

Ukrainian migration to Essex

Health needs assessment

April 2025

Acknowledgements

The Essex County Council Public Health team extends our gratitude to all participants who generously contributed their time and insights to our study. Your valuable input is appreciated and will greatly contribute to advancing our understanding in this area. Thank you for being a vital part of our research journey.

Sponsor:

Public Health Consultant

Author:

Senior Wellbeing and Public Health Officer

Thank you to the Programme Manager for Overseas Arrivals, and the Lead Overseas Arrivals Officers for their input and support on this project.

Contact us:

overseasarrivals@essex.gov.uk

List of abbreviations

ACL- Adult Community Learning

AUGB - Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain

BNO - British National Overseas

CAMHS - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

ECC - Essex County Council

ECDC - European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control

ESOL - English for Speakers of Other Languages

EWS - Essex Wellbeing Service

GP - General Practitioner

IAPT - Improving Access to Psychological Therapies

ICB - Integrated Care Board

LGA - Local Government Association

LTBI - Latent TB Infection

MDR-TB - Multidrug Resistant Tuberculosis

MHCLG - Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government

NCD - Non-communicable Diseases

NHSE - NHS England

NICE - National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

ONS- Office for National Statistics

OHID - Office for Health Improvement and Disparities

PCN – Primary Care Networks

PTSD – Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

SMP – Strategic Migration Partnership

STI - Sexually Transmitted Infection

TB – Tuberculosis

UK – United Kingdom

UKHSA - UK Health Security Agency

UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

VCSE - Voluntary, Community Sector and Social Enterprises

WHO - World Health Organisation

Contents

Ukrainian migration to Essex	1
Acknowledgements.....	2
List of abbreviations.....	3
Executive summary	7
Introduction	8
The global picture	9
The national picture.....	10
Background	10
Current Ukrainian resettlement schemes.....	11
Entitlements of Ukrainian arrivals	14
The regional picture	14
The local picture.....	15
Wider determinants of health	16
Individual lifestyle factors	17
Social and community networks.....	17
Living and working conditions	18
Access to health care services.....	19
Housing	19
Mental health.....	20
Post-traumatic stress disorder	20
Suicide	20
Communicable diseases.....	21
Vaccination.....	21
Hepatitis.....	21
Tuberculosis (TB).....	21
HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections.....	22
Polio	23
Measles	23
Women's health.....	23
Non-communicable diseases	24
Recommendations	24
Discussion.....	33
Appendices.....	34
List of figures.....	34

List of tables 35

Executive summary

Greater Essex has a long history of hosting refugees from diverse parts of the world. Local authorities and the National Health Service (NHS) have become accustomed to delivering services to support these new arrivals. In many cases, the findings of this Health Needs Assessment (HNA) highlights concerns which have already been identified for other migrant groups, which have not yet been fully resolved.

However, the findings of this HNA highlight that compared to other migrant groups, Ukrainian arrivals to the United Kingdom (UK) hold higher levels of education, have previously held better jobs, have high levels of personal agency and higher expectations. Due to the nature of the cause of migration (war), the arrivals are disproportionately female and children.

There is recognition that a lot of excellent work is already taking place at a local level to support existing and new migrants, including the Ukrainian refugees. This HNA takes a county-wide approach and therefore some recommendations may already be taking place in some areas but not others.

This report includes recommendations involving the health care system, local authorities, government departments, voluntary sector, and universities. These include:

- support for community liaison/ champion/ navigator type roles
- better explanations of how the health system works at an early stage prior to and immediately on arrival
- immunisation screening
- quicker and easier access to translators/ mediators
- improved cultural competence amongst clinical staff, including the social and cultural aspects of refugees

Overall, the outcome of these recommendations should lead to quicker and more appropriate access to services, increased cultural engagement and understanding of clinical needs, resulting in improved physical and mental health. These findings are in line with previous recommendations for other migrant groups in recent years.

Government data demonstrates that there are Ukrainian refugees in every lower tier and unitary authority in Greater Essex. Therefore, it is likely that the recommendations are appropriate and relevant in most areas and footprints across the county.

Introduction

The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has resulted in loss of life, separation of family members, loss of homes, belongings, savings, and jobs. Inflation and the contracting economy places families and communities who have been torn apart by displacement in an increasingly precarious position. Civilian infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed, disrupting the supply and access to gas, electricity, and fuel. Attacks by missiles, rockets and drones continue to pose a risk to the safety and security of millions of Ukrainians.

Approximately one-third of Ukrainians have been forced to flee their homes and around 5 million are currently displaced within the country, while over 6 million are displaced as refugees abroad.¹ It is currently one of the largest human displacement crises in the world.²

The humanitarian needs inside Ukraine continue to grow as the war continues and 17.6 million people are considered to be in need of humanitarian assistance according to the 2023 Humanitarian Needs Overview and Response Plan.³ Internally displaced persons, older persons, and persons with disabilities are among the most vulnerable and severely affected by the war.⁴

The invasion caused Europe's largest refugee crisis since World War II and the fourth largest refugee crisis in history. It is the largest refugee crisis of the 21st century, with the highest refugee flight rate globally.⁵

This HNA will focus on Ukrainian citizens living in Essex under a UK government resettlement scheme. The findings of this HNA are drawn from a literature search (see Appendix 1) and key data sources.

Due to differences in their experiences, including travel to, and legal rights once they arrive in the UK, the needs of Ukrainian citizens are reviewed as part of the Essex County Council Overseas Arrivals HNA.

¹ [Ukraine | UNHCR UK](#) Accessed 2 September 2024

² [Ukraine | UNHCR UK](#) Accessed 2 July 2024

³ [Ukraine | UNHCR UK](#) Accessed 2 July 2024

⁴ [Ukraine | UNHCR UK](#) Accessed 2 September 2024

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/06/ukraine-fastest-growing-refugee-crisis-since-second-world-war> Accessed 1 July 2024

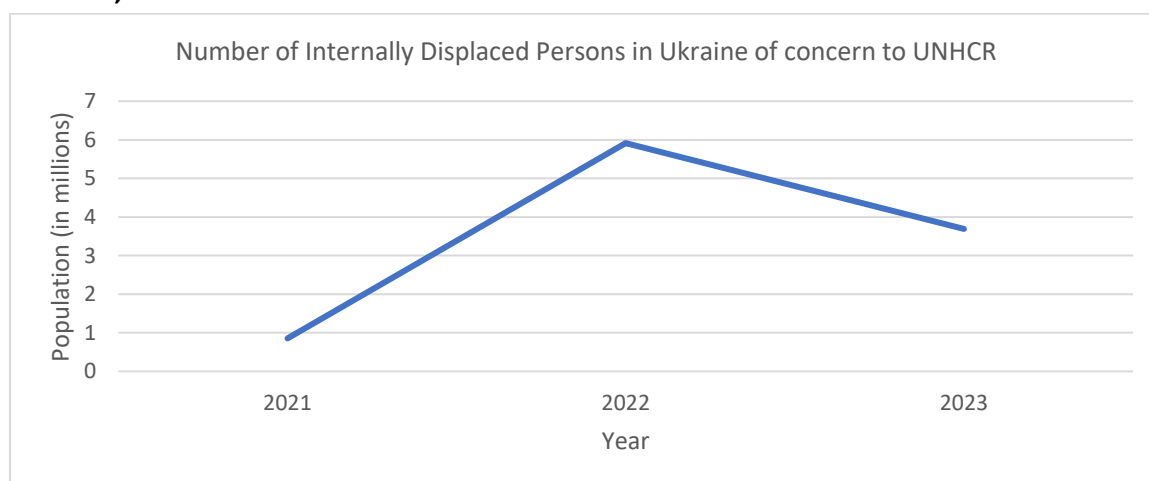
The global picture

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022 caused massive civilian casualties with destruction of civilian infrastructure, forcing millions of people to flee their homes to seek safety, protection, and assistance. As of 1 July 2024, 6,554,800 refugees from Ukraine have been recorded globally,⁶ while an additional 3,689,000 others remain internally displaced within the country as of May 2024.⁷

