

Ukraine Crisis FAQ - General considerations

Note - This FAQ is concerned with visas and immigration.

UKRAINE

Top Q&A

Q. Is anyone prohibited from leaving Ukraine?

A. Yes, currently men aged 18 to 60 and women in strategic roles cannot leave.

Q. What are common travel routes out of Ukraine?

A. Many visa centres are closed and there are no commercial flights from Ukraine. Most people have left Ukraine through land borders into Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. Typically, certain documents are expected for border crossing that can be found [here](#).

Q. What if someone doesn't have their passport or other documents?

A. The European Commission has published operational guidelines for management of the EU/Ukraine border, including the temporary relaxation of controls to allow Ukrainian citizens and legal residents to enter the European Union on humanitarian grounds, including facilitation for individuals who may not possess necessary entry documentation. In this event, Member States should provide an arrival declaration and/or provisional travel documents. Temporary travel documentation may not permit travel between EU Member States.

Q. Where can Ukrainian nationals travel without a visa?

A. You can view visa-free options for Ukrainian nationals [here](#). Do note that every European Union country will allow Ukrainians to enter without a visa.

At the border

Q. With airspace closed to civilian flights, what countries can people travel to by land?

A. Ukraine has land borders with Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. All countries currently have border crossing checkpoints open. This [document](#) should help to identify information about requirements to cross land borders from Ukraine to neighbouring countries. Ukrainian nationals may consider onward travel to countries where they can enter visa-free as a visitor. A list of such countries can be found [here](#). Note that Romania and Moldova are not part of the Schengen area.

Q. What documents should I take with me if I can?

If possible, Ukrainian nationals (principal and dependant) leaving Ukraine should try at a minimum to carry the following documents, ideally all in original form. This will help when crossing borders or to subsequently apply for a visa or permit in another country. We understand and expect countries to be flexible where people have been unable to collect these documents, but this flexibility will vary by country:

- ▶ Biometric passport;
- ▶ Diplomas;
- ▶ Reference letters – from current and past employers;
- ▶ Assignment letter or contract from current employer;
- ▶ Updated CV/**résumé**;
- ▶ Marriage certificate;
- ▶ Birth certificate for all family members;
- ▶ Financial statements (e.g. bank statements showing savings or regular income);
- ▶ Health insurance valid for countries that will be visited; and
- ▶ COVID-19 vaccination certificates.

Q. What about non-Ukrainian citizens who typically require a visa to enter bordering countries (e.g. to Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania)?

A. Border guards can apply relaxed rules for third-country nationals trying to enter bordering countries. When considering whether to relax requirements, they will take into consideration the following:

- ▶ citizenship of an EU Member State;
- ▶ an already existing residence status in an EU Member State;
- ▶ the nationality of the traveller (in particular whether the third-country is visa required or visa exempt);
- ▶ the residence status in Ukraine of third-country nationals not holding Ukrainian citizenship;
- ▶ the vulnerability and age of travellers, having particular regard to the best interest of the child;
- ▶ any available information on security threats, such as terrorism or organised crime, on possible threats to public security and on illegal immigration risks;
- ▶ the existence of a biometric passport;
- ▶ the existence (or absence) of a valid travel document in general; and
- ▶ the status as a key worker, such as transport workers (including seafarers), regardless of their nationality, holding valid documents proving their profession.

Generally, those able to prove their identity and legal stay in Ukraine should be permitted to enter neighbouring countries for a limited period to allow an onward journey to their home destination. Exceptions may exist.

Onward destinations

Q. Where can Ukrainian nationals travel without a visa?

A. You can view visa-free options for Ukrainian nationals [here](#). Do note that every European Union country will allow Ukrainians to enter without a visa.

Q. Is it possible to stay permanently in these visa-free countries?

A. Not necessarily. Generous EU provisions will allow Ukrainian citizens and residents to stay and work for a minimum of 12 months, subject to registration procedures. Some other countries allow people to move to longer term provisions on or after arrival (e.g. virtual working permits in UAE) but that is not guaranteed and contingent on certain conditions being met. Please get in touch if you would like to understand precise arrangements in particular countries. Arrivals may also choose to claim asylum, although that is outside of the scope of this FAQ.

Q. What should people know about the EU as an onward destination?

A. Key considerations are:

- ▶ EU Member States are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.
- ▶ The UK is no longer an EU Member State (more below).
- ▶ Ukrainian citizens and residents fleeing the war can enter EU Member States without a visa.
- ▶ Member States have agreed to allow impacted people to live and work in Member States, subject to registration procedures. This is managed under the **EU Temporary Protection Directive**.
- ▶ The permission will allow employed or self-employed activities, access to suitable accommodation, the necessary social welfare assistance, medical or other assistance, and means of subsistence.
- ▶ The detail and application/registration process will differ between Member States, but in general the Temporary Protection status will initially be granted for applicants in any EU Member State for one year, from March 4, 2022 until March 4, 2023, renewable (should the situation in Ukraine remain unstable) in two six-month increments. If necessary, a third year may be added by the European Union. Eligible applicants are granted right to reside and work (although restrictions may apply), and rights to accommodation, health care, education and social support.

