



Guidance for European Companies on Hiring Refugees From Ukraine

March 2023



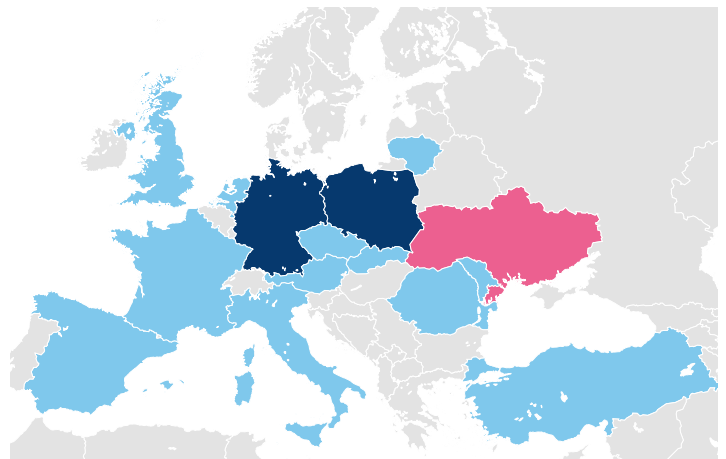
Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, more than 8.1 million refugees from Ukraine have been recorded across Europe.¹ This mass exodus of people is one the fastest forced displacement crises in history and the largest since the Second World War.²

As of 28 February 2023, millions of refugees from Ukraine have crossed borders into neighbouring countries, with Poland hosting the most people (1.6 million).³

Many other refugees have moved on to western and southern European countries, including Germany, Spain, the UK, France, and the Netherlands.⁴ Recorded refugee numbers ebb and flow as people return to Ukraine either permanently or temporarily to reunite with family, pick up supplies, or because they perceive their home to be safe.

The table below shows the top 15 locations in Europe where refugees from Ukraine have been recorded:⁵

Country	Data date	Refugees from Ukraine recorded in country
Poland	28/02/2023	1,563,386
Germany	31/01/2023	1,055,323
Czech Republic	26/02/2023	494,793
Italy	24/02/2023	171,739
Spain	26/02/2023	168,654
The UK	23/02/2023	163,500
France	31/10/2022	118,994
Romania	26/02/2023	112,575
Slovakia	28/02/2023	110,444
Moldova	06/02/2023	108,885
Turkey	26/01/2023	95,874
Austria	20/02/2023	93,579
The Netherlands	10/02/2023	89,730
Switzerland	24/02/2023	81,436



About the EU's Temporary Protection Directive

To help countries deal with such high numbers of displaced people arriving at their borders, the European Union (EU) activated the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) on 4 March 2022 to enable EU Member States to move rapidly to offer protection and rights to people fleeing Ukraine. It grants individuals immediate protection, as well as access to housing, employment, medical care, education, and more for up to three years. According to the UN's Refugee Agency (UNHCR), more than 4.8 million refugees from Ukraine have registered for temporary protection across Europe.⁶ The UK, which is no longer an EU Member State, has not adopted the directive, instead implementing alternative national protection schemes.

¹ <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

² <https://reporting.unhcr.org/ukraine-situation>

³ <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

⁴ <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

⁵ <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

⁶ <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>



What educational and professional backgrounds do refugees from Ukraine have?

With Ukraine's general mobilisation order requiring men aged 18 to 60 to stay within the country, UNHCR estimates that 90% of refugees from Ukraine are women and children.⁷

According to UNHCR:

7 in 10 Ukrainian refugees have "completed higher levels of education" (i.e., have a bachelor's degree or higher)

63% were employed or self-employed before leaving Ukraine, with "diverse professional and occupational backgrounds"

The table below shows the top 10 skills backgrounds of refugees from Ukraine:⁸

Skills background*	%
Education	16
Trading	12
Professional services	10
Health and social services	7
Other services	6
Accommodation and food	5
Financial services	5
Personal services	5
Construction	3
Agriculture	3

* Multiple responses were possible



Have refugees from Ukraine successfully integrated into host countries' labour markets?

