



11 May 2022

Dame Diana Johnson MP
Chair, Home Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Dame Diana,

In response to the terrible humanitarian crisis caused by the invasion of Ukraine, the Home Office has created safe and legal pathways for Ukrainians to seek safety in the UK. We were the first country in the world to operationalise such schemes, in some of the fastest timescales in this country's immigration history. This has taken a lot of hard work and determination, reflecting the desire of the British people to open their hearts and homes to Ukrainians.

The Ukraine Family Scheme allows British nationals in the UK to bring Ukrainian family members here. The Homes for Ukraine Scheme allows people to sponsor Ukrainians without existing ties to the UK. And the Ukraine Extension Scheme permits Ukrainians already in the UK to extend their stay. Each scheme provides three years' leave to remain and allows people to work and access public services. Over 70,000 visas have so far been granted.

Understandably, because the schemes had to be delivered so urgently, resources have needed to be temporarily diverted from other casework areas. This has had an impact on some of them.

Super Priority (SPV) and Priority (PV) offerings for Work, Study, Marriage and Family entry clearance applications have been temporarily suspended. It has not been possible to meet the normal standard of a 15-day return on Work, Marriage and Family entry clearance applications. And there have been delays in processing of some other immigration applications.

However, the impact on Work visas is short-term and expect to return to normal standards as quickly as possible. Once we have returned to service standard, we will resume SPV and PV for Work and Study visa routes.

The impact on Marriage and Family visas has been more significant because the unit responsible for these routes has been supporting Ukraine efforts

since early February. The normal service standard for entry clearance applications is 60 working days. We are working very hard to be able to return staff to Marriage and Family visa routes, but it will take a longer time to return to normal service standards. In the meantime, we are temporarily amending our Marriage and Family service standard to 120 working days. By way of comparison, this temporary amendment to 120 days is quicker than the current average processing time of similar routes offered by comparative countries such as Canada and New Zealand.

This is a time of existential crisis for Ukraine, the war is bound to have an effect on other parts of the world. That is especially true of this country, which is so united in its determination to do right by Ukrainians.

With all your wishes


Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
Home Secretary