

# Mobility: Immigration alert

February 2024



## Bulgaria

### Bulgaria extends temporary protection for Ukrainian nationals and residents until March 2025

#### Executive summary

Bulgaria recently extended the temporary protection status for Ukrainian nationals, their families and other individuals impacted by the armed conflict in Ukraine until March 2025 and clarified the procedure for these individuals to re-register their documents. In addition, Bulgaria extended the Programme for Humanitarian Assistance to Displaced Persons from Ukraine under Temporary Protection until 30 April 2024.

#### Background

Under the TPD, Ukrainian citizens and residents who fled Ukraine after 24 February 2022 may be eligible to receive various rights in an EU country that has adopted the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD), including the right to work, reside and receive medical assistance. The TPD was initially in effect until 4 March 2023 and then extended until 4 March 2024. In September 2023, the Council of the European Union proposed [extending](#) the TPD until 4 March 2025.

#### Key developments

On 25 January 2024, Bulgaria's Council of Ministers issued Decision No. 54, which extends the TPD in Bulgaria until March 2025. Effective 1 February 2024, the authorities began the procedure for re-registering impacted individuals who sought to extend their stay in Bulgaria. The State Agency for Refugees published guidance regarding the extension procedure for documents issued under the TPD. To apply to extend their registration cards, holders must visit the registration and

reception centers of the State Agency for Refugees or the Regional Directorates of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Metropolitan Directorate of Internal Affairs for Sofia on or before 31 March 2024. Individuals must present a valid passport and their existing card and file an extension application. After 31 March 2024, extension applications will be accepted only at the centers of the State Agency for Refugees.

As of February 2024, almost 173,000 Ukrainian nationals have registered for temporary protection in Bulgaria. The latest extension is expected to impact approximately 65,000 individuals, whose registration cards are set to expire in March 2024.

Additionally, Bulgaria's Council of Ministers extended the Programme for Humanitarian Assistance to Displaced Persons from Ukraine under Temporary Protection until 30 April 2024. Under this program, qualifying individuals impacted by the conflict in Ukraine are eligible for certain benefits in Bulgaria, including free accommodation in registered hotels. Currently, those who hold temporary protection status can apply for one-time assistance.

#### Impact on employers

The extension of the TPD will benefit impacted individuals, who will be eligible to continue working in Bulgaria without interruption until March 2025, and the organizations that employ them.

## Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

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