While 35% of Ukrainian refugees in Europe are currently employed or self-employed (in their host country or remotely), "the majority are employed at a lower level than previously in Ukraine, with a higher prevalence among women than men," according to UNHCR.⁹ An estimated 12% of Ukrainian refugees are engaged in professional training. More than one in five refugees are unemployed and actively looking for work opportunities.¹⁰

Although childcare has been identified by UNHCR as a barrier to accessing employment, "limited knowledge of the local language", "skills mismatches", and "difficulties in skills recognition and lack of decent work opportunities" are more prevalent.¹¹

⁷ <https://reporting.unhcr.org/ukraine-situation>

⁸ <https://reporting.unhcr.org/document/3268>

⁹ <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/99072>

¹⁰ <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/99072>

¹¹ <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/99072>



What role can business play?

Refugees from Ukraine need support to be included in host countries' labour markets. Employment opportunities are key to helping refugees to build lives of dignity, become self-sufficient contributors to the economy and society, and to reduce the risk of them becoming exploited or abused.

Companies can help by hiring refugees from Ukraine, and offering them training and mentorship. More than simply a moral imperative, the business case for doing so is clear and growing:

- Refugees are highly resilient and motivated employees
- Refugee employees are known for lower turnover¹²
- Hiring refugees has been found to strengthen the employer's brand¹³
- Companies with diverse workforces out-innovate and out-perform others¹⁴

What is next for the Ukraine crisis?

Increasing and potentially sudden inflows of refugees from Ukraine into Europe are predicted for 2023, with forecasts ranging from 500,000 to 4 million, according to the International Center for Migration Policy Development. Against a "backdrop of severe war damage, a wounded critical infrastructure, and enormous economic and humanitarian challenges", it says a second large-scale outflow of refugees "cannot be ruled out" for the rest of the year.¹⁵

What this resource is, and who it is for

This resource provides potential employers in Europe with information about the rights that refugees from Ukraine have to work in the following countries: Poland; the Netherlands; Germany; France; and the UK. It includes:

A general overview of the EU's TPD, including the rights it offers, to whom, and for how long

Information on how individual EU Member States have applied the directive, as well as how the UK's alternative national protection schemes work

What employers need to know about the legalities of hiring refugees from Ukraine

More countries will be added to this resource in the near future.



¹² <https://www.tent.org/resources/good-retention-strong-recruitment/>

¹³ <https://www.tent.org/resources/how-hiring-refugees-helps-brands-europe-2023/>

¹⁴ https://coqual.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/31_innovationdiversityandmarketgrowth_keyfindings-1.pdf

¹⁵ <https://www.icmpd.org/news/migration-outlook-report-possible-second-wave-of-refugees-from-ukraine-and-further-weaponisation-of-migration>

What is the Temporary Protection Directive?

The TPD was developed by the European Commission (EC) in 2001 in the aftermath of the conflicts in former Yugoslavia. It is a measure that enables EU Member States to move rapidly to offer protection and rights in the event of a mass influx of displaced people, and to avoid overwhelming national asylum systems.

The TPD remained unused for more than 20 years until it was activated for the first time on 4 March 2022 following Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022. Due to a "clear risk that the asylum systems of EU countries would be unable to process applications within the deadlines set", the European Council unanimously adopted the EC's proposal to activate the directive, granting individuals fleeing Ukraine immediate protection.¹⁶

By implementing the TPD, the EU, which was in deadlock for years over common action over asylum, has shown remarkable and resolute support for Ukraine, as well as its citizens and residents displaced by Russia's invasion.

What rights does the directive offer?

