**THCAN Ukraine support/information for advisors:**

**Note information is changing rapidly, check links/websites for updates**

**General Help/Support**

* [Ukrainian Refugees | NatWest Bank Accounts](https://www.natwest.com/ukraine-refugees.html)
* Bilingual Ukrainian poster and leaflet. We now have a poster and trifold leaflet - [PDFs for printing are saved here](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=65e919dab8&e=588bae1b2e). These resources are intended to give a broad overview of our services and publicise how we may be able to help, and can be used in offices, with clients and distributed to partners
* [Mortgage companies confirm](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=cbdc54619b&e=588bae1b2e) that consent is needed to host someone in a spare room under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, but most will grant this.
* [Habitual residence test will not be applied to Ukrainian refugees](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=5766a5af73&e=588bae1b2e) claiming benefits. See benefits section below
* [Health charges are waived for newly arrived Ukrainians](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=1168623748&e=588bae1b2e)
* The [pets of Ukrainians](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=5460a9efe1&e=588bae1b2e) must quarantine when they arrive but the costs will be picked up by the government
* [Rail and bus companies will provide free onward to travel for Ukrainians](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=2c99316957&e=588bae1b2e) to travel from their port of entry to their accommodation
* The [British Red Cross page on Help for Ukrainian nationals](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=8c7db91d42&e=588bae1b2e) remains a good source of practical help on the visa schemes, travel to the UK and family tracing
* Barnardo’s Ukrainian Support Helpline to provide a holistic support service. You can [find more about the Ukrainian Support Helpline on the Barnardo’s website](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=61eb6da2a7&e=588bae1b2e).
* [Gov website](https://adviceuk.us10.list-manage.com/track/click?u=b59f31050d56d30a14cbcd871&id=ce24155475&e=6092eec86d) (UK visa support for Ukrainian nationals)

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**Benefits**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/immediate-benefit-support-for-those-fleeing-the-invasion-in-ukraine>

**Immediate benefit support for those fleeing the invasion in Ukraine**
In force from 22 March 2022, the [Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) has laid emergency regulations](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=40ad457e13&e=588bae1b2e), so that those arriving to the UK from Ukraine as a result of the Russian invasion can access benefits immediately.

Ukrainians will be eligible for Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Pension Credit, Personal Independence Payment, Disability Living Allowance, Carers Allowance and Attendance Allowance. The habitual residence test and any past presence requirements will not apply to these claimants. Contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance, and Jobseekers Allowance are also available for those Ukrainians who meet the criteria.

[The Child Benefit (General) Regulations 2006 have also been amended](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=ff7bfcfb0e&e=588bae1b2e) to allow those who are fleeing the invasion in Ukraine to claim child benefit without the requirement to have been living in the UK for at least three months.

[The Tax Credits (Definition and Calculation of Income) Regulations 2002 have been amended](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=0c39841436&e=588bae1b2e) so that monthly payments of £350, paid as part of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, are disregarded for the purposes of calculating Tax Credits.

A [press release from the  DWP](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=4c02612874&e=588bae1b2e) outlines further support available from the DWP stating that:

‘Translation services are available to help new arrivals with phone applications, with Work Coaches in DWP Job Centres on hand to support people making claims online. DWP staff are also delivering additional face-to-face assistance to those who need it – including tailored support to find work and advice on benefit eligibility’.’

The legislation is here-

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2022/344/contents/made>

and for child benefit here:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2022/346/made>

**Immigration**

Free UK immigration advice for Ukrainians
A group of volunteer legal professionals are offering to give free UK immigration and asylum advice to Ukrainian citizens affected by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. To request advice, please email ukraine@freemovement.org.uk.

You can [find more information on the Ukraine Advice Project UK website](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=594d25fa19&e=588bae1b2e).

[The adviser immigration helpline](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=74e6675118&e=588bae1b2e) is open 10am to 4pm, Monday to Friday.

[Adviser Online](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=96f52e53a2&e=588bae1b2e) has a section with immigration articles.

[Ukraine Family Scheme update on GOV.UK](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=5a20c858be&e=588bae1b2e)

[Gov website](https://adviceuk.us10.list-manage.com/track/click?u=b59f31050d56d30a14cbcd871&id=ce24155475&e=6092eec86d) (UK visa support for Ukrainian nationals)

[Gov website](https://adviceuk.us10.list-manage.com/track/click?u=b59f31050d56d30a14cbcd871&id=93780f1c34&e=6092eec86d) (aimed at Ukrainians looking at options to move to the UK)

[Gov website](https://adviceuk.us10.list-manage.com/track/click?u=b59f31050d56d30a14cbcd871&id=03237b84b7&e=6092eec86d) (Family Scheme Visa)

[Ukraine Advice Project UK](https://adviceuk.us10.list-manage.com/track/click?u=b59f31050d56d30a14cbcd871&id=4de5022625&e=6092eec86d)

[Homes for Ukraine](https://adviceuk.us10.list-manage.com/track/click?u=b59f31050d56d30a14cbcd871&id=a595cd25ae&e=6092eec86d)

[Gov website Homes for Ukraine scheme](https://adviceuk.us10.list-manage.com/track/click?u=b59f31050d56d30a14cbcd871&id=8ec64b561e&e=6092eec86d) (aimed at hosts)

Applications in the UK
The scheme is now open to Ukrainians who are already in the UK on another visa with family members who can sponsor them. They should have been normally living in Ukraine before 31 December 2021 - but they can still apply if they weren't actually in the Ukraine on that date but were temporarily absent.

