4 March 2024

The EU must provide future-proof solutions for people displaced from Ukraine

With temporary protection set to expire on 4 March 2025, EU leadership is urgently needed to ensure millions of people displaced from Ukraine have continued access to rights and inclusion in Europe. **As 131 civil society organisations, we call on the EU to propose timely, coordinated, collective and future-proof options for the transition out of temporary protection.** Without a common European approach, millions of people risk becoming undocumented and losing access to rights, protection and other essential services, national authorities will likely be overwhelmed, and much of the inclusion work of governments, municipalities, NGOs and volunteers risks being undone.

Act now to prevent hardship later

With less than one year of protection remaining, people are now left with the practical and emotional impacts of an uncertain future. Some face the prospect of registering children for school without knowing if they can complete the school year, others struggle to secure work or housing as their permits expire in March 2025. This uncertainty may trigger premature returns to Ukraine - where many people lack access to essential services and face daily safety risks. It could also result in mass applications for asylum and other residence permits, leading to backlogs and delayed access to protection.

- ➢ **The EU must ACT NOW to plan and coordinate the transition out of temporary protection,** in order to prevent unsafe returns, loss of residence status, or unnecessary pressure on migration systems, and to allow authorities, civil society and displaced people to prepare.
- ➢ **Displaced people must be informed and consulted** on the options available to them.

Pursue a united EU response

If temporary protection ends without a collective European response, access to rights for people who fled Ukraine may vary drastically across Member States. Migration ministers noted in January that *"adopting 27 different national legislations on this topic would be counterproductive, result in secondary movements, and cause uncertainty."* Without common standards, there is a risk of a race to the bottom on rights and services. In many countries there are no or few appropriate permits available. This could particularly disadvantage individuals in vulnerable situations - such as stateless persons, refugees and asylum seekers who fled Ukraine, Roma, people with care-giving responsibilities, and older people - who risk losing their current access to rights, being redirected to ill-fitting residence permits, or becoming undocumented.

- ➢ The EU should prioritise a **COMMON and COORDINATED** approach to prevent people from becoming undocumented or switching to permits with fewer or different rights.
- ➢ In parallel, Member states should **ensure access to residence permits on various grounds**, including asylum, work, the principle of *non-refoulement* and private life.

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Look to the future

If the above measures cannot be taken in time**, a further extension of temporary protection - as is currently under discussion - would be a vital stopgap to ensure continued access to residence status and rights.** However, piecemeal, yearly extensions of temporary protection risk perpetuating a state of insecurity that hinders displaced people from planning for their future, whether in Ukraine or in the EU. The EU has a range of options for more durable solutions that should be explored in parallel to any extension.

- ➢ The EU should pursue **FUTURE-PROOF** solutions that **offer at least the same standard of rights as temporary protection, and which protect at least the same groups of people.**
- ➢ Solutions should be developed that can benefit other temporary protection holders in future.
- ➢ **These solutions should be informed by the needs and experiences of displaced people** as well as civil society and other stakeholders assisting them.

List of signatories:

European and international organisations

ADRA Europe
AMERA International
Amnesty International
Asociatia Sprijin Pentru Comunitatea Ucraineana
CARE International
Caritas Europa
Child Circle
Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME)
Danish Refugee Council
EASPD
EuroMed Rights
European Evangelical Alliance
European Lawyers in Lesvos (ELIL)
European Network Against Racism (ENAR)
European Network on Statelessness
HIAS Europe
Housing Europe
International Rescue Committee
La Strada International
Médecins Du Monde - International Network
Methoria
Migration Policy Group
Missing Children Europe
OpenEmbassy

Oxfam
PICUM - Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants
Social Platform
SOLIDAR
SOS Children's Villages International
The European region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA-Europe)
Vitsche e.V.

National organisations

Aditus Foundation
ADPARE
ANAIS Association
ARSIS Association for the Social Support of Youth
Association for Integration and Migration, SIMI
Association for intercultural work
Association for Legal Intervention
Better Days Greece
CARUSEL Romania
Centre for Peace Studies
Centrum pro integraci cizinců, o. p. s.
Clare Immigrant Support Centre
CoMensha
Community Law & Mediation
Consortium of Migrants Assisting Organizations in the Czech Republic
CSO "La Strada-Ukraine"
Defence for Children - The Netherlands
Diakonie ČCE-SCPS
Doras
Dutch Council for Refugees
Equilibrium NGO (Громадська організація "Точка рівноваги")
EQUITA
FairWork
Feminist Lodge
Finnish Refugee Advice Centre
Forum réfugiés
Fundatia Inima de Copil
Foundation for Access to Rights - FAR
Foundation for Migrants "Dobry Start" in Memory of A. G. Farah
Fundacja HelpNowHub ГО Позитивні жінки Херсон
Fundacja Imago
Greek Council for Refugees
Greek Forum of Migrants
Helping Irish Hosts

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Humanitarna organizacija Jesuit Refugee Service
Immigrant Council of Ireland
Initiative for Social Change ARSIS
Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Malta
Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Romania
Jewish Representative Council of Ireland (Ukraine Support Programme)
Kalyna - Komunitní uprchlické centrum, z. s.
Kerk in Actie
KISA (Cyprus)
Kopin (Malta)
Kuchnia Konfliktu / Conflict Kitchen
LGBT Ireland
MigAid (A Segítők Egyesület)
Migrant Rights Centre Ireland
Migration Consortium
Most pro o.p.s.
Movimiento por la Paz (MPDL)
NewBees
NGO Bilozerka center for regional development (Ukraine)
NGO Zhiva-Ya
Nordic Ukraine Forum
OPORA Foundation
ORBIT
Organization for Aid to Refugees (OPU)
PA International Center "La Strada" Moldova
PATCHWORK Association for Immigrant Families of Persons with Disabilities
People in Need
Right to Protection
SOFT tulip Foundation
SolidarityNow
Spark 15
Stichting voor Vluchtelingen-Studenten UAF
Swedish Refugee Law Center
The Federation of Nongovernmental Organisations for Social Services - FONSS
The Human Rights League
The Open Doors Initiative
United For Changes
Vatra Psycho Social Center
WA Sphere (ГО "ХЖО "Сфера")
Willi Eichler Akademie e.V.
Women in Media NGO
ГО "Зв'язок "
ГС "ІМД "Відкрите суспільство"
Жіночий Центр "Підтримка, Захист та Трубота"
Когорта

4 March 2024

Національна Рада Жінок України
Хмельницька обласна ГО Подільський центр "Гендерна рада"
Школа Рівних Можливостей

Local and community groups

ABBA Student Association
BIPoC Ukraine and friends in Germany
Blue Door Education
Cairde
Chief Rabbinate of Poland
Cultur Migrant Centre
CUSBU: CommUnities Support for BIPoC Refugees from Ukraine
Diakonie ČCE - středisko Západní Čechy
Jewish Community of Łódź
Migrant Women Associations Malta
Migrationsrat Berlin e.V.
NestingPlay
Romodrom, o.p.s.
South Kerry Development Partnership CLG
Waterford Area Partnership
Women for Integration and Wellbeing
Yoga and Sport with Refugees