Q. What should people know about the UK as an onward destination?

A. Key considerations are:

- ▶ The UK is no longer a member of the EU and has made independent arrangements.
- ▶ Ukrainian nationals need a visa to enter the UK.
- ▶ That visa will generally be a standard visit, work or study visa or through new provisions for family members.

- ▶ Those new provisions say family visas will be granted for entry where the individual(s):
 - are applying to join or accompany their UK-based family member;
 - are Ukrainian or the immediate family member of a Ukrainian national who is applying to the scheme; and
 - have been residing in Ukraine prior to 1 January 2022 (including those who have now left Ukraine).
- ▶ The UK-based family member must be:
 - a British national;
 - someone settled in the UK – for example, someone with indefinite leave to remain, settled status or proof of permanent residence;
 - someone who has pre-settled status and started living in the UK before 1 January 2021; or
 - someone with refugee status or humanitarian protection in the UK.
- ▶ Qualifying family members include spouses, long-term partners, children, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, siblings, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins and in-laws. The immediate family members of those family members can also qualify.
- ▶ Other family members will be considered in exceptional (but undefined) circumstances.

Q. What should people know about the UAE as an onward destination?

A. Key considerations are:

- ▶ Existing routes may provide an option for both Ukrainian and Russian nationals.
- ▶ Both Ukrainian and Russia nationals with a passport valid for 6 months or over, can enter the UAE and are eligible to be granted a visa on arrival (for Ukrainians for 30 days, extendable by a further 30 days, for Russians for 90 days that can be used for a 180 day period). This status does not allow work.
- ▶ Individuals can switch to a virtual work permit from within the UAE provided strict criteria are met and this would allow the individual to work from home whilst on home country payroll. The lead time is 21-25 days and the individual can sponsor dependants provided they meet the eligibility criteria.
- ▶ Alternatively, if the employer has an entity established in the UAE, the individual can regularise their status to Employment Residence Permit (either from within the UAE or on an out of country basis). This would allow the individual to work from the UAE office. Stringent criteria include UAE payroll will apply. The individual can sponsor dependants provided they meet the eligibility criteria and lead times are 15-28 days.

Q. Can people apply for a visa for a country outside the EU from their location in one of the neighbouring countries they have entered?

A. Submission of visa application at a consulate will depend on the rules of a consulate where you plan to submit your application, and the conditions you need to meet to file such an application. There may be a number of concessions available to Ukrainian nationals, therefore it is recommended to verify the

requirements directly with the consulate or immigration professional that is supporting you with the application. As a rule, visas can only be submitted by the applicant in a country of their citizenship or where they established legal residency, but exceptions exist.

Ukrainian citizens living abroad

Q. Can Ukrainian nationals return home?

A. Immigration rules would not prevent people from returning but there could be immigration consequences. In many cases the decision could see them break residence, impeding their ability to extend their stay in the country they have been living. We are hoping that concessions will be introduced to limit or remove those risks. Please consult Fragomen for more advice on the current situation.

Q. Can Ukrainian nationals, including visitors, extend their stay in their expat countries?

A. Probably, but it should not be taken for granted. Some countries have introduced an ability to extend permission and stay, even where it would not normally be possible. We are actively monitoring expiry dates for our clients and will advise on options. Please get in touch if you have any other cases that need to be assessed.

Q. What information can we give to people concerned about their family and friends in Ukraine?

A. We have drafted communications that can be sent to employees. Please get in touch if you would like a copy. We can also hold employee webinars for single or multiple destinations or 1:1 consultations. This is all available to people looking to leave Ukraine too, of course.

RUSSIA

Q. Can people leave Russia?

A. Yes, although reports suggest that decisions to leave are being questioned and limits on travel may be imposed soon. It is not possible to confirm those reports.

Q. What documents should people leaving Russia carry?

A. Documents that are typically required for travel and future immigration applications include: passports; vaccine certificates; marriage/birth certificates; financial documentation; and educational certificates.

Q. Have any countries suspended issuing new visas to Russian nationals?

A. A limited number of countries (largely in Eastern Europe) have temporarily suspended processing new visa applications from Russian citizens. Please refer to our [Immigration Alerts page for the latest updates](#).

Q. In which countries can Russian nationals start to work immediately due to treaty relationships with Russia?

A. Russian nationals may be able to legally work in number of CIS countries such as: Armenia, Belarus, Georgia and Kazakhstan. Each of those countries have different rules and there are criteria, limitations and administrative formalities that must be considered.

Q. Which countries recognise the Sputnik vaccine?

A. It must be verified on a country-by-country basis. We recommend visiting our microsite or contacting Fragomen for further information.

Q. Are there any concessions available for Russian nationals who are abroad with short stay visit visas who wish to stay beyond visa expiry?

A. Russian citizens should review the possibility of extending their stay beyond the allowed time. If that is not possible, they may need to travel to one of the countries where they do not require a visa or can obtain a visa on arrival. This, along with long-term stay options should be carefully mapped, given the complexity.

Q. Are humanitarian or other visa concessions available to Russian nationals?

A. There are no immigration concessions available to Russians, relating to the current crisis.