The TPD defines the decision-making procedure needed to initiate, extend, or end temporary protection. It also lists the rights for beneficiaries, which are:

- ✓ A residence permit for the entire duration of the protection (which can last from one to three years, although the EC has recommended that EU Member States grant residence permits for two years from the outset)
- ✓ Appropriate information on temporary protection
- ✓ Guarantees for access to the asylum procedure
- ✓ Access to employment, subject to rules applicable to the profession, national labour market policies, and general conditions of employment
- ✓ Access to suitable accommodation or housing
- ✓ Access to social welfare or means of subsistence if necessary
- ✓ Access to medical care
- ✓ Access to the state education system for people under 18 years old
- ✓ Opportunities for families to reunite in certain circumstances
- ✓ Access to banking services (e.g., opening a basic bank account)
- ✓ The ability to move to another EU Member State before the issuance of a residence permit
- ✓ The ability to move freely to other EU countries (other than the Member State of residence) for 90 days within a 180-day period after a residence permit in the host country has been issued

Being a beneficiary of temporary protection does not preclude the possibility of applying for refugee status at any time.

In June 2022, the EC issued further guidance on how EU Member States can better integrate people under temporary protection into labour markets and support their access to vocational education and training, and adult learning. In particular, it encouraged countries to provide support to employers hiring people fleeing and make allowances for the creation of start-ups.¹⁷

¹⁶ https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/common-european-asylum-system/temporary-protection_en

¹⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_22_3620

▲ National variations

The purpose of the TPD is to establish minimum standards for giving temporary protection. This means that individual EU Member States can go further than what is set out in the directive – for example, by granting more generous rights or widening the scope of who is eligible.

There are other national variations. The directive does not apply to Denmark, for example, due to its opt-out from EU policies (although it has introduced a similar status via national legislation). Because it is no longer an EU Member State, the UK is also not bound by the TPD. Instead, it has introduced alternative national protection programmes.

▲ Who is eligible for temporary protection?

- Ukrainian nationals residing in Ukraine before 24 February 2022 (the first day of Russia's invasion), and their family members
- Stateless people and nationals of other third countries who benefited from international protection or equivalent protection in Ukraine before 24 February 2022, and their family members
- Non-Ukrainian nationals of third countries and stateless people who can prove that they were legally residing in Ukraine before 24 February 2022 on the basis of a valid permanent residence permit issued in accordance with Ukrainian law, and who cannot return in safe and durable conditions to their country of origin. These people are eligible for either temporary protection or adequate national protection, depending on the EU country they are in

The following people shall be considered to be part of a family, so long as the family was already present and residing in Ukraine before 24 February 2022:

- A spouse or unmarried partner in a stable relationship, where the legislation of the EU Member State treats unmarried couples in a way that is comparable to married couples under national immigration laws
- The minor unmarried children of a person or their spouse, without distinction as to whether they were born in or out wedlock, or adopted
- Other close relatives who lived with the family, upon whom they are largely or wholly dependent

The registration procedure for temporary protection varies between countries, but they all require that applicants submit some form of documentation, whether photographic ID, proof of residence, proof of family relationship, and/or something else.

As of October 2023, refugees from Ukraine in Europe who decide to return home will no longer have to de-register from the temporary protection system (which was previously the case). This is to facilitate refugees' possible return to Europe if necessary.

▲ How long is temporary protection valid for?

A person's temporary protection granted by the TPD currently lasts until 4 March 2024.¹⁸ If the reasons for temporary protection remain, the EU Council may vote to extend the directive upon the recommendations of the EC by one more year, until 4 March 2025.

¹⁸ <http://www.informigrants.net/en/post/43937/eu-extends-ukrainian-refugee-protection-to-march-2024>

The TPD was implemented into Dutch law in 2004, meaning it was automatically activated when the EU Council voted to implement the directive on 4 March 2022.

However, the scope of the directive has been extended to include:

Ukrainian nationals who:

- Left Ukraine after 26 November 2021
- Left Ukraine before 27 November 2021 and can demonstrate that they were already a resident in the Netherlands (e.g., because they had a residence permit or applied for asylum)

Non-Ukrainian nationals who:

- Were granted international protection (or equivalent national protection) in Ukraine on 23 February 2022
- Had a valid Ukrainian residence permit on 23 February 2022

Family members of the above-named persons:

- A married or unmarried partner with whom they had a long-term relationship
- Unmarried children under the age of 18
- Other close relatives who lived with the family, upon whom they are largely or wholly dependent

People who can prove their identity, origin, or lawful residence in Ukraine (e.g., a passport, birth certificate, or residence papers) can register with their “municipality” (local authority) or via the Dutch Immigration Service (IND). This entitles them to certain services, such as housing, living expenses, medical care, and education.²³

Once the individual's identity has been established, they will be registered in the municipality's Personal Records Database (BRP), as well as the Basic Provision for Aliens (BVV). They are also automatically known to the IND.

