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# [*Charity worker speaks of Ukraine aid difficulties*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YG-8PN1-DY4H-K3JT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 9, 2022 Wednesday 2:18 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 451 words

**Byline:** Rod Minchin

**Highlight:** Hope and Aid Direct was set up in the 1990s and has never seen an outpouring of help like that offered since Ukraine was invaded by Russia.

**Body**

A UK aid worker who has travelled to the [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) border to help refugees fleeing the [*Russian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) invasion has spoken of the difficulties in getting supplies to those most in need.

The charity Hope and Aid Direct was set up in the 1990s in response to the [*Balkans*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/balkans) conflict but nothing has prepared them for the outpouring of help, both needed and offered, it has received since the war broke out in the Ukraine.

Trustee Roger Wilson has travelled to Eastern Europe to help with the aid operation as more than a million refugees have fled Ukraine and travelled into neighbouring countries.

Our phones, inboxes, WhatsApp groups and all other forms of communications have gone totally mad

Charity trustee Roger Wilson

Mr Wilson said the charity was focusing its aid efforts on [*Romania*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/romania) , [*Slovakia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/slovakia) , and Moldova.

"Our phones, inboxes, WhatsApp groups and all other forms of communications have gone totally mad," he said.

"But the transportation of aid is complex, you can't just load a van and go."

He said that to send aid to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** the charity had to be sponsored by a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in the country receiving the aid.

They, in turn, need to have the correct warehousing and facilities to receive the aid and move it on to those that need it most.

Mr Wilson, from Sussex, said he travelled to the region to monitor the situation and understand where their support could best be utilised.

"In Poland, there is a sense of organised chaos," he said.

"People are arriving, food, medical supplies and the right type of aid is available - and there are systems in place for the onward journeys to major cities in the country.

"Unfortunately, the story is not the same for other border countries, such as Romania, Slovakia and Moldova."

In Slovakia, while the borders are very similar, people are arriving mostly on foot, he said.

It is busier than the Polish border with many smaller volunteer organisations on the ground and less coordination.

"It felt different and less hospitable," Mr Wilson said.

"Amongst the many with a genuine desire to provide support, there are some offering 'help' in exchange for, I am not sure for what, but you certainly get the feeling that the bowl of soup is far from free."

Mr Wilson said the Essex-based charity had good contacts with several NGOs across Slovakia, Romania and Moldova.

"I travelled to the region to meet up with some long term contacts we have in the region," he said.

"I am confident that we now have reliable NGOs that we can work with in Romania immediately and Moldova and Slovakia for future trips. We are ready to go."

The charity's latest convoy left the UK on Wednesday carrying aid for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** reaching the neighbouring borders.

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Religious leaders urge PM to extend Ukrainian visa scheme*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YH-M4G1-DY4H-K040-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 9, 2022 Wednesday 10:45 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 503 words

**Byline:** Isobel Frodsham

**Highlight:** They have criticised the visa forms process and called for 'urgency' over the scheme.

**Body**

The [*Archbishop*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/archbishop) of Westminster and dozens of other clergymen from the [*Christian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/christian) [*Leadership*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/leadership) of [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) have written to Prime Minister [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) urging him to extend the visa programme to all ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

The letter, sent on Wednesday, said the group was "encouraged" by the Government's family sponsorship programme and "welcomed the intention to establish a pathway to humanitarian sponsorship".

But they called for "urgency" and to "act swiftly and without delay", criticising the visa forms process.

"How can mothers with young children, the elderly and the disabled, who have travelled a thousand miles, be expected to complete online application forms in a language foreign to them?", the letter reads.

"Times of war require swift action and flexibility, the easing of normal procedures and the removal of complex bureaucratic obstacles that can easily turn hope into despair and resignation."

It recalled the evacuee process used in Britain in 1939, where children in London were sent to the countryside to protect them from Second World War bombing, adding that "tens of thousands are hoping to find refuge far from Russia's relentless, unconscionable, and indiscriminate attacks on homes, hospitals and schools throughout their homeland."

It said: "We would ask that sponsorship not be limited to those with family members in the UK, but that those sponsorship criteria be expanded to include all ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** on humanitarian grounds, allowing them to enter the UK as quickly as possible."

Those who have signed the letter include Archbishop of Westminster Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Thyateira and Britain (a Greek Orthodox church) Nikitas Lioulias and Lieutenant Colonel David Shakespere of the Salvation Army.

Home Secretary Priti Patel announced the Ukraine Family Scheme last week, which allows Ukrainian people to join British relatives in the UK.

A second scheme - the Local Sponsorship Scheme for Ukraine - has also been announced, which allows those who have not got family to be sponsored by a private individual, community organisation, business, local authority or church.

Mr Johnson has said a thousand visas have been granted under the family scheme and he promised another programme allowing individuals to offer a home to Ukrainians would be set out in "the next few days".

At Prime Minister's Questions, he stated the security checks were vital to prevent Russian President Vladimir Putin infiltrating agents into the UK.

A Government spokesperson said: "Last week we announced a new sponsorship route which will allow Ukrainians with no family ties to the UK to be sponsored to come to the UK.

"This is alongside our Ukraine Family Scheme, which has already seen thousands of people apply, as well as changes to visas so that people can stay in the UK safely.

"The routes we have put in place follow extensive engagement with Ukrainian partners. This is a rapidly moving and complex picture and as the situation develops we will continue to keep our support under constant review."

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Hundreds of children among 2,500 Ukrainians to have arrived in Ireland so far*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YG-FMJ1-JBNF-W1RD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 9, 2022 Wednesday 3:35 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 478 words

**Byline:** Dominic McGrath

**Highlight:** A new system has been put in place in Dublin Airport to process the arrival of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

**Body**

More than 2,500 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have already arrived in [*Ireland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ireland) , with children comprising a third of that number.

Justice Minister Helen McEntee said around 400 Ukrainians are arriving in Ireland every day as they flee the Russian invasion of their country.

Speaking at [*Dublin Airport*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dublin-airport) alongside Minister for Social Protection Heather Humphreys, Ms McEntee said that two thirds of those arriving were female - many of whom had left husbands and fathers behind in Ukraine.

Both ministers were at Dublin Airport, just north of the Irish capital, to see the systems being put in place to welcome and process arrivals from Ukraine.

[*Refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) from the war-torn country will receive a PPS number allowing them to work and access supports, as well as a letter confirming their access to temporary protection.

The Irish Government has also said that Ukrainians entering Ireland will receive medical cards.

Those arriving will also be registered for social welfare supports and provided with accommodation where necessary.

A dedicated room at the centre, filled with toys, baby food and nappies, has been opened for Ukrainian children.

On Wednesday, Ms McEntee and Ms Humphreys met with some of the people who had arrived from Ukraine.

"Both departments have worked hard over last few days to put it all together," Ms Humphreys said.

"They have come from extremely, extremely difficult situations and they are so relieved to be here.

"They're also very concerned - they've left their husbands, their fathers behind them.

"It is a very difficult situation for them. We want to make sure that when they arrive here, they get all the support they can."

The Justice Minister said that a very significant number of Ukrainians will continue to arrive in the weeks to come.

"We are trying to process this as quickly as possible," she said.

It has been estimated that Ireland could ultimately welcome a multiple of 20,000 refugees from Ukraine, as the war continues.

Ms McEntee refused to be drawn on media reports that the British Government has concerns about the Irish plan to welcome tens of thousands of refugees from Ukraine, citing security risks.

"We engage regularly with the [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office). We've been speaking to them directly about this issue and the invasion of Ukraine since February 24. I have spoken directly to [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) myself and our team and our offices are in constant co-operation.

"It is really important that we do make sure the appropriate measures are taken, security checks are put in place and obviously where necessary information is shared between our offices and those in the UK.

"We discussed a number of things but obviously our focus and our priority was making sure that we stayed in contact with each other, that we're able to share information where necessary.

"The conversations I have with Priti Patel are the most important, not the reports I read on a newspaper."

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Nuclear is not the 'energy security' Johnson promised*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6561-GV21-F072-4238-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 9, 2022 Saturday

First Edition

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**Section:** VOICES; Pg. 32

**Length:** 856 words

**Body**

Boris Johnson wants to include nuclear energy-driven power stations as part of the energy infrastructure of the UK in order that we will not, in future, be dependent on foreign sources of power. Apart from the intrinsic risk of a malfunction through whatever cause and the problem of disposal of nuclear waste, I'm not sure where the UK uranium mines are located. If we, as I suspect, do not have any "British" uranium ore, we will have to import it.

This immediately negates the "energy security" argument put forward by Johnson et al. The only truly national sources of energy apart from fossil fuels are wind, tidal and solar, combined with a limited amount of geothermal energy in some geographical areas. If the UK really wants energy security then nuclear has to be discarded in favour of these non-polluting and limitless energy sources.

Patrick Cleary Gloucestershire

In the discussion about the government's new energy strategy, I have heard no reference to the potential use of small-scale hydro generation. The UK receives substantial rainfall on high ground and this water tumbles down innumerable streams to lower ground as it makes its way to the sea. Is it beyond our engineering ingenuity to devise cost-effective small generators to exploit this free source of energy?

Such schemes would of course need connecting to the grid, adding to the initial cost, but the running costs would be minimal compared to nuclear power or offshore wind. The pioneering Lord Armstrong showed what could be done with the small hydro-scheme installed in the late 19th century at his Cragside home in Northumberland, the first house in the world to be lit by electricity.

John Wilkin Bury St Edmunds

<strong>A case to be made for morality</strong>

Two things apropos Ms Murty and her non-dom status. First, the optics: this simply does not look good and people will make a connection with the chancellor's awful treatment of the poorest in his spring statement.

Secondly, while the legal position appears clear, and that no law has been broken, the law, in all matters in which it applies, really is the lowest common denominator of behaviour.

Richard Lloyd Dunfermline

<strong>How do we stop politicians lying?</strong>

How do you stop the prime minister and ministers from lying and making false statements?The answer may lie in research being undertaken at Tel Aviv University that is predicted to result in artificial intelligence-equipped cameras able to detect deception by measuring people's subtle facial movements.

But, once developed, would parliament agree to their installation? Perhaps we should ask the prime minister for an honest opinion!

Roger Hinds Surrey

<strong>Patel's anti-refugee machine</strong>

Only a quarter of the 12,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** granted UK visas have actually made it here. Asked to explain why, home secretary Priti Patel replied: "I'll be very candid, it has taken time. Any new scheme takes time, any new visa system takes time".

Britain has accepted far fewer ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** than other countries, with Germany opening its doors to 300,000 Ukrainians and Ireland welcoming 20,000. According to Patel, this is because "Germany is an EU country".

This explains nothing. Faced with the refugee crisis, most European countries - Germany and Poland among them - have put humanitarian considerations over bureaucracy and have waived visa requirements. It seems to me, under Priti Patel, the UK Home Office has been weaponised against refugees.

Patel has built her career on creating a hostile environment for refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants who she views as criminals. I believe Patel's Home Office is an anti-refugee machine and it doesn't have a reverse gear.

The UK is treating ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** with the same inhumanity it has treated refugees from Afghanistan, Syria and Libya.

Sasha Simic London

<strong>The UN must hold Putin to account</strong>

Expelling Russia from the Human Rights Council of the United Nation is entirely appropriate given the scale of human rights transgressions committed upon the people of Ukraine.

A far bolder, if more difficult, task would be to eject Russia outright from the UN. A precedent was Russia's (then the Soviet Union) ejection from the League of Nations in 1939 for the illegal invasion of Finland. To be the only country to be thrown out of both world peace-keeping organisations would be a national humiliation, however Putin tries to present it.

Of course, enforcing expulsion requires overcoming Russia's veto in the Security Council, a challenge made more difficult by the non-committal position of China. Technically, Russia's legal place on the Security Council has always been dubious given it simply succeeded in the place of the USSR after its collapse.

And if Russia's removal cannot be achieved then making both the Security Council and General Assembly more an international courtroom (as to some degree it became during the Cuban missile crisis) to daily hold Putin to account with graphic testimony and imagery of his brutal campaign of terror, for the world and those still uncommitted nations to hear and see, may be the next best thing.

Paul Dolan Cheshire

**Load-Date:** April 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Japan scrambles jets at Russia helicopter incursion as old rivals feud over Ukraine and WWII island dispute*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64X1-V7D1-JBNF-W30J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 2, 2022 Wednesday 10:22 PM GMT

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**Section:** WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 473 words

**Byline:** Justin Vallejo

**Highlight:** Tokyo has committed to hosting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and says dozens have applied to join Ukraine's fight

**Body**

[*Japan*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/japan) said it scrambled [*fighter jets*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/fighter-jets) to deter a Russian helicopter incursion into its airspace as the two old rivals feud over [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) and a World War II-era territorial dispute.

