

# UK Ukraine visa support

This annex on temporary protection complements and should be read together with the [AIDA Country Report on the United Kingdom](#).

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## Response to the displacement of Ukrainian nationals

### A. General

The United Kingdom's Ukraine visa schemes available to support persons displaced were as follows:

#### ❖ Ukraine Family Scheme

This scheme is for Ukrainians and their family members seeking to join someone in the UK to whom they are related (including extended family members and their spouse/partner). The UK based member must be a UK citizen, settled, EEA pre-settled status or a beneficiary of refugee status/Humanitarian Protection. It was launched on 4 March 2022. No financial support is provided to host family members. There is a three-year visa for those coming to the UK with access to all public funds. There is no fee for the visa, applications can only be made from outside of the UK. Applicants must have been residing in Ukraine on or immediately before 1 January 2022.

#### ❖ Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine)

The four nations of the UK all fundamentally have the same system with some differences but the same eligibility for visa/checking of hosts/eligibility for the main public services. Again a three-year visa is provided. Those arriving in the UK receive a £200 payment to fill the gap until welfare benefits/work are available. Hosts receive £350 per week as a 'thank you' payment for the first 12 months, increased to £500 after the first year, up to a maximum of two years. The local authority is required to check and approve accommodation with further checks if a child is being hosted. The local authority receives funding for each arrival.

There is no fee for the visa, applications can only be made from outside of the UK. Applicants must have been residing in Ukraine on or immediately before 1 January 2022.

#### ❖ Ukraine Extension Scheme

This is for Ukrainians and/or family members of Ukrainians who were in the UK with permission to enter (or stay) in the UK on 18 March 2022 or between 22 March 2022 and 16 May 2023. The exceptions are if they were in the UK with permission immediately before 1 January 2022 and that permission has since expired, or if they are a child born in the UK to parents who qualify.<sup>1</sup>

#### ❖ Any other support made available since September 2022

None of the Ukraine visa support schemes provide a pathway for permanent settlement status. Additionally, any time spent on the Ukraine visa extension scheme will not be counted in any future application for settlement.<sup>2</sup>

There is no cap on numbers for any of the schemes. 'Super sponsor' schemes established by the Welsh and Scottish governments, which required no individual to apply to sponsor/host were both closed to new applications in June and July respectively.

Protection under the visa support schemes generally extends to immediate family members who were part of the family before 1 January 2022 or born after that date.

The schemes are only open to Ukrainian nationals although their family members do not need to be nationals themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> Home Office, 'Immigration Rules Appendix Ukraine Scheme', last updated 13 April 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/3WG13XV>.

<sup>2</sup> UK Visas and Immigration and Home Office, 'Apply to stay in the UK under the Ukraine Extension Scheme', last updated 13 May 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/3Mx70I6>.

Ukraine schemes as of 27 December 2022			
Scheme	Applications	Grants	Arrivals
Ukraine Family Scheme	80,158	64,976	44,200
Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme	176,771	144,853	110,300
Ukraine Extension Scheme	Not available	15,169	Not applicable.

Source: Home Office, 'National statistics – Statistics on Ukrainians in the UK', 23 February 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/42ex0rx>.

In addition, in 2022, the following visas were granted to Ukrainians:

Visa Type	2022
Other, Family and Dependents Joining or Accompanying	906
Study	695
Visitor	19,821
Work	8,751
Seasonal Workers	7,318

Source: Home Office, 'National statistics – Statistics on Ukrainians in the UK', 23 February 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/42ex0rx>.

The Homes for Ukraine Scheme offers a one off £200 payment to cover essential costs on arrival. Sponsors (hosts) receive a £350 per week 'thank-you' payment for the first six months, increasing to £500 after the first year, up to a total of two years.

Local authorities receive £10,500 for each arrival, out of which they pay the initial £200 but not the £350 weekly payment (this is reimbursed by central government).<sup>3</sup> In December 2022, an additional £150 million of funding was announced for local authorities across the UK to support Ukrainians where the current hosting arrangement could not continue. A further £500 million was announcement for local authorities in England to obtain housing across all protection schemes.<sup>4</sup>

## B. Qualification for Ukraine Family Scheme visa

The person applying to come to the UK must be coming to join a family member in the UK (see below), one of the applicants must be Ukrainian (family members accompanying the main applicant do not need to be) and have been living in Ukraine on or immediately before 1 January 2022. Applications can be made from outside of Ukraine and may be made after arriving in the UK as long as other eligibility requirements are met.

