

## CONSULTATIONS FOR CITIZENS OF UKRAINE

On phone number 0800 88 001 the call center of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy provides free consultations in Bulgarian, Russian and English to Ukrainian citizens on access to the labor market in Bulgaria and opportunities for social support for children and families every working day from 09:00 to 05:30 pm.

### **Access to the labor market**

The Asylum and Refugees Act introduces the requirement of Art. 12 of Council Directive 2001/55 / EC of 20 July 2001 on minimum standards for the granting of temporary protection that foreigners under temporary protection have the right to work and vocational training. It follows that Ukrainian citizens under temporary protection could work in Bulgaria without a work permit, register as jobseekers at an employment office at their permanent or current address and benefit from employment services and vocational training.

### **Ukrainian citizens under temporary protection have the right to:**

1. to remain on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria
2. to work in Bulgaria without a permit for access to the labor market, as well as to take vocational training courses
3. of appropriate accommodation or of means of accommodation if necessary
4. of social assistance
5. of medical aid in case of emergency
6. to return freely to their country of origin.

### **Citizens of Ukraine can gain access to the Bulgarian labor market in order to work under the following simplified procedures:**

Ukrainian citizens who have the necessary documents proving Bulgarian origin can start working immediately (even before they have received a residence permit) only by registering with the Employment Agency. For this purpose, they must have an employment contract with a local employer for a period of at least 6 months. Additional information about the procedure can be found here / <https://www.az.government.bg/pages/zaetost-na-lica-ot-bulgarski-proizhod/>.

Ukrainian citizens have the right to seasonal work of up to 90 days in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, hotels and restaurants in Bulgaria without interruption within a period of 12 months. For this purpose, registration with the Employment Agency is required on the basis of a declaration submitted by the employer. Additional information about the procedure can be found here: <https://www.az.government.bg/pages/sezonna-zaetost-do-90-dni/>.

Ukrainian citizens who have applied for international protection and the proceedings have not been completed within three months of submitting the application for reasons beyond their control have the right to work in Bulgaria without a work permit until the procedure is completed. Declaring the employment of Ukrainians in these cases is done by the local employer, who hired them under an employment contract. Additional information can be found here: <https://www.az.government.bg/pages/4ujdenci-po-chl29-bejanci/>.

Ukrainians and members of their families granted asylum or international protection in Bulgaria have the right to work in Bulgaria without a permit to access the labor market. People who have refugee or humanitarian status can register as jobseekers with the Labor Office at their permanent or current address.

### **Labor rights in Bulgaria**

The control bodies of the General Labor Inspectorate are ready to advise Ukrainian citizens on their labor rights. For this purpose, an email has been created where they can ask their questions related to the Bulgarian labor legislation, as well as submit signals if they are already employed and believe that their rights have been violated.

The e-mail is [BGhelp.Ukrainians@gli.government.bg](mailto:BGhelp.Ukrainians@gli.government.bg) and is published on the website of the Labor Inspectorate, in the contacts section, as well as in the section "For employers and workers", section "Work of foreigners on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria". The experts of the General Labor Inspectorate will answer the questions in a timely manner on the mentioned e-mail, and for this purpose feedback contacts should be provided.

Bulgarian employers who want to hire citizens of Ukraine should provide them with equal working conditions with their colleagues from Bulgaria, and they can not be less favorable than the minimum set in labor legislation.

### **Child Protection**

For children who arrive in Bulgaria accompanied by their relatives or friends, support is provided in a family environment. For unaccompanied children, the guiding principle is to provide support in a family environment, and when staying outside the family, the sequence of protection measures is observed (accommodation in a family of relatives or friends, in a foster family and, as a last resort, accommodation in a social or integrated health and social service for residential care). Each case is based on an individual approach, compliance with regulatory procedures and, above all, an up-to-date assessment of the possibility for the child to take both adequate and more favorable protection measures.

Given the specific risk situation in which these children find themselves, the lack of documents (in many cases) and the lack of parental care for their support, all necessary measures and activities for child protection will be taken, as well as additional funds will be provided to support to the people who will take care of these children.

