

Further support for Ukrainians fleeing Russia invasion

Thousands more Ukrainians will be welcomed to the UK as the Government continues its support for Ukraine in their fight against the Russian invasion.

The Prime Minister this morning (March 1) announced an expansion to our Ukrainian Humanitarian Route, which will increase the number of people from Ukraine who are eligible to come to the UK to be reunited with their families.

As well as immediate family members, British nationals and people of any nationality settled in the UK will now be supported to bring parents, grandparents, adult children and siblings to the UK.

Normal requirements for salary or language tests will be waived. Essential security checks will take place, given the malign action being taken by the Russian state to infiltrate Ukraine but the Home Office will continue to accelerate these checks and process applications as quickly as possible.

People in the region who are eligible under this route are encouraged to call the helpline on 0300 3032785 and to go to a Visa Application Centre in a neighbouring country to enrol biometrics once they have submitted an application.

The Prime Minister also announced plans for a new scheme for Ukrainians with no ties to the UK to come here. An uncapped sponsored humanitarian visa route will allow sponsors, such as communities, private sponsors or local authorities, to bring people to the UK. They will be able to work and the sponsor would provide housing and integration support.

The Government will work closely with international partners and neighbouring countries on the scheme to ensure that displaced Ukrainians forced to flee their homes are supported to apply. We will ensure that those who want to sponsor an individual or family can volunteer and be matched quickly with Ukrainians in need, working closely with the devolved administrations and local authorities across the country.

This is the latest in a package of humanitarian support to help Ukrainian people and is being brought forward following extensive discussion with Ukrainian leaders and other countries in the region.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Putin's war on Ukraine is monstrous and unjustified and the Government will stand with the people of Ukraine, both at home and abroad.

I have been talking to our friends in Ukraine and in the region to ensure the humanitarian support we offer is in the best interests of Ukrainian people.

Our Ukrainian Humanitarian Route will allow families to be reunited in the UK and our bespoke sponsor route will give safety to Ukrainians who have sadly been forced to flee their homes.

This agile response to the despicable Russian invasion is living proof of our New Plan for Immigration – doing what is fair and right to support people in genuine need.

While the Visa Application Centre in Kyiv has had to close in response to the conflict, the Home Office has surged capacity to other countries including Hungary, Poland and Moldova. A new pop-up Visa Application Centre in Rzeszow, Poland, has also been opened.

The staggered steps the UK has taken is in response to the evolving threat situation. Further changes will be made if needed, following discussions with Ukrainian leaders to ensure that support meets their needs.

It forms part of the wider effort to support Ukraine in the face of the Russia invasion. The UK continues to back Ukraine with defensive weapons and economic support as well as £220 million in humanitarian aid.

The announcement is the latest in a series of measures:

- Last week the Home Secretary confirmed that Ukrainians who are on work, study or visit visas in the UK will have their visas temporarily extended or be able to switch to different visa routes or for those on seasonal work visas to have their leave temporarily extended.
- We have waived fees, fast-tracked visas and allowed entry to others who did not meet the requirements.
- The Home Office established 24/7 bespoke helplines to support people through the Ukrainian Humanitarian Route
- The Home Secretary has also shut down the Tier 1 investor visa route, to ensure people who have profited from dirty money cannot gain access to the UK, and visas of people we do not want to be in the country are being cancelled.

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

- The new changes will allow extended family members of British nationals and people settled in the UK to come. This will include parents, grandparents, adult children and siblings from Ukraine, as well as immediate family members.
- Extended family members will also be able to bring their immediate family with them. For example, a sibling of a settled person will be able to come to the UK with their spouse and child.
- Immediate family members are defined as;

- a spouse or civil partner
 - an unmarried partner (you must have been living together in a relationship for at least 2 years)
 - your parent if you are under the age of 18
 - your child under the age of 18
 - an adult relative you provide care for who lives with you due to a medical condition
- Anyone who thinks they may be eligible for this concession to call 0300 3032785.
 - Further details on the community sponsorship route are being worked up at pace and will be communicated in due course, including how people and organisations in the UK can apply to be sponsors.
 - The Home Secretary's statement to Parliament is available here: [Home Secretary statement on humanitarian support for Ukrainians](#)