

Employing Ukrainian Refugees Guide: Part One

In response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, many UK businesses have stepped up to help.

Marks & Spencer, Lush, and PwC, just to name a few, are offering jobs to Ukrainian refugees. If you're in a position where you would like to provide work, but aren't sure where to start, we've got you covered.

Over the next few weeks, Croner will be providing support and guidance on the situation. In this first part of the series, we'll be exploring the different processes and schemes to get a Ukrainian national into work. This includes the criteria for employment and the checks you should conduct to ensure your business meets current employment law.

The situation so far

Since the crisis began the government has introduced several schemes to help refugees settle and find work in the UK. Mostly, these schemes revolve around the individual being sponsored by someone. This may be where some confusion occurs, as there already existing rules around sponsorship and immigration. However, you don't have to sponsor in the usual way. You can 'sponsor' Ukrainians by complying with the necessary requirements. The main aspect of this is providing accommodation for at least 6 months.

We'll explain how this works in greater detail as we explore each of the schemes providing a route to the UK for Ukrainian nationals.

How to offer work to Ukrainian refugees

If you are an employer, and want to offer work to Ukrainian nationals, you start by informing the Home Office.

This is separate from the Homes for Ukraine scheme. That means there is no obligation for you to provide accommodation to the individuals you employ. You can offer full time, part time, or voluntary roles. Whatever vacancies you do offer, the individual(s) must have the right to work in the UK. This means doing the appropriate checks.

If you wish to offer work, you should send an email to offerwork@homeoffice.gov.uk and provide this information:

- your company name and contact details
- how many roles you have available
- the location of the role (if it's local or national)
- a job description
- if the role is part-time, full-time or a different working pattern
- if English language qualifications are needed
- any support you can offer - for example, relocation packages, mentoring or English lessons

Homes for Ukraine Scheme

In short, this scheme allows both businesses and individuals to sponsor a named contact, or contacts, and provide them housing for at least six months.

How does it work?

How the process works depends on whether you already have a named contact to sponsor.

If you do, you must complete a visa application with details of the refugee and your business. The sponsored contact must have been living in Ukraine on or immediately before 1st January 2022, and currently be outside of the UK.

Once the application is processed, the individual will receive a letter confirming they may travel to the UK without a visa. The rest of the process will be the same as the Family Scheme. They'll receive a stamp giving them the right to work in the UK for six months. The individual will need to submit their biometric information to extend their stay up to 3 years via a BRP. As an employer you should conduct right to work checks during these deadlines.

If you don't have a named contact, you can register your interest in being a sponsor, here: <https://www.gov.uk/register-interest-homes-ukraine>.

If you do choose to sponsor an individual through this scheme, you *must* provide accommodation for them for at least 6 months. An offer of work is not sufficient on its own.

The accommodation must meet certain standards. These are:

- be kept clean and in a reasonable state;
- have adequate kitchen and bathroom space
- have access to drinking water
- have a working smoke detector on each floor of the property and other fire safety precautions suitable for the building e.g. fire doors or escape routes as appropriate (further information on making a home safe from fire)
- have a working carbon monoxide detector in any room containing a solid fuel burning appliance (e.g. a coal fire, wood burning stove)
- have sufficient heating to keep the property at a comfortable temperature
- have safe gas appliances, fittings and flues and have undertaken a Gas Safety check within the last year (see more information)
- have safe and working electrics, which a qualified electrician can help with if you are unsure
- be almost entirely free of damp or mould
- have doors and windows at entry level that lock properly
- be easy and safe to move around in, without excessively steep

Standard Visa Scheme

If an individual cannot apply through one of the other schemes, they may take this route instead. If you are already a licensed sponsor, you may recruit Ukrainian national by allocating a certificate of sponsorship so they can work under a Skilled Worker visa. The vacancy itself would need to comply with the usual criteria involved in the points-based system.

Extending existing visas

Ukrainian nationals already working in the UK have the opportunity to extend their current visas. If the individual had permission to stay in the UK on, or before, 18th March 2022, they'll

be able to do this visa the Ukraine Extension Scheme. If their permission to stay has expired since 1st January 2022, they'll still be able to apply.

Support employing Ukrainian nationals

If you have questions regarding sponsorship, the right to work in the UK, or hiring foreign nationals, we can provide expert advice. Our consultants deal with recruitment and employment issues daily.

Speak to one of them today on **0844 561 8133** and quote **80168**.

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