Japan MP Kono Taro said the violation occurred over Nemuro Peninsula on Wednesday morning, with Tokyo's Ministry of Defence linking the breach to [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's military drills in the Sea of Okhotsk.

The two countries never signed a formal peace treaty after World War II, and Japan's support of Ukraine has reignited their feud over the disputed Kuril Islands seized by the Soviets after declaring war on the empire in 1945.

Japan joined international sanctions against Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine, which Ministry of Foreign Affairs official Hideki Uyama compared to Russia's occupation of its four islands north of Hokkaido.

"I understand that Russia occupying Northern Territories and Russian military's invasion happening in Ukraine now are both against international law," Mr Uyama said, according to the Asahi newspaper.

In response, Russia's embassy in Tokyo tweeted that the islands were legally transferred as "part of the punishment for Japan's aggression and its alliance with Nazi Germany".

"In fact, Japan has come to support the Nazi government twice in less than 100 years. They once supported the Hitler administration, and this time the Ukrainian administration," the embassy tweeted.

Mr Putin has claimed the "Nazi regime" of Ukraine's Jewish president was the driving force of his "peacekeeping" troops, which are in the process of bringing said the so-called peace through a full-scale invasion of the country.

Tokyo has committed to hosting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and the pacifist country has had about 70 Japanese fighters apply to volunteer to join Ukrainian armed forces.

Japan's former prime minister Shinzo Abe has even suggested they host US nuclear weapons in the wake of the Russian invasion.

As the fighting in Ukraine enters its seventh day, Japan's Ministry of Defence said the Russian military used exercises in the Sea of Japan and the Sea of Okhotsk to show how it could operate simultaneously in Europe and Asian theatres of war.

"Under the current circumstances ... Russia's increased activity in the sea and airspace around Japan is a cause for concern, and we will take all possible measures to monitor it vigilantly," the ministry said in a statement, according to the Japan Times.

The Russian embassy in Tokyo has been rapidly tweeting that Japan's claims about Russia are "frankly false", that its special military operations in Ukraine were to "denazify" the country, and that there is "no evidence" of attacks on civilian infrastructure.

"Shame on you," Mr Kono, Japan's former foreign and defence minister, tweeted in response.

Shame on you. [*https://t.co/9j5a1zYE7I*](https://t.co/9j5a1zYE7I) - KONO Taro (@konotaromp) [*February 28, 2022*](https://twitter.com/konotaromp/status/1498421895225503748?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Voices: Please continue to support our Refugees Welcome campaign*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XW-P571-DY4H-K41X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 6, 2022 Sunday 10:30 PM GMT

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**Section:** EDITOR'S LETTERS,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:1

**Length:** 491 words

**Byline:** Harriet Williamson

**Highlight:** Refugees Welcome: The government must do more to make the UK a safe haven for refugees - and provide sanctuary for displaced Ukrainian people, writes Harriet Williamson

**Body**

A massive thank you to everyone who has supported our [*Refugees Welcome*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0?CMP=ILC-refresh) campaign so far.

More than 130,000 people have already signed [*our petition*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) , calling on the UK government to provide aid and support to the people of Ukraine in their hour of need.

Thanks to your generosity, we have also [*raised over £100,000*](https://www.gofundme.com/f/refugeeswelcome) for charities on the ground in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) and neighbouring countries. On 3 March, the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) Ukrainian Humanitarian Appeal was launched, bringing together 13 leading UK aid charities, including the Red Cross and Save the Children, the two groups we have supported so far.

On Voices, we have had [*Lord Alf Dubs*](https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/ukraine-war-refugees-asylum-b2024026.html) , Lib Dem MP [*Layla Moran*](https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/ukraine-russia-uk-government-refugees-welcome-b2024760.html) and much-loved children's author [*Michael Rosen*](https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/refugees-welcome-ukraine-war-jews-b2027563.html) writing in support of our campaign.

The government must do more to make the UK a safe haven for refugees - and provide sanctuary for displaced Ukrainian people, fleeing the horror and devastation of war.

On Sunday, the home secretary, [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) , was urged to send emergency help for at least 150 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** stranded in Calais. Women and children were turned away and told to get visas at UK consulates in Paris or Brussels. French interior minister Gerald Darmanin[*accused the UK of "lacking humanity"*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugees-france-uk-b2029536.html) in a strongly worded letter to Patel.

EU countries have opened their borders to all ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. They don't need visas. They can come as they are and receive sanctuary.

According to the UN, 1.5 million Ukrainians have been forced to leave their homes after the invasion by Russian forces. Most have entered Poland, Moldova, Slovakia, Romania and Hungary. UNHCR, the UN's refugee agency, estimates that more than 4 million people will be displaced by the conflict. It is likely that the refugee crisis is only just beginning.

To keep up to speed with all the latest opinions and comment, sign up to our free weekly Voices Dispatches newsletter by [*clicking here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Fnewsletters%3Fitm_channel%3Dnative%26itm_campaign%3Dfooter%26itm_audience%3Dprospecting%26itm_content%3Dnewsletters&data=04%7C01%7CVictoria.Richards%40independent.co.uk%7C062b3d811f2541e4220808d98fb59a11%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637698832400255119%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=cljURBTtBLaWfVwBrZv8UPgOVVFGM0rPoexRmk0aRHA%3D&reserved=0)

Please keep sharing our petition, keep reading and talking - and listening. Listen to the experiences of those who know what it means to leave everything behind, with no choice but to rely on the humanity of strangers and strange governments. Stay generous. Stay open-hearted.

If shells were falling on your home and you had to flee to another country, carrying your children, your pets and a few scant belongings, how would you want to be received?

Yours,

Harriet Williamson

Voices commissioning editor

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our [*Refugees Welcome*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Ftopic%2Frefugees-welcome-0&data=04%7C01%7CHarriet.Williamson%40independent.co.uk%7C44b46804ea604841cd8a08d9fc33883c%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637818120540878043%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=fxFRbHYzF8K9%2F9swnZLj2eNWpWFo2siaK1gVBLG9e24%3D&reserved=0)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Poland's local elections test Tusk's new government after 4 months in power*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BRH-MHF1-JBNF-W3TM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 7, 2024 Sunday 5:02 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 507 words

**Byline:** Vanessa Gera

**Highlight:** Voters across Poland are casting ballots in local elections in what is the first electoral test for the coalition government led by Prime Minister Donald Tusk, nearly four months after taking power

**Body**

Voters across Poland are casting ballots in local elections Sunday in the first electoral test for the coalition government of Prime Minister [*Donald Tusk*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/donald-tusk) nearly four months since it took power.

Voters will elect mayors as well as members of municipal councils and provincial assemblies, an important exercise in self-governance that is one of the great achievements of the democratic transformation that Poland made when it threw off communism 35 years ago.

In all there are nearly 190,000 registered candidates running for local government positions in the central European nation of 38 million people.

Runoff votes will must take place two weeks later, on April 21, in cases where mayoral candidates do not win at least 50% of the vote in Sunday's first round.

Opinion polls released in the days ahead of the vote showed the two largest political formations running neck-and-neck: Tusk's Civic Coalition, an electoral coalition led by his centrist and pro-European Union Civic Platform party, and [*Law and Justice*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/law-and-justice) , a national conservative party that governed the country from 2015 until last year.

Several other groups trail the two main groups, including the Third Way coalition, the Left and the radical right-wing Confederation party.

Tusk's coalition government, which includes the Third Way and the Left, together won the national election in October. The result amid record turnout spelled the end for eight bumpy years of rule by Law and Justice, which was accused by the European Union of violating democratic standards with its changes to the judicial system and public media.

Tusk won on promises to reverse many of those changes and is trying to implement that program, but it isn't easy. His attempts to restore independence to the judicial system are a long process that will require the passage of new legislation.

And a promise to liberalize the strict abortion law is being hampered by conservatives in Tusk’s own coalition.

The vote is also a test for Law and Justice, which had a string of electoral victories and dominated the political scene for years, enjoying strong support in conservative rural areas. However, its hard-line policies on LGBTQ+ and its restriction of abortion rights were rejected by many of the young and female voters who turned out in October to vote.

Local governments have played an important role in the two major crises of recent years, rolling out vaccinations against COVID-19 and helping the huge numbers of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who arrived in the country after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Among those running is [*Warsaw*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/warsaw) Mayor RafaÅ‚ Trzaskowski, a Tusk ally who is seeking a second term. He is favored to win, but it is not clear if he could win outright Sunday or would need to face a runoff in two weeks.

The outgoing term of office for local officials was the longest since 1989 after Law and Justice extended it from four to five years, and then delayed the elections by half a year, worried that holding local elections along with those to the national parliament would hurt its chances.

**Load-Date:** April 7, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Majority of the public back those seeking refuge in UK*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650G-PTG1-JCS0-D06S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 14, 2022 Monday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 4

**Length:** 837 words

**Byline:** LIZZIE DEARDEN HOME AFFAIRS EDITOR

**Body**

Three in four Britons back giving refuge to those fleeing war or persecution, new polling shows, as criticism of the government's response to the Ukraine crisis continues. An Ipsos survey found that even before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, a majority of Britons thought people should be able to seek refuge in the UK, and the majority had sympathy for asylum seekers crossing the Channel.

Yesterday, charities and opposition parties voiced fears that the government's new sponsorship route - which will give Britons who provide homes to Ukrainianrefugees £350 per month - would be "slow and cumbersome". Cabinet minister Michael Gove said he hoped "tens of thousands" would be able to come via the route, and announced that local authority areas will be entitled to more than £10,000 per Ukrainian refugee in their area.

But the Refugee Council said ministers were still putting too many "bureaucratic hurdles" in the way of those fleeing Russian forces and said the complex scheme "will inevitably be restricted to those who are known to people in the UK". In response to criticism over support for Ukrainians, the government has created a bespoke "family scheme" that offers three-year visas but does not amount to a grant of asylum.

Experts said the government had "misread the public mood", as the war sparks wider questions over the UK's asylum system. A wide-ranging survey by Ipsos and the British Future think tank, which was carried out weeks before Russian forces invaded Ukraine, showed that attitudes towards immigration and asylum have warmed significantly since the 2016 EU referendum.

Only 16 per cent of Brits disagreed that people "should be able to take refuge in other countries, including in Britain, to escape from war or persecution". Less than a third of people agreed with the statement that "it is important to have an asylum system that deters people from seeking asylum in the UK" while 46 per cent would rather have a fair asylum system "even if that means allowing more asylum seekers to stay and live in the UK than we do now".

When asked about small boat crossings in the English Channel, 56 per cent of those surveyed said they had sympathy for people making the journeys, while 39 per cent said they had little or no sympathy.

Mr Gove said he expects the first ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** making use of the government's new sponsorship route to come to the UK "in a week's time". The levelling up minister said he hoped individuals and community groups would use social media to connect with refugees, adding that charities would help in the "matching" process.

Labour cautioned that "too many questions remain unanswered" about the new scheme. "We're asking people to take to social media at a time they're fleeing a war zone. This is a serious crisis - it's not an online dating situation," shadow levelling up minister Lisa Nandy told LBC.

Sunder Katwala, the director of British Future, said: "The government clearly misread the public mood about ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and is now playing catch-up to make the generous offer of sanctuary that people feel is right ... underlying attitudes to immigration are becoming more positive over time."

The survey showed that the number of British people wanting general immigration reduced was at its lowest level for seven years, while a greater proportion of people said it has had a positive effect on Britain. The research involved interviewing 3,206 British adults online between 28 January and 10 February 2022, with findings weighted to reflect the population profile.

Gideon Skinner, the research director at Ipsos, said: "We know that Britons are supportive of making it easier for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to come to the UK, but this research shows this is part of a long-term belief in the principle of giving refuge to people fleeing war and persecution." The next stage of the research, which will be published in six months' time, will show what impact the Ukraine war has had on attitudes. Polling also showed that less than a third of British people want to deter asylum seekers, as controversial new laws are to be debated in parliament.

A bill being considered by the House of Lords today seeks to criminalise all refugees arriving in Britain "without permission" and see them deported abroad, or possibly held in offshore processing centres. The Nationality and Borders Bill has been hailed by the government as the "cornerstone" of its immigration plans, and names one of its key priorities as "deterring illegal entry into the UK".

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered.