As of 15 March 2024, approximately 4,455,000 people have returned spontaneously to their place of habitual residence in Ukraine following a period of displacement of at least two weeks (internal displacement or cross-border). Of these, 26 per cent have returned from abroad.⁸

90% of Ukrainian refugees are women and children. By 24 March 2022, more than half of all children in Ukraine had left their homes, of whom a quarter had left the country.⁹

Figure 1: UNHCR data on internally displaced persons at the end of the year, country of origin: Ukraine, 2021 to 2023



Source: UNHCR¹⁰

⁶ [Situation Ukraine Refugee Situation \(unhcr.org\)](https://www.unhcr.org/situations/ukraine/) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁷ <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/ukraine-conditions-return-assessment-factsheet-round-7-may-2024#:~:text=As%20of%2015%20March%202024,5%2C930%2C400%20people%20were%20displaced%20abroad.> Accessed 1 July 2024

⁸ <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/ukraine-conditions-return-assessment-factsheet-round-7-may-2024#:~:text=As%20of%2015%20March%202024,5%2C930%2C400%20people%20were%20displaced%20abroad.> Accessed 1 July 2024

⁹ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/03/1114592> Accessed 1 July 2024

¹⁰ [unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=Mx4W9g](https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=Mx4W9g) Accessed 2 July 2024

Figure 1 is a line graph titled 'Number of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine of concern to UNHCR.' The x-axis represents the years 2021 to 2023. The y-axis represents the population in millions. The graph shows a significant rise in the number of internally displaced persons in Ukraine from 2021 to 2022, followed by a slight decrease in 2023. 2021: approximately 2 million internally displaced persons. 2022: sharp increase to about 5 million internally displaced persons. 2023: decrease to around 4 million internally displaced persons.

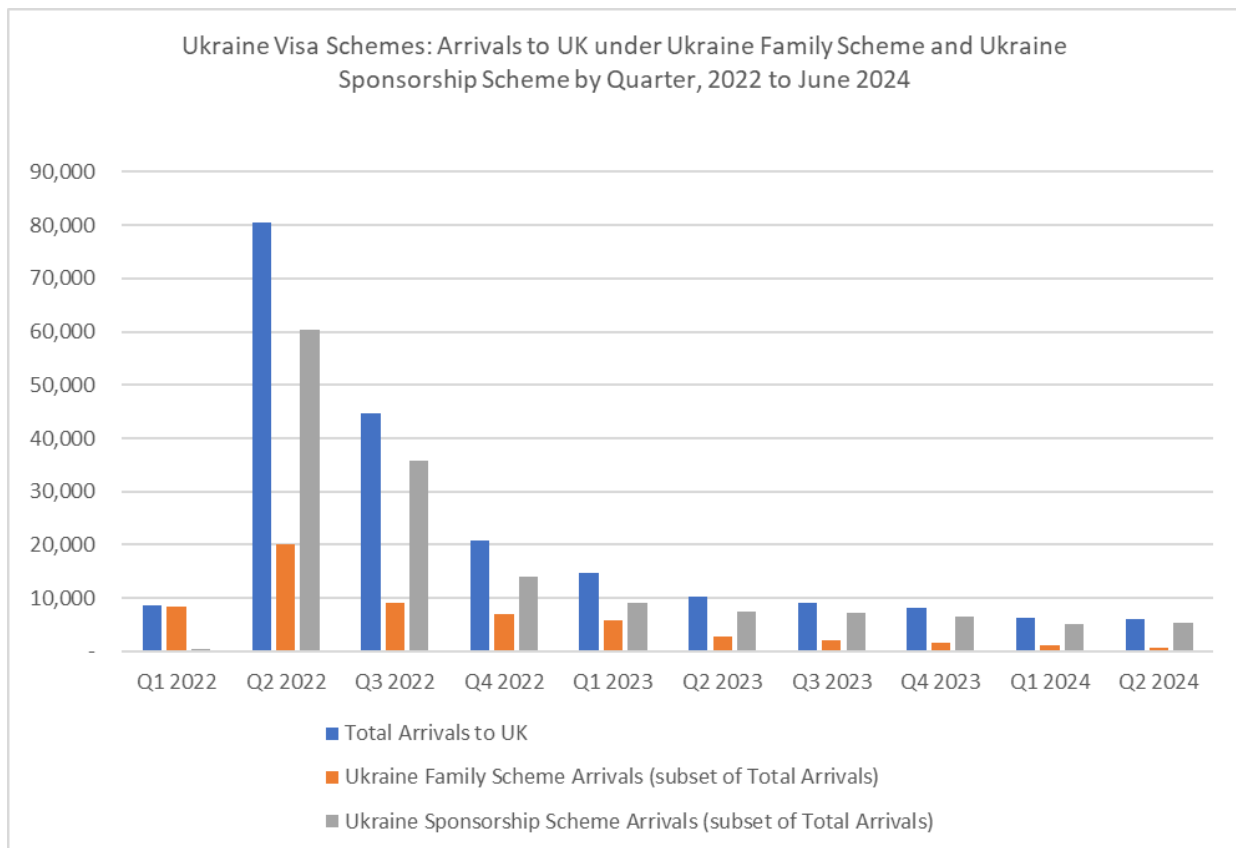
The national picture

Background

In requiring visas and either family connections in the UK or sponsors within the community, the UK's approach to people fleeing war in Ukraine is more restrictive than that of the European Union.

Policies addressing specific conflicts, such as the resettlement programme for Syrian refugees, and the scheme providing visas for Hong Kong residents with British National Overseas (BNO) status¹¹ have similarly permitted entry to the UK via these routes without arrivals being physically present in the country, as is required for applicants under the regular asylum process.

Figure 2: Ukraine Visa Schemes: Total arrivals to UK under Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme by Quarter, March 2022 to 30 June 2024



Source: Immigration system statistics data tables, 2024¹²

¹¹ <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/ukrainian-migration-to-the-uk/#:~:text=Around%20174%2C000%20people%20had%20moved,as%20of%209%20May%202023.&text=Total%20weekly%20arrivals%20under%20the,to%201%2C000%20in%20March%202023>. Accessed 1 July 2024

¹² [Immigration system statistics data tables - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-data-tables) Accessed 2 October 2024

Figure 2 is a bar chart which shows the total number of arrivals to the UK under two visa schemes for Ukrainians: the Ukraine Family Scheme and the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme. The data is presented quarterly from Q1 2022 to Q2 2024. The x-axis represents the quarters from Q1 2022 to Q2 2024. The y-axis represents the number of arrivals,

Current Ukrainian resettlement schemes

In response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, three UK government visa schemes were launched:

- the Ukraine Family Scheme, which allows applicants to join family members or extend their stay in the UK¹³
- the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, which allows Ukrainian nationals and their family members to come to the UK if they have a named Sponsor under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme
- the Ukraine Extension Scheme, which allowed people already in the UK to extend their temporary stay

Those who were granted permission under the Ukrainian Family Scheme can live, work and study in the UK and access public funds for up to 3 years.

