



Home Office

Home Secretary

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Dame Diana Johnson MP
Chair, Home Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London
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21 June 2022

Dear Dame Diana,

Thank you for your letter of 18 May which asked what the expected timescale for the resumption of the 60 day service standard for Marriage and Family (entry clearance) visas is, and whether additional support was being utilised to aid the recovery.

The Home Office is currently prioritising Ukraine Visa Schemes applications in response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. It has received over 130,000 applications under the Ukraine schemes, one of the fastest and largest visa programmes in UK history. In as little as 2 months we have issued over 100,000 visas, helping Ukrainians displaced from their home country to come to the UK to live, work, study and find stability here.

The Home Office have surged staff from other government departments, including DWP and HMRC, to provide assistance with Ukraine casework. In turn, this will release Home Office staff back to their normal roles and enable casework of Marriage & Family applications to recommence in larger volumes. Work is continuing to identify further support from within the Home Office as well as from other government departments. We have also recently onboarded additional staff which will allow further support for recovery work, although it should be noted that the impact will not be immediate as it will take time to conduct training and familiarisation.

Our planning team has been fully committed to Ukraine reporting since the beginning of the invasion. Therefore, it has not yet been possible to fully model our recovery until the impacts of that support have ended and recovery prioritisation, particularly over the summer period, has been confirmed.

Due to the above factors, we are currently unable to provide a specific timescale as to when Marriage and Family (entry clearance) applications will return to a 60-day service standard. We will though keep this under review, and I will write to you again in due course to advise of further plans and forecasting relating to this.

With our good wishes
P
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Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
Home Secretary