This will usually be best for a visitor or anyone with a visa that is not a route to settlement.

They can now apply online in the UK and book an appointment to attend a UKVCAS centre to have their fingerprints and photograph taken. They should not pay for any extra services, such as for uploading documents, and if they need to do this during the appointment it will be provided for free.

We have a new page for Ukrainians in the UK - [If you’re from Ukraine and your visa is ending](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=f25f4697cc&e=588bae1b2e).

Applications from abroad
As of 15 March Ukrainian nationals with a valid Ukrainian international passport or an expired Ukrainian international passport with a formal extension stamp issued by the Ukrainian government, will not have to attend a Visa Application Centre (VAC) before being issued with a visa. Instead they can:

* apply online and upload a copy of their passport (including the page with the extension stamp if applicable) and evidence of their family relationship and that they were living in Ukraine before 1 January 2022
* If successful they will receive a permission letter confirming they can travel to the UK - with this, they will receive a 6-month entry stamp in their passport at the UK border
* In the UK they must provide their biometrics within 6 months. They will then have their stay extended to 3 years.

People with only a domestic Ukrainian passport, ID card or no documents must still make an appointment at a VAC.

[Homes for Ukraine scheme on GOV.UK](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=37749641f2&e=588bae1b2e)
The new scheme that allows people and organisations to sponsor Ukrainian people who do not have family connections in the UK has now been launched and expressions of interest can now be lodged. It will open for applications on 18 March.

It has been confirmed that:

* Ukrainian nationals and their immediate family members who were resident in Ukraine before 1 January 2022 will be eligible (immediate family usually means partner and children under 18)
* Currently sponsors need to match with a particular person or family
* Sponsors will be subject to a range of checks
* The application form will be available from 18 March. It can be completed by either the sponsor or the Ukrainian applicant
* If the applicant has a Ukrainian passport then they will not have to attend a VAC and can apply entirely online
* The scheme is free of charge
* Security checks will be carried out
* Biometrics (fingerprints and photo) will be taken in the UK after arrival
* People who come in on this scheme will be granted a 3 year visa with access to public services, work and benefits
* There is no cap on the numbers of people that can come in on this scheme
* Sponsors must commit to provide accommodation) for a minimum of 6 months - this can be in their home or in a self-contained property
* Sponsors will be paid £350 per month
* [Bringing family members from Ukraine to the UK](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=79d8e282e6&e=588bae1b2e)
* [If you’re from Ukraine and your visa is ending](https://citizensadvice.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f2e5709e33ab37630d8a8d4be&id=0ac4d9a8af&e=588bae1b2e)

**Housing**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2022/339/made>

<https://www.housing-rights.info/whats-new.php>

From 22 March 2022 the Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) England Regulations have been amended to include a new category of people who are eligible for homelessness assistance.

People who left Ukraine because of the Russian invasion that began on 24 February 2022 are eligible for assistance if they:

* were residing in Ukraine immediately before 1st January 2022
* have been given leave in accordance with the Immigration Rules
* are not subject to a no recourse to public funds condition

An explanatory memorandum to the amending regulations states that the Home Office will amend the Immigration Rules to include leave granted under the Ukrainian Family Scheme and the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. Leave granted under the schemes before then is leave outside the rules.

From 22 March 2022, people who left Ukraine in connection with the Russia invasion are not required to be habitually resident.

**Students**

The government has made changes to the rules to allow for [Ukrainian nationals to claim benefits quicker](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/immediate-benefit-support-for-those-fleeing-the-invasion-in-ukraine) BUT full time students are excluded from benefits even if they are British and I haven’t seen any changes there.  There are exemptions for those with children and/or disability so I would need more information. Students are usually expected to rely on student grants and loans etc and it is really unfair, but studying is seen as a ‘choice’ rather than necessity and when students aren’t entitled to student funding they are expected to withdraw from the course and can then claim benefits.  Benefits and student finance rules are very complex so need full circumstances.

These links may be of use;

[Student finance for refugees and asylum seekers | Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Conservatoires | UCAS](https://www.ucas.com/finance/additional-funding/student-finance-refugees-and-asylum-seekers)