

(December 2022)



## One Minute Guide



### How do children from Ukraine enter the UK?

The UK government created three new immigration routes for Ukrainian nationals and their family members: the Ukraine Family Scheme, Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine) and Ukraine Extension Scheme, collectively known as Ukraine Scheme. These routes provide opportunity for those displaced to come to the UK for up to three years either through joining family in the UK or independent UK sponsors and provide an option for those Ukrainian nationals already in the UK and unable to return to regularise their stay. The newest edition was for the Homes for Ukraine scheme to be extended to allow children up to the age of 18 to travel without a legal parent/guardian to the UK to reside with a sponsor, this is called Unaccompanied Minors or Eligible Minors.

### Ukraine Family scheme

Under the Family Scheme, despite the requirement of having a family member already residing in the UK, there is no available funding and accommodation conditions as part of the visa application. Family members are not required to provide financial support or accommodation which can leave applicants with no housing or financial support upon their arrival which could mean that local authorities are required to provide homelessness and housing assistance.

[Apply for a Ukraine Family Scheme visa - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-ukraine-family-scheme-visa)

### Homes for Ukraine scheme

The Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme refers to the visa route enabling Ukrainians and their immediate family members to be sponsored by non-family members in the UK. Sponsors can be individuals, businesses, charities, community groups and local authorities. Ukrainians can find their own host through charity organisations who help with matching Ukrainian guests with hosts.

Once a host and guest have been matched, a visa application should be submitted, this data is then shared with Wakefield Council who then arrange the relevant

checks on the host to ensure the sponsorship can go ahead. These checks include a DBS check, a home check and other relevant safeguarding checks on the lead sponsor and anyone in the sponsor household over the age of 16. If these checks are passed the sponsorship can go ahead and once the guest arrives the host can claim a £350 thank you payment each month. Once a guest has been in the UK for 12 months, this claim increases to £500 each month. If any checks fail/cause concern, these would be escalated to the weekly case management meeting in Wakefield, where key agencies discuss sensitive/difficult cases and decide if the sponsorship can or cannot continue.

Once the guest arrives, Wakefield Council arrange a £200 welcome payment for each arrived guest, notify Public Health who would arrange a telephone and face to face visit for the guests to discuss their health needs and the Ukrainian Support Team would support the guest with accessing benefits, schools, bank accounts etc.

If a sponsorship cannot continue due to failed checks, but the visa has been issued Wakefield Council would look to find an alternative host for the guests by using a rematch pool. The rematch pool is a selection of people who are willing to be hosts but have not been able to find anyone to sponsor. Wakefield Council uses the rematch pool to try and prevent guests entering the homeless procedure should there be any relationship breakdowns.

[Homes for Ukraine: guidance for councils - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-guidance-for-councils)

### Extension scheme

The Ukraine Extension Scheme formalises a system for those already in the UK to regularise their stay long-term beyond the initial visa concessions. The scheme is open for Ukrainian nationals and their dependent family members who are already in the UK. Applicants must have had permission to stay on or before 18 March 2022, meaning that anyone on another visa route will be able to switch into this route whilst in the UK. The scheme is also open to those whose status previously expired after 1 January 2022.

## Unaccompanied Minors / Eligible Minors

In June 2022, the government extended the Homes for Ukraine Scheme to allow unaccompanied minors to travel to the UK. The main headlines of the guidance are:

- There is no lower age limit. The upper age limit is 18
- Eligible children must have an immediate family member who is Ukrainian, they must have resided in Ukraine prior to 1/1/22 or have been born after that date
- Applications can be made from the Ukraine, or any other Country, except the UK
- Parents must identify the sponsor and two consent forms are required before any application can be considered. Proof of parental consent will be notarised by an authority approved by the Ukrainian Government. If in another Country, this must be certified by the notary Authorities
- The sponsor must have a pre-existing relationship with the child, that can be verified, (evidence may include letters, emails, social media activity prior to the start of the conflict on 24 February 2022)
- A visa will not be granted, and the child will not be permitted to travel unless all relevant checks and assessments have been completed to evidence that this is a suitable arrangement
- Sponsor should be able to commit to 3 years or until the child turns 18

[Homes for Ukraine: Guidance for councils \(children and minors applying without parents or legal guardians\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-guidance-for-councils-children-and-minors-applying-without-parents-or-legal-guardians)

## General information on the schemes

Funding is available to local authorities, sponsors and arrivals under the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme but there is no funding for the other schemes.

All Ukrainian arrivals are entitled to live, work and study in the UK and have access to public funds and healthcare.

Applicants will receive up to three years' leave to remain with access to public funds and the right to work. Successful applicants will be permitted to travel to the UK and granted six months leave at the UK border and then up to three years' leave upon completing registration of biometrics in the UK. There is currently no route to settlement. This route is managed through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' (DLUHC).

## Arrangements in Wakefield

The Ukrainian Support Team are available to support any guest or sponsor with any query that comes in via the phone or by email. The team work hard to help them complete applications, provide information or signpost them to the relevant agency. They also have easy access to translators to ensure they are communicating with guests effectively. They regularly contact the guest and the sponsor to complete welfare checks and monitor for any signs of relationship breakdown etc to avoid guests entering the homeless procedure where possible.

You can contact the team by ringing 0345 8 506 506 (option 7) or by emailing [ukrainiansupport@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:ukrainiansupport@wakefield.gov.uk). The team are available between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

If anyone needs to raise any concerns about a guest/sponsor they should speak to the Ukrainian Support Team and they will complete the relevant investigation and refer to the Case Management meeting where appropriate.

## What to do if you have a safeguarding concern in relation to a child

In line with normal guidance, where there is an emergency about the safety of a child, and they are in immediate danger the police should be contacted on 999.

If you believe the situation is urgent but there is no immediate danger, please call 0345 8503 503 in the first instance to speak to the Integrated Front Door. As part of this discussion the Integrated Front Door will advise on the next steps to take and as to whether a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) should be completed and submitted to [social\\_care\\_direct\\_children@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:social_care_direct_children@wakefield.gov.uk)

Should your call be outside of business hours (Monday – Thursday, 8.30am – 5pm and Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm) please still call 0345 8503 503 to speak to the Emergency Duty Team. Please note, the Emergency Duty Team operate an emergency only service, non-emergency contacts will need to be made on the next working day.