<sup>3</sup> Home Office, 'Homes for Ukraine: council guides', last updated 3 April 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/45OjZrN>.

<sup>4</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 'New over £650 million support package for Ukrainians sees increased 'thank you' payments for longer-term hosts', 14 December 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3WC1T84>.

The UK based family member must be a UK citizen, settled, EEA pre-settled status or a beneficiary of refugee status/Humanitarian Protection.

A 'UK family member' must be a:

- ❖ spouse or civil partner
- ❖ unmarried partner (who must have been living together in a relationship for at least 2 years)
- ❖ child who is under 18
- ❖ parent (if applicant is under 18)
- ❖ fiancé(e) or proposed civil partner

'UK extended family members', include a:

- ❖ parent (if you are over 18)
- ❖ child who is over 18
- ❖ grandparent
- ❖ grandchild or your partner's grandchild
- ❖ brother or sister
- ❖ aunt or uncle
- ❖ niece or nephew
- ❖ cousin
- ❖ mother-in-law or father-in-law
- ❖ grandparent-in-law
- ❖ or brother-in-law or sister-in-law

Applicants must use the online application form and register biometrics at a specific centre. A government telephone helpline is provided for those in need of assistance.

Non-Ukrainian nationals residing in Ukraine and displaced by the war can only benefit from the visa scheme if they are immediate family members of an applicant who is Ukrainian.

In support of their application, applicants must provide evidence of nationality – either a passport (applicants with a valid passport do not have to separately provide biometrics before arriving in the UK) or other evidence such as a Ukrainian national identity card, a combination of official documents – for example, a photo driving licence and birth certificate or an emergency certificate issued by a Ukrainian authority since March 2022. Such documents are not mandatory but applicants are informed that it will assist the application to have them.<sup>5</sup>

Applicants are entitled to remain in the United Kingdom for three years as part of the Ukraine Family Scheme.

For the Family visa scheme, 80,158 applications had been made, with 64,976 grants and 44,200 arrivals by 31 December 2022.

### C. Qualification for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme visa

Government information about the Homes for Ukraine Scheme states: To apply to the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme you must be Ukrainian, or the immediate family member of a Ukrainian national who has been granted permission under, or is applying to and qualifies for, the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme.

You must also:

- ❖ have been residing in Ukraine on or immediately before 1 January 2022 (including those who have now left Ukraine)
- ❖ be outside of the UK
- ❖ have an [eligible UK-based sponsor](#), or you can choose the Scottish or Welsh Government as your sponsor (see below)

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<sup>5</sup> UK Visas and Immigration and Home Office, 'Apply for a Ukraine Family Scheme visa', last updated 31 January 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/3qk1quY>.

The scheme is for individuals to be named as sponsors. Sponsors must be British citizens or have permission to live in the UK for at least six months. Sponsors must not have a criminal record. Sponsors are asked to make the accommodation available for six months although some agreements have ended before this time period.<sup>6</sup>

The accommodation offered must be approved by the local authority. Local authorities must approve the arrangement.

For individual sponsor arrangements the rules are the same in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Wales and Scotland announced their plans on 13 March 2022<sup>7</sup> to open 'super sponsor' schemes which meant an individual could apply to be sponsored and the governments of those countries would match them to accommodation. However, the schemes were both paused; in June (in Wales) and July (in Scotland).

In support of this application, the evidence required includes evidence of eligibility on nationality and recent residence in Ukraine if not arriving directly. For children travelling alone, consent of parents/guardians (notarised by officials of guardianship service or Ukraine consulate) is required.

If the people being sponsored are to share the accommodation with the host the local authority must conduct safeguarding checks as part of the approval process. For all households to which this applies, the local authority will facilitate a basic check by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) of all members of the household aged 16 or over.

- ❖ If the guests include children, an enhanced DBS check (including a check of the children's barred list) will be undertaken, for all those who are 16 or over in the sponsor household who are not related to the guest.
- ❖ If the sponsor is applying to host a child who is not travelling with or joining their parents/legal guardian, enhanced DBS checks will be carried out before their arrival into the UK
- ❖ If the local authority decides, while undertaking other checks, that an adult guest requires additional support due to age, disability or illness then the local authority may ask for an enhanced DBS check (including a check of the adults' barred list) to be undertaken on any such members of this household.

As with other programmes the visa for the Ukraine sponsorship scheme is valid for three years.

176,771 applications had been made to the Ukraine sponsorship scheme by 31 December 2022, with 144,853 grants and 110,300 arrivals

## D. Qualification for Ukraine Extension Scheme visa

Those eligible for the Ukraine Extension Scheme include:

- ❖ Ukrainians who previously held permission to be in the UK and that permission expired on or after 1 January 2022 or who held permission to be in the UK on or between 18 March 2022 and 16 May 2023 – the permission does not need to cover the whole period;
- ❖ Non-Ukrainians who are immediate family members of a Ukrainian national are the only third country nationals eligible.

There are no other specific visa options aimed at Ukrainians available to displaced persons who otherwise do not qualify for the Ukraine Extension Scheme.

Evidence of the previously held visa is required in support of the application.

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<sup>6</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 'Homes for Ukraine: sponsor guides', last updated 3 April 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/427YSgJ>.

<sup>7</sup> Scottish Government, 'Ukraine refugee sponsorship', 13 March 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3IH1cEL>.

If applying as an immediate family member (spouse, civil partner, partner, child) evidence of relationship with the Ukrainian national is required.

15,169 extensions had been granted as of 31 December 2022.

It should be noted that Ukrainians holding seasonal worker or temporary HGV/pork butcher worker visas automatically had their visas extended to the end December 2022 therefore did not need to apply to the extension scheme immediately.<sup>8</sup>

Outside of the three visa schemes that persons displaced by the war may benefit from Ukrainians can claim asylum if they are present in the UK. No special arrangements have been made to process such claims. Government statistics show an increase in asylum claims in 2022, noting that there was a sharp rise in between the outbreak of the Russian invasion and the opening of the visa extension scheme.<sup>9</sup>

## E. Access to visa support schemes

### 1. Admission to territory and practical challenges

There are no reports of people fleeing from Ukraine being refused entry at the United Kingdom border although admissions tables show that in the first quarter of 2022, 337 Ukrainian nationals were stopped at the border (276 at juxtaposed controls and 61 at UK ports). There were reports of people waiting long periods for visas to be issued, including people in France. Border officials have the power to grant leave to enter into the UK when travelling across the border but there are no statistics indicating the numbers of Ukrainians who have benefitted from this.

Initially the rules required all applicants to register their biometrics at a visa application centre outside of the UK. This requirement was dropped (from 15 March)<sup>10</sup> for holders of Ukrainian passports which resulted in fewer people 'queuing' for access to the scheme.

Applications to the three schemes are considered by the Home Office.<sup>11</sup> The family scheme and homes for Ukraine scheme require an application from outside of the UK. When an application is agreed, the applicant is granted entry clearance through the issuing of a visa or in some circumstances a 'permission to travel' letter issued by the Home Office. Once in the UK the visa holder is required to register biometrics if they have not done so as part of their application and subsequently collect their Biometric Residence Permit.<sup>12</sup>

No fees are required to apply.

Discretion allows border officials at any port or at the land border with Ireland to grant entry clearance in the form of leave outside of the rules, although it is not widely advertised. Advice to officials states that those who arrive at a UK port without the correct entry clearance but who meet the family relationship requirements set out in UKR 5.1-5.4 of the Rules should be considered for leave outside the rules for six months. These applicants can then apply to switch onto the Ukraine Scheme from the UK and be granted permission to stay if they meet the eligibility requirements and were resident in the Ukraine on or before 1 January 2022.

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<sup>8</sup> Home Office, 'Home Secretary announces visa concessions for Ukrainians', 24 February 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3N1XyYA>.

<sup>9</sup> UK Visas and Immigration, 'Ukraine Family Scheme, Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine) and Ukraine Extension Scheme visa data', updated 25 May 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/3N4BMne>.

<sup>10</sup> UK Visas and Immigration and Home Office, 'Home Secretary update on support for Ukrainians', 10 March 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/43qYkDG>.

<sup>11</sup> Home Office, *Ukraine Scheme – Version 4.0*, 11 March 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3BXtze9>.

<sup>12</sup> Home Office et al, 'Move to the UK if you're coming from Ukraine', last updated 22 February 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/43e2vT1>.

Generally, rules require that applications are made before leave expires, so applications for the extension scheme should be made before the current visa expires. Visas for Ukrainians already in the UK were automatically extended until the end of December 2022

The visa decision making is a non-devolved matter (UK government controlled) so the issue of delays affected people applying to each of the four nations. Reports in the media<sup>13</sup> and debates in parliament included some acknowledgment of this by government<sup>14</sup> although public statistics are more generic.<sup>15</sup>

There is no right of appeal in any of the three specific visa schemes. Refused applicants may present unlimited subsequent applications.

## 2. Legal assistance

In England and Wales there is no provision of free immigration advice funded by government even where an applicant has insufficient funds. Only asylum advice is publicly funded and that applies to people in the UK only.

A group of lawyers established a pro bono project.<sup>16</sup> The Scottish government funded a project to provide free legal advice for Ukrainians seeking to apply to live in Scotland.<sup>17</sup>

Northern Ireland is part of the UK schemes although information about the action taken if people cross the border from the Republic of Ireland (largely unstaffed) with no prior leave to enter the UK, is issued by the UK government<sup>18</sup>.

The only free legal advice for visa schemes is via the pro bono project above, which has limited value if applicants are not aware of its existence.

## 3. Information provision and access to NGOs

The government's online information is provided in English, Ukrainian and Russian.

When the scheme for unaccompanied children opened in July 2022 specific guidance was published, as well as a welcome guide for children themselves.<sup>19</sup>

Information is provided from a mixture of NGO and government advice. Some government advice signposts to NGO information but there is relatively good translated information aimed at Ukrainians compared to other migrants. There are a number of difficulties generally with regard to information for asylum seekers at different stages of the asylum procedure but it is not clear at the moment which would be applicable specifically to Ukrainians.

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<sup>13</sup> See for example Diane Taylor, 'Homes for Ukraine hosts protest over Home Office visa delays', 25 April 2022, *The Guardian*, available at: <https://bit.ly/3N1XOqw>; Mark Easton and Callum May, 'Ukraine refugees: Patel apologises for UK visa delays', 8 April 2022, *BBC News*, available at: <https://bit.ly/3WG5W31>.

<sup>14</sup> UK Parliament, 'Hansard - Homes for Ukraine: Visa Application Centres', 28 April 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3MGmgwd> and UK Parliament, 'Hansard - Ukraine Refugee Visas', 31 March 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3qfsdsq>.

<sup>15</sup> UK Visas and Immigration, 'Visa processing times: applications outside the UK', 22 May 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/3IHRFNC>.

<sup>16</sup> Ukraine Advice Project UK, 'Free UK immigration advice for people fleeing Ukraine', available at: <https://bit.ly/3IL3hPS>.

<sup>17</sup> JustRight Scotland, 'Ukraine Advice Scotland', available at: <https://bit.ly/42hqhwS>.

<sup>18</sup> UK Visas and Immigration and Immigration Enforcement, 'Right to work checks: an employer's guide', last updated 28 March 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/45teQoC>.

<sup>19</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 'Homes for Ukraine: welcome guide for Ukrainian children under 18', last updated 16 January 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/45Doh56>.



The main relevant border crossing point is the Irish border which is largely unstaffed. No information appears to be available at ports specific to the schemes as the intention is for people to apply before arriving at the UK border.

## F. Guarantees for vulnerable groups

For vulnerable groups there is only one specific process for unaccompanied children applying to be sponsored/hosted by someone who is not a parent or guardian. This application must be accompanied by specific consent forms and be approved by the local authority in whose area the sponsor lives.<sup>20</sup>

In June 2022, an announcement was made that visa applications made already and put on hold as applicants were under 18s who were not accompanied or joining a parent/guardian, would begin to be processed.<sup>21</sup> New applications were permitted from 10 August.<sup>22</sup>

Mental health support and support for torture survivors and traumatised beneficiaries is mainly provided by NGOs although some of it is funded by government. The government in England signposts to support from organisations such as Barnardo's.<sup>23</sup>

A briefing aimed at parliamentarians summarises the barriers and challenges faced by refugees and asylum seekers, including specific mention of those fleeing Ukraine.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> UK Visas and Immigration and Home Office, 'Apply for a visa under the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine)', last updated 13 April 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/3INCfHQ>.

<sup>21</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Department for Education, 'Homes for Ukraine scheme to begin processing applications from unaccompanied children', 22 June 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/43tBjA8>.

<sup>22</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 'Homes for Ukraine: Guidance for sponsors (children and minors applying without parents or legal guardians)', last updated 16 January 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/42cAquP>.

<sup>23</sup> Department for Education, 'Resources to help support children and young people arriving from Ukraine', updated 28 September 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/43t34Ja>.

<sup>24</sup> UK Parliament, 'Refugee mental health and the response to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine', 7 July 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3qdcEI4>.