The Ukrainian Sponsorship Scheme (also known as the Homes for Ukraine Scheme) was launched by the UK government on 14 March 2022. This scheme was initially for 3 years. From 19 February 2024 anyone who applied could only receive an 18-month visa. Accommodation is provided in someone's home or in a property they own.¹⁴ Sponsors are asked to provide accommodation for six months in the first instance. All visas will be able to apply for the new Ukraine Permissions Extension Scheme.

As of 24 September 2024, the total number of Ukraine Scheme visas issued (visa applications received in parentheses) in the UK is 263,900 (347,100)¹⁵

This was comprised of:

- Ukraine Family Scheme visas: 72,500 (108,500)
- Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme visas: 191,400 (238,600)
- UKR Extension Scheme visas: 25,600 (31,700)

ranging from 0 to 90,000. Three types of data are represented: Total Arrivals to UK (blue bars), Ukraine Family Scheme Arrivals (orange bars) Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme Arrivals (grey bars)

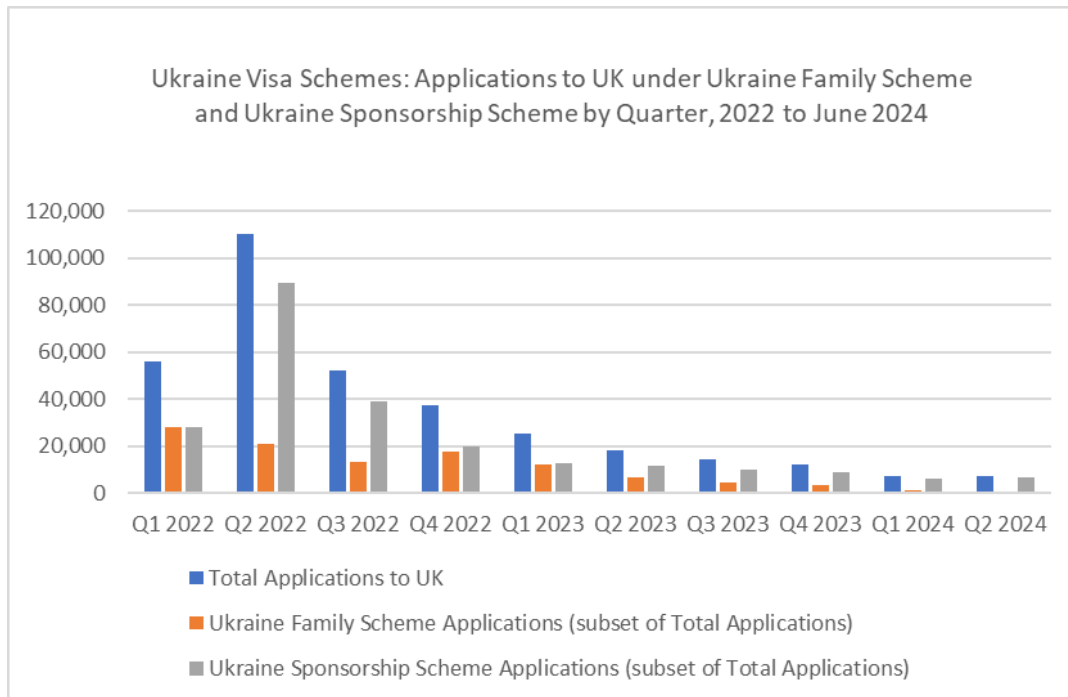
Key observations: in Q1 2022, there were minimal arrivals across all categories. A significant increase in total arrivals is observed in Q2 2022, with over half being through the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme. From Q3 2022 onwards, there is a general decline in total arrivals each quarter. By Q1 and Q2 of 2024, both schemes show relatively low numbers compared to earlier quarters.

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-ukraine-family-scheme-visa> Accessed 29 May 2024

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-visa-under-the-ukraine-sponsorship-scheme> Accessed 29 May 2024

¹⁵ [Ukraine Family Scheme, Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme \(Homes for Ukraine\) and Ukraine Extension Scheme visa data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 2 October 2024

Figure 3: Ukraine visa schemes: Applications to UK under Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme by Quarter, March 2022 to 30 June 2024

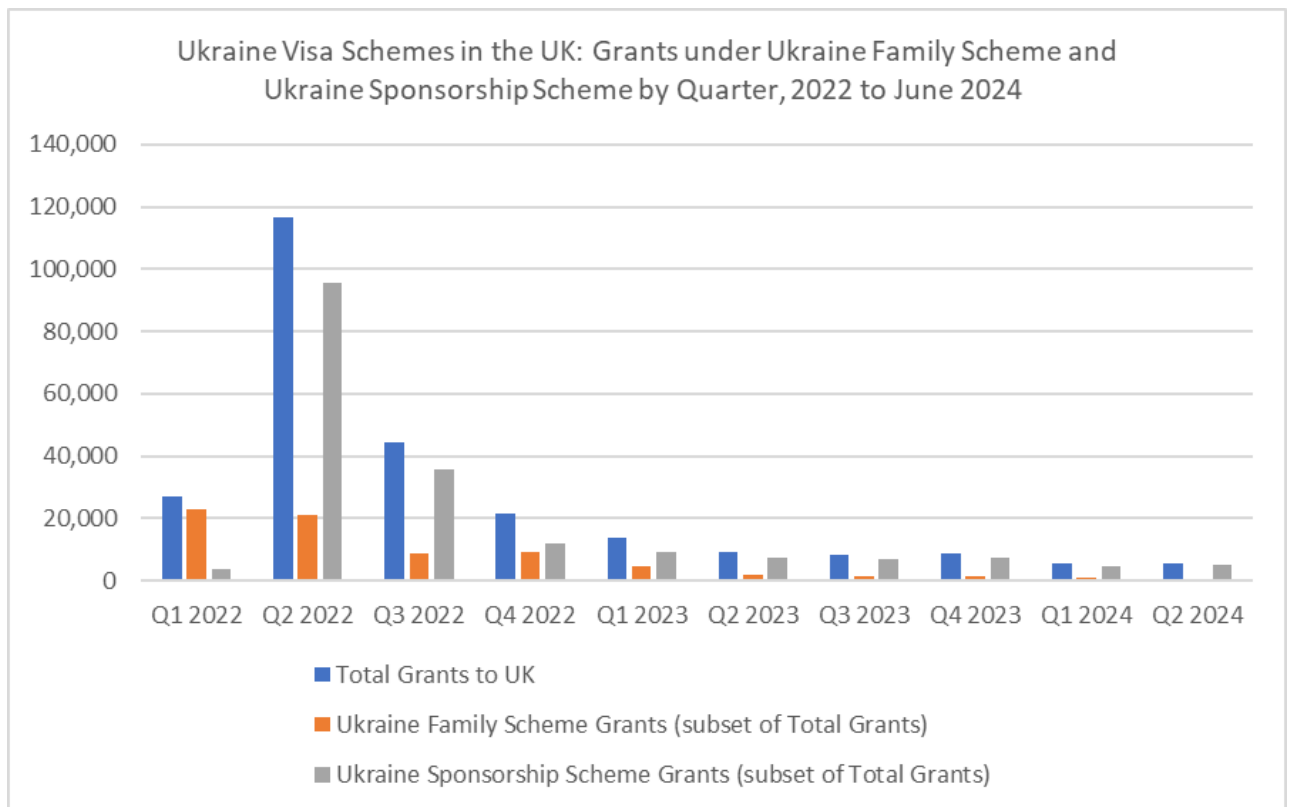


Source: Immigration system statistics data tables, 2024¹⁶

¹⁶ [Immigration system statistics data tables - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-data-tables) Accessed 2 October 2024

Figure 3 is a bar chart which displays the number of visa applications in thousands across different quarters from Q1 2022 to Q2 2024. The x-axis represents the quarters from Q1 2022 to Q2 2024. The y-axis represents the number of applications, ranging from 0 to 120,000. Three categories are represented by different coloured bars: total Applications to UK (blue bars); Ukraine Family Scheme Applications (orange bars); Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme Applications (grey bars). Key observations: in Q1 and Q2 of 2022, there is a significant spike in total applications, with over 100,000 applications in each quarter. From Q3 2022 onwards, there is a noticeable decline in total applications. Both Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme show similar trends but at lower volumes compared to the total applications.

