Questions and Answers on Entering Ukraine and Staying in Germany
(last revised: 08/29/2022)

The following answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ) on entry and residence reflect the Federal Office’s knowledge at the time of publication. The FAQ will be adapted as new, reliable information becomes available.

www.bamf.de/faq-ukraine

Are entry into Germany and temporary lawful residence ensured in the short term?

Persons who are not EU citizens or citizens of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland need a permit to stay in Germany legally for a longer period of time. This permit is called a ‘residence title’ (Aufenthaltstitel). In many cases, this permit must be obtained in advance of entry. A residence title issued before entry at an embassy or consulate general as a sticker in the passport is called a ‘visa’. Residence titles must be applied for.

Because of the special situation in Ukraine, an exception to these rules has been created: The Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community has issued a legal ordinance for this purpose, which temporarily exempts war refugees from Ukraine in the German federal territory from the requirement of a residence title. With effect from 1 September 2022, this derogation is extended again.

The statutory order serves to facilitate the entry and residence of the persons concerned and to give the refugees the possibility and the necessary time to obtain a residence title in the federal territory and thus to protect them from entering into an unauthorised stay.

War refugees from Ukraine, who arrive by 30 November 2022 currently do not need a residence permit for the first 90 days after their first entry to Germany. This regulation is initially limited to 28 February 2023. After 90 days, war refugees need a residence permit. However, the persons concerned do not have an influence on how long the authorities need to process the application, it is enough to submit an application within the 90 days, in which someone is legally residing in Germany without a residence permit. According to the current state, the application must be submitted to the local immigration authority till 28 February 2023. Please inform yourself in time on the website of the city/district administration or the immigration authority whether you need an appointment or if the application of residence permit can be submitted online on time. Once the application is submitted, the status of “permitted residence” will maintain until the decision on the application is taken – even after 28 February 2023. A so-called fictitious certificate will be issued.

The rule that a visa is first required before entering the country for long-term residence does not apply by exception to war refugees from Ukraine under the aforementioned legal ordinance. This means that: According to the current state of affairs, an application for a residence title under Section 24 of the Residence Act (AufenthG; Granting of residence for temporary protection) must be submitted to the competent foreigner’s authority within the period until 31 August 2022.

Important: The initial registration, the distribution, the registration at the registration office and the application for a residence title are separate processes – sometimes they are done together, but this ultimately depends on the local organisation. If in doubt, please ask.
For further information on the procedure in Germany and the application for a residence title, please read the section “What happens after I enter Germany? Where can I register in Germany and where can I get accommodation and meals?”

Can I continue travelling within the EU?
With a biometric passport, Ukrainian nationals can continue to travel within the Schengen area without a visa and stay there for a total of 90 days within 180 days. The same applies if you have already received a residence title, e.g. for temporary protection, even if you do not have a biometric passport. You do not then need a separate visa.

If you want to travel on to apply for temporary protection in another EU Member State, this is currently usually possible without a visa. If in doubt, please enquire about the entry modalities with the state to which you wish to continue your journey. There is currently no European distribution procedure for persons wishing to apply for temporary protection. You then apply for the residence title for temporary protection locally in the new Member State.

What is the effect of the EU Decision taken on 4 March to accept war refugees from Ukraine? What does it mean for Ukrainian citizens, stateless persons, or other third-country citizens?
With the entry into force of the Decision on the admission of war refugees pursuant to Article 5 para. 1 of the Council Directive 2001/55/EC of 20 July 2001 on minimum standards for giving temporary protection, Section 24 of the Residence Act (AufenthG; Granting of residence for temporary protection) is directly applicable to the group of persons mandatorily covered by the Council Decision; this means that from that time onwards, corresponding residence permits can be applied for.

If you belong to the groups of persons referred to in Article 2 para. 1 and 2 of the Decision, you may submit an application for temporary protection to the competent foreigners authority.

This concerns the following groups of persons who have fled Ukraine since 24 February 2022 as a result of Russia’s military invasion:

- Ukrainian nationals who had their residence in Ukraine before 24 February 2022.
- Stateless persons and nationals of third countries other than Ukraine who enjoyed international protection or equivalent national protection in Ukraine before 24 February 2022.
- Family members of these first two groups of persons mentioned (i.e. spouses, unmarried partners, minor unmarried children and close relatives under further conditions), even if they are not Ukrainian citizens.

In addition, according to Article 2 para. 2, stateless persons and nationals of third countries other than Ukraine who can prove that they have resided lawfully in Ukraine before 24 February 2022 on the basis of a valid permanent residence title issued under Ukrainian law and who are unable to return safely and permanently to their country or region of origin.
According to Art. 2 para. 3, further stateless persons and nationals of other third countries may be included who were lawfully residing in Ukraine and cannot safely and permanently return to their country or region of origin.