To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign,click here. To sign the petitionclick here. If you would like to donate then pleaseclick herefor our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Britons offered £350 to open homes to refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6508-FG51-JCS0-D4P3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 13, 2022 Sunday

Second Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 6

**Length:** 850 words

**Byline:** CHIARA GIORDANO

**Body**

Britons opening their homes to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** fleeing the Russian invasion will receive a "thank you" payment of £350 per month, the government has announced.

The Homes for Ukraine scheme, to be rolled out this week, will allow individuals, charities, community groups and businesses to bring people fleeing the war to safety - even if they have no ties to the UK.

Sponsors can nominate a named Ukrainian individual or family to stay with them in their home, or offer a separate property for them to use rent-free.

It comes as the government has faced criticism over the speed and scale of its efforts to bring fleeing Ukrainians to the UK.

People sponsoring refugees through the new uncapped route will be required to commit to the scheme for a minimum of six months but are encouraged to keep up the offer for as long as they can.

Those offering accommodation will be vetted and Ukrainian applicants will undergo security checks.

A website gathering expressions of interest is set to launch tomorrow.

The government said it is also working to enable communities, the voluntary sector and charitable and religious organisations to sponsor groups of Ukrainians.

Cabinet minister Michael Gove said the UK "stands behind Ukraine in their darkest hour" and urged people to "join the national effort" to help refugees as he announced the plan last night.

The levelling up, housing and communities secretary said: "The crisis in Ukraine has sent shock waves across the world as hundreds of thousands of innocent people have been forced to flee their homes, leaving everything they know and love behind.

"Together we can give a safe home to those who so desperately need it."

Mr Gove is also calling for Russian oligarchs' multi-million-pound mansions to be seized and used to house ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** as "payback", according to the Mail on Sunday.

Ukrainians who have sponsors will be granted three years' leave to remain in the UK, with entitlement to work and access public services.

Meanwhile, Nicola Sturgeon and Mark Drakeford have said both Scotland and Wales are willing to become "super sponsors" for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

In a letter to Mr Gove, they also renewed their calls on Westminster to waive all visa requirements for Ukrainian nationals trying to get into the UK.

The governments in Holyrood and Cardiff said super sponsorship would enable Ukrainians to get clearance to enter each country quickly and be housed temporarily while they work with local partners to provide longer-term accommodation, safeguarding and access to services.

Education secretary Nadhim Zahawi announced yesterday that online lessons will be made available to 100,000 refugee pupils as they transition to "life and safety" in the UK.

He told BBC's Question Time earlier in the week: "What you are seeing now is a surge in our capability to take more Ukrainians.

"I can tell you in my own department in education, I have a team that's already making plans for a capacity of 100,000 children that we will take into our schools."

Responding to Mr Gove's announcement, Lisa Nandy, Labour's shadow secretary of state for levelling up, housing and communities, said too many questions still remained unanswered.

"We have known for weeks that generous Brits want to help Ukrainians fleeing war," she said.

"The problem is that once again the government has failed to plan and has been dragging its feet. We still need far more urgency and too many questions remain unanswered.

"It is unclear what support will be offered to vulnerable children and older people, whether provision is made for unaccompanied children, and what help will go to local government, sponsoring organisations and housing providers.

"Given the scale of the refugee crisis in Ukraine, ministers must be sure this scheme will help enough people, and quickly.

"If Brits will need to have a prior connection to a Ukrainian family to sponsor them, as is suggested, that would be a severe limitation. Once they are here, how will families access support, such as universal credit for housing, after their sponsorship ends?"

The Independent has launched a petition calling for the UK to lead the international community in helping those who have been displaced by the conflict.

We are calling for the following two actions:

Aid to be given to the countries that neighbour Ukraine, so that they have enough supplies of food, clothing and shelter needed to care for people who have been forced to abandon their homes.

The government must also do more to make the UK a haven for refugees, and ensure we take in Ukrainians who want to find safety here.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, click here. To sign the petition click here. If you would like to donate then please click here for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 12, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Home Secretary could face legal action over Ukraine visa delays*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65C4-R3T1-JBNF-W50R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 3, 2022 Tuesday 2:57 AM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 533 words

**Byline:** Jemma Crew

**Highlight:** A class action lawsuit is being prepared over 'inordinate and unreasonable delays'

**Body**

Would-be sponsors under the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) visa scheme are threatening the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) with legal action on behalf of hundreds of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have spent weeks waiting to come to the UK.

A class action lawsuit is being prepared over "inordinate and unreasonable delays" in processing hundreds of visa applications made in March.

Figures shared with the PA News Agency last week, compiled by would-be hosts, show there were at least 800 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** still waiting for visas after applying within the first two weeks of the scheme opening.

The groups behind the action, Vigil 4 Visas and Taking [*Action*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/action) Over the Homes for Ukraine Visa Delays, say the delays have put people in Ukraine and border countries at risk, and heaped "considerable pressure and strain" on UK hosts.

Lawyers for the groups are planning to send a pre-action protocol letter to the [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) this week.

Katherine Klinger, who has helped organise vigils outside the Home Office over the past week, told PA: "Perhaps the most striking thing I've noticed is the utter despair, shame and sense of responsibility so many hosts report.

"Hosts are in tears sometimes when they report to us what has happened in the past six weeks - dozens of emails, phone calls, letters, trips to the Home Office, MPs' involvement etc - it's very humbling."

The groups are due to launch an online Crowdfunder on Tuesday morning to raise up to £15,000 to help pay for the legal costs.

The changes the Home Office has made to streamline the visa system, including simplifying the forms and boosting staff numbers, are working and we are now processing visas as quickly as they come in - enabling thousands more Ukrainians to come through our uncapped routes.

Government spokesperson

The legal letter will highlight ten cases of Ukrainians who are still waiting for their visas after applying during the days after the Homes for Ukraine scheme first opened on March 18.

These include the case of a Ukrainian mother and her daughter, aged under 10, who applied for their visas around five weeks ago.

The mother received her visa on April 18 but the little girl is still waiting.

PA has reported on multiple similar cases where family members, usually with young children, are waiting for longer than their relatives for permission to travel.

The legal action is being prepared by Amanda Jones, an immigration and public law barrister, and follows a previous successful individual challenge, the group said.

They said the judicial review would be brought on the grounds that the Home Office has a policy of delaying the March applications, and deciding later applications instead; or that the system is so chaotic and unstable that it is unreasonable.

A Government spokesperson said: "In response to Putin's barbaric invasion we launched one of the fastest and biggest visa schemes in UK history. Over 86,000 visas have been issued so Ukrainians can live and work in the UK.

"The changes the Home Office has made to streamline the visa system, including simplifying the forms and boosting staff numbers, are working and we are now processing visas as quickly as they come in - enabling thousands more Ukrainians to come through our uncapped routes."

**Load-Date:** May 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Prince Charles's Easter message pays tribute to those helping refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657P-VVP1-DY4H-K4RG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 17, 2022 Sunday 12:47 AM GMT

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**Section:** ROYAL FAMILY,LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 517 words

**Byline:** Kate Ng

**Highlight:** 'I have found myself heartbroken at the sufferings of the innocent victims of conflict, or persecution, some of whom I have met,' the prince says

**Body**

The Prince of Wales has dedicated his [*Easter*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/easter) message to the millions of [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) who are "wounded by the past, fearful of the future".

[*Prince Charles*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prince-charles) ' words come as thousands of Ukrainians continue to seek [*sanctuary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sanctuary) from fighting in their homeland, following in the footsteps of millions of refugees who have already fled the Russian invasion.

He said meeting the "innocent victims of conflict" over the years, he had found it "profoundly moving" to see the numbers of people ready to invite those in need into their homes.

It comes after more than 200,000 people in the UK registered an interest in opening their homes to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** under the government's Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) sponsorship scheme.

Charles also said it was an "enormous privilege" to perform the ancient ceremony of distributing Maundy money to community stalwarts at Thursday's Royal Maundy service, on behalf of the Queen who was unable to attend.

The prince remembered the role that his late father, the Duke of Edinburgh, played during the many Maundy services he attended, when he would "read the Gospel, which tells how on the night of the Last Supper, Jesus knelt before his disciples and washed their travel-weary feet".

Charles said in his message: "Today, millions of people find themselves displaced, wearied by their journey from troubled places, wounded by the past, fearful of the future - and in need of a welcome, of rest and of kindness.

"Over the past years, I have found myself heartbroken at the sufferings of the innocent victims of conflict, or persecution, some of whom I have met and who have told me stories of unutterable tragedy as they have been forced to flee their country and seek shelter far from home.

"But amidst all this sadness and inhumanity, it has been profoundly moving to see how so many people are ready to open their homes to those in need, and how they have offered their time and their resources to help those facing such soul-destroying sorrow and hardship."

According to the Home Office, a total of 94,700 Ukraine Scheme visa applications have been received as of 13 April, including 39,100 through the Family Scheme and 55,600 through the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

However, while 31,400 family visas have been issued, just 25,100 sponsorship visas have been issued.

Earlier this month, home secretary Priti Patel [*apologised for the low number*](https://www.google.com/search?q=priti+patel+apologises+refugees+independent.co.uk&rlz=1C1GCEB_enGB977GB977&oq=priti+patel+apologises+refugees+independent.co.uk&aqs=chrome..69i57j0i546l2.7219j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8) of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** arriving in the UK, adding that it "takes time to start up a new route".

Charles and wife Camilla showed their solidarity with Ukraine by lighting a candle for the nation and sympathising with its London community in March, during a visit to the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral in central London.

The future king concluded his message by saying: "This Easter, as always, we are reminded of Our Lord's timeless example of goodness in the face of suffering, of courage in the face of fear, of faith in the face of despair. His light triumphed in that dark time.

"I pray with all my heart that his inspiring example might help us all dispel the darkness of the world."

Additional reporting by PA

**Load-Date:** April 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Irishman with terminal cancer travels to Ukraine to deliver aid*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654T-2921-JBNF-W4Y4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 3, 2022 Sunday 12:02 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 494 words

**Byline:** Dominic McGrath

**Highlight:** Corkman Don O'Leary made the 2,500-kilometre journey to Shegyni on the Polish-Ukrainian border to bring urgent aid to those fleeing the war.

**Body**

An Irishman living with terminal cancer has made his way from Co [*Cork*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/cork) to the Ukrainian border with a truck-load of aid.

64-year-old local man Don O'Leary, a well-known figure in Cork city, is suffering from terminal cancer.

But that did not stop him making the 2,500-kilometre journey to Shegyni on the Polish-Ukrainian border to bring urgent aid to those fleeing the war, after raising 24,000 euro from the local community.

Mr O'Leary is the director of the Cork Life Centre, which educates marginalised young people in the city, and says that he never had any doubts about making the journey, despite his diagnosis.

He said: "I can't control cancer, but I can control what I do, where I go and who I want to be with."

When a doctor told him that he had terminal lung cancer in February 2021, he was initially given eight to 12 months to live.

Despite this, he made it his mission to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

He revealed: "Everyone said, 'Are you mad?' The answer to that is probably yes.

"I love being able to do something that is relevant, important and supports community. That kind of thing does all of that."

He is clear that Russian President [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) is a "fascist".

Mr O'Leary made the journey by van on March 22 with four other volunteers.

He said: "I was comfortable enough, because they made a bed and I could get some sleep along the way."

During that time, he was in regular contact with the young people the Cork Life Centre works with.

I love being able to do something that is relevant, important and supports community. That kind of thing does all of that

Don O'Leary

He took questions from them while on the road and tried to communicate what he was witnessing.

One question, he says, stood out: "What was the difference between us going to [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) and the people coming out of Ukraine? That hit hard."

"They left their house behind then. They may never go back," he says.

"It strikes you. That's your life - three suitcases.

"Women and kids. In every war, they come off worst."

His young grandson had asked him the same question about why he felt the need to go.

"I wanted to support the small boys and girls," he told him.

Having returned to Cork in recent days, he say he has a much better insight into what people in Ukraine need.

He says that essential items like bedsheets and generator are crucial.

The Irish Red Cross has been playing a key role in providing aid to Ukrainians and Mr O'Leary says he understands that some people might ask why the money raised couldn't be handed to charity.

"There is something about communities giving to communities," he says, stressing the importance of forging links between Cork and the contacts he made at the Ukrainian border.

He has also been forced to consider the difference reception ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have received, compared to other people fleeing other conflicts.

He said: "I would have liked them to see the same thing done for [*Syrians*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/syrians) , Afghans.

"What is the difference between the Syrians and the Ukrainians?"

