

Ukraine

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Background

Following the introduction of the Homes for Ukraine scheme, launched by the Home Office in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, several thousand Ukrainian families (evacuees) have been living with 'host' families (or Sponsors) in the UK since their arrival from March 2022 onwards.

The initial sponsorship period was for 6 months which for some evacuees will soon be reached. There is no obligation for the sponsors to continue to host Ukrainian evacuees in their home.

There is a risk that some evacuees will find themselves with no sponsor, homeless or at risk of homelessness at the end of the initial sponsorship period.

Identity Verification

Ukrainian evacuees must verify their identity to claim Universal Credit. This is to confirm that we link the right person to the right claim and help to reduce identity fraud. It is the claimant's responsibility to prove who they are.

Refer to the Identity verification – documentary evidence guidance for information if there is any doubt about the authenticity of the ID presented by the claimant.

To verify Ukrainian ID, please go to the [Public Register of Authentic Identity and Travel Documents Online](#) (PRADO).

Official documents

On arrival from Ukraine, non-UK nationals will have either a passport which is stamped or an IS116 document provided to them by Visa immigration.

If the citizen does not have a current passport, they will be issued with an IS116 document. This includes all children who will have individual IS116 documents.

The passport should be stamped with Home Office Immigration to confirm their Leave to Remain status and Recourse to Public funds designation. However, some passports have been stamped incorrectly stating that they do NOT have Recourse to Public Funds.

In most cases a Code 1A stamp was used which confirms Leave to Enter the UK until xx/xx/xxxx.

In some cases a Code 1 stamp was used with the 'No recourse to public funds' designation scored out in ink.

However, this is unique in this circumstance and only relates to stamps issued from 24/02/2022 until August 2022.

For Code 1 stamp cases, there is an escalation route into the Home Office to confirm cases where the No Recourse to Public Funds designation is not crossed out before the Universal Credit ID being confirmed.

An IS 116 document is completed by the Home Office on arrival to the UK with full personal details of the holder, including immigration status and Leave to Remain dates.

Some Ukrainian nationals are now being granted permission to enter or stay in the UK in the form of digital immigration status (an eVisa). The Home Office has been issuing eVisas since:

- 11 May for the Ukraine Family Scheme
- 18 May for the Homes for Ukraine Scheme

Individuals who have been issued with a digital status (eVisa) will not receive an entry clearance vignette in their passport or on a Form for Affixing the Visa (FAV). They also do not require permission to enter on arrival at the UK border which means that their passport and/or FAV will not be stamped. Instead, they will be able to use the Home Office's View and Prove service to:

- view their status and or eVisa and check what rights they have in the UK (for example, the right to work or claim benefits)
- prove their status to others (such as employers, landlords or education providers) by generating a 'share code' which gives them time limited access to relevant data
- update personal details (for example, their phone number and email address)

They will also receive a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) permitting up to 36 months' stay in the UK. This will be available for collection from the location they selected at the time they made their application.

When the individual is granted digital status and/or an eVisa, they will receive a Digital Status Confirmation (DSC) letter accessible through their UK Visas and Immigration account.

Citizens without a passport

These citizens will have been issued with a paper version of the visa 'vignette' at the Visa Application Centre as their Biometrics will have been confirmed in Europe. They will also be issued with the IS116 document.

They will be notified by Home Office letter once their Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) is ready to be collected from a pre-nominated Post Office.

They will also have been granted 36 months leave to remain as Biometrics have already been confirmed.

For examples of passport documentation, see [Public Register of Authentic Identity and Travel Documents Online](#) (PRADO).

Visa extensions

Most Ukrainians and their family members arriving in the UK as a result of the conflict will have been granted 3 years leave to remain (with recourse to public funds). However, some people will have arrived in the UK and granted only 6 months leave. They will need to apply to extend their leave in order to continue to access benefits. This could include:

- those who applied to the Homes for Ukraine or Ukraine Family Scheme and travelled to the UK under the biometric deferral process:
 - since 15 March, valid Ukraine passport holders have not been required to attend in-person Visa Application Centres to submit biometrics when making applications under the Ukraine schemes - they have been given 6 months leave outside the rules to enable them to travel to the UK and whilst in the UK they are required to apply to extend their leave (up to 3 years in total) submitting biometrics as part of the application process
 - they may have received an email from the Home Office advising them to submit their biometrics via this application link: <https://apply.visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/product/ukraine-scheme-brp>.
 - if these emails are queried, you can advise that they are genuine and should be actioned.
 - if needed you can provide the above application link and let them know that if they have questions they can call the Home Office helpline 0808 164 8810 and select option 1
- Ukrainians and their family members who have arrived in the UK without a prior entry clearance and been granted 6 months leave outside the rules:

- they can apply for 3 years leave via the Ukraine Extension Scheme, see [Apply to stay in the UK under the Ukraine Extension Scheme](#).

Biometric Residence Permit extensions

Many Ukrainian Evacuees applied for a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) after they arrived in the UK. Those who have been successful with their application will have received a BRP card which enables them to remain in the UK and in some cases to be entitled to benefits for an extended period.

The date on the BRP card will be different to their original Leave to Remain deadline date.

Checking Habitual Residence Test requirements

ID must be verified prior to completing the Habitual Residence Test (HRT) process.