On this basis, Germany grants temporary protection to non-Ukrainian third-country nationals, but not stateless persons, in accordance with Section 24 of the Residence Act if

- they can prove that they were legally resident in Ukraine on 24 February 2022,
- they cannot return safely and permanently to their country or region of origin, and
- they were not only in Ukraine for a temporary short stay.

This applies in particular to students and persons staying in Ukraine for purposes other than visiting or short-term gainful employment.

In contrast, for example, persons who cannot prove that they were lawfully in Ukraine on 24 February 2022 or who had been in Ukraine as tourists or business travellers do not receive temporary protection under Section 24 of the Residence Act.

In addition, Germany grants protection to the following persons:

- Ukrainian nationals who are already residing in the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany with a residence title that is likely to expire, irrespective of when they entered the country.
- Persons who fled Ukraine not long before 24 February 2022 or who were in the EU shortly before that date (for example, on holiday or for work) and who cannot return to Ukraine as a result of the armed conflict.

What is the Federal Government doing to help German citizens?

Staff of the German embassies are on the ground in the border regions of Poland, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia and the Republic of Moldova to Ukraine to support German nationals.

For Germans still in Ukraine, the Federal Foreign Office has set up a crisis hotline at +49 30 5000 3000.

More information is available at the Federal Foreign Office.

Do COVID-19-related entry restrictions apply? What proof is required?

Since 1 June 2022, entrants no longer need proof that they have been vaccinated, recovered or tested negative. People from a virus variant area are excluded.

Since 11 June 2022, the remaining corona-related entry restriction have been lifted for those entering from third countries. Further information are available at the German Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry of Interior.
What happens after I enter the country? Where can I register in Germany and where do I get accommodation and food?

The procedure is divided into four successive steps: First registration and (in the case of benefit recipients) distribution to a place of residence, as well as registration of the residential address at the destination and application for a residence title.

First registration / distribution to a place of residence (in case of social benefits)
Foreigners who resided in Ukraine on 24 February 2022 as well as Ukrainian nationals who were domiciled or habitually resident in Ukraine on 24 February 2022, but who were temporarily absent from Ukraine on that date, are exempt from the requirement of a residence title until 30 November 2022 for the first 90 days – therefore at the latest exempted from the requirement of a resident permit until 28 February 2023.

For the entire EU and thus also for Germany, at least the following regulation applies: Ukrainian citizens can stay freely in the EU or move within the EU with a biometric passport for 90 days (counted together for all Schengen states).

In this case, initial registration in Germany is not mandatory at first. However, from the moment war refugees from Ukraine ask for state support in Germany in the form of accommodation, care or social benefits, registration is required. To be registered and receive state support, please contact a reception centre at your place of residence or the police.

If you are claiming state benefits, you will also be informed at the time of registration where you will initially live in Germany. This distribution is necessary so that the burden of caring for war refugees is evenly distributed among cities and municipalities. If you claim state benefits and do not have private and permanent accommodation, you will be distributed to a specific location. Only at this location can you apply for a residence title; the authorities responsible for this location are then also responsible for state benefits and for your residence title.

If, on the other hand, you can initially provide for yourself because you are living with friends or relatives, for example, only your details will usually be recorded during the first registration. You can then stay in the accommodation of your choice and will not be distributed.

As proof of your registration, you will usually be issued a so-called proof of arrival. As a general rule, you can contact the social office/job centre, which is responsible for granting benefits. Please inform yourself locally about the local circumstances.

Registering your residential address at your destination / applying for a residence title
Once you have arrived at your destination, please register at the registration office. If you are moving into collective accommodation, you will also receive information there on how to register. Neither registration at a local registration office nor first registration after which a proof of arrival is issued are automatically an application for a residence title. Registration is only the first step. Make
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Sure that the application for a residence title is also made and if in doubt, please ask. If you have received a document called a ‘fictional certificate’ (Fiktionsbescheinigung) or a receipt of an online application for a residence title, you have already submitted an application for a residence title.

Important: The proof of arrival is not yet a residence title. Once it is clear where you will live for the time being, you must apply for the residence title at the foreigners authority responsible for this location. If you claim state benefits, a distribution decision is therefore first required. Only then can you apply for the residence title.

If you move after you have applied for a residence title, please inform the foreigners authority about your new address. For more information, please visit the website of the respective foreigners authority. You can find the nearest foreigners authority in the [BAMF-NAvi](https://www.bamf.de).

Municipal contact points have also been set up at many stations, which you can turn to should you need assistance.

Unaccompanied minors should contact their nearest youth welfare office, where they will take care of all further steps.