Figure 4: Ukraine visa schemes in the UK: grants under Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme by Quarter, March 2022 to 30 June 2024



Source: Immigration system statistics data tables, 2024¹⁷

People fleeing Ukraine may apply for asylum in the UK if they are not eligible for the Ukraine schemes, for example if they do not have qualifying family members in the UK or cannot find a sponsor. However, to apply for asylum in the UK, a person must be physically present in the UK; it is not possible to apply from outside the country.¹⁸

¹⁷ [Immigration system statistics data tables - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-data-tables) Accessed 2 October 2024

Figure 4 shows the number of grants under the Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme in the UK by quarter, from March 2022 to 30 June 2024. The bar chart includes three categories: total grants to UK, Ukraine Family Scheme grants (subset of total grants), and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme Grants (subset of total grants). Q1 2022: No grants recorded. Q2 2022: Significant increase with approximately 120,000 total grants. Of these, around 40,000 were under the Ukraine Family Scheme and about 80,000 under the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme. Q3 2022: Total grants decreased to around 60,000. The Ukraine Family Scheme accounted for approximately 20,000 grants while the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme accounted for about 40,000. Q4 2022 and Q1-Q3 of both years following (2023 and projected into mid-2024): a steady decline in total grants: Q4 2022: Approximately 30,000 total grants. Q1-Q3 each year: a gradual decrease from around 20,000 down to around 10,000. By mid-2024 both schemes show minimal activity with less than 5,000 grants each. The chart visually represents how visa scheme activity peaked in mid-2022 and has been declining steadily since then.

¹⁸ [Ukrainian migration to the UK - Migration Observatory - The Migration Observatory \(ox.ac.uk\)](https://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/ukrainian-migration-to-the-uk) Accessed 2 September 2024

Entitlements of Ukrainian arrivals

Anyone who is ordinarily resident in Ukraine, but lawfully residing in the UK, is exempt from charge for NHS treatment (except assisted conception services) in England.¹⁹ The entrant will be able to access certain social welfare benefits, and education provision. They have the right to work in the UK and pay taxes.

The regional picture

Table 1: Regional Upper Tier Local Authority figures (16 July 2024)

Upper tier local authority	Number of visa applications	Number of visas issued	Number of arrivals by sponsor location
Bedford	790	651	559
Cambridgeshire	3,280	2,813	2,452
Central Bedfordshire	722	600	511
Essex	3,686	3,053	2,654
Hertfordshire	3,623	3,005	2,599
Luton	305	228	177
Norfolk	2,538	2,062	1,778
Peterborough	702	530	422
Southend-on-Sea	378	307	266
Suffolk	2,277	1,837	1,595
Thurrock	495	363	279
East of England total	18,796	15,449	13,292

Source: East of England Local Government Association

¹⁹ [NHS Charges to Overseas Visitors Regulations 2015](#) Accessed 23 May 2024

The local picture

At 24 September 2024, 3,767 visa applications had been made to Essex, with 3,093 visas issued, and 2,705 arrivals (by sponsor location).²⁰

Table 2: Cumulative number Homes for Ukraine, by local authority, as at 30 June 2024

Lower Tier local authority or unitary authority in Greater Essex	Homes for Ukraine
Basildon	232
Braintree	277
Brentwood	172
Castle Point	70
Chelmsford	299
Colchester	369
Epping Forest	341
Harlow	97
Maldon	144
Rochford	98
Southend-on-Sea	264
Tendring	179
Thurrock	269
Uttlesford	343
Total	3154

Source: Regional and local authority data on immigration groups²¹

Under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, local government has been given certain responsibilities, including:

- conducting checks on sponsors and sponsors' homes
- making arrangements for payments to those arriving in the UK under the scheme
- making arrangements for the payment to sponsors
- helping to make sure entrants settle into life in Essex

The relevant district, borough, or city council have a duty to check the suitability of the sponsor's home. Local information packs were produced by the council which aim to help sponsors and their guests understand and access the wide range of support available in Essex. This includes

²⁰ [Ukraine sponsorship scheme - visa data 24 September 2024.ods \(live.com\)](#) Accessed 2 October 2024

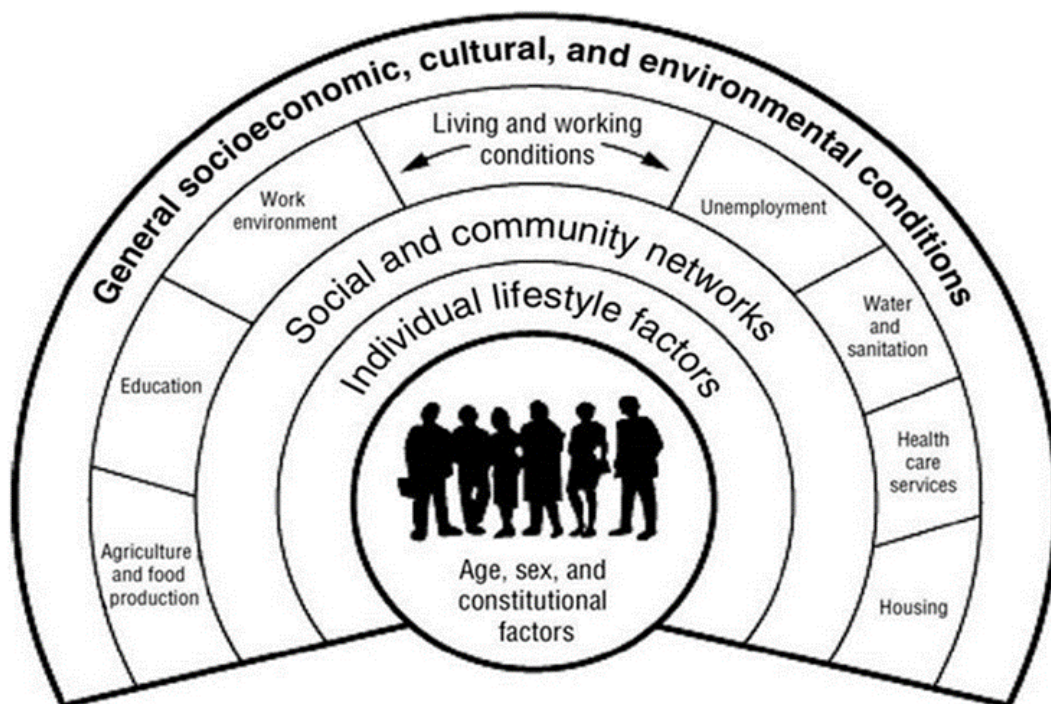
²¹ [Regional and local authority data on immigration groups - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 2 October 2024

mental health support, help with finances and benefits, applying for school places, and accessing NHS services. Guests are provided with translated versions in Ukrainian and Russian.