**Load-Date:** April 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'Woeful' 2,700 visas granted under new Ukrainian refugee sponsorship scheme*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:653Y-1MK1-DY4H-K458-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 30, 2022 Wednesday 10:38 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:3

**Length:** 586 words

**Byline:** Amy Gibbons

**Highlight:** The Home Office said 28,300 applications have been received under the Homes For Ukraine scheme, and 31,200 for the family route.

**Body**

Just 2,700 visas have been granted to people wanting to come to the UK under the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) For Ukraine scheme, despite applications reaching 28,300, latest figures show.

Campaigners called the numbers "woeful", urging the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) to "cut the red tape" for refugees seeking sanctuary in Britain.

The scheme started accepting applications on March 18, with the aim of allowing individuals, charities, community groups and businesses to bring Ukrainians - including those with no family ties to the UK - to safety.

However, Britain retains a visa requirement on security grounds while other European countries have waived checks in response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the Russian invasion.

Home Office">

The total number of applications from Ukrainians wanting to come to the UK was 59,500 as of March 29, the Home Office said.

This includes 28,300 under the Homes For Ukraine scheme and 31,200 under the separate Ukraine Family Scheme, which allows Ukrainians to join relatives living in the UK.

There have been 25,500 visas issued altogether, including 2,700 under the sponsorship scheme and 22,800 under the family scheme.

In other developments:

- Further sanctions against Russia are expected to be announced shortly.

- UK defence intelligence analysts reported Russian units are "suffering heavy losses" and have been "forced to return to [*Belarus*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/belarus) and Russia to reorganise and resupply".

- The UN refugee agency said four million people have now fled Ukraine since Russia launched its war on February 24.

Refugees minister Lord Harrington said progress is starting to be seen thanks to changes the Home Office has made to "streamline" the visa process.

"The response of the British public has been incredible, opening their hearts and homes to the people of Ukraine, and we must do everything we can to make the most of this extraordinary generosity," he said.

"We are starting to see progress because of changes the Home Office made to streamline the visa process and put additional resources into the system.

"However, we need to do more and will be making further improvements to bring people to the UK as quickly as possible.

"I look forward to welcoming more families and ensuring they have the support they need when they arrive."

Shadow home secretary [*Yvette Cooper*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/yvette-cooper) said the latest figures reveal "shamefully slow progress on ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***".

"British people (have) shown strong support but shambolic Home Office bureaucracy (is) letting everyone down," she tweeted.

Shamefully slow progress on ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.British people shown strong support but shambolic Home Office bureaucracy letting everyone down.Tens of thousands of visa applications still outstanding.Just 1 in 100 Homes for Ukraine offers have visas[*https://t.co/tHcBsRORLc*](https://t.co/tHcBsRORLc) - Yvette Cooper (@YvetteCooperMP) [*March 30, 2022*](https://twitter.com/YvetteCooperMP/status/1509110831438610437?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Sonya Sceats, chief executive of the Freedom From Torture charity, described the sponsorship scheme numbers as "woeful", and called on the Government to "cut the red tape".

"In a month where people across the country signed up to welcome more refugees than the Government has in 10 years, these woeful numbers prove why visa-based schemes are an unsuitable gateway for refugees fleeing Ukraine to reach safety here in the UK," she said.

"Increasing reports of horrendous sexual violence against Ukrainian women and girls make it all the more urgent for the Government to cut the red tape so that survivors can get here quickly and access services from specialist trauma services like Freedom From Torture."

**Load-Date:** March 30, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Pope heads to Malta; Migration, Ukraine war top his agenda*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654J-7PB1-DY4H-K4GV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 2, 2022 Saturday 7:30 AM GMT

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**Length:** 539 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Pope Francis is going to Malta this weekend, aiming to draw attention to Europe's migration challenge that has only become more stark with the war in Ukraine

**Body**

Pope Francis headed to the [*Mediterranean*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mediterranean) island nation of [*Malta*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/malta) on Saturday for a pandemic-delayed weekend visit, aiming to draw attention to Europe's migration challenge that has only become more stark with Russia's invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Francis is likely to encourage Europe's embrace of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** while also urging countries to extend the same welcome to migrants coming from Libya and elsewhere.

Francis used a wheelchair lift to board the ITA aircraft rather than take the stairs, a sign that his painful knees were bothering him. It was the first time he has used the elevator and was an indication that the inflammation has gotten worse.

Malta, the [*European*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) Union's smallest country with a half-million people, has long been on the front lines of the flow of migrants and refugees across the Mediterranean. It has frequently called upon its bigger European neighbors to shoulder more of the burden receiving would-be refugees.

Francis has frequently echoed that call, and will certainly link it this weekend to the welcome the Maltese once gave the Apostle Paul, who according to the biblical account, was shipwrecked off Malta in around A.D. 60 while en route to Rome and was shown unusual kindness by the islanders.

The Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, said migration will top the agenda for Francis' trip and said Europe's reception of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** was "truly admirable."

"I hope that this tragic experience can also really help to grow, to increase sensitivity also towards the other migration, the one that comes from the south," he told Vatican Media.

Although short, the two-day visit was already going to be challenging for the 85-year-old Francis, who has had increasing trouble walking due to an inflamed ligament in his right knee. He has struggled in recent days to stand up from his chair and climb stairs, and his limping gait from sciatica has appeared more pronounced.

While he was able to use the elevator to board the plane, Francis is due to board a catamaran Saturday afternoon for a sailing trip to the island of Gozo, and on Sunday plans to descend the steps into the Grotto of St. Paul in Rabat.

Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni said the elevator was decided upon in the past day to avoid subjecting the pontiff to unnecessary strain. He suggested a similar measure was expected in Valletta.

Francis had been due to visit Malta in May 2020, but postponed the visit after the coronavirus pandemic hit. The rescheduled trip comes as the Catholic Church in the overwhelmingly Catholic country is preparing for its first in-person Easter Week celebrations in two years.

Maltese Archbishop Charles Scicluna, who is also a top Vatican official, asked for prayers for the visit, not least because of Francis' catamaran trip Saturday.

"That should be lovely if he has the right weather for it, but the last two weekends before the pope's trip have been an unmitigated disaster weather-wise," Scicluna told The Associated Press. "So we pray for something we cannot organize: the weather."

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Associated Press religion coverage receives support through the AP's collaboration with The Conversation US, with funding from Lilly Endowment Inc. The [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) is solely responsible for this content.

**Load-Date:** April 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Do not travel to UK before sponsorship application decision, Ukrainians told*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651D-BYN1-DY4H-K0JD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 18, 2022 Friday 4:07 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:3

**Length:** 557 words

**Byline:** Jemma Crew

**Highlight:** The Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme formally launched on Friday.

**Body**

***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** without UK family members applying for visas under the new sponsorship scheme have been told not to travel to Britain until they have received a decision on their application.

***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and their sponsors are now able to fill in an online form on Gov.uk under the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, which formally launched on Friday.

Those with valid passports who apply under the scheme will receive a permission letter from [*UK Visas and Immigration*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/uk-visas-and-immigration) (UKVI) confirming that they can travel to the UK.

Ukrainians without passports will have to submit their biometrics at a visa application centre, where they will receive a visa.

The [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) said refugees should not make their own way to the UK before they have received a permission letter or visa.

It said it is prioritising applications under the scheme and aims to make a decision "as quickly as possible".

Guidance published on Friday says that, by completing the online application form on Gov.uk, both the applicant and sponsor have given permission for their data and contact details to be shared for the purpose of checks.

Those who hold a valid Ukrainian passport will not need to attend an appointment at a visa application centre to give their biometrics.

When they reach the UK, they will receive a six-month entry stamp.

They will need to submit their biometrics within this time to extend their stay for up to three years and to receive a residence permit.

Ukrainian nationals and their immediate family members, who were living in Ukraine before January 1 this year, will be eligible to apply under the sponsorship scheme.

Relatives who fall under this definition are a spouse or civil partner, unmarried cohabiting partner of at least two years, a fiance/e or proposed civil partner, a child under 18, and a parent of a child who is under 18.

NEW -UK individuals, charities, community groups & businesses can now record their interest in supporting Ukrainians fleeing the war through our new Homes for Ukraine scheme.Express an interest in becoming a sponsor now [*https://t.co/TnhlcpJEle*](https://t.co/TnhlcpJEle) [*#StandWithUkraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/StandWithUkraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/vbbINAz3XP*](https://t.co/vbbINAz3XP) - Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (@luhc) [*March 14, 2022*](https://twitter.com/luhc/status/1503407897224622081?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Applicants and sponsors will undergo security and safeguarding checks.

Enver Solomon, chief executive of the [*Refugee Council*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugee-council) , said: "The Ukraine sponsorship scheme is a complex visa scheme that will inevitably be inaccessible to the most vulnerable refugees, such as unaccompanied children.

"A humanitarian crisis requires a speedy and compassionate response, not one that puts bureaucratic hurdles ahead of the immediate needs of people whose lives have been ripped apart.

"The Government must waive visas to allow any Ukrainian to reach safety in the UK as a refugee and then match them with [*Britons*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/britons) who have shown incredible generosity by wanting to welcome Ukrainians into their homes.

"At the same time, we urge the Government to rethink its cruel and harmful proposals in the Nationality and Borders Bill going through [*Parliament*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/parliament) that will criminalise any Ukrainian seeking safety who arrives in the UK without a visa.

"The Government must not discriminate between those refugees it considers to be more deserving of our protection than others. By definition, all those fleeing the brutal conflict in Ukraine are in need of safety."

**Load-Date:** March 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*King Charles chats to Ukrainian refugees on state visit to Germany*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67WV-BJP1-JBNF-W3BS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 30, 2023 Thursday 9:40 PM GMT

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**Section:** LIFESTYLE,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 95 words

**Byline:** Holly Patrick

**Body**

King [*Charles III*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/charles-iii) met ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** at the Tegel Refugee Centre in Berlin as part of his state visit to [*Germany*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/germany) on Thursday, 30 March.

The country has welcomed more than one million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** since Russia invaded their homeland.

His Majesty told Ukrainian people he was “praying” for them after condemning President Vladimir Putin’s actions.

In an historic address to the German parliament (Bundestag), the King praised the nation’s “courageous, important and appreciated” decision to send military support to Ukraine.

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters?itm_channel=native&itm_campaign=newsletters&itm_content=video-articles) to sign up for our newsletters.

**Load-Date:** March 30, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Priti Patel invokes Windrush scandal to defend her Ukraine refugee policy*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YP-XNY1-JBNF-W107-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 10, 2022 Thursday 6:34 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 500 words

**Byline:** Jon Stone

**Highlight:** Home Secretary tells MPs to consider 'something known as the Windrush scandal'

**Body**

[*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) has cited the [*Windrush*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/windrush) scandal as a reason not to allow open-door entry to ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees).

Speaking in the Commons on Thursday the Home Secretary told MPs that visa restrictions imposed by the Home Office were necessary because of "something known as the Windrush scandal".

The scandal came about because the government's "hostile environment" policies required people to show documentation they were never issued with when they arrived in the UK.

As a result thousands of people - particularly those from the so-called "Windrush generation" who came to Britain after WWII were locked out of services like housing and healthcare.

The government was pushed into paying compensation to the victims, who were mostly black Britons - though it has been criticised for being slow to do so.

"What we are seeing, and it is important that we're flexible in our response and we have been, is that there are many Ukrainians that do not have documentation," Ms Patel said in response to an urgent question from shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper.

"And if I may, Mr Speaker, I think this country and all governments, including probably a government that she once served in, will recognise that there was something known as the Windrush scandal."

As MPs on the opposition benches cried out in anger over her comments, the Home Secretary continued:

"It's important that everyone who arrives in the UK has physical and digital records of their status in the UK to ensure that they're accessible to schemes.

"They may holler on the other side by the process is absolutely vital in terms of the verification - notification and permission to travel, but importantly to give people the status when they come to the United Kingdom to have that right to work, the right to access some benefits and also the digital verification of their status. I think that is absolutely right."

Shadow foreign secretary David Lammy, who campaigned for the scandal's victims, appeared to criticise the Home Secretary's comments.

Responding later on social media , he said: "Priti Patel, please listen to your government's own Windrush Lessons Learned Review which said:

"the Home Office must ... change its culture to recognise that migration and wider Home Office policy is about people and, whatever it's objective, should be rooted in humanity."

Britain has stood out among European countries in not offering an open door policy to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** - with the government coming in for international criticism.

At the start of the week French interior minister Gerald Darmanin, wrote a strongly-worded letter to his British counterpart Priti Patel, accusing the UK of a "lack of humanity" for not opening its doors.

