



Ukraine: EU support to help Member States meet the needs of refugees

Brussels, 23 March 2022

Today, the European Commission [outlines](#) the actions being taken to support Member States in meeting the needs of those fleeing the war against Ukraine and its people. Since the unprovoked and unjustified Russian invasion, some 3.5 million people – mainly women and children – have arrived in the EU in the space of just four weeks. Around 6.5 million people are estimated to be displaced internally. The EU's welcome to those who arrived on EU territory is epitomised by the first-ever activation of the Temporary Protection Directive, offering quick assistance and a clear legal status. Beyond the immediate support provided in terms of assistance at the border, reception and civil protection, the EU is today taking further steps to help Member States ensure beneficiaries can effectively access their right to education, healthcare, accommodation and jobs – hallmarks of the European way of life.

The available support includes:

- **Special protection for children:** Children need to be guaranteed swift access to their rights, without discrimination. Their registration upon entry into the EU is key. The EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child provides a comprehensive framework for the protection and the fulfilment of the rights of the child. National coordinators now in place under the **European Child Guarantee** have a key role to play in galvanising and coordinating the effort at a national level and with regional and local authorities. In this context, specific focus is given to children from institutions (such as orphanages), and children at risk of trafficking and abduction. On top of this, the Commission is preparing dedicated Standard Operating Procedures for **transfers of unaccompanied minors**.
- **Access to education:** Helping pupils, students and teachers in these difficult times is a priority. The Commission will bring together Member States to start sharing experiences and identify what is needed to continue the education of displaced children. The [School Education Gateway](#) will serve as a one-stop shop to link to educational material from Ukraine and Member States' material in the Ukrainian language. It will also be essential to draw on the capacities of Ukrainian teachers among the new arrivals in Europe. The [eTwinning community](#) can help groups created in the secure space of the platform to support teachers. [Flexibility in the Erasmus+](#) funding programme will also be used to support the education of refugee students and the integration of staff of higher education institutions who are fleeing the war.
- **Access to healthcare:** Thanks to a solidarity mechanism set up by the Commission, people in urgent need of specialised hospital treatment can be quickly transferred between Member States for such treatments, with 10,000 beds already available. The ECDC monitors the health situation on the ground and has issued [guidelines](#) on the prevention and control of infectious diseases. The Commission, through HERA, also supports the supply of vaccines, with a particular focus on childhood vaccination. Finally, it will take targeted actions on mental health and trauma support for those fleeing the war, including the set-up of a network of Ukrainian-speaking mental health professionals.
- **Access to jobs:** Member States are invited to take measures to help those arriving swiftly take up their right to work, as well as vocational training. This includes informing people about their rights under the Temporary Protection Directive, providing language or business support, and ensuring access to childcare, with a key role for public employment services to act as matchmakers on the labour market. The Commission has added the Ukrainian language to the [EU Skills Profile Tool for non-EU nationals](#) to help Ukrainian job seekers and those who wish to continue their studies showcase their skills and connect with opportunities and guidance on next steps. The Commission will also pilot a **new Talent Pool** to match skills with job vacancies. Other Commission initiatives in this area include developing new guidelines to facilitate recognition of **professional qualifications** obtained in Ukraine and working with social partners to help **inform the private sector** about the rights under temporary protection and the programmes available.
- **Access to accommodation and housing:** To meet immediate needs for suitable

accommodation, a new **"safe homes" initiative** will support Europeans who are making their homes available, mobilising targeted funding and online resources as needed. In addition, the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, as well as Cohesion Policy funds, will be mobilised to strengthen public reception systems. In the longer term, the European Regional Development Fund helps to provide social housing for families and individuals in the community, and the Fund can cover both the purchase and refurbishment of accommodation. The European Social Fund can support community-based services and accommodation, especially for those with special needs, disabilities, children and older people.

Solidarity in action

The Commission has set up a **Solidarity Platform**, bringing together Member States and EU Agencies, to coordinate support to Member States in need. The Platform will help organise the transfers of people within the EU to the Member States that have reception capacity and can also help establish pathways towards non-EU countries that already host significant Ukrainian communities, such as Canada or the United Kingdom. Solidarity has also come from the private sector, with many transport companies organising humanitarian trains and providing free tickets to those fleeing. The EU is helping repatriate non-Ukrainian nationals who were caught up in the war in Ukraine, for instance with the first Frontex-supported humanitarian voluntary return flights from Poland to Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Fast, flexible solutions to support solidarity

The Commission has taken immediate action to help mobilise financial support to Member States hosting those fleeing war in Ukraine. This includes the proposal on the [Cohesion's Action for Refugees in Europe](#) (CARE) and [amendments](#) to the 2014-2020 Home Affairs Funds. Tailor-made support via the [Technical Support Instrument](#) will provide Member States help to build institutional and operational capacity to welcome people fleeing the war in Ukraine, enhancing their social and economic integration and making the best use of available EU funds to provide accommodation for families or unaccompanied children. In addition, available funding under **REACT-EU**, in particular its 2022 tranche of up to €10 billion, can be used by the Member States. To support Member States, and particularly those closest to the EU border with Ukraine, €3.4 billion pre-financing payments under REACT-EU will be [made available](#) to speed up access to funds. Significant funding is also available under the agreed 2021-2027 financial framework from both Home Affairs and Cohesion Policy funds.

Members of the College said

Vice-President for Democracy and Demography, Dubravka **Šuica**, said: *"Children make up around half of all arrivals since the beginning of the war. These children have suffered traumatising experiences and have seen their lives up-ended from one day to another. It is our duty and responsibility to ensure that they are appropriately received and cared for, including children with disabilities. The immediate priority now is to offer these children a place where they can feel secure, and receive swift and indiscriminate, access to psycho-social support, healthcare, nutrition and education. Unaccompanied minors, children separated from their parents and orphaned children need to be immediately registered and supported by child protection services to prevent them from falling prey to trafficking and abuse. With this Communication, we are taking concrete actions in the best interests of these children, every step of the way".*

Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, Margaritis **Schinias** said: *"The temporary protection directive is now in place and is giving millions of people immediate access to medical care, schools, jobs and housing. Today the Commission is outlining a series of further measure to help Member States give life to these rights in practice. From giving a platform to host school materials, to a mechanism for intra-EU medical transfers, an EU Talent Pool for jobseekers and a Safe Homes initiative, we will translate the goodwill of Europeans into practical help for the millions forced to leave their homes."*

Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva **Johansson** said: *"Millions of people have been uprooted and we need to put all expressions of solidarity rapidly into action. The new Solidarity Platform is up and running already, to ensure that, between Member States we can match needs to capacity. Those who flee the war need to have their rights quickly reestablished. They must be able to work, to have access to healthcare, be sure of a roof over their heads and be able to put their children in school."*

Background

In the face of Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military invasion of Ukraine, the EU has made available direct humanitarian aid, emergency civil protection assistance, support at the border, as well as a clear legal status allowing those fleeing the war to receive immediate protection in the EU.

Today's Communication follows from the decision taken on 4 March to introduce temporary protection for persons fleeing the war, which grants them the right to accommodation, healthcare, access to the jobs market and education. It complements the Commission's operational [guidelines](#) to support Member States in applying the Temporary Protection Directive. It also complements the Commission's operational [guidelines](#) on external border management, intended to help Member States' border guards in managing arrivals at the borders with Ukraine efficiently.

For More Information

[Communication](#) on Welcoming those fleeing war in Ukraine: Readyng Europe to meet the needs

[Factsheet](#)

[Website](#) - EU solidarity with Ukraine

[Website](#) - Information for people fleeing the war in Ukraine

IP/22/1946

Press contacts:

[Anitta HIPPER](#) (+32 2 298 56 91)

[Laura BERARD](#) (+32 2 295 57 21)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)

Related media

 [Solidarity for Ukraine - Italy](#)