Wider determinants of health

Wider determinants of health are a diverse range of social, economic, and environmental factors which influence people’s mental and physical health.

Figure 5: The Dahlgren and Whitehead model of the determinants of health



Source: Gov.uk Chapter 6: Social determinants of health.²²

These determinants can affect Ukrainian arrivals in a different way than the hosting population, reflecting their complex situation.

²² [Chapter 6: social determinants of health - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-determinants-of-health) Accessed 2 September 2024

Figure 5 is a diagram illustrating the various determinants of health. It is structured in concentric circles, with each circle representing different levels of influence on health. The outermost circle is labelled 'General socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental conditions.' This includes factors such as work environment, education, agriculture and food production, living and working conditions, unemployment, water and sanitation, healthcare services, and housing. The next circle inward is labelled 'Social and community networks.' The innermost circle represents 'Individual lifestyle factors.' At the centre of the diagram are silhouettes of people with the label 'Age, sex, and constitutional factors.'

Individual lifestyle factors

As of 31 March 2024, 70% of Ukrainian adults who arrived under the Sponsorship and Family Schemes were women. Ukrainian men aged 18 to 60 are not allowed to leave Ukraine. Of all arrivals under these schemes, 27% were under the age of 18.²³

One third of adults in Ukraine smoke tobacco and consume a diet high in sodium intake and trans fats.²⁴ There is a higher prevalence of alcohol misuse in men than women (11.5% compared to 1.4%).²⁵ Preventative healthcare is uncommon, with many people previously relying on private provision for acute treatment.²⁶ Across Essex, the Essex Wellbeing Service (EWS) helps people connect with support services in their local communities.²⁷

Active Essex run clubs for primary and secondary aged children who are eligible for benefits-based free school meals, as well as those from low income working families. This provision extends to children and young people who may be vulnerable to inactivity or social isolation, on a case-by-case basis.²⁸

Alongside free or low-cost sessions for families, including adults, which encourage physical activity and community integration, Active Essex support with connecting provider organisations and signpost to potential funding. A number of community groups have run targeted physical activity sessions for refugees, such as Together We Grow and Changing Lives.^{29, 30}

Social and community networks

Local authorities play a key role linking guests with Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations who provide vital wraparound support and link people into the local community. An example of this is Community 360, who have worked closely with Colchester City Council and organised sports and recreational activities in collaboration with the University of Essex, Active Essex, Sport England, and sports clubs such as Colchester United Football Club and Colchester Cricket Club. The organisation implemented a holistic approach, recognising the connection between physical activity and mental well-being. Activities such as football, yoga, and other sports were introduced to improve the overall health of refugees. Initiatives not only focused on the immediate well-being of refugees but also aimed to empower them. Involvement in sports activities, research projects, and collaborations with universities contributed to

²³ [Ukrainian migration to the UK - Migration Observatory - The Migration Observatory \(ox.ac.uk\)](#) Accessed 16 October 2024

²⁴ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

²⁵ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

²⁶ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

²⁷ [Essex Wellbeing Service](#) Accessed 19 June 2024

²⁸ [Essex ActivAte - Explained! - Active Essex](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

²⁹ <https://www.activeessex.org/news-events/blog/together-we-grow-at-home/> Accessed 29 May 2024

³⁰ <https://www.activeesseximpact.org/colchester/changing-lives> Accessed 29 May 2024

increased employability and skills' development. The initiatives led to positive outcomes, including social integration, and the creation of friendships among refugees.

Living and working conditions

Education

Ukrainian nationals can apply for a school place for a child upon arrival in the UK. Alternatively, the host can complete the application on the parents' behalf. The application will be considered under the council's school admission arrangements.³¹ Children in reception, Year 1, and Year 2 have automatic entitlement to free school meals. Children in Year 3 or above may be eligible for free school meals, dependent on parental income.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses can help people to settle in the UK, gain employment, progress onto other training courses, or be more confident in communicating with other people³². These courses are open to all ages.

A survey from The Office of National Statistics (ONS) reveals the English skills of Ukrainian adults have improved over time, although they remain a barrier. In the survey, 64% of respondents said that they were fluent or able to speak a fair amount of English, up from 44% in June 2022.³³ A majority (58%) of Ukrainian adults had accessed formal English support programmes. However, for 37% of Ukrainian adults, English was still limiting their ability to work.³⁴

Work environment

Once an application has been made for the guest to receive a National Insurance number, they will be eligible to work in the UK and pay taxes.³⁵ A survey from ONS reveals 69% of Ukrainian adults either had a job or were self-employed in April 2024, just below the employment rate of the UK-born population (78%).³⁶ The employment rate of Ukrainians has increased considerably over time, from 19% in June 2022.

³¹ www.essex.gov.uk/admissions Accessed 28 May 2024

³² www.aclessex.com/esol-campaign Accessed 28 May 2024

³³

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/visaholdersenteringtheukundertheukrainehumanitarianschemes/15aprilto22april2024#living-arrangements>

Accessed 2 September 2024

³⁴

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/visaholdersenteringtheukundertheukrainehumanitarianschemes/15aprilto22april2024#living-arrangements>

Accessed 2 September 2024

³⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/offer-work-ukraine> Accessed 29 May 2024

³⁶ [Visa holders living in the UK under the Ukraine Humanitarian Schemes, follow-up survey - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 2 September 2024

Access to health care services

People ordinarily resident in Ukraine who have legal status in the UK have the same entitlements to NHS care as UK residents. However, individuals may not know how the NHS works.³⁷

Soon after individuals and their families arrive in the UK from Ukraine, they should be supported by their host family to register with a GP practice and attend a new patient consultation to assess their health and care needs.

There may, however, be several interactions with the NHS (including in primary care) before GP registration takes place. All health care professionals have a role to help support Ukrainians to access to NHS services.

It should be explained to individuals:

- that some services still incur charges. This includes prescriptions, dentistry, and optometry. Individuals may be eligible for reduced charges or free care for these services³⁸
- that proof of identity or an address is not necessary to register with a GP practice and registration should not be denied for those without identification
- how to request an interpreter for healthcare appointments. Individuals should be provided with translated vaccination, treatment, and public health restrictions' guidance in their preferred language
- that participation in NHS screening programmes is encouraged

Housing

Under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, accommodation is provided for six months or more in the UK, in someone's home or in a property they own.³⁹ If both parties are happy to extend the sponsorship beyond six months, Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) guidance encourages guests to remain with their host until they are ready to move on.⁴⁰

The ONS survey revealed many Ukrainians gradually moved into their own homes. Around 56% were paying for their accommodation in April 2024, compared to 6% in June 2022.⁴¹ However, half of the respondents experienced barriers to renting privately. Among them, many lacked references or a guarantor (49%) or could not afford to rent a home with their income (42%).⁴²

³⁷ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/arrivals-from-ukraine-advice-for-primary-care) Accessed 28 May 2024

³⁸ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/arrivals-from-ukraine-advice-for-primary-care) Accessed 28 May 2024

³⁹ [Ukraine Family Scheme, Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme \(Homes for Ukraine\) and Ukraine Extension Scheme visa data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ukraine-family-scheme-ukraine-sponsorship-scheme-homes-for-ukraine-and-ukraine-extension-scheme-visa-data) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁴⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homes-for-ukraine-guidance-for-guests> Accessed 14 August 2024

⁴¹ [Visa holders living in the UK under the Ukraine Humanitarian Schemes, follow-up survey - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/people-and-population/migration-and-immigration/visas-and-immigration/visaholderslivingintheukundertheukrainehumanitarianchemesfollowupsurvey) Accessed 2 September 2024

