

# FACT SHEET FOR UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

## Background

As a result of the escalation of the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine that began in February 2022, [over 6.5 million estimated individuals](#) have fled Ukraine to neighboring European countries, with the numbers of displaced increasing as the conflict continues. While European countries (especially Poland, Romania, Moldova, and Hungary) have accepted the largest numbers of families from Ukraine, it is unclear how many of those will seek long-term resettlement opportunities in place of returning home in the future. The Department of State (DOS), the federal agency that leads refugee resettlement to the United States, expects that many Ukrainians will choose to remain in Europe close to family and their homes in Ukraine, while others will make their way to the U.S. through a variety of pathways.



On March 24, 2022, in response to the ongoing crisis, President Biden [announced](#) that the U.S. will welcome up to 100,000 Ukrainians and others fleeing the conflict through multiple pathways to receive temporary safe harbor, including parole and visas, as well as permanent resettlement through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP). As a result, the federal [Uniting for Ukraine \(U4U\) program](#) was launched in April 2022 to provide temporary humanitarian parole for two years for Ukrainians with financial sponsors in the U.S. On **May 21, 2022, President Biden signed the [Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act \(AUSAA\)](#), conferring eligibility for all Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees for mainstream federal benefits as well as resettlement services funded by the Office Refugee Resettlement (ORR), as further described in [Policy Letter 22-13](#)**. This includes Ukrainians paroled between February 24, 2022 and September 30, 2023 through the U4U program or previously on the Southern Border, who will have a new date of eligibility for services of May 21, 2022, the date that the bill became law.

Ukrainian refugees may also continue to be resettled through the federal [Lautenberg Program](#), created in 1989 to resettle members of religious minorities from former Soviet republics, based on the program's capacity and family ties of applicants, who must meet all eligibility requirements. This includes screening procedures which often require an average of 18-24 months to complete. As refugee resettlement is a permanent durable solution for those who cannot either return home or be protected where they currently reside, this may not be the most appropriate pathway for those seeking temporary safe harbor until they can return to Ukraine. Through this program, the U.S. has welcomed more than [50,000 refugees](#) from Ukraine since 2001, the largest source of European refugee admissions to the U.S. over the past two decades. This includes 809 refugees since October 2021, 12 to Maryland as of May 2022.



## Next Steps for Ukrainian Nationals and Others Seeking Refuge

Ukrainian nationals (non-refugees) continuously residing in the U.S. since April 11, 2022 may be eligible for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 18 months, or may seek assistance to apply for asylum - for more information see the [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services \(USCIS\) website](#). In addition, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced a temporary halt on deportations to Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia and Slovakia. Note that Ukrainian nationals who have arrived in the United States on visas are not eligible for resettlement services and benefits.

Ukrainian nationals abroad seeking travel to and/or resettlement in the U.S. may inquire through several pathways:

- The [U.S. Department of State](#) has information on various options including visa processing, emergency assistance, and refugee applications, including the Lautenberg Program. The State Department has announced that while Ukrainians can apply for a temporary visa at any American consulate, such visas are subject to limited processing capacity and wait-times of upwards of 90 days. Please note that per the DOS, “a visa is not a viable way to achieve refugee resettlement in the U.S.”, and does not confer eligibility for federal benefits.
- The [USCIS website](#) describes the process for eligible Ukrainian nationals in Europe to apply for the Uniting for Ukraine program, in order to receive temporary safe harbor in the U.S. The first step is for a U.S.-based sponsor to file Form I-134 Declaration of Financial Support, available on the website. Ukrainians nationals approved for humanitarian parole by USCIS are eligible for all resettlement services and benefits available to refugees, as well as mainstream public benefits, except for federal Reception & Placement services. See the [ORR website](#) for a list of available resettlement services.

## Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees

Services administered by the Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees (MORA) under the Department of Human Services (DHS) are available to eligible individuals who have completed the federal resettlement process, including refugees resettled through USRAP, individuals who receive a federal asylum grant, and other populations deemed eligible by the federal [Office of Refugee Resettlement](#), including Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees.

Please note, MORA has no role in the federal refugee resettlement process until individuals have received an eligible federal status and have established residence in Maryland. Eligible clients may contact MORA or one of its service providers to enroll in services, including:

- Transitional Cash Assistance
- Health Screenings and Assistance
- Employment Services
- English Language and/or Vocational Training
- Programming for youth, children, and elders
- Case Management
- Other services

See the [MORA website](#) for additional information and a list of organizations to contact to receive support.

## How to Help Refugees from Ukraine and Other Countries

As the conflict in Ukraine continues, many individuals in the United States and Maryland have sought ways to help the Ukrainian people, both those in and outside the country. Many international organizations have organized efforts to provide humanitarian assistance, such as the Red Cross, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Doctors Without Borders, CARE, International Medical Corps, Save the Children, UNICEF, World Vision, and others. Individuals may contact these organizations directly to provide financial and other forms of support.

Those seeking immigration assistance for Ukrainian nationals, including family members, must contact the federal agencies referred to above, such as the Departments of State and Homeland Security/USCIS.

Eligible Ukrainian nationals in need of assistance or those would like to help refugees who have already been resettled in Maryland are encouraged to contact the 3 Resettlement Agency affiliates in the state along with other refugee or immigrant organizations:

- [ECDC African Community Center DC Metro](#)
- [International Rescue Committee Baltimore](#) and [Silver Spring](#)
- [Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area \(LSSNCA\)](#)

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