

GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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Czech Republic - Measures for Ukrainian Refugees (Immigration, Education, Social Security)

The war in Ukraine has had knock-on effects on Ukraine's neighbours. The countries near Ukraine have seen a rise in Ukrainian nationals fleeing the war and seeking refuge or coming to those countries as a temporary stopping point before transiting on to other countries, including the Czech Republic.

The Czech Republic has had to act quickly to modify its policies and practices to accommodate the incoming refugees. The government recently passed three new acts related to the war in Ukraine and Ukrainian refugees entering the Czech Republic.

WHY THIS MATTERS

It appears there is hardly anybody not affected by the ongoing Russian invasion in Ukraine. All countries located near Ukraine are trying to figure out the best approach to handle the large number of unexpected new arrivals.

The Czech Republic has taken steps to provide the refugees with appropriate protections and the recently-enacted policies/rules should help facilitate the entry in the Czech Republic of Ukrainian nationals fleeing the war and aid in their settlement.

Three New Acts

Act no. 65/2022¹ defines the status of "Temporary Protection" and its use in specific scenarios. Temporary Protection is suitable for all Ukrainian nationals and other permanent residents of Ukraine arriving in the Czech Republic without a visa or residence permit. It is being issued in the form of a visa stamp at any of the Regional Centres for Assistance and Help to Ukraine upon request. Since the approval process has been simplified, the visa stamp is issued immediately during the visit, and, as a change in policy and procedure, the customary obligation of arrival registration within 30 days is actually being fulfilled during this issuance. (For prior coverage, see [GMS Flash Alert 2022-042](#), 2 March 2022.)

Act no. 66/2022² defines the conditions for employing nationals who have been granted the status of Temporary Protection. Under the new rules, all holders of Temporary Protection are granted free access to the Czech labour market and thus it is not necessary to apply for a work permit. The employment may be performed immediately after receiving the temporary protection visa stamp. The same applies also for self-employed persons.

Act no. 67/2022³ defines the ways to register children who were granted with Temporary Protection in the Czech education system. It specifies the conditions for children to be accepted into any level of education in the Czech Republic and ways that schools should deal with the increasing amount of such applications.

What Is the Practice?

It is necessary to remind all arrivals from Ukraine to keep both the registration obligation and the issuance of Temporary Protection in mind as those are the most crucial steps defining and setting up all possible benefits that these individuals may receive. To ease the administrative burdens facing the standard authorities, the Czech government introduced the Regional Assistance Centres where all the aforementioned procedures are carried out. Individuals do not have to visit various authorities to handle the different entry, work, and educational administrative procedures, since the new Regional Assistance Centres handle all this.

There are measures aimed at employers willing to hire Ukrainians for whom Temporary Protection has been granted. With the status of free access to the labour market, an individual may work almost immediately without a need of prior approval. However, it is the employer's obligation to register all foreign nationals who they employ with the respective Labour Office. This obligation may not be done later than on the employment start date and, according to the latest update from the Office of Labour Inspection, its completion will be carefully checked by the authorities.

Finally, as a part of the sanctions imposed on the Russian Federation and Belarus, the Czech Republic temporarily prohibited all options open to nationals of these countries in terms of visa applications. Therefore, apart from very limited exceptions, it is currently not possible for Russian and Belarusian nationals to apply for any type of visa or residence permit; in addition, all applications that have not yet been decided will be rejected automatically. This does not apply to those already residing in the Czech Republic; they are free to proceed with their residence as usual.

Summary

The current legislation was introduced for a limited period of time. Its effectiveness will end on 31 March 2023 – all temporary protection visas are thus being issued in accordance with this “expiry” date.

It is expected that an update of this legislation will be introduced. However, it has not yet been decided what the future steps will look like.

FOOTNOTES:

1 Zákon č. 65/2022 Sb. - Zákon o některých opatřeních v souvislosti s ozbrojeným konfliktem na území Ukrajiny vyvolaným invazí vojsk Ruské federace

2 Zákon č. 66/2022 Sb - Zákon o opatřeních v oblasti zaměstnanosti a oblasti sociálního zabezpečení v souvislosti s ozbrojeným konfliktem na území Ukrajiny vyvolaným invazí vojsk Ruské federace.

3 Zákon č. 67/2022 Sb., o opatřeních v oblasti školství v souvislosti s ozbrojeným konfliktem na území Ukrajiny vyvolaným invazí vojsk Ruské federace.

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Contact us

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local GMS or People Services professional* or one of the following professionals with the KPMG International member firm in the Czech Republic:



Vojtech Kotora
Immigration Consultant
Tel. + 420 222 123 834
vkotora@kpmg.cz

Romana Szutanyi
Legal Associate
Tel. + 420 222 123 194
rszutanyi@kpmg.cz

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