⁴² [Visa holders living in the UK under the Ukraine Humanitarian Schemes, follow-up survey - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/people-and-population/migration-and-immigration/visas-and-immigration/visaholderslivingintheukundertheukrainehumanitarianchemesfollowupsurvey) Accessed 2 September 2024

Guests are experiencing several challenges when entering the private rental market which, combined with the existing pressure on council services and the growing number of six-month sponsorships coming to an end, has led stakeholders to express concerns over the risk of homelessness.⁴³ By 31 March 2024, around 9,500 had been identified as either homeless or facing a significant risk of becoming homeless in the UK. Two-thirds of them had overcome the situation after local authorities intervened.⁴⁴

Mental health

Post-traumatic stress disorder

Escaping war can contribute to psychological stress and mental health issues, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This may not manifest until weeks or months after displacement. Children may be particularly vulnerable. Conservative estimates indicate at least 30% of all refugees will develop PTSD at some point, while other estimates go as high as >70%.⁴⁵ Therefore, it is crucial to:

- recognise that the context of mental health support in Ukraine is likely to have an impact on the levels of stigma about mental health problems
- assess individuals' mental health and wellbeing as those affected by war and conflict are at higher risk of mental disorders
- use trauma-informed approaches to care, recognising where people are affected by trauma and responding in a way that prevents further harm and supports recovery
- refer, where appropriate, to specialist services through the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service or local voluntary-sector service providers
- support children and young people to obtain advice and support from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) which can help with low mood, anxiety, sleep problems, trauma, and loss. The service may help directly or point towards more appropriate support

Suicide

Ukraine has an estimated suicide rate of 29.6 deaths per 100,000 population, compared to 10.7 deaths by suicide per 100 000 in the UK⁴⁶, and a global average of 10.4 deaths per 100,000 population. The rate of suicide is particularly high among men (56.7 per 100,000 vs. 8.4 per 100,000 among women).

⁴³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-management-information-ukrainian-nationals-england> Accessed 14 August 2024

⁴⁴ [Visa holders living in the UK under the Ukraine Humanitarian Schemes, follow-up survey - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 2 September 2024

⁴⁵ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 19 June 2024

⁴⁶ [Suicides in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 2 October 2024

Communicable diseases

Vaccination

Many people in Ukraine are susceptible to, and at an increased risk of, vaccine-preventable diseases. The population has low immunisation rates.⁴⁷ Contributing factors include lack of availability and a distrust of vaccines and health professionals. Individuals should be informed that vaccination is free in England. Ensuring continuity of routine vaccinations and addressing gaps in prior vaccination histories is an essential element of public health support for displaced people.⁴⁸

Arrivals to the UK part way through their immunisation schedule should be transferred onto the UK vaccination schedule and immunised as appropriate for their age.⁴⁹

Hepatitis

There is a low prevalence of hepatitis B in Ukraine.⁵⁰ Any risk factors for the infection that may indicate the need for screening should be ascertained upon arrival to the UK, for example screening for pregnant women. Hepatitis B vaccine should be offered to family members and close contacts of confirmed cases, with post-exposure immunisation provided to infants born to hepatitis B infected mothers.⁵¹

The prevalence of hepatitis C in Ukraine nationals is higher than in the UK.⁵² As such, screening for hepatitis C should be offered to all adults upon arrival to the UK.⁵³

Tuberculosis (TB)

There is a high incidence of TB (approximately 73 per 100,000 population), so all new Ukrainian arrivals (including children) to the UK should be screened for TB, as per National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines.⁵⁴ Ukraine has one of the highest rates of multidrug resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) in the world and fourth highest TB incidence rate amongst 53 countries of the World Health Organization (WHO) European region.⁵⁵

Individuals screening positive should be referred to local TB services promptly, whilst maintaining long term vigilance for symptoms of TB even if their initial screening is negative. Age is a significant risk factor for progression from infection to active disease and the younger the child

⁴⁷ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/news-events/prevention-and-control-infectious-diseases-context-russias-aggression-towards-ukraine> Accessed 28 May 2024

⁴⁸ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/news-events/prevention-and-control-infectious-diseases-context-russias-aggression-towards-ukraine> Accessed 28 May 2024

⁴⁹ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁵⁰ [Ukraine: migrant health guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 29 May 2024

⁵¹ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁵² [Ukraine: migrant health guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 29 May 2024

⁵³ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 2 October 2024

⁵⁴ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng33/> Accessed 28 May 2024

⁵⁵ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

the greater the risk. Many children arriving in the UK may have been exposed to TB travelling within Ukraine and across Europe. Therefore, children under five years should be considered at higher risk. Children aged 0 to 15 years should have a symptom check in primary care. Children with symptoms of TB disease, should be referred to local paediatric services.⁵⁶

Previously, arrivals to the UK from Ukraine would be subject to pre-entry screening for active pulmonary TB disease for visas for more than six months. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) recommends that those arriving from Ukraine should have screening for active TB in line with these previous pre-entry specifications.⁵⁷ This enables early identification of those with active TB, including those with MDR-TB and initiation of early treatment, preventing onward transmission and averting new cases. For people aged over 15 (who are not pregnant), this would include a symptom check, chest X-ray, and sputum assessment, where appropriate.⁵⁸ Pregnant women should be offered a symptom check and a sputum examination.⁵⁹

People who have been in known contact with a person with infectious TB should be referred for appropriate assessment and investigation.⁶⁰

Vaccination against TB should be offered for those aged under 16 who do not have a history of BCG vaccination and are tuberculin negative, including infants under the age of one.⁶¹

HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections

Ukraine has the second highest HIV diagnosis rate in the WHO European region, however there is likely to be under-diagnosis.⁶² HIV rates are higher in Ukraine than in the UK ($\leq 1\%$).⁶³ Around half of people with HIV are currently in receipt of treatment.⁶⁴

Upon arrival in the UK, a sexual history should be taken, with screening for STIs (Sexually Transmitted Infections) and HIV according to risk as specified in the UK national standards and guidelines.⁶⁵ All sexually active patients under the age of 25 should be offered testing for chlamydia, gonorrhoea, and syphilis.⁶⁶

⁵⁶ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024
Accessed 19 June 2024

⁵⁷ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁵⁸ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁵⁹ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁶⁰ [Tuberculosis \(TB\): migrant health guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁶¹ [Tuberculosis \(TB\): migrant health guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁶² [Ukraine: migrant health guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁶³ [Ukraine: migrant health guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁶⁴ [Ukraine: migrant health guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁶⁵ [Ukraine: migrant health guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁶⁶ [Ukraine: migrant health guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

Polio

An outbreak of poliovirus was detected in Ukraine in October 2021. A polio vaccination campaign for children aged six months to six years who missed routine polio doses was due to start in Ukraine shortly before the war broke out.⁶⁷

Despite oral and injectable vaccine availability, there is low vaccination coverage, and hence vulnerability to polio in Ukraine, especially in children. Therefore, it is important to establish vaccination history and, if the individual is unvaccinated or requires further vaccine doses, this service should be offered.⁶⁸

Measles

Vaccination coverage for measles is below the threshold to prevent measles outbreaks in Ukraine.⁶⁹ If the individual is unvaccinated or requires further vaccine doses upon arrival in the UK, they should be offered vaccines as soon as possible.⁷⁰

Women's health

Pregnant women should be referred to maternity services and offered routine screening for STIs and hepatitis C due to the raised prevalence in Ukraine.⁷¹

In Ukraine, 25-35% of women consume alcohol during pregnancy. Risks associated with alcohol consumption in pregnancy should be highlighted with referrals made to local support services, where appropriate.⁷²

Abortion is common in former Soviet Union countries, with contraception use lower than in the UK.⁷³ Appropriate use of contraception should be encouraged, and patients advised that these services are free to all, including male contraceptives.