Following legislation changes from 22 March 2022, all claimants arriving from Ukraine are exempt from HRT criteria but Right to Reside must be recorded in the Service.

Ukrainian evacuees who:

- left Ukraine in connection with the events that took place in Ukraine on 24 February 2022, and
- were resident in Ukraine immediately before 1 January 2022, and
- who have arrived in the UK with recourse to public funds and leave either:
 - under immigration rules, or
 - leave outside immigration rules (which will include the families of 21 children brought in for emergency medical treatment

will no longer be subject to HRT requirements and will require a Right to Reside decision. This must be referred to a decision maker using the fast track process and be marked as 'Non-EEA other'.

Claimant doesn't have a National Insurance number

ID must be verified and HRT completed prior to requesting a national insurance number (NINO).

For Universal Credit (including Advances) to be paid, all eligible claimants will need to have a National Insurance number.

Home Office schemes for those at risk in Ukraine

The Home has announced the introduction of 3 new schemes for those at risk in Ukraine:

- The Ukraine Family Scheme
- The Homes for Ukraine Scheme
- Ukraine Extension Scheme

The Ukraine Family Scheme

See [Apply for a Ukraine Family Scheme visa](#).

The Homes for Ukraine scheme

A sponsored humanitarian visa route enabling communities, private sponsors or local authorities to sponsor Ukrainian evacuees to come to the UK. Sponsors are expected to support with housing and integration support. There is no cap on numbers. The scheme can last for up to 12 months.

The leave granted under this scheme will be 36 months of leave with recourse to public funds and a right to work.

Each evacuee was given a one-off payment of £200. This is treated as capital and is disregarded.

Those sponsoring arrivals under the scheme are given £350 per month as a “thank you” for up to 12 months. Any of the £350 unspent after the period for which it was paid is disregarded as capital under provisions relating to local welfare.

Ukrainian families are treated as not normally residing with their host. Therefore, hosts must not add Ukrainian nationals they have accommodated through the Homes for Ukraine Scheme as non-dependents on their Universal Credit claim.

The host sees no change to the level of Universal Credit they receive as a consequence and housing support continues to be limited by existing size criteria rules'.

For more information, see [Homes for Ukraine: Guidance for sponsors \(children and minors applying without parents or legal guardians\)](#) and Under 18s.

Ukraine Extension Scheme

See [Apply to stay in the UK under the Ukraine Extension Scheme](#).

Discretionary housing payments

Ukrainian nationals who are accommodated by a host in a Homes for Ukraine placement cannot access Discretionary Housing Payments because they do not receive housing costs support through Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.

Rent liability

No rental liability will be created between the sponsor and the Ukrainian nationals they offer a home too, while they are part of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, which means there will be no income from board and / or lodging declared by any claimants who volunteer for the Scheme.

When the 6 month sponsorship scheme comes to an end

At the 6 month point, the Local Authority should be discussing the various options which are, the Ukrainian national may:

- extend the sponsorship arrangement with the host beyond 6 months

- be directed to a new host,
- rent private accommodation, or
- be accommodated by the local authority in temporary accommodation under the local authority's homeless duty

Families or individuals are to contact their local authority if they have any concerns or need to discuss their options further.

Housing costs support is available for claimants whose sponsorship ends and they rent in the Social Rented sector (SRS) or Private Rented Sector (PRS). In some instances, a host may end their sponsorship arrangement and grant a tenancy for the accommodation.

Detailed guidance has been published for sponsors and guests explaining the options available 4 to 6 months into the sponsorship arrangement.

See [Guidance for guests](#) for further information.

The expectations regarding the sponsorship duration for children who are not travelling with or joining their parent or legal guardian are different. Please see the GOV.UK guidance here:

- [Guidance for Councils \(Children and minors applying without parents\)](#),
- [Guidance for Sponsors \(Children and minors applying without parents\)](#)
- [Guidance for Parents and Legal Guardians \(Children and minors applying without parents\)](#)
- [Guidance for sponsors](#)

Claimant is homeless or at risk of homelessness

Local Authorities will work with them taking all reasonable steps to prevent homelessness.

DWP have created a Homeless & Housing Toolkit to provide comprehensive guidance to staff which includes the duty to refer process. The duty to refer is voluntary and can only be made if the claimant gives their consent.

For further information see:

- [your National/District Provision Tool - Refugees](#)
- [Refugee Toolkit - Support for Ukrainians](#)

Further support

Each site will have a Vulnerable Customer Lead and/or a Homelessness Single Point of Contact (SPOC) / SME (Subject Matter Expert) who is available to support both claimants and colleagues with additional queries. You can also speak with your Ukraine District SPOC.

Related content

[Spotlight on evacuees from Ukraine](#)

[Guidance for guests](#)

Spotlight on: Homelessness 'duty to refer' to a local authority (England only)

Please see the GOV.UK guidance here:

- [Guidance for Councils \(Children and minors applying without parents\)](#),
- [Guidance for Sponsors \(Children and minors applying without parents\)](#)
- [Guidance for Parents and Legal Guardians \(Children and minors applying without parents\)](#)
- [Guidance for sponsors](#)
- Homeless and Housing Toolkit
 - Spotlight on: Homelessness 'duty to refer' to a local authority (England only)