**The Ukraine Crisis – Email to employees**

**This email should help you to communicate with any employees who are concerned about friends and family in Ukraine and Russia. Please get in touch if you need any other help with the crisis.**

Dear colleagues,

I am writing to those of you with family or friends in Ukraine, and other countries directly impacted by the war. It is a difficult and frightening time, and they have our absolute sympathy, as do you.

The situation is complex and fast moving, but we appreciate that you may need to understand whether and how they can find safety outside of Ukraine. We cannot advise on the entirety of the journey - there are too many moving parts - but we wanted to help you understand the key visa and immigration considerations.

**Considerations for Ukrainian friends and family**

* Limits have been placed on who can leave, with men aged 18 to 60 and women in strategic roles (e.g., doctors) expected to stay. The authorities are granting limited exceptions.
* Visa services are largely closed in Ukraine but many people have passed into bordering countries.
* People moving across borders will be expected to hold certain documents. You can find those documents [here](https://www.fragomen.com/a/web/r3dJqmCGFu8VLQdci5yiwc/safe-exit-options-ukraine.pdf).

Most European Union Member States are in the Schengen area, which Ukrainian citizens can enter without a visa. Usually, biometric passports are needed to cross borders, but in these circumstances border agencies are flexible about documentation requirements. In some border countries, those without biometric passports are issued a temporary status or documents, which may impact movement on to another country from there. The right to stay on in the arrival country or to travel with the temporary documents is still developing.

* Individuals fleeing the Ukraine war can claim Temporary Protection status in all European Union countries, which grants a residence permit and access to social rights, including the right to work (with labour market testing in some countries), health care and schooling. This status will grant the same rights in all EU member states, but the processes will differ country by country. Read more about these [processes here](https://www.fragomen.com/insights/european-unionukraine-eu-member-states-start-implementing-temporary-protection-directive.html).
* Rules differ in other jurisdictions outside of the EU. Ukrainian citizens must hold a visa to enter the UK. Visas will not be available to everyone and the rules are complex. You can find more information [here](https://www.gov.uk/world/ukraine).
* In some cases, people are looking to move to countries outside of Europe where a visa is not needed. You can find a list of those countries [here](https://www.fragomen.com/a/web/6UxpTksPYTEUmyAct8JpqW/ukraine-crisis-table-of-ukrainian-visa-exemptions-022822.pdf). Please remember that those stays will often be limited to between 90 and 180 days. Consideration should be given to whether they will be able to extend their stay once in country.

**Other considerations**

This email concentrates on Ukrainian citizens but understand that people from many countries are caught up in the crisis. You may also have family and friends who want to leave Russia.  The situation there is also complicated. Some countries have suspended new visa issuance in Russia, and general banking sanctions may prevent payment for their applications. Flights are limited and could also pose problems.

Please remember that the situation is moving quickly and arrangements can change without warning. Please be sure to research your decisions before taking any action.