⁶⁷ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁶⁸ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁶⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/arrivals-from-ukraine-advice-for-primary-care/arrivals-from-ukraine-advice-for-primary-care> Accessed 29 May 2024

⁷⁰ [Ukraine: migrant health guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁷¹ [Ukraine: migrant health guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁷² [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁷³ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Accessed 28 May 2024

Non-communicable diseases

The average life expectancy in Ukraine is 71.83 years compared with 80.17 years in the UK.⁷⁴ Around 90% of deaths are attributable to non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The NCDs most prevalent in Ukraine are cardiovascular disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, and chronic respiratory illnesses.⁷⁵ Many of these are related to lifestyle behaviours, as outlined above, with support available from the Essex Wellbeing Service.⁷⁶

People arriving from Ukraine may arrive without medication required for long-term NCDs and may have had no access to medication for some time. It is imperative that individuals have access to necessary medication and that NCDs are appropriately managed.⁷⁷

Dental health has been recognised as an area of concern with limited access to a dentist and large numbers reporting experiencing dental pain.⁷⁸

Recommendations

Below are recommendations in relation to access to health care, provision of health care, child health, wider determinants, and information for refugees from Ukraine.⁷⁹

This HNA does not include any specific recommendation in relation to dental health or managing chronic diseases, despite there being an unmet need regarding some conditions. As these are predominantly related to access to service provision, it is recommended that commissioners and providers prioritise the access to treatment recommendations. A review of the dental health and chronic conditions should then be carried out to re-assess the situation and prioritise new actions, if necessary, at this stage.

Although some of the recommendations are already in place to address other migrant groups, there may be a need to adapt the methodology to accommodate Ukrainian refugees. Equally, some recommendations are already taking place in some parts of Essex, but not universally available across the county. Sharing lessons from areas with most experience in supporting migrant populations across the region has the potential to help all refugees in Essex.

⁷⁴ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/arrivals-from-ukraine-advice-for-primary-care) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁷⁵ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/arrivals-from-ukraine-advice-for-primary-care) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁷⁶ [Essex Wellbeing Service](https://www.essexwellbeing.org/) Accessed 19 June 2024

⁷⁷ [Arrivals from Ukraine: advice for primary care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/arrivals-from-ukraine-advice-for-primary-care) Accessed 28 May 2024

⁷⁸ [Ukrainians in UK shocked by shortage of dentists, survey finds | Immigration and asylum | The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com/ukraine/2024/oct/02/ukrainians-in-uk-shocked-by-shortage-of-dentists-survey-finds-immigration-and-asylum) Accessed 2 October 2024

⁷⁹ [Ukraine refugee HNA – Bolton JSNA](#) Accessed 2 July 2024

Table 3: Recommendations to improve access to healthcare

Issue	Recommendation	Responsible organisation
Ukrainian refugees reporting that staff in clinical settings are not aware of their entitlements	Refresh the understanding of NHS frontline staff of OHID’s Migrant Health Guide which provides practical advice for healthcare workers. This includes: specific guidance on the health needs of migrants from Ukraine; how the NHS works and their entitlements to healthcare; how to comprehensively assess new migrant patients and ensure continuity and alignment with the UK immunisation schedule for routine and COVID-19 immunisations	OHID (Office for Health Improvement and Disparities) PCN (Primary Care Network) NHS England (Workforce Training and education)
Low, but at times excessive, and inappropriate use of health services by Ukrainian refugees	Fill knowledge gaps by improving access to linguistically and culturally translated NHS guidance, including via community social media such as Telegram and Viber chats	NHS England PCN
Ukrainian refugees report navigating access to public services as complicated and difficult to understand	Identify and train community ‘champions’ to support Ukrainians’ engagement with health, social, and educational services	PCN Local Authorities VCSE ICB (Integrated Care Board) Ukrainian residents as community assets

Cultural and linguistic barriers when accessing health care, and during consultations	Increase use of medical translation services and introduce Ukrainian Care buddies to accompany refugees to appointments	PCN ICB Ukrainian residents as community assets
	Ensure free ESOL and other English language courses are available to refugees. Additional ESOL funding is available, and all Ukraine refugees are entitled to use this provision immediately	ACL Community Hub Ukrainian residents as community assets
Ukrainian refugees understanding of medical terminology in English is limited	Support in registering with and requesting interpreter services for NHS Talking Therapies/social prescribing	ICB Ukrainian residents as community assets
Differing cultural approach to mental health in Ukraine. Language differences creating an additional barrier.	Online mental health options, such as private video consultations with Ukrainian- and Russian-speaking professionals, Ukrainian self-directed counselling via chatbot, and social media support groups	NHS England
	Research benefits, methodology and impact of digital solutions for treatment of refugees. Funding may be available from the NIHR Digital health inclusion and inequalities	ICB OHID
	Signposting to local cultural, community, and church groups for practical and wellbeing support. These groups can manage sub-	Local Authorities Strategic Migration Partnership (SMP)

	threshold mental health symptoms.	The Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain (AUGB)
--	-----------------------------------	---

Table 4: Recommendations to improve provision of healthcare services

Issue	Recommendation	Responsible organisation
Refugees from Ukraine report low levels of cultural awareness regarding the needs and experiences of refugees, and differing expectations of refugees amongst frontline NHS staff	Encourage health care professionals and all partners working with Ukrainian refugees to protect time to complete existing Cultural Competency Training, available on e-Learning for Health. Supported by production of specific cultural information flashcards regarding Ukrainians	OHID
	Research effective methods of cultural competency training in a clinical setting. A strong candidate for a funding source for this work would be the NIHR to address the research question: “What interventions are effective in increasing the health and wellbeing of asylum seekers and refugees in the UK?”	OHID Academic Institutions
No current capacity to flag patients as refugees and potentially vulnerable on Health Information Systems	Commission and use health Information Systems which record the refugee status of patients	NHS England PCN NHS Trust

<p>Communication skills and consultation models used within UK general practice were largely designed for a culturally homogeneous British society. Ukrainians have established health beliefs, experiences, and expectations that may clash with standard communication approaches</p>	<p>Through clinical supervision opportunities ensure that clinicians understand they should not perceive differences as criticism or confrontation, but as an opportunity to pragmatically discuss UK health system norms and find a mutually agreeable management strategy. Flexibility or even reimagination of the consultation may be required to build this trustful and open dialogue.</p>	<p>PCN</p>
<p>Low COVID vaccination rates amongst Ukrainian population</p>	<p>COVID vaccination needs to be offered to all with a strong communications package</p>	<p>ICB UKHSA</p>
<p>High rates of treatment resistant TB in Ukraine</p>	<p>All refugees arriving in the UK should be screened for TB. This will ensure early treatment. Current airport screening is probably not sufficient to achieve this.</p>	<p>UKHSA</p>
<p>High rates of HIV in Ukraine</p>	<p>GPs should offer HIV testing and consider Hepatitis C screening in high-risk groups to ensure early treatment.</p>	<p>UKHSA PCN</p>
<p>High rates of STIs in Ukraine</p>	<p>GP appointment for full asymptomatic screening of bloods for HIV, syphilis, Hep B and C, and swab/ urine for chlamydia and gonorrhoea during initial appointment. Supported to order tests</p>	<p>PCN Essex Sexual Health Service</p>

	online via Personal Health Record. Positive results could be referred into Essex Sexual Health Service as happens from GPs currently for treatment, partner notification and follow up.	
Low breast cancer screening rates in Ukraine	Offer breast cancer screening to women on registration at GP	ICB NHS England
Poor pregnancy outcomes post trauma	Rapid referral to NHS maternity services	PCN
Mild to severe mental health needs experienced by refugees because of trauma induced by the war	Trauma-informed care. Resources, including the CALMER Framework, have been developed to support integration of trauma-informed practice.	PCN