## Content of Protection under Ukraine Visa Schemes

### A. Status and residence

#### 1. Residence permit

##### Indicators: Residence permit

1. What is the duration of residence permits granted to beneficiaries of the Ukraine visa schemes?  
3 years
2. How many residence permits have been issued under the Ukraine visa schemes up to 31 December 2022?
  - ❖ Ukraine Family Scheme  
80,158 applications had been made, with 64,976 grants and 44,200 arrivals
  - ❖ Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme  
176,771 applications had been made, with 144,853 grants and 110,300 arrivals
  - ❖ Ukraine Extension Scheme  
15,169 extensions granted<sup>25</sup>

There have been no reports of difficulties accessing Biometric Residence Permits (BRP) after arrival in the UK. The process is explained in information on the government's official website.<sup>26</sup> Depending on whether biometrics were given as part of the application, beneficiaries either collect their BRP or register to give biometrics, after which a BRP will be produced. This must be done within six months of arrival in the UK.

All schemes offer a three-year visa.

All beneficiaries have access to work and public funds. There is no requirement to pay the surcharge (as most visa beneficiaries do) to access the NHS<sup>27</sup>.

#### 2. Access to asylum

It is possible to apply for asylum but no special provisions have been introduced to deal with asylum applications from Ukrainians.

### B. Movement and mobility

There are no restrictions on freedom of movement within the UK.

No specific information has been issued relating to this visa route on whether persons granted visas have the right to leave the UK and return. Rules are not exactly the same for all UK visa holders but most visas allow for the holder to be absent for 180 days in a year.

There have been no reported issues for people wishing to temporarily return to Ukraine as the visa is not issued under a protection route.

<sup>25</sup> Home Office, 'National statistics – Statistics on Ukrainians in the UK', 23 February 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/42ex0rx>.

<sup>26</sup> UK Visas and Immigration and Home Office, 'Apply for a visa under the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine) – After you've applied', last updated 13 April 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/3INCfHQ>.

<sup>27</sup> Minister of State at the Department of Health and Social Care, 'Outcome of the review of the NHS Charging Regulations exemption from Ukrainians', 24 October 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3oyyxef>.

## C. Housing (Sponsorship Scheme/Homes for Ukraine)

### Indicators: Housing

1. For how long are persons granted a sponsorship visa entitled to stay in a UK household?  
Sponsors were asked to agree that the person/s sponsored could stay for a minimum of six months but there is no guarantee.
2. How many displaced people are benefiting from the Ukraine sponsorship scheme?  
As of 28 December 2022, 176,771 applications had been made, with 144,853 grants and 110,300 arrivals

The government surveyed sponsors in July 2022 and published experimental statistics which showed that 92% of accommodation places were in the host's home living with the host.<sup>28</sup>

There is no guaranteed entitlement for length of stay. Sponsors are asked to commit to six months' minimum stay although this is not enforced. Sponsors of unaccompanied children are asked to commit to the entire three years or until the child reaches 18 years of age.

Under the 'super sponsor' schemes in Scotland and Wales the government can identify accommodation of the beneficiary, whereas the overall scheme requires the offer (and acceptance) of accommodation by an individual host before the visa is issued. Both super sponsor schemes have remained suspended since June 2022 (Wales) and July (Scotland).

Beneficiaries of the sponsor scheme and family scheme may turn to a local authority for assistance if the placement is no longer able to provide appropriate accommodation for them. Statistics on Ukraine visa beneficiaries presenting as homeless to local authorities in England is published on a regular basis<sup>29</sup>.

In Scotland beneficiaries are hosted by individuals but also through the super sponsor scheme, into 'welcome' and longer-term accommodation. Statistics have been produced relating the accommodation provision in Scotland<sup>30</sup>.

Reception and accommodation was provided by the state in Wales and Scotland under the 'super sponsor' schemes. Private accommodation is assessed for suitability by the relevant local authority. A 'thank-you' payment of £350 per week is paid to the host for the first year, which then increases to £500. Hosts were asked to commit to a six-month minimum stay but this is not enforced. Some NGOs have been approved as suitable to 'match' sponsors and hosts<sup>31</sup>; this was established following reports of irresponsible and inappropriate matching often using social media.<sup>32</sup>

## D. Employment and education

### 1. Access to the labour market

Visa beneficiaries are permitted to work in the UK.

<sup>28</sup> Office for National Statistics, 'Experiences of Homes for Ukraine scheme sponsors, UK: 7 to 14 July 2022', 10 August 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3WDY6ql>.

<sup>29</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 'Homelessness management information – Ukrainian nationals: England', last updated 4 May 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/3WCTQYs>.

<sup>30</sup> Scottish Government, 'Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme in Scotland: statistics – September 2022', 17 November 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3ovjwKf>.