In cases of unaccompanied Ukrainian children, the Social Assistance Directorate takes the following actions:

1. investigation of relatives or a suitable foster family with whom they may be accommodated
2. temporary accommodation, including in the cases of emergency accommodation outside the family until the issuance of a court decision
3. granting of monthly allowances / funds for children placed for upbringing with relatives or close ones or in foster families
4. one-time assistance for meeting a certain need, which has arisen exceptionally and is not related to the maintenance of the child

All children, foreign nationals and refugee children at risk have the right to use various types of social services for children. Their parents or legal representatives also have this right. One of the most important forms of social services for these people is the provision of adequate psychological support.

## **Support from the State Agency for Child Protection**

Ukrainian citizens can turn to the State Agency for Child Protection (SACP), which has direct contact with all 147 social assistance directorates and child protection departments in Ukraine, for assistance in child support and caregivers in the country of the Social Assistance Agency, who work on site with children, families and their relatives.

Every Ukrainian citizen can contact the SACP in a way convenient for him:

- on site at the State Agency for Child Protection - Sofia, 2 Triaditsa Str .;
- in the territorial structures of the SACP:
  - Burgas, 7-9 Aleksandrovska Street;
  - Varna, 76 G Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd., room 515;
  - Vratsa, 2 Stoyan Zaimov Str., 4th floor, room 14;
  - Plovdiv, 1 Nikola Mushanov Square, rooms 122 and 134;
  - Ruse, 6 Svoboda Square, room 502.
  - Stara Zagora, 8 Stephan Karadga
- by e-mail: [sacp@sacp.government.bg](mailto:sacp@sacp.government.bg).

## **National telephone line for children**

Available around the clock, free of charge and throughout the country for consultations on cases with children is the National Children's Hotline of the SACP with harmonized European number 116 111. The line is part of the Global Network of National Hotlines for Children - Child Helpline International and cooperates with lines in 140 countries.

The consultants of the National Telephone Line for Children 116 111 are ready at any time, seven days a week to provide psychological support and give the necessary consultation to Ukrainian children and citizens arriving in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.

The line is the fastest connection with the child protection departments in places in the country. There is a cooperation agreement with the emergency number 112, as well as with the regional police departments, the regional departments of education, municipalities, social services and others.

## **Social support**

Ukrainian citizens under temporary protection are entitled to social assistance. After registering at the current address in Bulgaria, they can apply to the relevant directorate "Social Assistance" for the following types of social benefits:

- One-time social assistance in the amount of up to BGN 375.
- One-time targeted social assistance for issuing an ID card. The amount of aid is determined individually depending on the necessary costs, with a maximum amount of up to BGN 75.
- Monthly social assistance. The right to this assistance possess people and families whose income for the previous month is lower than the individually determined differentiated minimum income and meet the statutory conditions.
- Targeted heating aid - granted for a period of five months for the upcoming heating season. The application period is from July 1 to October 31.

- People who receive monthly allowances and targeted heating allowances are provided with health care at the expense of the state budget.
- People who have no income or personal property are entitled to targeted funds for diagnosis and treatment in hospitals.

### **Rights of people with disabilities**

Ukrainian citizens with disabilities under temporary protection have the same rights as Bulgarian citizens with disabilities, provided that the degree of permanently reduced working capacity or the type and degree of disability are determined by the legislation in force in the Republic of Bulgaria.

### **Social services**

The main types of social services are: information and counseling, advocacy and mediation, community work, therapy and rehabilitation, training for skills acquisition, support for acquiring work skills, day care, residential care, shelter, assistant support. Social services are provided according to the desire and personal choice of the person.

People wishing to use a social service state their wish orally and / or in writing on the spot, by telephone or electronically to the Social Assistance Directorate at the place of residence.

Social shelter services are provided in shelters, temporary accommodation centers and crisis centers. These centers provide temporary accommodation (for a certain part of the day) for homeless people and families and temporary accommodation in a safe environment for people in crisis situations and for victims of domestic violence and victims of trafficking. The various centers also provide specialized information and counseling services, advocacy and mediation, therapy and rehabilitation, and skills training. Assistance is also provided for inclusion in qualification and retraining courses and other training courses and / or for finding a job. These are services that are also suitable for stateless people or those seeking international protection.

Stateless persons and applicants for international protection who are unable to verify their current address for objective reasons may use social services at their place of residence.

In all cases of urgent need for support, people can use services without prior referral, and the relevant Social Assistance Directorate immediately takes the necessary referral actions to use social services. When the person is accompanied by a child and is his / her parent or guardian, the service is also provided to the child. When a parent or guardian needs urgent support but is accompanied by their child, social services are also provided to the child.