Table 5: Recommendations to improve children’s health

Issue	Recommendation	Responsible organisation
Low childhood vaccination rates in Ukraine	Screen for, and offer protection against, polio, diphtheria (DPT ideally) and measles and should be prioritised since they are easily transmitted and associated with serious outcomes. Rotavirus vaccination of children and tetanus and COVID vaccination for pregnant women are important.	PCN UKHSA

Low rates of flu and COVID vaccines in children	COVID and flu vaccination needs to be offered to all with a strong communications package	PCN NHS England
Ukrainians arriving in areas which are not accustomed to accommodating migrants. Consequently, low levels of experience amongst GPs and other health care professionals.	Primary Care practitioners to complete The Royal College of Paediatrics & Child Health training course on How to Manage Refugee Child Health. This course covers the clinical risk assessment and multidisciplinary approach to the holistic management of accompanied and unaccompanied refugee and asylum-seeking children.	PCN

Table 6: Recommendations to address wider determinants of Ukrainian’s health and wellbeing

Issue	Recommendation	Responsible organisation
Difficulties in securing adequate employment to be self-sustaining	Compile and share a database of vacancies and employers recruiting potentially short-term staff for highly educated staff with moderate levels of English.	DWP
Insufficient housing and accommodation available following the end of an initial sponsorship, either	Develop and promote local positive host recruitment campaigns	Local Authorities Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

with a new host or in their own rented property	Research the benefits gained by hosts of refugees. These can be used to promote hosting opportunities to others.	Academic Institutions OHID LGA (Local Government Association)
	Develop and promote schemes to support refugees to find affordable housing.	Local Authorities VCSE
	Lower Tier (district/ city/ borough councils) have the homelessness duty and support with rematching guests to new hosts. Work with private landlords to identify appropriate accommodation close to employers, especially in more affluent areas. Longer term, access and utilise Housing and Homelessness funding available from MHCLG (this includes a total fund of £500 million for English councils to buy 4,000 homes plus £150 million to assist local authorities in preventing homelessness)	Local Authorities

Table 7: Recommendations to improve information for Ukrainian refugees

Issue	Recommendation	Responsible organisation
There is a need to support the rapid cultural adaptation of children to understand how things operate in the UK, and to	Widen distribution of the 'Hello (Privit)' book published by the Sanctuary Foundation. Raise awareness of the Save the	VCSE Youth groups Schools

<p>help other children support child refugees feel as if they are welcome</p>	<p>Children 4-minute film about child refugees. Amongst teachers and youth workers. Fully utilise Homes for Ukraine educational funding for school age children (Early Years £3,000, Primary £6,580, Secondary £8,755)</p>	
<p>All adult refugees must feel welcome and able to navigate the public service systems as soon as possible on arrival.</p>	<p>Provide information in an easy-to-read form when a visa is issued and again on arrival, both in English and Ukrainian</p>	<p>Home Office MHCLG Local Authorities</p>
	<p>Identify and train community ‘champions’ to support Ukrainians’ engagement with health, social, and educational services</p>	<p>Local Authorities ICB PCN Ukrainian residents as community assets</p>
	<p>Replicate ‘Hello’ book for adults</p>	<p>SMP VCSE MHCLG</p>
	<p>Research effectiveness of community champions. A strong candidate for a funding source for this work would be the NIHR to address the research question: “What interventions are effective in increasing the health and wellbeing of asylum seekers and refugees in the UK?”</p>	<p>OHID Academic Institutions</p>

The majority of arrivals from Ukraine have reported that they are separated from their family. This separation in a foreign country can contribute to loneliness	Develop community support groups and provide meeting places such as libraries and church halls	Local Authority VCSE Ukrainian residents as community assets
Poor understanding of universal requirements of refugees by first time hosts and no information provided regarding individual circumstances and visa/arrival complications	Provide pre-application support and as much information as possible to hosts/families.	Local Authority Community Hub
	Ensure early identification of issues and better joined up work with UK Visas and Immigration on arrival dates	SMP

Discussion

Implementation of these recommendations should lead to quicker and more appropriate access to services, increased cultural engagement, and understanding of clinical needs, resulting in improved physical and mental health for arrivals from Ukraine.

These findings are in line with previous recommendations for other migrant groups in recent years, however, a significant difference is that the Ukrainian refugees arriving in the UK have a higher level of education and previous employment, resulting in higher expectations and greater personal agency.

Government data demonstrates that there are Ukrainian refugees in every lower tier and unitary authority in Greater Essex. Therefore, it is likely that the recommendations are appropriate and relevant in most areas and footprints across the County.

Challenges the local system faces are not specific to Essex, and some are not within the gift of the local system to resolve, especially due to financial and resource constraints.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Literature search

1. 2021 to 2024

“Ukraine” OR “Ukrainian” OR “refugee” OR “migrant” AND

"health need" OR "health" OR "medicine" OR "medical"

OR

"mental health" OR "stress" OR "depression" OR "post-traumatic stress" OR "PTSD" OR "anxiety"
OR "isolation"

OR

"physical health" OR "communicable disease" OR "infection*" OR "chronic disease"

OR

“social" OR "access" OR "integration" OR "culture" OR "housing*" OR "education*" OR "care"

2. Only UK and English language articles

3. Other languages = Excluded

4. Restrict to social sciences, medicine, nursing, immunology, health professions, multidisciplinary, and dentistry

5. Restrict to articles, book chapters, government guidance and conference notes

6. Limit to 2022 (Russian invasion of Ukraine)

7. Sort on relevance. Review abstract and title of top 250 results

8. Review of full text of documents

List of figures

Figure 1: UNHCR data on internally displaced persons at the end of the year, country of origin: Ukraine, 2021-2023

Figure 2: Ukraine Visa Schemes: Total arrivals to UK under Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme by Quarter, March 2022 to 30 June 2024

Figure 3: Ukraine Visa Schemes: Applications to UK under Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme by Quarter, March 2022 to 30 June 2024

Figure 4: Ukraine Visa Schemes in the UK: Grants under Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme by Quarter, March 2022 to 30 June 2024

Figure 5: The Dahlgren and Whitehead model of the determinants of health

List of tables

Table 1: Regional UTLA figures (as at 16 July 2024)

Table 2: Homes for Ukraine, by Local Authority, as of 31 March 2024

Table 3: Recommendations to improve access to healthcare

Table 4: Recommendations to improve provision of healthcare services

Table 5: Recommendations to improve children's health

Table 6: Recommendations to address wider determinants of Ukrainian's health and wellbeing

Table 7: Recommendations to improve information for Ukrainian refugees

This information is issued by:
Essex County Council

Contact us:

overseasarrivals@essex.gov.uk

Essex County Council
County Hall, Chelmsford
Essex, CM1 1QH



[Essex CC](#)



[facebook.com/essexcountycouncil](https://www.facebook.com/essexcountycouncil)

The information contained in this document can be translated, and/or made available in alternative formats, on request.

Published April 2025