Ukrainian nationals who cannot prove their identity may request assistance from the Ukrainian embassy in the Netherlands.

Non-Ukrainian nationals will need to present as many documents as possible, as without them, they are not covered by the TPD, meaning they must leave the Netherlands and return to the country of their nationality.

▲ Who is eligible to work?

As a general rule, people require a work permit to be officially employed in the Netherlands. However, those who qualify for temporary protection under the TPD can work without one. This means that an employer does not have to request a permit for employees from Ukraine.

In order to obtain a compliant employment contract, a person must:

- Be covered by the TPD
- Be able to show a valid proof of residency (in this case, “a sticker of O-document” that has been issued by IND)²⁴

These requirements also apply if the refugee works as a volunteer or intern.

Employers must notify the Employee Insurance Agency (UWV) at least two working days before an employee from Ukraine starts work. They can do this via a form on the UWV website.²⁵ In the form, the employer must state, among other things, the period and the number of hours of employment, the position, and the salary. If an employer fails to do so, they may be fined.

Employees from Ukraine have the same rights as Dutch employees – for example, the right to a safe workplace, breaks, holidays, and the minimum wage. If an employer has a collective labour agreement, this also applies.

It is currently not possible for refugees from Ukraine to work as self-employed, as the government wants to protect them from abuses such as underpayment.²⁶ However, this may change in the future.

²³ <https://ind.nl/en/ukraine/temporary-protection-directive-ukraine>

²⁴ <https://www.schengenvisainfo.com/news/netherlands-ukrainian-refugees-obliged-to-hold-a-sticker-of-o-document-from-nov-1/>

²⁵ <https://www.uwv.nl/werkgevers/formulieren/melden-tewerkstelling-van-een-tijdelijk-beschermde-werknemer-uit-oukraiene.aspx>

²⁶ https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven_regering/detail?id=2022Z06173&did=2022D12599

▲ Who to contact

Information about employment in the Netherlands can be found through these government and non-governmental bodies:

Employee Insurance Agency (UWV)

URL: <https://www.uwv.nl/overuwv/index.aspx>

Address: Delflandlaan 3, 1062 EA Amsterdam, Netherlands

Tel: (+31) 88-898 92 95, for employers; (+31) 88-898 92 94, for individuals

Dutch Refugee Council (Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland)

URL <https://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl/nl>

Address: Surinameplein 122, 1058 GV Amsterdam, Netherlands

Email: info@vluchtelingenwerk.nl

Tel: (+31) 203 467 200

Online: The Dutch Refugee Council and Start Foundation recently launched RefugeeWork²⁷ – a new platform that connects employers and refugees through skills-based matching

The Tent Partnership for Refugees

URL: <https://www.tent.org/>

Email: info@tent.org

Refugee Talent Hub

URL: <https://refugeetalenthub.com/info/contact>

Address: Boost, Danie Theronstraat 2, 1091 XX Amsterdam, Netherlands

Email: info@refugeetalenthub.com

Refugee Start Force

URL: <https://refugeestartforce.eu/>

Email: info@refugeestartforce.eu

New Bees

URL: <https://new-bees.org/>

Address: Chris Lebeauststraat 4, 1062 DC Amsterdam, Netherlands

Email: communication@new-bees.org

Duizend1

URL: <https://duizend1.nl/en/home/>

Address: Hendrik Figeeweg 3F, 2031 BJ Haarlem, Netherlands

Email: madelon@duizend1.nl

Tel: (+31) 626 066 481

FURSA For Change

URL: <https://www.fursaforchange.com/fursaforcompanies>

Address: Van Hogendorpstraat 893, 1051 CE Amsterdam, Netherlands

Email: info@fursaforchange.com

Tel: (+31) 685 332 856

²⁷ <https://www.refugeework.nl/>