



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP

*Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and
Communities*

Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

**Department for Levelling Up, Housing and
Communities**

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To: All MPs and Peers

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Dear Colleague,

Humanitarian crisis in Ukraine

As a result of Putin's devastating, indefensible invasion, we are now facing the greatest crisis in Europe since the end of the Second World War. This Government is determined to do what we can to help those fleeing heart-breaking scenes that we never thought to see again on the Continent.

The British people have recognised just how perilous this moment is and the stories of defiance and bravery in the face of a tyrant has prompted a tidal wave of generosity that has swept across the country since war broke out just over three weeks ago. I know that you are ready to support the national effort needed and your support will, as ever, be critical in responding to this crisis.

'Homes for Ukraine'

The Government has already put in place a rigorous sanctions regime targeted at the property and assets of those supporting the Putin regime and expanded the Family Sponsorship scheme. We want to go further; so today I am announcing a new UK-wide sponsorship scheme, 'Homes for Ukraine'.

This scheme, developed with my colleagues in the Home Office, will allow people seeking sanctuary with no family ties to the UK to be sponsored by individuals or organisations who can offer them a home, such as a spare room or unoccupied residential self-contained unit. The scheme will be uncapped, open to Ukrainian nationals (and immediate family members of Ukrainian nationals). Those arriving through this scheme will be able to live and work in the UK for up to three years and also access benefits, healthcare, and other support. Our aim, through this route, is to offer a safe, warm welcome to as many arrivals as possible, based on the number of sponsors.

Sponsor requirements

Sponsors can be of any nationality, with any immigration status, provided they have at least six months' leave to remain within the UK. In the first phase of the scheme, sponsors will need to have a named person who they wish to sponsor. This could be a friend, or friend of friend, someone they are already connected with, or it could be someone they have been linked with by a charity, faith group or other organisation. The visa application route will go live on Friday 18 March.

We are asking that sponsors provide accommodation for a minimum of six months. We appreciate people's generosity and know there will be costs associated with helping out – so we are offering an optional 'thank you' payment of £350 per month to people for up to 12 months. This thank you payment is limited to one payment per residential address. Sponsors should not charge rent. They will not be expected to cover the costs of food and living expenses, although they may wish to offer this philanthropically.

We want to minimise bureaucracy and make the process as straightforward as possible while ensuring the safety of all involved. Those arriving will therefore need to meet standard security checks. Those living in the sponsoring households will also be subject to security checks and may be subject to safeguarding checks too.

Launch of Expression of Interest Webpage

Any individual, charity, community group and business across the country can record their interest on a webpage going live today - www.gov.uk/homes-for-ukraine. They will receive updates and more information on how to apply once the scheme launches. Then on Friday 18 March, Phase One of the visa application route will open for sponsors and named contacts to apply to the scheme.

Over time, we expect to see the scheme develop further to allow charities, faith groups, community groups and other organisations to act as sponsors.

Local Authority Support

I know local councils will want to play their part in supporting people who have been through so much to feel at home in the UK, in addition to the already significant work they are doing to support those who have arrived from Afghanistan and Hong Kong. We are committed to working with them to achieve this and on efforts to provide a full wraparound service that also encompasses sponsors. As such, we will be providing substantial level of funding at a rate of £10,500 per person to local authorities, with an additional top-up for child education, to enable them to provide much wider support to families to rebuild their lives and fully integrate into communities.

Our country has a long and proud history of supporting the most vulnerable during their darkest hour. We are doing so again with Homes for Ukraine. Thank you for your support with this vital national effort.

With every good wish,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Gove". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations**