

GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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Switzerland - Extension of Temporary Protection for Ukrainians Until March 2025

Given the situation in Ukraine, both the European Union and Switzerland implemented a protection regime for Ukrainian refugees in 2022. The EU has implemented a temporary protected status, and Switzerland, protection status S.

The EU decided on 19 October to extend temporary protection to Ukrainian refugees until 4 March 2025.¹

The Swiss Federal Council decided to uphold protection status for Ukrainians until 4 March 2025, unless the situation changes fundamentally before then. According to a government press release, as of 31 October 2023, there are around 66,000 people from the Ukraine holding the protection status S in Switzerland.²

WHY THIS MATTERS

The decision brings clarity to individuals affected and Swiss employers hiring them in Switzerland. The protection status of Ukrainians will be extended until 4 March 2025, which means that access to education and labour market integration, as well as the offer of language courses, will equally be extended. If the protection status for Ukrainians was not extended, all individuals affected would have been required to leave Switzerland by March 2024 or make sure they are able to secure another permit type in Switzerland through the normal immigration procedures, particularly the ones who are employed by Swiss companies.

Taking Steps to Integrate Ukrainians in Switzerland

Efforts are being intensified to enhance the labour market integration of Ukrainian refugees. It is the Federal Council's objective to double the current employment rate of approximately 20 percent to 40 percent by the end of 2024. To attain this target, the Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP) in collaboration with the Federal Department of

Economic Affairs, Education and Research (EAER), the cantons, and social partners, will develop and implement additional specific measures.³

Updated Policies for Cantons

Moving forward, the cantons will face stricter requirements regarding the utilisation of federal funding, encompassing the provision of language support measures for all Ukrainian individuals seeking protection and a comprehensive assessment of each individual's potential and support requirements.

Cases Where Temporary Protection S Status May Be Denied

The protection status S, however, would not be extended if the individuals concerned no longer faced an unreasonable risk should they return to their home country/country of origin. This would be the case if the situation in the country of origin or in the home country has fundamentally and permanently changed for the better, hence making a safe return possible.

KPMG INSIGHTS

The government has emphasised that fostering market integration can have the effect of reducing government social welfare expenses; but also, that initiatives around education and productive employment are designed to socially integrate Ukrainian refugees in Switzerland while enabling them to preserve and enhance their skills.⁴

If employers, organisations, or individuals have questions regarding temporary protection status S (who is eligible, what entitlements are available, etc.) and require further advice and assistance, they should consult with their qualified immigration counsel or they can contact a member of the Immigration and Employment Law team with KPMG in Switzerland (see the Contacts section).

FOOTNOTES:

1 See [GMS Flash Alert 2023-193](#), 18 October 2023.

2 See (in English) "No lifting of protection status S" on the webpage of Switzerland's State Secretariat for Migration at: <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/sem/medien/mm.msg-id-98405.html> (also available in French, German, and Italian).

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

RELATED RESOURCE:

This article is excerpted, with permission from "KPMG's Immigration News Flash Alert – Protection Status S" (2 November 2023), a publication of KPMG in Switzerland.

Contact us

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