<sup>31</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 'Recognised Providers: Organisations who can help UK citizens become sponsors', 6 May 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3N2Ctxi>.

<sup>32</sup> Rajeev Syal, 'Stop matching lone female Ukraine refugees with single men, UK told', 13 April 2022, *The Guardian*, available at: <https://bit.ly/43vyMp5>.

Some employers made statements welcoming Ukrainians<sup>33</sup> and developed specific schemes.<sup>34</sup> The UK government assisted with information and some matching.<sup>35</sup>

Persons granted visas are entitled to equal treatment to nationals with regard to employment. There is no information on the number of persons granted Ukraine visas who had accessed the labour market as of 31 December 2022.

## 2. Access to education

Access to education up to age 18 is provided under the terms of the visa under the same conditions as nationals.

In England data was published in October 2022<sup>36</sup> showing 20,500 children had been offered a school place. Although the data was from a limited number of local authorities, it was also shown as a percentage of applications made to those local authorities (92%).

Data is not available from the other nations.

There are no limitations to accessing education in law. Resources have been developed for the purpose of assisting children to access education<sup>37</sup> and funding is provided to local authorities in England.<sup>38</sup> Information for those wishing to access the Ukrainian curriculum are signposted towards the document produced by Ukraine's Parliament.<sup>39</sup>

The law provides access to education and vocational training for adults/ young people but differences in provision occur according to local factors e.g. availability of ESOL classes.

Beneficiaries of the visa schemes can access higher education as 'home students' (i.e. equal eligibility to UK citizens) in all nations of the UK.<sup>40</sup>

Regional variations can apply to ease of access to education post 18, particularly as some beneficiaries may be hosted in areas with little specialist provision.

## E. Social welfare

The law provides access to public funds including access to social welfare, in all four nations.

The law was changed to exempt Ukraine visa scheme beneficiaries from the 'habitual residence test' which can restrict access to those arriving in the UK from overseas for the initial months of their residence.

The Department for Work and Pensions administers Universal Credit and other financial assistance. Housing is granted through local authorities.

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<sup>33</sup> HR World, 'Four in five businesses welcome applications from Ukrainian refugees, 6 April 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3IKotWe>.

<sup>34</sup> Financial Times, 'UK companies join scheme helping Ukrainian refugees find jobs', available at: <https://bit.ly/3WGoQH7>.

<sup>35</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 'Guidance for businesses offering work to people coming from Ukraine', 6 May 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3MXL5oJ>.

<sup>36</sup> UK government, 'School placements for children from outside of the UK', 13 October 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3ovkfer>.

<sup>37</sup> Department for Education, 'Resources to help support children and young people arriving from Ukraine', 28 September 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/43t34Ja>.

<sup>38</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Department for Education, 'Homes for Ukraine education and childcare grant conditions of funding', 24 February 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/3N1ZYGE>.

<sup>39</sup> Child.Wales, *Information education sources for Ukrainian children*, March 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3MZInJ>.

<sup>40</sup> House of Commons Library, 'Support for students from Ukraine in UK higher education', 20 December 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/43tqrSS>.

Language limitations and unfamiliarity with systems can impede access although it is notable that there is much more advice aimed specifically at Ukrainians including translated information, than for other non-UK nationals. Sponsors and hosts are also encouraged to assist.

There is no information on the number of persons granted visas under the Ukraine schemes who had accessed different forms of social welfare as of 31 December 2022.

## F. Health care

Persons granted support under the Ukraine visa schemes have access to all health care in England other than assisted conception services.<sup>41</sup>

Access is the same as nationals in whichever country the beneficiary resides e.g. everyone living in Wales has free prescriptions. Dental charges have been waived for Ukrainians displaced and living in Scotland.

Gaps in health provision e.g. waiting times for treatment, timely access to mental health support, vary across regions and whilst displaced Ukrainians may face additional barriers, additional help e.g. the establishment of mental health helplines and translated information<sup>42</sup> are examples of good practice.

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<sup>41</sup> Minister of State at the Department of Health and Social Care, 'Outcome of the review of the NHS Charging Regulations exemption for Ukrainians', 24 October 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3oyyxef>.

<sup>42</sup> NHS inform, 'A guide to NHS Scotland Services for displaced persons from Ukraine (Ukrainian)', last updated 6 April 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/45yBiga>; NHS England, 'Meeting the initial health needs of people arriving in the UK from Ukraine', last updated 6 October 2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3MD9FK9>.