



Home Office



Department for Levelling
Housing & Communities

Lord Richard Harrington
Minister for Refugees

Home Office and Department for
Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Email:
PSRichardHarrington@levellingup.gov.uk

Dame Diana Johnson MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

01 June 2022

Dear Dame Diana,

Thank you for your letter, with enclosure, regarding the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. *We continue to work as hard as possible to process applications under our Ukraine schemes as quickly as possible, and as of 9 June had issued over 124,000 visas under these schemes.*

In this reply, I will address each of your specific questions in turn:

The actions your department is taking to improve communication with applicants and whether regular updates can be provided, in order to reduce distress?

I completely understand the importance of clear communications to applicants under the schemes. The time taken to check an application is, however, ultimately the same as the time taken to make a decision, and I am firmly of the view that issuing as many visas as possible is the best way to reduce distress for the vast majority of cases.

For those cases with special or complex cases, we are reviewing future updates to those individuals with outstanding applications where appropriate, and our “Portcullis House Hub” has been available for Parliamentarians and their staff to receive information every working day since the scheme opened. We are also exploring opportunities for improved communications through our “AUK2” system, which I discuss more below.

Where applications were lodged over 14 days ago, would you consider allocating specific resource to ensure these cases are examined and resolved as a matter of urgency?

We have received tens of thousands of applications for the Ukraine Family Scheme and the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and in just over three months, over 124,000 visas have been issued and more than 70,000 Ukrainians have arrived to rebuild their lives in the UK. Officials are processing the paperwork as quickly as possible, and more than 500 additional caseworkers from across government have been brought in specifically to manage this demand.

My officials are working seven days a week to process applications, but it is right that as well as extra resource, we continue to improve our processes. On Wednesday 18 May, a fully digital application process (AUK2) for holders of valid Ukrainian international passports applying under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme from outside the UK was launched.

There are a small number of deferred cases that have required policy review due to their particularly complex nature, but these are being worked through as quickly as possible.

When do you expect to reach the target of issuing 15,000 visas a week under both schemes?

The Home Office achieved this target during late April and it continues to deliver visa decisions as quickly as possible. The published data is updated weekly and can be found at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/ukraine-family-scheme-application-data

We are currently effectively able to process the amount we are currently receiving with capacity to increase further should there be any sudden significant increase in demand.

Can you confirm whether there have been multiple data losses regarding applications to the Homes for Ukraine scheme? If not, please immediately issue clear communication that documents disappearing in the online application form does not mean that the documentation and application has in fact been lost.

There have been no such data losses, and I have gone on the record in the press being very clear about that.

With regard to the specific cases you have raised, I hope you will understand that I am unable to provide an update on each application in this reply. This is in order to safeguard an individual's personal information, and to comply with Home Office obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation, as tailored by the Data Protection Act 2018. However, I of course shared these with my caseworkers.

As I

have outlined above, officials are processing applications as quickly as possible, and are aware of the urgency of the task at hand.

With all my very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard". The script is cursive and fluid.

**Lord Richard Harrington
Minister for Refugees**