For help finding your way in Germany, the portal 'Germany4Ukraine' offers an up-to-date overview of information, accommodation and medical care: [www.germany4ukraine.de](https://www.germany4ukraine.de)

Should Ukrainian nationals apply for asylum?

No, that is not necessary. The required protection will be granted in another, faster procedure. Ukrainian nationals are therefore advised not to apply for asylum. However, the right to apply for asylum at a later stage continues regardless.

As a result of the Decision to admit war refugees pursuant to Article 5 para. 1 of Council Directive 2001/55/EC of 20 July 2001 on minimum standards for giving temporary protection, a residence title pursuant to Section 24 of the Residence Act (AufenthG; Granting of residence for temporary protection) will be granted with immediate effect to the group of persons covered upon application.

Registration upon entry does not constitute an asylum application. The implementation of an asylum procedure requires an application for asylum to be filed at the competent branch office of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees.

For these reasons, filing an asylum application is not required to secure a right of residence or to claim social benefits.

What options do people with Ukrainian citizenship have who have already been in Germany for 90 days or longer?

Ukrainian nationals, who entered Germany visa-free must obtain a residence permit for a further stay within 90 days after their entry. You can apply for a residence permit at the immigration authority of your place of residence, without having been issued a visa outside Germany.
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If you enter the country before 30 November 2022, you will be able to stay legally for the first 90 days without an application and residence permit. Until then, person concerned should not worry about staying in Germany illegally. The 90 days count from the first entry into Germany and do not start to count again after an exit and re-entry.

Please contact the immigration authority in a good time within these 90 days to apply for a residence permit for a further stay. If you enter Germany for the first time on 30 November, you must do so by 28 February at the latest.

Anyone who has already been in Germany for 90 days or more as of 31 August and wishes to remain in Germany must contact the responsible immigration authority for a legal stay until 31 August.

**Can I work in Germany with a residence permit for temporary protection?**

Yes, you can. However, gainful employment must first be permitted by the foreigners authority. When the residence permit is issued, the foreigners authority will already enter in the residence title that gainful employment is permitted, even if no concrete job is in prospect yet. This means that no further work permit from another authority is required.

The foreigners authorities will issue so-called probationary certificates when an application is submitted. These bypass the residence law until the actual residence title can be issued and granted. The foreigners authority will also enter "gainful employment permitted" in the probationary certificate. Even with this probationary certificate, it is therefore possible to work in Germany on a self-employed basis or as an employee. Special professional access requirements (such as a licence to practise medicine or a permit for a trade requiring a licence) naturally apply to persons with a temporarily protection status just like to everyone else. But the procedures for the recognition of foreign professional qualifications are also open to those affected, just like everyone else.

Persons with a residence permit for temporary protection in Germany are also eligible for advice and placement services in accordance with Social Code III (SGB III) through the employment agencies.

**As a war refugee from Ukraine, do I receive social benefits and medical care in Germany?**

Since 1 June 2022, if there is a need for help, everyone who is covered by the scope of Section 24 of the Residence Act (AufenthG – Residence Granting for Temporary Protection) receive social benefits in accordance with the Second or Twelfth Book of the Social Code (SGB II or SGB XII) and no longer with the Asylum Seeker Benefits Act.
In the case of those who have received a residence permit in accordance with Section 24 of the Residence Act or a fictitious certificate or a substitute certificate corresponding to its content before June 1, 2022, the storage of their data in the Central Register of Foreigners is sufficient; in these cases, the identification treatment must be carried out by October 31, 2022.

The necessary registration and/or identification services take place e.g. in reception facilities or immigration authorities.

With reference to SGB II, compulsory insurance in statutory health insurance and social long-term care insurance is crucial. Recipients of social benefits according to SGB XII, who are not legally insured, receive benefits corresponding to those of the statutory health insurance, as well as benefits in case of need of care.

As a Ukrainian war refugee, can I participate in advisory services and language courses?

The Federal Government would like to make it easier for you to arrive and settle in Germany. There are several offers available to you for this purpose, even if it is not yet clear how long you will stay in Germany. To make it easier for you to find your way around Germany for a start and to help meet the need for advice, the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Home Affairs has decided to open up the following courses and services to persons from Ukraine seeking protection who have a residence permit under Section 24 of the Residence Act (AufenthG; Granting of residence for temporary protection):

- Federal Government Migration Counselling Service for Adults (Migrationsberatung für Erwachsene, MBE)
- Initial Orientation Courses for Asylum Seekers (Erstorientierungskurs, EOK)
- Programme ‘Migrantinnen einfach stark im Alltag’ (MiA courses for female migrants)
- Integration Courses
- Occupational Language Courses (Berufssprachkurs, BSK)

The Migration Counselling Service (MBE) is an individual counselling service that you can turn to with your personal questions about settling in Germany, e.g. about finding a place to live, a job or a doctor.

