Commission can make a proposal to the Council to suspend the temporary protection earlier than its foreseen end date.

- [How the EU helps refugees from Ukraine \(background information\)](#)

Press office - General Secretariat of the Council of the EU

Rue de la Loi 175 - B-1048 BRUSSELS - Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 6319

press@consilium.europa.eu - www.consilium.europa.eu/press