

SOCIAL CARE

FOR BENEFICIARIES OF TEMPORARY
PROTECTED STATUS



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In Belgium, there are Public Centres for Social Welfare, abbreviated to PCSW. These centres provide free assistance to people who have difficulties with food, housing, paying bills, heating, etc. They look after the well-being of every citizen. Once you have received your temporary protection status, you can contact a PCSW. The PCSW is there to help you, even if you do not speak French, Dutch or German.

The PCSW has no equivalent in Ukraine.
This is what they are called in Belgium:

- In French: CPAS
- In Dutch: OCMW
- In German: ÖSHZ



How does it work? Contacting a PCSW in Belgium

Any person legally residing in Belgium can apply for help from the Public Centres for Social Welfare. This applies to you if you have been granted temporary protected status. There is a PCSW in every Belgian municipality, so there is bound to be one near you.

The competent PCSW is that of the city where the beneficiary of temporary protected status is registered in the register of foreigners.

If you have not gone to the right PCSW, the PCSW will forward your application to another PCSW. You will be informed, and told where to go. This does not mean that the PCSW does not want to help you. [Here is the list](#) of all the PCSWs in Belgium

2 How long does the procedure take?

The PCSW has 30 days to make a decision based on your application. It must give you proof that you have submitted your application. Then a social worker, a person specifically trained to help people in trouble, will carry out a social investigation. This person will check your living situation, your income, the composition of your household, etc. These questions are normal and are designed to help you as much as possible. You can also ask the social worker questions about the PCSW. You can talk to the social worker about your problems.

Based on the social investigation, the PCSW will decide within 30 days of the application whether you are eligible for assistance, and what type of assistance is appropriate for your situation. The information will be sent to your home or where you are staying by letter.

3 What kind of assistance?

Medical assistance

While waiting for temporary protection status, you can get emergency medical assistance from the PCSW. You will not have to pay for your emergency health care. Once you have this status, you can be affiliated with the mutual insurance company of your choice. In Belgium, the main role of a mutual insurance company is to ensure a partial reimbursement of medical and health care expenses. The PCSW will register you with a mutual insurance company. The charges, which are called “contributions”, can be covered by the PCSW.

Help with housing

Initially, you may stay with family, friends or acquaintances in our country. If this is not the case, Fedasil, a Belgian authority responsible for the reception of asylum seekers, will direct you to accommodation offered by the country's municipalities.

The PCSW can help you with the purchase of furniture (bed, table, fridge, etc.) using what is called the settlement grant. This is financial assistance for your permanent personal housing, not for temporary housing with friends, for example.

Financial aid

You can benefit from financial aid. This is a sum of money which can range from €729.20 to €1,478.22 per month (amounts at 01/03/2022). The amount will depend on your situation: single person, family with children, etc. These amounts may seem high, but the cost of living is more expensive in Belgium than in Ukraine.

Psychosocial support

You have experienced difficult and traumatic situations. The PCSW may cover the cost of a professional who treats trauma, anxiety or psychiatric disorders.

Other types of assistance

- Basic needs (purchase of clothes, glasses, etc.)
- Food aid
- Help for families in difficulty
- Energy assistance (electricity, gas or oil bill)



You are Ukrainian and you lived in Belgium prior to the conflict

You are now unable to return to Ukraine. Your residence permit or visa can be extended, as long as you are unable to return to Ukraine because of the conflict. Make an appointment with the municipal administration of your place of residence.



Additional information

The authorities and public services are working together to bring together all the information on a single website: www.info-ukraine.be. The content is available in French, Dutch, German, English, Ukrainian and Russian. You will find information on your rights, the procedures to follow, the organisation of the reception, etc. You can also call +32 (0)2 488 88 88, every day from 9am to 5pm.