Ms Patel announced more measures to relax biometric checks on Thursday but Labour has said the measures will still result in delays. The opposition says emergency protection visas should be introduced, though it has also stopped short of calling the UK to emulate the UK's open door policy and waive visas entirely.

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[*A different Russia could lead the way in uniting continents*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YM-HVV1-JCS0-D2B5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 10, 2022 Thursday

First Edition

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**Section:** VOICES; Pg. 36

**Length:** 544 words

**Body**

At the end of the Second World War, Russia and the UK were allies. British lives were lost trying to help the Russian people as the convoys went round the North Cape. Millions of Russian lives were lost.

Russia is still a great country. It is part of both Europe and Asia, the only country in two continents. As such, it could play a leading role in uniting both areas, while we fight our greatest problem - climate change. Please Russia, leave Ukraine and take on your greatest role yet.

Margaret Mann London

<strong>Refugees unwelcome</strong>

Given the appalling way this government has treated - and is treating - refugees from war zones, do they have some sort of pathological phobia of the word "immigrant", which renders our leaders incapable of rational thought and action? I struggle otherwise to make any sense of the cruel, contemptuous and vicious actions of the government in this matter.

Joanna Pallister Durham City

<strong>Zelensky's Commons address</strong>

What a superb, impassioned, and hard-hitting address from the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelensky, to parliament. I was especially attracted to his Churchillian "fighting the on the beaches" analogy. For all their thunderous applause, however, how unfortunate - to put it mildly - that the current prime minister and his immediate acolytes aren't even remotely close to the power of his venerated predecessor, either morally or intellectually.

Jeremy Redman London

Refugees "not having the right papers" reminds me of my father-in-law, actor Herbert Lom, whose Czech girlfriend Didi was refused entry in 1938. She was murdered in Auschwitz.

Mike Bor London

<strong>The Nasty Party</strong>

Priti Patel, attacking Ireland for its humanity in accepting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** while at the same time erecting barriers that Nigel Farage would have been proud of to stop them coming to the UK, has done herself no harm in the race to lead the Nasty Party.

John Simpson Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire

<strong>Coexistence and compromise</strong>

In the closing document at the Bucharest Nato Summit in 2008, America insisted that Georgia and Ukraine may, or will, join the Nato alliance. Russia objected for obvious reasons. It did not want to have further Nato alliance states sitting at its border, with American deploying its military forces there. Any rational human being, never mind politicians, should understand this. Ukraine, and in due course Belarus, could have become neutral buffer states with economic freedom.

Over time, this would have encouraged changes within Russia with people seeking more freedom and eventually a change towards a more democratic government. It's an evolutionary process and cannot be achieved through constant threats and sanctions. The alternative? A country destroyed. Coexistence demands compromise, but the west has never understood this at an immense cost to its people and immense profits for its military industrial complex.

Gunter Straub London

<strong>'Global Britain'</strong>

As "Global Britain" leads the way with a "world-beating", not-to-be-seen-anywhere-in-the-EU visa scheme to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** decide not to come to Britain, do we conclude this government is: serially incompetent, evil, mired in Russian money - or all of the above?

Katharine Powell Cheshire

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Boris Johnson urged to sack Priti Patel for 'utterly shameful' handling of refugee crisis*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650B-G991-JBNF-W0MC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 13, 2022 Sunday 4:09 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 524 words

**Byline:** Adam Forrest

**Highlight:** Home secretary has show 'incompetence, indifference and sheer inhumanity', says Lib Dem leader

**Body**

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) has been urged to sack home secretary [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel%22%20title=%22Priti%20Patel) over her department's handling of the Ukrainian refugee crisis.

Liberal Democrat leader Sir [*Ed Davey*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ed-davey) said Ms Patel's response to the "humanitarian catastrophe" had been "utterly shameful".

In a speech at the party's spring conference on Sunday, the Lib Dem leader said: "She has answered desperation with delays; crisis with confusion; pain with paperwork."

Sir Ed alleged that Ms Patel has shown "incompetence, indifference and sheer inhumanity", which "does not befit our United Kingdom, with its proud history of providing sanctuary to those in need".

He added: "It couldn't be clearer that Priti Patel is not up to the job. The buck stops with the prime minister. So Boris Johnson must sack her now."

Levelling up secretary Michael Gove has announced details of a new sponsorship scheme to help people fleeing the Russian invasion, allowing Britons to offer homes to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and receive a "thank you" payment of £350 per month.

Mr Gove said "tens of thousands" of refugees are potentially set to benefit from the new route, with the first expected to come the UK "in a week's time".

The government has been criticised over the speed and scale of its efforts to bring people fleeing the war to the UK, with access previously limited to those with family members settled in this country.

Labour also cautioned that "too many questions remain unanswered" about the new scheme - accusing the government of being "far too slow, far too mean" in its approach to refugees.

Scottish first minister and SNP leader [*Nicola Sturgeon*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nicola-sturgeon) said on Sunday that Scotland "stands ready" to take 3,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** immediately.

Ms Sturgeon also said she was worried the UK sponsorship scheme will be "slow and cumbersome", lack proper support and safeguarding, and may not be sustainable for the length of time that people may need to stay in the UK.

Earlier this week, Conservative MPs joined the opposition in launching a furious attack on the Home Office's "snail's pace" response to the crisis.

Davey told the Lib Dem conference that "people across the UK have said loud and clear: we want to welcome them, with open arms", adding: "The British people want to offer them a home - but Priti Patel has slammed the door in their face."

Mr Gove said on Sunday that "more than 3,000 visas" have now been issued, up from the 1,305 figure given by Home Office minister Baroness Williams on Friday.

Ms Patel and the Home Office have been approached for comment.

In a previous statement, the government said: "We are standing shoulder to shoulder with Ukrainians, which is why we've made it easier for those with valid Ukrainian passports to come here. This is alongside changes to visas to ensure Ukrainians in the UK can stay here."

Meanwhile, Irish prime minister Micheal Martin said his country's humanitarian response trumps security checks on arriving Ukrainians. "Our primary impulse is to assist those fleeing war," he told the BBC.

He said Ireland has so far accepted 5,500 people fleeing the Russian invasion, a response to what he termed "the worst displacement of people since World War Two".

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Cleverly set for Estonia stop-off before Nato gathering*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68BP-YH51-DY4H-K428-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 29, 2023 Monday 11:01 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 286 words

**Byline:** Dominic McGrath

**Highlight:** James Cleverly will hold talks in Estonia and Norway over the coming days – as Nato foreign ministers gather for an informal meeting.

**Body**

[*James Cleverly*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/james-cleverly) will hold talks in [*Estonia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/estonia) and [*Norway*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/norway) over the coming days – as [*Nato*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nato) foreign ministers gather for an informal meeting in Oslo.

The war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) is set to top the agenda at the Nato gathering, while it is also likely that Sweden’s accession will be discussed ahead of a key summit in Vilnius, Lithuania, in July.

The Foreign Secretary will arrive in Tallinn on Tuesday for his first official visit to Estonia, where he is expected to meet members of the government and visit the Royal Navy’s HMS Albion in the Baltic Sea.

While there, he is likely to stress the UK’s desire for continued close co-operation on European security, including on support for Ukraine, which was invaded by its neighbour Russia last year, and the need to tackle illegal migration.

“In Estonia, across land, sea and air, British personnel are on the frontline protecting Europe’s security and deterring Russia’s cruel and catastrophic aggression,” Mr Cleverly said ahead of the trip.

“As Nato allies, we are stronger than ever before – unified against hostility and in defence of democracy and freedom.

“Not only is our military leading the way, our diplomats are working across the globe to galvanise our partners and strengthen international efforts to ensure (Russian President Vladimir) Putin faces the consequences of his barbaric actions.”

In Norway, Mr Cleverly is expected to use the informal meeting on Wednesday to push for Sweden to join Nato ahead of the summit in July.

Objections from Turkey and Hungary have so far slowed the process for Swedish membership.

Mr Cleverly’s stop-off in Estonia will also see him speak to figures from the country’s technology sector and visit a school for children of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

**Load-Date:** May 29, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Donald Tusk calls out UK's tiny Ukraine refugees contribution by quoting Boris Johnson*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YF-KYR1-DY4H-K00C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 9, 2022 Wednesday 10:15 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 528 words

**Byline:** Jon Stone

**Highlight:** The Polish politician oversaw Brexit talks as president of the European Council

**Body**

[*Donald Tusk*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/donald-tusk) has criticised Britain's response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis, as the Home Office continues to turn back people without visas.

Most of Europe has operated an open door policy for Ukrainians freeing the Russian invasion, with the UK standing out as an exception.

The approach has sparked anger in other countries, with France's interior minister accusing the British government of a "lack of humanity".

Now Donald Tusk, the former president of the European Council who oversaw [*Brexit*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/brexit) talks, has taken aim at [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) himself.

"Solidarity in action. The UK has granted 50 visas to the ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) while the Poles have welcomed 1.2 million Ukrainians in two weeks," Mr Tusk said in a post on social media.

Mr Tusk, a longstanding critic of UK government policy, juxtaposed the statistics with a quote from the UK's prime minister.

"'We are generous as we possibly can be, we are very, very generous', says Boris Johnson."

Mr Tusk ended his message with a "facepalm" emoji - used to expressed frustration.

The former Council chief, a Polish politician who is now president of the ruling centre-right European People's Party group, also took aim at eurosceptics and nationalists.

"If you undermine the European unity and promote nationalism, you are Putin's ally," he said.

"If you attack the rule of law, media freedom and human rights in your country, you are Putin."

Unlike most European countries the UK government has said it will only take ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** with family connections or sponsorship by a third party. Immigration ministers have suggested people could be pretending to be Ukrainian and that they might consider coming to Britain on work visas to pick fruit.

By contrast the European Union has activated a special law which will allow all people fleeing the conflict access to housing and other public services for an initial period of three years. They will not be asked to apply for asylum or visas.

The figure of around 50 refugees used by Mr Tusk dates from over the weekend, with the latest official stats suggested 300 Ukrainians have been granted visas to come to Britain - still dwarfed by the two million who have actually fled the country.

Ireland has already taken over 2,000 people and its government has said it expects to take between 80,000 to 100,000 in total.

The Home Office says a total of 17,700 [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) national visa applications have been started and that 9,000 of those are require to provide more information.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Calls for Home Secretary to tackle delays in processing Ukraine refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YG-FMJ1-JBNF-W1R2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 9, 2022 Wednesday 3:28 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 534 words

**Byline:** Flora Thompson

**Highlight:** It comes after reports of a 90-year-old holocaust survivor trying to be reunited with family in London.

**Body**

Jewish leaders have called on the [*Home Secretary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-secretary) to tackle "delays" in helping refugees fleeing [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) amid reports of a 90-year-old holocaust survivor trying to reach her granddaughter in [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london).

Marie van der Zyl, the president of the [*Board of Deputies of British Jews*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/board-deputies-british-jews) , wrote to Priti Patel asking her to "substantially increase capacity" to provide UK visas to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who are "stranded and vulnerable to lack of shelter and malnutrition as well as the dangers of war".

She Highlighted the case of Kateryna Razumenko, who reportedly fled her home and is now in [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) while trying to reunite with family in the UK.

Ms van der Zysaid: "This is a fast-moving situation and I am sure that both the Government and civil servants are working around the clock to ensure that the United Kingdom plays its role in accepting and supporting refugees.

The current process appears to be far too slow

Marie van der Zyl

"Nevertheless, there are inevitable delays in the process, leading to refugees being stranded and vulnerable to lack of shelter and malnutrition as well as the dangers of war.

"We strongly welcome the Government's family sponsorship programme, the intention to establish a humanitarian sponsorship pathway and your leadership in this matter.

"Unfortunately, the current process appears to be far too slow.

"The Jewish community has been moved in particular by a case of a 90-year-old Holocaust and Holodomor survivor, who is currently living in makeshift accommodation in Poland, but whose granddaughter in London is desperately trying to bring her over to ensure that she has the care and support she needs.

"For that one story we know about, there are likely to be thousands of refugees, of all faiths and none, facing similar circumstances.

"I am therefore asking for you to substantially increase capacity for delivering the family sponsorship programme and establish the humanitarian sponsorship pathway for which all ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** are eligible as quickly as possible."

Accord to the Telegraph, Ms Razumenko was born in Kharkiv, Ukraine, in 1931 and has left her home country for the first time amid the conflict. Now in Poland, she is waiting to be processed by the UK Government so she can come to London to be with her granddaughter.

It is understood the Home Office has escalated Ms Razumenko's case and is in contact with the family to get her to the UK as quickly as possible. A visa is expected to be provided within 24 hours.

