

This factsheet outlines the housing & benefits rights of Ukrainian nationals who have entered the UK having fled the war in Ukraine.

The Ukraine schemes

In response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Government set up two schemes to assist Ukrainian refugees from the war:

- [Homes for Ukraine](#) – allows Ukrainians to be sponsored by UK residents who have accommodation available for at least six months.
- [Ukraine Family Scheme](#) - allows family members of British nationals and people settled in the UK to come to the country.

Recourse to Public Funds – access to benefits and help with housing

Ukrainians who have come to the UK under the Ukraine schemes will normally have recourse to public funds, meaning that they can claim benefits and get assistance with housing.

Ukrainian nationals who left the country following the Russian invasion on 24 February 2022 will have recourse to public funds if they:

- Were resident in Ukraine before 1 January 2022 and
- have been given leave to enter the UK, and
- are not subject to a no recourse to public funds condition.

Access to benefits

Ukrainian nationals who have recourse to public funds will be entitled to claim benefits such as Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Pension Credit, Personal Independence Payment, Child Disability Living Allowance and Carers Allowance and Attendance Allowance.

There are [benefits calculators](#) to help determine a person's entitlement. Work Coaches in Jobcentres can also help with making online claims.

Financial support for renting

Financial help with rent can be claimed from Universal Credit (Universal Credit Housing Element UCHE) or Housing Benefit.

For private rented accommodation, the maximum amount of benefit that a household receives towards the rent is known as the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and depends how many people are in your household and where the property is.

The [LHA bedroom calculator](#) shows the number of bedrooms the household is entitled to and [this site](#) shows the LHA rate by postcode or local authority.

Single people aged under 35 will normally get the shared accommodation rate, and the one-bedroom rate when 35 or over. [There are some exemptions](#).

The LHA rate is the maximum amount of benefit that can be paid for rent and may be reduced depending upon a household's income or savings.

Right to Rent – access to private rented properties

Every prospective private sector tenant has to prove to their landlord that they have the '[right to rent](#)' before they can be granted a tenancy.

Ukrainians who have entered the country under the Ukraine schemes will have a time-limited right to rent, initially for 12 months, this will be extended to up to 3 years if the person is granted a residence permit for a longer period.

Prospective landlords will ask for proof of the right to rent and cannot grant a tenancy until they have this proof.

The housing register – social housing

Ukrainians in the country under the Ukraine schemes can apply for social housing (Council and housing association) if they meet the local connection criteria and have a housing need.

The local connection criteria for Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough are:

- Currently living in the area and have done so for the past two years, or
- Having lived in the area for a total of 3 out of the last 5 years, or
- Having permanent employment in the area for at least two years, or
- Immediate family who are currently living in the area and have done so for a minimum of 5 years.

There are some exemptions to the requirement to have a local connection (details in the allocation policy, see below). The only exemption that is likely to apply to Ukrainian nationals is if they are a homeless applicant owed a full housing duty.

Waiting times to be rehoused from the housing register

There is a shortage of social housing. With a few exceptions the waiting time to be rehoused into social housing is long. People on band A will wait, on average, over a year, and applicants on band C can expect to wait over five years.

Waiting times can be shorter for people aged over 60 (55 for some housing associations) who want to go into [retirement housing](#) (also known as sheltered housing).

Assistance when homeless or at risk of homelessness

Ukraine scheme residents can apply to the Council for help if they are homeless, or at risk of homelessness within 56 days. The leaflet '[Applying for Assistance with Housing](#)' gives more details.

For anyone at risk of homelessness, the Council will attempt to help the household remain in their current accommodation. For example, if the relationship between the host and refugee is breaking down, we can engage the mediation service (see below for contact details).

For households who are homeless, or where homelessness cannot be prevented, we will support them to find an alternative host or private rented accommodation.

The factsheet [Looking for somewhere to live](#) gives advice on how to find accommodation.

We have a duty to provide temporary accommodation only for households who have a [priority need](#). Households with no priority need are supported to find other accommodation.

Useful contacts

Lewes & Eastbourne Councils

[Housing Allocations Policies](#)

[Homelessness](#)

[Housing leaflets and factsheets](#)

Tel: 01323 410000 or 01273 471600

East Sussex County Council - [Support for Ukrainian refugees](#)

British Red Cross – [Help for Ukrainian Nationals](#) advice in English, Ukrainian and Russian.

Shelter – [Housing Advice](#)

Mediation Service – the mediation service can help in any situation where there is conflict, for example between the sponsor and Ukrainian guest. The factsheet '[Help if conflict is affecting your household](#)' gives details of the service and how to contact them.