Initial orientation courses (EOK) provide an overview of life in Germany and teach simple German language skills for topics such as e.g. health, work and education.

MiA courses are aimed specifically at women and support them in getting started and moving on in Germany. The participants receive relevant information for everyday life, e.g. how the school and education system in Germany works or what opportunities there are for vocational training and continuing education.

Integration courses are much more extensive and always consist of a language course and an orientation course. In the language course, you will learn the basics of the German language in order to be able to write
letters and emails, for example, and to apply for a job. The orientation course is about German history, culture and the legal system, for example. In addition to general integration courses, there are also special courses, e.g. for women as well as for young people, and intensive courses. At the end of the integration course you will take a language test as well as a final test on living in Germany and, if you pass the tests, you will receive a certificate.

Occupational language courses (BSK) build on the integration courses and prepare participants for the world of work in Germany. In addition to the basic course, there are also courses with different target language levels.

Participation in the courses and counselling services is generally free of charge and possible with proof of your origin. Ukrainian war refugees can generally take part in all courses funded by the BAMF. You can register for the integration and occupational language courses by applying to the BAMF, and you can register directly with the course providers for the initial orientation and MiA courses as well as migration counselling.

Please go to www.bamf.de/eok for a list of EOK course providers and to www.bamf.de/mia for MiA course providers.

The BAMF-NAvI makes it easy to find out where integration courses and migration counselling are available in your area.

Detailed information on all courses and services as well as on the registration modalities can be found in our information leaflet (German language only): 'Welcome Service and Language Support for Refugees from Ukraine’

Are war refugees who have already received a residence title under Section 24 of the Residence Act (AufenthG; Granting of residence for temporary protection) allowed to travel back to Ukraine, e.g. to collect property left behind, to visit someone, etc.?

If you already have a residence title for temporary protection in Germany, it expires under the following conditions:

- you are leaving Germany not only for a temporary reason or
- you are absent from Germany for more than six months.

If you already have a residence title for temporary protection in Germany, it is generally possible for you to travel abroad and thus also to your country of origin (please note any entry regulations of the respective destination countries). You can re-enter Germany at any time during the validity of the residence permit and with a valid travel document.
Please note: Persons who are staying in Germany and have applied for a residence permit are issued with a so-called fictional certificate. This does not entitle the holder to travel within the Schengen area without a visa, as no residence title has yet been issued. The fictional certificate therefore does not replace a residence title and therefore does not allow re-entry after a stay abroad (although entry is currently permitted until 30 November 2022 via the Ukraine Transitional Residence Regulation without a residence title). The same applies, of course, to other official certificates of registration or applications as a war refugee from Ukraine, which are issued instead of a fictional certificate.

What regulations apply to Russian nationals who are currently unable to leave Germany, for example because flights have been cancelled? Are there any support services for these people?

In principle, their stay is only permitted for the duration of the respective visa or other residence title; there are currently no special regulations. If a return journey by land or via other third countries is out of the question, the competent foreigners authority should be contacted to extend the respective visa or to apply for a residence title in Germany.

In principle, third-country nationals who are legally and presumably permanently resident in Germany and find themselves in an emergency situation are entitled to social security benefits. If there is no entitlement under this provision, bridging benefits and the reasonable costs for the return journey can be granted until the person leaves Germany, for a maximum of one month. However, if a third-country national without the required residence title continues to stay in Germany and is therefore obliged to leave the country, he or she is entitled to benefits under the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act. The locally responsible social welfare office will check whether you are entitled to benefits.

I am a Russian citizen, am already in Germany and have a residence title for Germany (e.g. residence permit or settlement permit). Do I have to expect to be expelled from Germany due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine?

No. The situation in Ukraine has no influence on the continuation of your right of residence, unless you are one of the few persons for whom sanction decisions apply.

I am staying in Germany for a limited period of time, e.g. as a student. Will my residence title as a Russian citizen (e.g. visa or residence permit) still be extended?

Yes. The situation in Ukraine has no influence on the granting or extension of your residence title. Please contact the competent foreigners authority on site if you have any questions regarding the extension of your residence.

You can find the nearest foreigners authority in the BAMF-NAvI.

What applies to Jewish immigrants from Ukraine with a letter of acceptance?

Applicants who have already received a letter of acceptance but have not yet been able to apply for a visa can also complete the visa procedure in neighbouring countries.

More information on this is available on this website.
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Where can late repatriates from Ukraine get further information?

For late repatriates from Ukraine, the Federal Office of Administration (Bundesverwaltungsamt, BVA) has set up a special hotline at +49 22899358 20255 that is open from Monday to Thursday from 8 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. and Friday until 3 p.m., and at weekends from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

More information on this is available on the BVA's [website](#) (German language only).