



Bulgaria



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1. General information



Language

The official language of Bulgaria is Bulgarian.



Administrative settings

Bulgaria is a parliamentary republic and Sofia is the capital city. Bulgaria is divided in 28 provinces known as oblasti (oblast in the singular): Blagoevgrad, Burgas, Dobrich, Gabrovo, Haskovo, Kardzhali, Kyustendil, Lovech, Montana, Pazardzhik, Pernik, Pleven, Plovdiv, Razgrad, Ruse, Shumen, Silistra, Sliven, Smolyan, Sofia, Sofia-Grad (Sofia City), Stara Zagora, Targovishte, Varna, Veliko Tarnovo, Vidin, Vratsa, Yambol.



Population

The population in Bulgaria is around 6.8 million people.



Emergency contacts

- ◆ Emergency number is **112** (you will be directed to the respective service)
- ◆ For medical emergencies: **150**
- ◆ For fire emergencies: **160**
- ◆ For police assistance: **166**
- ◆ For emergency road service and assistance: **143** or **146**
- ◆ For traffic police: **165**
- ◆ For pharmacy and medicines information: **178**
- ◆ Country code for Bulgaria is **+359**
- ◆ National telephone line at the Unified Portal for People Affected by the War in Ukraine: **029055555** and **+380 322465075**
- ◆ Crisis line of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: **+359 29482404**
- ◆ Legal protection of refugees and migrants at the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee: **029813318** and **029802049**
- ◆ Access for deaf refugees from Ukraine: **+359 877951718**

All useful contacts are available on the dedicated website <https://ukraine.gov.bg/useful-contacts/>





Driving licence

A foreign resident who does not have a driving licence issued by an EU Member State / the EEA or Switzerland may drive in Bulgaria for up to one year. After that period, the licence must be exchanged for a Bulgarian driving licence (if an exchange agreement exists) or you must take the Bulgarian driving test and a new licence will be issued. Non-EU issued licences may be exchanged if the issuing country has ratified the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic and the licence meets the requirements of this agreement.



Ukrainian embassy in Bulgaria

- ◆ Address: GK 'Ovcha Kupel', 29, Borjana street
- ◆ Phone: **+359 2818 6828**
- ◆ Fax: **+359 29555247**
- ◆ Email: emb_bg@mfa.gov.ua
- ◆ Website: <http://bulgaria.mfa.gov.ua/>



2. Entry to Bulgaria

Holders of a biometric passport can enter visa-free and stay in the country for a total of 90 days within the last 180 days. An extension of this period can be requested once and the Migration Unit of the Ministry of Interior in Sofia or in the regional cities should be contacted in this case. The Migration Directorate of the Ministry of Interior will provide information.

In the absence of a biometric passport, displaced persons from Ukraine can enter with the following document(s): an old passport without biometric data; an ID card; a driving licence; a birth certificate for children up to 14 years; or other official documents that indicate identity, for example, certificates, passes, diplomas, membership cards, bank cards, employment records, property documents, etc. If you do not have any documents, you can enter exceptionally and after an inspection by border police officers, under Article 8 of the Schengen Visa Code.



3. Temporary protection

Bulgaria transposed the Temporary Protection Directive in 2007 with the Law on Asylum and Refugees. The Council of Ministers activated temporary protection for displaced persons from Ukraine in Bulgaria by Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria, No 144 R.E. of 10 March 2022 for granting temporary protection for displaced persons from Ukraine and amending the National Action Plan for Temporary Protection in the Republic of Bulgaria.

The categories of persons entitled to temporary protection are:

- ◆ Ukrainian nationals residing in Ukraine before 24 February 2022;
- ◆ Stateless persons or nationals of non-EU countries other than Ukraine who have been granted international protection or equivalent protection in Ukraine before 24 February 2022;
- ◆ Family members of the above categories of persons; and
- ◆ Stateless persons or non-EU nationals who can prove that they were residing legally 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 permanently to their country or region of origin under safe conditions.

If a person does not fall under one or more of these categories, they will be subject to the general residence of foreign nationals under the Law on Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria. You also have the right to apply for international protection in Bulgaria.

Where can you register for temporary protection in Bulgaria?

- ◆ There are **registration points** where displaced persons from Ukraine are registering and being granted temporary protection, e.g. police stations, border crossing points and Migration Directorate offices.
- ◆ **12 points for meeting Ukrainians are open 24/7** in Burgas, Nessebar, Primorsko, Albena Resort, Balchik, General Toshevo, Durankulak, Dobrich, Kavarna, Shabla, Ruse Dunav Bridge and Central Railway Sofia station.
- ◆ **Deadline for registration:** there is no deadline but registration should occur before the expiry of the 90 days of the visa-free



regime. For citizens of Ukraine and their family members who are not Ukrainian citizens, there is no time limit within which it is obligatory to register in Bulgaria as persons under temporary protection. They may apply for temporary protection in Bulgaria before the expiry of the 90 days of the visa-free regime following their entry into the country.

