

Mobility: immigration alert

April 2022

United States

Temporary Protected Status updates for Cameroon and Ukraine

Executive summary

On 15 April 2022, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) designated Cameroon for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 18 months. TPS is available for Cameroonian nationals or individuals with no nationality who last habitually resided in Cameroon, provided that they have continuously resided in the United States as of 14 April 2022.

On 19 April 2022, DHS also published a Notice of TPS designation for Ukraine in the Federal Register after having announced that Ukraine would be designated for TPS on 3 March 2022. The 18-month designation for Ukraine is effective as of the date of publication, 19 April, until 2023 October 19.

Background and Analysis

A country may be designated for TPS when conditions in the country fall under ongoing armed conflict, environmental disaster, or other extraordinary and temporary conditions. TPS is available to eligible nationals who are already physically present in the United States and cannot return to the designated country, such as Cameroon.

Cameroon's designation is based on the existing humanitarian crisis it faces due to the escalating violence between government forces and armed rebels, and the ongoing attacks from Boko Haram. DHS also indicated that the "extreme violence and widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure have led to economic instability,

food insecurity, and several hundred thousand displaced Cameroonians without access to schools, hospitals, and other critical services." As a result, the present conditions in Cameroon prevent Cameroonian nationals from returning to Cameroon safely.

To qualify for TPS for Cameroon, an applicant must:

- ▶ Be physically present in the United States
- ▶ Have continuously resided in the United States since 14 April 2022
- ▶ Be a Cameroonian national, or, if having no nationality, have last habitually resided in Cameroon
- ▶ Undergo security and background checks

Once granted TPS, applicants are not removable from the United States. Additionally, a grant of TPS does not prevent the beneficiary from also seeking asylum, non-immigrant status (e.g., H-1B or F-1), or adjustment of status (lawful permanent residency), if otherwise eligible.

The TPS designation for Cameroon will take effect upon the publication of a forthcoming Federal Register notice, which will provide instructions and guidance on applying for TPS and an employment authorization document (EAD).



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The Federal Register notice published for Ukraine on 19 April outlines the procedures that must be followed by eligible nationals of Ukraine (or individuals having no nationality who last habitually resided in Ukraine) to submit an initial registration under the TPS designation previously announced on 3 March. The initial registration period will run from 19 April 2022 - 19 October 2023, during which time applicants must submit Form I-821 for TPS to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), either electronically through a USCIS online account or via mail. Those who wish to receive an EAD must also submit Form I-765 to USCIS to be approved for work authorization.

The original 3 March announcement stated that applicants must have continuously resided in the United States since 1 March 2022 to be eligible for TPS, but the 19 April Federal Register notice has rolled the cut-off date to 11 April. Thus, Ukrainians who traveled to the United States between 1 March to 11 April 2022 are newly-eligible to apply for TPS during the initial registration period.

What this means

By providing TPS designation for Cameroon, DHS seeks to recognize the ongoing armed Conflict in Cameroon and demonstrate its support for the Cameroonian nationals currently residing in the United States. The expansion of TPS for Ukraine also further underscores support for refugees from the country's armed conflict with Russia. Applicants granted TPS and EADs under these programs will be able to remain and work in the United States until conditions in their home countries improve.

We will continue to monitor developments in this area and provide updates as they are available.

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ey.com/en_ca

George Reis, Managing Partner
+1 416 943 2535
george.reis@ca.ey.com

Batia Stein, Partner
+1 416 943 3593
batia.j.stein@ca.ey.com

Roxanne Israel, Partner
+1 403 206 5086
roxanne.n.israel@ca.ey.com

Marwah Serag, Partner
+1 416 943 2944
marwah.serag@ca.ey.com

Authored by:
Mariam Arbabi, Associate Attorney
+1 416 932 5347
Mariam.arbabi@ca.ey.com

Alex Israel, Partner
+1 416 943 2698
alex.d.israel@ca.ey.com

Christopher Gordon, Partner
+1 416 943 2544
christopher.d.gordon@ca.ey.com

Jonathan Leebosh, Partner
+1 604 899 3560
jonathan.e.leebosh@ca.ey.com