

Information of the Swiss Bar Association in support of refugees fleeing the conflict in Ukraine

Refugee status

What is protection status 'S'? Under protection status 'S', the persons concerned receive an S permit. This is limited to a maximum of one year but can be extended.

Who is eligible for protection status 'S'? Ukrainian citizens seeking protection and their family members who were resident in Ukraine before 24 February 2022 ; Persons of other nationalities and stateless persons seeking protection and their family members who held international or national protection status in Ukraine before 24 February 2022; Those seeking protection of another nationality and stateless persons as well as their family members as defined in para a, who can prove by means of a valid short-term residence permit or residence permit that they have a valid right of residence in Ukraine and cannot return to their home countries in safety and on a permanent basis.

What does someone fleeing Ukraine need to do to obtain protection status S in Switzerland? Anyone seeking protection should register directly with a federal asylum centre. There each application will be assessed on an individual basis to decided eligibility for protection status S (see ID/passport and check). This assessment generally lasts between 1-3 days. Applicants are then allocated to a canton. The State Secretariat for Migration SEM recommends that you submit your application as quickly as possible. You may submit your application online [here](#). Applicants do not have to register within the first few days after arriving in Switzerland – you have up to 90 days to do so.

Accommodation

Together with the cantons and partner organisations, the Confederation is preparing to receive displaced persons from Ukraine. Although there are currently free accommodation spots available in the federal asylum centres, additional capacities are being created. Once a person has been granted status 'S', they are accommodated either in private or cantonal accommodation. The status 'S' thus not only makes it possible to grant swift protection, but also helps to maintain the functioning of the asylum system and the asylum structures. The numerous offers from the population for private accommodation are very welcome. The Swiss Refugee Council's (NGO) coordinates these and places refugees from Ukraine with S protection status with private hosts or in cantonal structures in close cooperation with the cantons.

School enrolment

The S status includes the right to education and thus the direct access of refugee children to school. According to the Federal Constitution, responsibility for primary education lies with the cantons. Please check with your canton of accommodation for further information.

Health care

According to Article 117a of the Federal Constitution, the Confederation and the cantons, within the scope of their competences, shall ensure adequate, high-quality basic health care accessible to all. Persons with protection status 'S' establish their civil residence in Switzerland at the time of submitting their application and are thus subject to compulsory insurance from that time onwards. This gives

them access to all compulsory benefits of the basic healthcare insurance in the same manner as all other insured persons.

Employment

Under applicable law, people with a protection status 'S' are allowed to work in Switzerland, but only after three months. There is no such waiting period in the EU. The Federal Council is of the opinion that access to employment is essential to enable refugees to participate in social and professional life and to achieve financial independence. Therefore, on 11 March 2022, the Federal Council decided to abolish the waiting period for persons with protection status 'S' and to allow self-employment.

Important Links

[Contact Points from Cantonal Bar Associations](#)

[State Secretariat for Migration SEM](#)

[Federal Justice and Police Department \(only in German, French or Italian\)](#)

[Swiss Refugee Council](#)

[Ukrainian National Bar Association](#)

[Embassy of Ukraine in the Swiss Confederation](#)

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