- ◆ **Temporary protection is granted upon an oral request** to the border police, the State Agency for Refugees or other bodies of the Ministry of the Interior (migration, police) to people who meet the eligibility criteria.
- ◆ **Registration is done in person at the nearest Regional Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior (ODMVR)**, Sofia Directorate of The Interior (SRD) - for Sofia or in one of the Registration and Reception Centres (ROC).
- ◆ The **list of registration for temporary protection** places is available here: <https://aref.government.bg/en/node/514>
- ◆ The **map of registration for temporary protection** places is available here: <https://ukraine.gov.bg/issuance-of-temporary-protection/#map>
- ◆ The government has also established that registration and the issuance of documents to Ukrainian refugees can be carried out not only in the territorial units of the State Agency for Refugees, but also before the police authorities of the place of residence.
- ◆ Upon request for temporary protection, the applicant has to provide information about identity and family ties and will have their photograph taken. If the applicant meets the requirements for granting temporary protection, a registration card will be issued certifying the rights of the person with temporary protection in Bulgaria.
- ◆ The procedure takes 5-15 minutes and temporary protection is provided immediately.

The procedure and the documents needed for registration for temporary protection Bulgaria

Temporary protection is granted upon oral request to the Border Police, the State Agency for Refugees or other bodies of the Ministry of Interior (migration, police), to people who meet the conditions.

Which documents will you receive as a beneficiary of temporary protection?

After registration, the applicant is issued a document called 'Registration card of a foreigner who has been granted temporary protection', which contains a photograph, personal data and the foreigner's personal number (ЛНЧ).



After 1 year, the term of temporary protection may be extended every 6 months up to 3 years. This period could be terminated earlier if the war ends and peace and independence are restored in Ukraine.

Displaced persons from Ukraine who have received registration cards of a foreigner can use these cards fully at all institutions and providers of public services. It also applies to cards issued without a stamp and without a current address.

The registration card of a foreigner is given when registering for temporary protection status and is part of the rights of citizens who have received such a status.

Duration of the temporary protection

After 1 year, the term of temporary protection may be extended every 6 months up to 3 years. This period could be terminated earlier if the war ends and peace and independence are restored in Ukraine.

More information about these rights

Access to the labour market

After the receipt of the registration card, beneficiaries of temporary protection are entitled to work in Bulgaria without a work permit. They can register as job seekers at their permanent or current address and benefit from employment services and vocational training.

Information is available on the:

- ◆ State Agency for Refugees website:
<https://aref.government.bg/bg/node/508>
- ◆ the governmental website 'Bulgaria for Ukraine':
<https://ukraine.gov.bg/access-to-the-labour-market-in-bulgaria-for-citizens-of-ukraine/>

Access to medical care

The State Agency for Refugees provides information on access to medical care (hospitals, doctors, etc.), which is at the same level as for Bulgarian citizens. Important information is available at the following webpages:

- ◆ the State Agency for Refugees website:
<https://aref.government.bg/bg/node/508>
- ◆ governmental websites:
 - ◆ Bulgaria for Ukraine - Medical information:
<https://ukraine.gov.bg/health-information/>



- ◆ Urgent medical help: <https://ukraine.gov.bg/get-medical-help/>
- ◆ Hospitals providing free medical assistance: <https://ukraine.gov.bg/2022/03/03/free-medical-help/>

The Bulgarian authorities are considering an immunisation campaign for Ukrainian adults and children, in light of the various differences in immunisations and vaccines for 11 diseases: tuberculosis, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, hepatitis B, haemophilus influenzae type B, pneumococci, measles, mumps and rubella. For this purpose, and especially for children, a doctor from the regional health inspectorate in the area of residence or a general practitioner of own choice will define an immunisation plan by type of vaccine and number of doses. All necessary documentation will be provided to certify the vaccines given to each child.

Every child from Ukraine who has received temporary protection in Bulgaria, as certified by the personal number, has the right to immunisations. Immunisation certificates will serve also for enrolment in school and kindergarten.

