



Home Office

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Department for Levelling Up,
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19 February 2024

Dear Leader,

Since the launch of our Ukraine schemes, the UK has offered or extended sanctuary to thousands of Ukrainians. Our three Ukraine visa schemes - the Ukraine Family Scheme, the Homes for Ukraine scheme, and the Ukraine Extension Scheme - were the first of their kind to be operationalised anywhere in the world.

Almost two years on from the start of the conflict, we continue to stand firm with the people of Ukraine and show that those who need our help are still warmly welcomed in the UK. We have extended that welcome to nearly 230,000 people who have come to the UK (or had their existing permission in the UK extended) under the Ukraine schemes. The people of the UK have shown incredible generosity towards, and solidarity with, the Ukrainian people, opening their homes to those seeking sanctuary, and we would particularly like to thank your team locally for all of your efforts in aiding this work in your communities.

We are now making changes to the Ukraine schemes to ensure they remain sustainable and meet the needs of those seeking temporary sanctuary in the UK.

This letter sets out the changes to the visa schemes we are putting in place from today (19 February 2024), as well as the associated funding available to local authorities welcoming new arrivals.

Ukraine Permission Extension (UPE) scheme

We will introduce a change to the Immigration Rules later this year so that individuals who hold, or have been granted, permission to enter the UK under Appendix Ukraine of those rules will be able to apply for further permission to remain. They will be able to apply from three months before the expiry of their current visa. The new route will provide an additional 18 months permission, ensuring Ukrainians in the UK can continue to move into independent living, secure rental agreements and employment contracts, while also supporting the Ukrainian government's preference for the future repatriation of its citizens to help rebuild Ukraine when it is safe to do so. It is important that our approach respects these wishes.

Existing schemes

We are announcing amendments to the existing Homes for Ukraine (HFU) sponsorship scheme. From 15:00 on 19 February, a new applicant's initial permission to stay, which will now be 18 months, is aligning with UPE. We will also amend the sponsor eligibility requirements through changes to HMG guidance to ensure those in the UK who sponsor Ukrainians must themselves be settled in the UK.

This package of changes also includes the closure of the Ukraine Family Scheme to new applications, in favour of rationalising the visa routes to a single out-of-country visa application route (Homes for Ukraine) and a single in-country route for those already here seeking to extend their existing leave (UPE). We will also ensure we maintain a route, through the Ukraine Extension Scheme (UES), for children born in the UK to parents who hold leave under one of our Ukraine schemes, to apply to regularise their immigration status here, in line with their parent(s). Finally, we will reintroduce previously disapplied paragraphs of Part 9 of the Immigration Rules (General Grounds for Refusal) to the Ukraine schemes' rules, now that we are almost two years beyond the immediacy of the invasion.

These changes will not impact the conditions granted under permission to stay, with the schemes continuing to provide the same rights and entitlements to access work, benefits, healthcare and education that Ukrainians have benefitted from under the existing schemes.

Funding

For new arrivals, local authorities will continue to receive the £5,900 per person tariff payment to support guests to rebuild their lives and fully integrate into communities. For eligible minors, local authorities will continue to receive the £10,500 per arrival.

Sponsors of guests who arrive under the Homes for Ukraine scheme will continue to be eligible for 'Thank You Payments' for the duration of their guest's Homes for Ukraine visa permission. The UK Government will provide up to three years of 'Thank You Payments' for sponsors of guests on a three year Homes for Ukraine visa, at £350 in year 1, and £500 for years 2 and 3. For sponsors of guests on an 18 months Homes for Ukraine visa (i.e. applications made from 15:00 on 19 February 2024), sponsors will be eligible to receive £350 in year 1, and £500 for months 13-18. This also applies to sponsors of eligible minors.

We would like to take this opportunity to again thank you for all the work you and your teams have done, and continue to do, to provide a place of sanctuary to those fleeing this conflict.

We will also be providing an update in our Local Government Bulletin today, with links to guidance, and your officers will be invited to our Resettlement Local Authority Network meeting with DLUHC and HO officials on Wednesday 21 February 2024.

Yours sincerely,



Tom Pursglove MP
**Minister of State for Legal Migration and
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