A Government spokesman said: "Last week we announced a new sponsorship route which will allow Ukrainians with no family ties to the UK to be sponsored to come to the UK.

"This is alongside our Ukraine Family Scheme, which has already seen thousands of people apply, as well as changes to visas so that people can stay in the UK safely.

"We are protecting appointments for Ukrainians at all our visa application centres, with a 24/7 helpline in place and deployed additional staff across the EU to help speed up the process further.

"The routes we have put in place follow extensive engagement with Ukrainian partners. This is a rapidly moving and complex picture and as the situation develops we will continue to keep our support under constant review."

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*New refugee scheme poses slavery threat, say charities*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650P-PG01-JCS0-D08Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 15, 2022 Tuesday

Second Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 6

**Length:** 544 words

**Byline:** MAY BULMAN SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

Ministers have been warned that ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** could be placed at risk of exploitation and abuse under its new sponsorship scheme launched yesterday by Michael Gove.

Anti-trafficking charities say "red flags could be missed" in the vetting of potential hosts under the new programme, which will see people in the UK paid £350 per month to host refugees who have fled the Russian invasion.

Experts said they were "certain" that some people in the UK will view the scheme as an "opportunity to turn a profit at the expense of vulnerable individuals" - and that thorough checks must be carried out.

But campaigners urged caution over the scheme, warning that vulnerable people could end up being exploited by those who have offered to host them unless the government commits to "rigorous" safeguarding measures, including follow-up checks.

Lauren Agnew, human trafficking policy expert at Care (Christian Action Research and Education), said that while the scheme was "well-motivated and could benefit a great number of individuals", the logistics of it had to be "weighed carefully".

She continued: "With large numbers of applications needing to be processed quickly, red flags could be missed in the vetting of potential hosts. We can be certain that some of this number will be seeing the Homes for Ukraine scheme as an opportunity to turn a profit at the expense of vulnerable individuals seeking refuge in the UK.

"Setting refugees up in homes around the UK is not the end of the story. There must be follow-up checks to ensure these individuals are not being exploited. We must remember that refugees are extremely vulnerable. They must not be allowed to fall off the radar."

Daniel Sohege, director of pro-bono consultancy Stand For All, said the new scheme raised "a number of concerns" with the scheme, with the most significant risk being that it "increases the danger of refugees being exploited and even trafficked".

"We already see how a failure to provide proper specialist support puts, particularly children, at risk in hotels. This seems to multiply the issue," he said. "Organisations that currently 'match' refugees to potential homes conduct multiple checks. The speed and scale of this scheme means it is nigh on impossible to properly carry out those checks."

Recent statistics from the National Crime Agency estimate there are at least 6,000-8,000 modern slavery offenders in the UK. The government has said each host will be checked against the police national computer for security concerns, and that refugees will be registered with GPs and schools, where safeguarding checks will be carried out.

The Independent understands that the new scheme will require all hosts to put forward the names of refugees they can sponsor, and is anticipating that charities will come forward and offer to facilitate the matching process.

Charities have warned that the need to put forward names could lead to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** without links to the UK being "excluded" from the programme.

The Home Office's Ukraine family scheme - a separate route which launched on 4 March - has so far issued 4,400 visas out of 32,400 applications that have been opened, meaning the UK is falling far short of the numbers of Ukrainians that other European countries have welcomed.

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*The British government must offer sanctuary to those fleeing Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64W8-VVH1-F072-40Y2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

February 27, 2022 Sunday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 2

**Length:** 526 words

**Byline:** EDITORIAL

**Body**

The prime minister has been stronger on rhetoric than on action in responding to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. He has imposed some minor sanctions, including cancelling a football game, but he has held back from levelling with the British people about the cost to us of the kind of meaningful sanctions that would impose significant costs on the Russian economy.

Nor has Boris Johnson said anything about our duty to take in refugees from Ukraine, which should be one of our first obligations to the Ukrainian people. There ought to be no hesitation about this. There can be no cavils about Ukrainians being "economic migrants": these are people fleeing a war. Ukraine's neighbours have opened their borders; we, as allies of the Ukrainian people, must show our solidarity in concrete form from further away.

First, we must help Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania as they try to provide food and shelter to the thousands of Ukrainians arriving across their borders; but then we must offer to accommodate our share of refugees here, too. Other countries have done so, with a speed that shames us. Ireland and Portugal have already said that they will accept ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** without requiring visas; the UK should do the same.

The Independent has had its disagreements with Mr Johnson's government about the issue of our membership of the European Union, including over its right of free movement. We have our reservations about the Nationality and Borders Bill currently going through parliament; it would be monstrous to criminalise Ukrainians arriving in the UK by the "wrong" routes. We have also praised the government for its willingness to allow Hong Kongers to settle here, and we urge the prime minister, the home secretary and the entire government to show the same compassion in this new emergency.

We have, after all, done this before. When war tore through the Balkans in the 1990s, thousands of refugees were given sanctuary in Britain. And we can do it again. The Local Government Association, representing local councils in England and Wales, and Cosla, its Scottish equivalent, have said that their members stand ready to work with the government to help to resettle refugees. We have throughout the UK a rich ecosystem of charities willing to help mobilise the better angels of the British people in this cause.

This is not just a matter of compassion or even of international law - obligations under the 1951 Geneva Convention on refugees - our sympathy for those fleeing tanks and missiles should be enough. This is also a matter of enlightened self-interest: we believe that, however gloomy Ukraine's prospects seem now, the country will be free and prosperous one day, and we want its people to look favourably on those nations that stood by them in their hour of need. We want them to trade with us, to exchange ideas and people with us, to form bonds of friendship.

If we are not prepared to fight with them against their aggressor - because Vladimir Putin's Russia has nuclear weapons - and yet we proclaim our solidarity with them, we must make it mean something. Taking in our fair share of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** is the least we can do.

**Load-Date:** February 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Russia could lead the way in uniting continents, instead of fighting a war*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YG-FMJ1-JBNF-W1PC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 9, 2022 Wednesday 3:08 PM GMT

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**Section:** LETTERS,VOICES; Version:2

**Length:** 675 words

**Highlight:** Letters to the editor: our readers share their views. Please send your letters to [*letters@independent.co.uk*](mailto:letters@independent.co.uk)

**Body**

At the end of the Second World War, [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) and the UK were allies. British lives were lost trying to help the Russian people as the convoys went round the North Cape. Millions of Russian lives were lost.

Russia is still a great country. It is part of both Europe and Asia, the only country in two continents. As such, it could play a leading role in uniting both areas, while we fight our greatest problem - climate change.

Please Russia, leave [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) and take on your greatest role yet.

Margaret Mann

London

Refugees unwelcome

Given the appalling way this government has treated - and is treating - refugees from war zones, do they have some sort of pathological phobia of the word "immigrant", which renders our leaders incapable of rational thought and action?

I struggle otherwise to make any sense of the cruel, contemptuous and vicious actions of the government in this matter.

Joanna Pallister

Durham City

Zelensky's Commons address

What a superb, impassioned, and hard-hitting address from the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelensky, to parliament. I was especially attracted to his Churchillian "fighting the on the beaches" analogy.

For all their thunderous applause, however, how unfortunate - to put it mildly - that the current prime minister and his immediate acolytes aren't even remotely close to the power of his venerated predecessor, either morally or intellectually.

Jeremy Redman

London

Refugees "not having the right papers" reminds me of my father-in-law, actor Herbert Lom, whose Czech girlfriend Didi was refused entry in 1938.

She was murdered in Auschwitz.

Mike Bor

London

The Nasty Party

[*Priti Patel, attacking Ireland for its humanity*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/ukraine-refugees-home-office-ireland-b2030874.html) in accepting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** while at the same time erecting barriers that Nigel Farage would have been proud of to stop them coming to the UK, has done herself no harm in the race to lead the Nasty Party.

John Simpson

Ross on Wye

Coexistence and compromise

In the closing document at the Bucharest [*Nato*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nato) Summit in 2008, America insisted that Georgia and Ukraine may, or will, join the Nato alliance.

Russia objected for obvious reasons. It did not want to have further Nato alliance states sitting at its border, with American deploying its military forces there. Any rational human being, never mind politicians, should understand this.

To keep up to speed with all the latest opinions and comment, sign up to our free weekly Voices Dispatches newsletter by [*clicking here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Fnewsletters%3Fitm_channel%3Dnative%26itm_campaign%3Dfooter%26itm_audience%3Dprospecting%26itm_content%3Dnewsletters&data=04%7C01%7CVictoria.Richards%40independent.co.uk%7C062b3d811f2541e4220808d98fb59a11%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637698832400255119%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=cljURBTtBLaWfVwBrZv8UPgOVVFGM0rPoexRmk0aRHA%3D&reserved=0)

Ukraine, and in due course Belarus, could have become neutral buffer states with economic freedom.

Over time, this would have encouraged changes within Russia with people seeking more freedom and eventually a change towards a more democratic government. It's an evolutionary process and cannot be achieved through constant threats and sanctions. The alternative? A country destroyed.

Coexistence demands compromise, but the west has never understood this at an immense cost to its people and immense profits for its military industrial complex.

Gunter Straub

London

'Global Britain'

As "Global Britain" leads the way with a "world-beating", not-to-be-seen-anywhere-in-the-EU visa scheme to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** decide not to come to Britain, do we conclude this government is: serially incompetent, evil, mired in Russian money - or all of the above?

Katharine Powell

Cheshire

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Boris Johnson admits UK could have acted faster in accepting Ukraine refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65C6-1JT1-DY4H-K1JW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 3, 2022 Tuesday 10:34 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 862 words

**Byline:** Sophie Wingate

**Highlight:** The Prime Minister said 86,000 visas have been issued and 27,000 Ukrainians are already in Britain.

**Body**

The [*Prime Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prime-minister) has admitted the UK could have reacted faster in helping ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** amid widespread criticism that families are being delayed in reaching safety.

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) said "large numbers" of those fleeing the war are now coming to Britain.

Pressed on why the UK is making it harder for refugees than other European countries in an interview conducted by Susanna Reid on ITV's [*Good Morning Britain*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/good-morning-britain) , he defended the Government's current efforts.

Could we have done it faster? Yes, perhaps we could

Boris Johnson

"Well, we have done a huge amount to help Ukrainian women and children in the area but we're now seeing large numbers come to the UK," he said.

"So far, 86,000 visas have been issued and 27,000 are already here and I want to say, thank you - 27,000 is a lot and it's growing fast and I want to pay tribute to all those who are helping to look after Ukrainians.

"Could we have done it faster? Yes, perhaps we could."

Asked why the UK is not offering visa-free travel to Ukrainians, Mr Johnson said that in a wartime situation, some people might be "pretending" to be refugees.

'Why are we making it harder than any other European country for Ukrainian women and children fleeing war?' -[*@susannareid100*](https://twitter.com/susannareid100?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Susanna challenges the PM over the delays in granting visas to Ukrainians fleeing the war and why the government can't grant visa-free travel. [*pic.twitter.com/YBlnRA9K1g*](https://t.co/YBlnRA9K1g) - Good Morning Britain (@GMB) [*May 3, 2022*](https://twitter.com/GMB/status/1521398404689141760?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) He said: "It's important to protect the system from those who might want to abuse it."It's also important to protect the women and children from coming to somewhere where they're not going to get the welcome that we would want, so that's why the screening and all the work we've done to make sure that we match up people in the right way, and the results are starting to be really excellent, you're seeing large numbers now."When it was put to him that only a fraction of those who have applied for visas have arrived in the UK, Mr Johnson responded: "Quite a big fraction."Earlier on the programme, Ukraine's ambassador to the UK said many refugees coming to Britain had to first wait in European towns such as the French port city of Calais as the UK "unfortunately" does not offer visa-free access.Vadym Prystaiko said he "restarted negotiations" on the issue with the Home Secretary with the aim of suspending "this unnecessarily long, difficult bureaucratic procedure".Ukraine's ambassador to the UK Vadym Prystaiko tells [*@susannareid100*](https://twitter.com/susannareid100?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) that he is 'working with the Home Office to find better solutions' regarding the issues surrounding visas for Ukrainians fleeing the war.Watch GMB on ITV and on ITV Hub [*https://t.co/6iQ6ebeOEQ*](https://t.co/6iQ6ebeOEQ) [*pic.twitter.com/WThZ9vr9pF*](https://t.co/WThZ9vr9pF) - Good Morning Britain (@GMB) [*May 3, 2022*](https://twitter.com/GMB/status/1521380037391437824?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) It comes as would-be sponsors under the Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) visa scheme are threatening the Government with legal action on behalf of hundreds of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have spent weeks waiting to come to Britain.Figures shared with the PA news agency last week, compiled by would-be hosts, show there were at least 800 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** still waiting for visas after applying within the first two weeks of the scheme opening.Mr Prystaiko also said that Kyiv is past the point of negotiations with Moscow.He said: "Now, these negotiations have stalled, for obvious reasons after the atrocities in Bucha. Many Ukrainians can't even imagine how we could sit at the table of negotiations with these people now."The reasonable politicians will remind us that actually we have to sit at the table, because all the worst wars ended up in forms of negotiations. But, frankly speaking, many Ukrainians believe that we have to defeat them physically now."The [*Ministry of Defence*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ministry-defence) said that despite Moscow's huge increase in military spending in recent years, strategic and execution failures have resulted in a failure to "dominate" Ukraine.Latest Defence Intelligence update on the situation in Ukraine -03 May 2022Find out more about the UK government's response: [*https://t.co/xvqMIBbfFS*](https://t.co/xvqMIBbfFS) [*#StandWithUkraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/StandWithUkraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/iZqitvBoOd*](https://t.co/iZqitvBoOd) - Ministry of Defence (@DefenceHQ) [*May 3, 2022*](https://twitter.com/DefenceHQ/status/1521365925626359808?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

In its latest intelligence update, the department said: "Russia's military is now significantly weaker, both materially and conceptually, as a result of its invasion of Ukraine. Recovery from this will be exacerbated by sanctions. This will have a lasting impact on Russia's ability to deploy conventional military force."