Social welfare assistance and means of subsistence

Upon registration and receipt of a temporary protection card, refugees from Ukraine will be entitled to request social assistance, which is granted by the Social Assistance Directorate at their current address. Social assistance may take the form of periodic monthly assistance and a financial assistance lump sum for meeting occasional health, educational, household and other vital needs of persons and families. The amount is determined according to the material and family situation of the persons requesting the assistance. An application for social assistance can be downloaded here: <https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https://www.bghelsinki.org/web/files/richeditor/articles/ukraine-2022/zayavlenie-za-otpuskane-na-ednokratna-sotsialna-pomosht.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>

Information is available on the governmental website 'Bulgaria for Ukraine' here: <https://ukraine.gov.bg/social-support/>



Education

Information is available on the:

- ◆ State Agency for Refugees website:
<https://aref.government.bg/bg/node/508>
- ◆ the governmental website 'Bulgaria for Ukraine':
<https://ukraine.gov.bg/education/>

The Regional Departments of Education (RUO) accepts applications from Ukrainian citizens who want to enrol children in kindergarten or school.

More information is available here:

<https://aref.government.bg/bg/node/508>

Information on free Bulgarian language courses and children's centres is available here: <https://ukraine.gov.bg/2022/04/26/free-bulgarian-language-courses-and-childrens-centres/>

Beneficiaries of temporary protection are entitled to free education as follows:

- ◆ Free education for children under 18 years. Information on where and how to apply for school is available here:
<https://mon.bg/bg/news/4708>
- ◆ Free kindergarten for children up to 6 years. Information on where and how to apply for kindergarten is available here:
<https://mon.bg/bg/news/4708>

Children under the age of 18 who have sought protection from the war in Ukraine in Bulgaria have the right to access education. The right to education is automatically granted for refugees from Ukraine who are beneficiaries of temporary protection. The Regional Education Departments select the specific school for each child. These are the representations of the Ministry of Education in each of the districts in our country. Parents should visit the Regional Education Department in the area in which they are housed. The residence card is the document to be used by children under the age of 18 to be officially enrolled in kindergartens and schools, and in order to start attending them.

The Ministry of Education website provides a template to be filled in by parents from Ukraine and submitted to the Regional Education Departments: <https://mon.bg/bg/100681> Parents must indicate the child's mother tongue, whether they speak any degree of Bulgarian or other European languages, and their graduation from previous school years. A model of the application for entry of refugee children into a Bulgarian kindergarten or school can be downloaded here:



<https://mon.bg/upload/29835/Pril.1+-+Zaiavlenie+za+priem.docx>

The platform Porsveta 'e-просвета' launched a Ukrainian 'classroom', dedicated to children from Ukraine. It contains more than 160 e-readable versions of textbooks up to Grade 11 in Ukrainian. The platform is available here: <https://www.e-prosveta.bg/>

The books on the platform are accessible free of charge here: <https://www.e-prosveta.bg/za-ukraina/> The books can be used by all teachers and parents involved in the education of Ukrainian children to facilitate their work. Access to the textbooks in 'e-просвета' does not require registration and is done quickly through a specially-created page 'For UKRAINE' available here: <https://www.e-prosveta.bg/za-ukraina/>

See more information and additional educational materials here: <https://ukraine.gov.bg/bg/education/>

The hotline of the Ministry of Education and Science for consultations of Ukrainian citizens is **0800 16111**.

Beneficiaries of temporary protection have the right to receive assistance for accommodation and meals in accommodation places registered in the National Tourist Register: <https://www.bghelsinki.org/bg/news/aktualna-informacija-za-vlizashtite-v-bylgarija-ukrainski-grajdani>. The aid will be provided for a period of up to 3 months. People who have expressed a desire to access the labour market have the same rights and this assistance will be provided for up to 1 month from the date of application. The period of validity of the programme is expected to be from 24 February 2022 to 31 May 2023.

The humanitarian programme for shelter, providing food and accommodation was continued until August 31 and subsequently with one more month, until September 30. The displaced persons from Ukraine are accommodated in places registered in the National Tourist Register and state infrastructure and receive assistance paid directly to the service provider.

If you need temporary free accommodation, please visit this page on temporary free accommodation here:

<https://ukraine.gov.bg/find-accomodation/long-term-accommodation/>

Long-term residential property rental process in Bulgaria

- ◆ Long-term rent in Bulgaria has a minimum duration of 1 year
- ◆ In 95% of the cases, properties are rented out furnished
- ◆ The rental amount per month is usually quoted in EUR, but paid in BGN
- ◆ A deposit equal to one or two months' rent is required. The





deposit is returned once you leave the property and cannot be used for the last month's rental payment. It would cover expenses that may be incurred by the homeowner for damage repairs, deep cleaning, etc.