The Prime Minister also told Good Morning Britain that any threat or attack on British diplomats in Ukraine is "totally beyond the pale" and there is "no justification for it".

He said the UK has "led the world in helping the Ukrainians to protect themselves against wanton aggression, barbaric aggression" and later added that the UK has also "marshalled the world in delivering a very tough package of economic sanctions".

"We are not saying we are doing this to drive some geopolitical change or have some outcome in Moscow," he said.

"What we care about is Ukrainian people and their suffering. It is totally unjustifiable to have a free country like Ukraine to be overwhelmed and obliterated like it has been."

**Load-Date:** May 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine refugees reach one million in seven days, says UN agency*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64X5-4Y41-JBNF-W1FJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 3, 2022 Thursday 6:39 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,WORLD,EUROPE; Version:3

**Length:** 512 words

**Byline:** Sravasti Dasgupta

**Highlight:** 'We are looking at what could become Europe's largest refugee crisis this century'

**Body**

One million people have fled [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) in the [*seven days since Russia invaded the country*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-latest-update-kyiv-explosion-putin-news-b2027373.html) , the United Nations' refugee agency said on Wednesday.

"In just seven days we have witnessed the exodus of one million refugees from Ukraine to neighbouring countries," Filippo Grandi, the [*UN*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/un) high commissioner for refugees (UNHCR), said in a statement on Twitter.

UNHCR spokesperson Joung-ah Ghedini-Williams said that the agency's data indicates they passed the one million mark "as of midnight in central Europe based on counts collected by national authorities".

The exodus amounts to more than two per cent of Ukraine's population that has been on the move in under a week. At the end of 2020, Ukraine's population stood at 44 million, according to the World Bank.

On Tuesday, the UN appealed for $1.7bn (£1.2bn) to urgently deliver humanitarian support to people in Ukraine and refugees in neighbouring countries.

"The UN estimates that 12 million people inside Ukraine will need relief and protection, while more than 4 million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** may need protection and assistance in neighbouring countries in the coming months," the UNHCR said in a press statement.

"We are looking at what could become [*Europe's largest refugee crisis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/features/ukraine-war-photo-olena-kurilo-b2026568.html) this century," said Mr Grandi.

The [*exodus began after Russia invaded Ukraine on 24 February*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/why-russia-ukraine-invasion-putin-b2026550.html). As the invasion entered its eighth day, Ukraine's capital [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) was braced for a siege, second-largest city [*Kharkiv was reeling from further strikes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kharkiv) and the control of port city Kherson was contested.

A blast in Kyiv caused minor damage to the central train station [*where thousands were being evacuated*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-kyiv-train-station-explosion-b2027252.html). Russian forces continued an assault on the southeastern port city of Mariupol that the mayor there said was relentless.

In the northern city of Chernihiv, two cruise missiles hit a hospital, according to the Ukrainian UNIAN news agency.

An investigation into alleged war crimes in Ukraine [*was opened by an International Criminal Court prosecutor*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-war-crimes-russia-invasion-b2027259.html) after referrals from 39 allied countries.

[*More than 2,000 civilians have died*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/ukraine-army-medic-tears-cnn-b2026980.html) since the invasion, Ukraine's state emergency service said, [*although that figure has not been independently verified*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-civilians-kyiv-kharkiv-death-toll-b2027141.html).

In an early address on Thursday, president [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) called on the people of Ukraine to continue their fight against [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia).

"We are a people who in a week have destroyed the plans of the enemy," he said. "They will have no peace here. They will have no food. They will have here not one quiet moment."

The president added that the death toll of Russian soldiers has reached about 9,000. "Ukraine doesn't want to be covered in bodies of soldiers," he said. "Go home."

Additional reporting by agencies

Read More

[*One million* ***Ukrainian******refugees*** *flee as Kherson falls to Russia -live*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-latest-update-kyiv-explosion-putin-news-b2027373.html)

[*Why has Russia invaded Ukraine? The conflict explained*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/why-russia-ukraine-invasion-putin-b2026550.html)

[*Sign The Independent's petition to help the people of Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-refugees-russia-petition-help-b2025628.html)

[*Russia-Ukraine War: What to know on Day 8 of Russian assault*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/ukraine-russia-belarus-roman-abramovich-airbus-b2027453.html)

[*Live updates: Fitch downgrades Russia's credit rating*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-international-paralympic-committee-russian-direct-investment-fund-fitch-b2027451.html)

[*Neutral Finland, Sweden warm to idea of NATO membership*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/finland-sweden-nato-russia-russian-foreign-ministry-b2027450.html)

**Load-Date:** March 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine: Heavy Russian shelling kills 5 civilians, wounds 18*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65XB-4CS1-JBNF-W1S3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 13, 2022 Wednesday 12:24 PM GMT

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**Length:** 640 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** The office of Ukraine’s president says renewed Russian artillery barrages killed at least five civilians and wounded another 18 in the past day

**Body**

Renewed Russian artillery barrages across Ukraine killed at least five civilians and wounded another 18 in the past day, the office of Ukraine's president reported Wednesday as [*Moscow*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/moscow) attempted to expand and consolidate its gains in the country's east.

Most of the deaths occurred in [*Donetsk*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/donetsk) province, which is part of a region where pro-Russia separatists have fought for eight years and the Kremlin is intent on capturing. The city of Bakhmut faced particularly heavy shelling as the current focus of Russia's offensive, Donetsk administrative chief Pavlo Kyrylenko said.

In adjacent Luhansk province, which Russian and separatist forces have all but conquered, Ukrainian soldiers battled to retain control of two outlying villages amid the shelling, Gov. Serhiy Haidai said.

Luhansk and Donetsk together make up Ukraine's Donbas region, a mostly Russian-speaking region of steel factories, mines and other industries vital to the economy. The Russians are “deliberately turning Donbas into ashes, and there will be just no people left on the territories captured,” Haidai said.

Russian artillery also rained down in northeast Ukraine, where a regional governor, Oleg Syniehubov, accused Russian forces of trying to “terrorize civilians” in Kharkiv, the country's second-largest city.

With Russia's sights set on the east, the Ukrainian military has tried to reclaim captured city's in the south. The Ukrainian military claimed Tuesday to have used missiles to destroy a Russian ammunition depot in occupied Nova Kakhovka, a city east of the Black Sea port of Kherson.

The precision of the depot strike suggested Ukrainian forces had employed U.S.-supplied multiple-launch High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, or HIMARS, a type of weapon for which the government in [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) repeatedly appealed.

Russia’s Tass news agency said the reported blast occurred when a mineral fertilizer storage facility exploded. Some of the ingredients in fertilizer can be used for ammunition.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian and Russian officials are expected to meet face-to-face Wednesday for the first time in months. Military delegations from the two countries and Turkey plan to hold talks in Istanbul on a potential deal to get grain out of Ukraine's blockaded and mined ports.

United Nations representatives also were involved in the talks. Ukraine is one of the world’s largest exporters of wheat, corn and sunflower oil, but Russia’s invasion halted shipments, endangering food supplies in many developing countries and contributing to higher global prices.

In other developments:

— The leader of a Moscow-backed separatist government in eastern Ukraine's Donetsk province said foreign fighters convicted of terrorism and trying to overturn constitutional order for working with Ukrainian troops have appealed their death sentences. If the appellate court in the separatists' self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic rejects the appeals, two British men and a Moroccan could face a firing squad. Rebel leader Denis Pushilin said about 100 members of Ukrainian National Guard battalion captured after the fall of the city of Mariupol were scheduled to appear before a court soon.

— The United Nations refugee agency reported that most ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** want to return to their country but plan to wait until the war subsides. Nearly two-thirds plan to stay put in their host countries for now. The vast majority of refugees from Ukraine are women and children. The U.N. agency's findings came in a survey based on 4,900 interviews with refugees in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. Just under one in 10 of the ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** surveyed said they planned to move to another host country within the next month.

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Jamey Keaten in Geneva contributed.

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Follow the AP’s coverage of the war at [*https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine*](https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine)

**Load-Date:** July 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*On this day*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:685M-2TG1-F072-43GD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

May 6, 2023 Saturday

First Edition

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**Section:** THE MAGAZINE; Pg. 32

**Length:** 339 words

**Body**

1626: Manhattan island was bought from local Indians by Dutch settler Peter Minuit for trinkets worth about $25.

1840: The first postage stamp - the Penny Black - was issued by the Post Office for use.

1851: American inventor Linus Yale patented the lock which bears his name.

1856: Sigmund Freud, father of psychoanalysis, was born in Freiberg, Moravia (now Czech Republic).

1895: Rudolph Valentino, Italian heartthrob of the silent screen, was born in Castellaneta, Italy.

1937: The German airship Hindenburg exploded at its moorings in Lakehurst, New Jersey, killing 36 of the 97 people aboard.

1954: Roger Bannister ran the first sub-four-minute mile on the Iffley Road track in Oxford, in three minutes 59.4 seconds.

1960: Princess Margaret married Anthony Armstrong-Jones (Lord Snowdon) in Westminster Abbey.

1966: Ian Brady and Myra Hindley, the Moors murderers, were found guilty at Chester Assizes and sentenced to life imprisonment.

1976: An earthquake struck Friuli in Northern Italy, causing 989 deaths and the destruction of entire villages.

1994: The Queen opened the Channel Tunnel.

1994: Nelson Mandela and the ANC were confirmed the winners in South Africa's first post-apartheid election.

1997: The Bank of England was given independence from political control, the most significant change in the bank's 300-year history.

2004: The series finale of the television sitcom Friends was shown on US channel NBC, attracting 52.46 million viewers.

2013: Three women missing for more than a decade are found alive in the US city of Cleveland, Ohio. Ariel Castro, is taken into custody.

On this day last year: Oxford University announced a new fully-funded graduate scholarship scheme for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

<strong>Birthdays</strong>

Bob Seger, singer, 78; Jeffery Deaver, author, 73; Sir Tony Blair, former prime minister, 70; Graeme Souness, former footballer and manager, 70; George Clooney, actor, 62; Leslie Hope, actor, 58; Chris Shiflett, guitarist (Foo Fighters), 52; Kerry Ellis, musical theatre actor, 44; Gabourey Sidibe, actor, 40.

**Load-Date:** May 5, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Child trafficking threat concerns Italian charities amid Ukrainian refugee influx*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:653S-2RC1-DY4H-K0X4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 29, 2022 Tuesday 4:47 PM GMT

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**Section:** WORLD,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:1

**Length:** 928 words

**Byline:** Sofia Barbarani

**Highlight:** Aid agencies in Italy say unaccompanied children are particularly at risk of abuse and human trafficking

**Body**

Italian aid agencies are warning people against taking in Ukrainian minors through unofficial channels due to concerns over exploitation and [*human trafficking*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/human-trafficking) , following the arrival in [*Italy*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/italy) of tens of thousands of children fleeing [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's invasion.

Roughly 72,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have reached Italy since Russia's ground and air offensive on its neighbour started over a month ago, catapulting [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) into a state of war and forcing nearly four million people to leave the country.