- ◆ You need to sign a contract, along with an inventory check form.
- ◆ When the tenant is a foreigner, the homeowner must fill out a special declaration and provide you with it.
- ◆ Long-term rental contracts can usually be terminated by either party (homeowner or tenant) with a one-month notice.
- ◆ Utility bills (electricity, heating, water and internet) are usually not included in the rental amount. In most cases the official utility accounts remain registered to the owner, but the bills are covered by the tenant in one of two ways – by paying them to the owner directly or online via epay.bg using the owner's account numbers.



4. International protection

If you apply for international protection whilst being a beneficiary of temporary protection, the procedure for granting international protection is initiated only after the termination or withdrawal of temporary protection. This provision guarantees that after the termination or withdrawal of temporary protection, you will be protected by the principle of non-refoulement, where applicable, and will have the opportunity to raise concerns during international protection proceedings.

In this way, the law guarantees full access to the procedure for granting international protection for persons within the scope of temporary protection.

Additional support

The European Union Agency for Asylum has a platform which provides a current and comprehensive overview of the measures used by EU+ countries to implement temporary protection for persons fleeing the war. It is available here: <https://whoiswho.euaa.europa.eu/temporary-protection>






Annex I . Repository of sources

Service	Website	QR
Emergency contacts	https://www.tourism.government.bg/en/faq/set-telephone-line-information-and-emergency-calls-2014-1015-winter-season	
Embassy of Ukraine in Bulgaria	https://bulgaria.mfa.gov.ua/	
Consulate of Ukraine in Bulgaria	https://www.mfa.bg/bg/embassyinfo/ukraine	
Temporary protection		
Bulgaria for Ukraine	https://ukraine.gov.bg/issuance-of-temporary-protection/ (Information available in English and Ukrainian)	




FAQ's - Questions and answers on Ukrainian citizens coming to Bulgaria	https://ukraine.gov.bg/faq/ (information available in Ukrainian and in English)	
Accommodation		
Bulgaria for Ukraine, information for long-term rent	https://ukraine.gov.bg/find-accomodation/long-term-accommodation/ (information available in English and Ukrainian)	
Bulgaria for Ukraine, information on free accommodation	https://ukraine.gov.bg/properties-list/ (information available in English and Ukrainian)	
Access to labour market		
Bulgaria for Ukraine, Job dashboard	https://ukraine.gov.bg/job-dashboard/	
Ministry of Employment, access to labour market for citizens of Ukraine	https://www.mlsp.government.bg/eng (information available in English and Ukrainian)	



Public health		
Bulgaria for Ukraine, medical information	https://ukraine.gov.bg/get-medical-help (information available in English and Ukrainian)	
Bulgaria for Ukraine, information by Bulgarian Food Agency and simplified procedure on entry of pets	https://ukraine.gov.bg/pets/ (information available in English, Ukrainian)	
List of private practicing doctors in Burgas, Varna, Sofia, Plovdiv	https://ukraine.gov.bg/2022/05/20/list-of-practicing-personal-doctors-in-burgas-varna-sofia-and-plovdiv/	
Ministry of Health	https://www.mh.government.bg/en/ (available in English)	
National Council of people with disabilities	https://www.edf-feph.org/our-members/national-council-of-people-with-disabilities-in-bulgaria/ (information available in English)	

Access to education		
Information on the procedure for admission and education of children and students of preschool and school age from Ukraine in Bulgarian state and municipal kindergartens and schools	https://ukraine.gov.bg/education/ (information available in English, Ukrainian and Russian)	
Ministry of Education and Science in Bulgaria	https://mon.bg/en/ (available in English)	



International protection		
International protection	https://euaa.europa.eu/uk/publications/informatsiya-pro-dostup-do-protsedury-nadannya-prytulku	
State Agency for Refugees with the Council of Ministers (SAR)	https://aref.government.bg/en/taxonomy/term/7 (information available in English as well)	
Additional Information		
UNHCR, Bulgaria, Information for Ukrainian nationals	https://help.unhcr.org/bulgaria/information-for-ukrainian-nationals/ (information available in English)	
Bulgaria for Ukraine, information on unaccompanied children	https://ukraine.gov.bg/information-for-unaccompanied-children/ (information available in English and Ukrainian)	



Information on free legal services for Ukrainians in Bulgaria	https://ukraine.gov.bg/legal-services/ (information available in English, Ukrainian and Russian)	
EUAA resources		
Service	Website	QR
More information on temporary protection is available from the EUAA Information Leaflets for Ukrainians	https://euaa.europa.eu/uk/vidpovid-euaa-ahentstvo-yevropeyskoho-soyuzu-z-pytan-prytulkuna-viynu-v-ukrayini	
More information about temporary protection in specific EU countries – the EUAA Who is Who platform	https://whoiswho.euaa.europa.eu/temporary-protection	