More than 31,000 of these recent arrivals into Italy are children, many of them armed with little more than a backpack and a favourite toy. Approximately 300 of them are unaccompanied, according to the Italian interior ministry.

Ukrainian children travelling solo are particularly vulnerable along their journeys, and even after crossing the border into the relative safety of Italy, they remain at risk of exploitation, violence, and trafficking, NGOs have warned.

"We need the highest level of alert," said Raffaela Milano, head of Save the Children in Italy. "During conflict there's the risk of being separated from the family and losing contact, and there are people who exploit [the situation]."

The influx of refugees has given rise to private individuals and unaccredited organizations purportedly seeking to help the arrivals. One such group was recently reported to local authorities, Ms Milano told The Independent.

So far there are no known cases in Italy of human trafficking among Ukrainian arrivals, but charities are remaining vigilant.

"Given what happens in other conflicts, we need to keep our guard up," said Ms Milano. "We invite people not to curb their generosity and hospitality but to direct them towards formal, institutional channels."

Such concerns are not unique to Italy. In the UK, ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have[*started to "advertise" themselves on social media*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugees-social-media-sponosrship-scheme-uk-b2040480.html) in a bid to find hosts while experts have warned that the British government's Homes for Ukraine scheme risks operating as "Tinder for sex traffickers".

Aid agencies in Italy are moving as quickly as they can to avoid children falling through the cracks by registering them the moment they cross the border, before offering them psychological support and cultural mediators.

But operating amid what the UN has called "the fastest growing refugee crisis in Europe since World War II" is no easy feat for NGOs in Italy or in nations neighbouring Ukraine.

Cases of children going missing along Ukraine's borders have already been reported by aid groups and volunteers in countries including Poland and Slovakia. Charities say they have seen men who they suspect to be predators, pimps or sex traffickers dressed in military fatigues or high-vis jackets and hanging around refugee shelters or transit points.

Earlier this month, UN Secretary-General António Guterres sounded the alarm about the threat of trafficking following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"For predators and human traffickers, the war in Ukraine is not a tragedy," he said on Twitter. "It's an opportunity -and women & children are the targets."

In Italy, UNICEF spokesman Andrea Iacomini said there had been a "proliferation of associations asking people if they want to take a Ukrainian child".

Most of the minors who have arrived in Italy without their respective parents have been entrusted to extended family members or family friends, according to Mr Iacomini. But reuniting them with their parents is key in avoiding further psychological stress and separation anxiety, he added.

Parents have resorted to desperate measures to protect their children including sending them abroad with neighbours or friends while they remain in Ukraine to help with the war effort.

"This crisis is a crisis of separated minors, children who must be brought to their parents when the time comes - but right now they must be protected," Mr Iacomini told The Independent. "Many of these children bear the so-called scars of war, they're in need of protection and should be protected immediately."

Last week in the Italian senate, interior minister Luciana Lamorgese called for an increase in border controls "to avoid grey areas that favour criminal interests and trafficking. All minors who cross the border are identified and have been guaranteed access to school activities."

After they are registered by aid workers at the border, ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** are free to travel onwards and with roughly 240,000 Ukrainian resident in Italy, many new arrivals have found housing with friends and family.

Those without acquaintances in Italy are offered accommodation in the homes of local families, as well as monasteries, hotels and prefabricated buildings once used for those displaced by the 2016 earthquake. Italians who wish to help have been asked to register with their local governments and aid groups.

In larger cities such as Milan, the Ukrainian consulate is also helping to keep a list of incoming people and families wishing to house them.

The number of Ukrainian arrivals has dwindled over the past week, Ms Lamorgese added.

But if "Odessa or Lviv were to be touched, the influx would begin again in a colossal way," she said

According to Save the Children, about six million children are still in Ukraine and under threat due to the ongoing attacks on civilian areas. At least 464 schools and 43 hospitals have been targeted so far, the charity said last week.

The UN on Sunday said that 1,119 civilians had been killed since the start of the war on 24 February - 99 of them children -while warning that the true figures were likely to be much higher.

**Load-Date:** March 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[*United Nations seeks $4.2 billion to help people in Ukraine and refugees this year*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B3T-WBG1-DY4H-K1WJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

January 15, 2024 Monday 9:35 AM GMT

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**Length:** 436 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** The United Nations is appealing for $4.2 billion to help people in Ukraine and displaced outside the country this year

**Body**

The [*United Nations*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/united-nations) appealed on Monday for $4.2 billion to help people in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) and displaced outside the country this year, saying that people on the front lines have “exhausted their meager resources” and many refugees also are vulnerable.

About three-quarters of the total, $3.1 billion, is meant to support some 8.5 million people inside Ukraine. The remaining $1.1 billion is sought for refugees and host communities outside Ukraine.

A recent wave of attacks “underscores the devastating civilian cost of the war” and a bitter winter is increasing the need for humanitarian aid, the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the U.N. refugee agency said in a statement from Geneva.

“In front-line towns and villages, people have exhausted their meagre resources and rely on aid to survive,” it said.

Ukraine has been subjected to massive Russian barrages recently. More than 500 drones and missiles were fired between Dec. 29 and Jan. 2, according to officials in [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv).

Nearly two years after Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the U.N. says 14.6 million people in the country need humanitarian help, while around 6.3 million have fled Ukraine and remain refugees.

“Hundreds of thousands of children live in communities on the front lines of the war, terrified, traumatized and deprived of their basic needs. That fact alone should compel us to do everything we can to bring more humanitarian assistance to Ukraine,” said Martin Griffiths, the U.N.’s humanitarian chief.

“[*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) , schools and hospitals are repeatedly hit, as are water, gas and power systems," he added. "The very fabric of society is under attack with devastating consequences."

The U.N. said that ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in neighboring countries “also need increased and sustained support.” It said that only half of school-age refugee children are enrolled in schools where they are now, only 40-60% are employed and “many remain vulnerable with no means to support themselves.”

Griffiths said donors covered 67% of last year's appeal for $3.9 billion for people inside Ukraine, one of the best levels in the world. He acknowledged that “the competition for funding is getting greater” because of crises elsewhere, including the war in Gaza.

“Amid everything else happening across the globe, we must stay the course for the people of Ukraine,” Griffiths told reporters. “And it is a very sad reminder that today we're begging for attention for Ukraine when for so many days and weeks and months of previous years, we've had ... attention to Ukraine and we've begged for attention for places elsewhere,” such as Sudan.

**Load-Date:** January 15, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Trafficking warning as tens of thousands of Ukrainian child refugees arrive in Italy*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:653W-T1V1-F072-407R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 30, 2022 Wednesday

First Edition

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**Section:** WORLD; Pg. 27

**Length:** 928 words

**Byline:** SOFIA BARBARANI IN ROME

**Body**

Italian aid agencies are warning people against taking in Ukrainian minors through unofficial channels due to concerns over exploitation and human trafficking, following the arrival in Italy of tens of thousands of children fleeing Russia's invasion. Roughly 72,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have reached Italy since Russia's ground and air offensive on its neighbour started over a month ago, catapulting Ukraine into a state of war and forcing nearly four million people to leave the country.

More than 31,000 of these recent arrivals into Italy are children, many of them armed with little more than a backpack and a favourite toy. Approximately 300 of them are unaccompanied, according to the Italian interior ministry. Ukrainian children travelling solo are particularly vulnerable along their journeys, and even after crossing the border into the relative safety of Italy, they remain at risk of exploitation, violence and trafficking, NGOs have warned.

"We need the highest level of alert," said Raffaela Milano, head of Save the Children in Italy. "During conflict there's the risk of being separated from the family and losing contact, and there are people who exploit [the situation]."

The influx of refugees has given rise to private individuals and unaccredited organisations purportedly seeking to help the arrivals. One such group was recently reported to local authorities, Ms Milano told The Independent. So far there are no known cases in Italy of human trafficking among Ukrainian arrivals, but charities are remaining vigilant.

"Given what happens in other conflicts, we need to keep our guard up," said Ms Milano. "We invite people not to curb their generosity and hospitality but to direct them towards formal, institutional channels."

Such concerns are not unique to Italy. In the UK, ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have started to "advertise" themselves on social media in a bid to find hosts while experts have warned that the British government's Homes for Ukraine scheme risks operating as "Tinder for sex traffickers".

Aid agencies in Italy are moving as quickly as they can to avoid children falling through the cracks by registering them the moment they cross the border, before offering them psychological support and cultural mediators. But operating amid what the UN has called "the fastest-growing refugee crisis in Europe since World War II" is no easy feat for NGOs in Italy or in nations neighbouring Ukraine.

Cases of children going missing along Ukraine's borders have already been reported by aid groups and volunteers in countries including Poland and Slovakia. Charities say they have seen men who they suspect to be predators, pimps or sex traffickers dressed in military fatigues or high-vis jackets and hanging around refugee shelters or transit points.

Earlier this month, UN secretary-general António Guterres sounded the alarm about the threat of trafficking following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "For predators and human traffickers, the war in Ukraine is not a tragedy," he said on Twitter. "It's an opportunity - and women & children are the targets."

In Italy, Unicef spokesperson Andrea Iacomini said there had been a "proliferation of associations asking people if they want to take a Ukrainian child".

Most of the minors who have arrived in Italy without their respective parents have been entrusted to extended family members or family friends, according to Mr Iacomini. But reuniting them with their parents is key in avoiding further psychological stress and separation anxiety, he added. Parents have resorted to desperate measures to protect their children including sending them abroad with neighbours or friends while they remain in Ukraine to help with the war effort.

"This crisis is a crisis of separated minors, children who must be brought to their parents when the time comes - but right now they must be protected," Mr Iacomini told The Independent. "Many of these children bear the so-called scars of war, they're in need of protection and should be protected immediately."

Last week in the Italian senate, interior minister Luciana Lamorgese called for an increase in border controls "to avoid grey areas that favour criminal interests and trafficking. All minors who cross the border are identified and have been guaranteed access to school activities".

After they are registered by aid workers at the border, ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** are free to travel onwards and with roughly 240,000 Ukrainian residents in Italy, many new arrivals have found housing with friends and family. Those without acquaintances in Italy are offered accommodation in the homes of local families, as well as monasteries, hotels and prefabricated buildings once used for those displaced by the 2016 earthquake. Italians who wish to help have been asked to register with their local governments and aid groups.

In larger cities such as Milan, the Ukrainian consulate is also helping to keep a list of incoming people and families wishing to house them. The number of Ukrainian arrivals has dwindled over the past week, Ms Lamorgese added. But if "Odessa or Lviv were to be touched, the influx would begin again in a colossal way," she said

According to Save the Children, about 6 million children are still in Ukraine and under threat due to the ongoing attacks on civilian areas. At least 464 schools and 43 hospitals have been targeted so far, the charity said last week. The UN on Sunday said 1,119 civilians had been killed since the start of the war on 24 February - 99 of them children - while warning that the true figures were likely to be much higher.

**Load-Date:** March 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[*‘You’re our new couple friends’, Kamala Harris tells Leo Varadkar and partner*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BJN-SHF1-JBNF-W03Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 15, 2024 Friday 7:55 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 467 words

**Byline:** Cillian Sherlock

**Highlight:** Ms Harris also praised Mr Varadkar as an ‘extraordinary role model’ during a St Patrick’s Day event in Washington DC.

**Body**

US vice president [*Kamala Harris*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kamala-harris) has told [*Irish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/irish) premier [*Leo Varadkar*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/leo-varadkar) that she and her husband consider him and his partner their new “couple friends”.

Ms Harris praised Mr Varadkar as a “global” leader, who has been an “extraordinary role model”, during a St Patrick’s Day event in [*Washington DC*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/washington-dc).

The Irish premier in turn praised Ms Harris as “courageous” for recent comments in which she called for a ceasefire in Gaza.

The pair had a breakfast meeting at the vice-president’s official residence on Friday morning, ahead of Mr Varadkar’s high-profile White House talks with President Joe Biden.

Mr Varadkar’s partner Matt Barrett and Ms Harris’ husband Doug Emhoff were also in attendance.

She told Mr Varadkar: “Doug and I decided last year that you’re our new couple friends.”

Ms Harris praised the [*Taoiseach*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/taoiseach) for “leading by example” and housing a Ukrainian refugee from Kyiv in his home.

“Under your leadership, Ireland has hosted one of the highest per capita populations of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, a testament to the generosity and the compassion of the Irish people,” she said.

Ms Harris said Mr Varadkar was “courageous in the fight for women’s reproductive freedom” and praised him for being the first Taoiseach to attend the Munich Security Conference, which the US vice president also attended.

She said: “On a personal note, Taoiseach, you have been an extraordinary role model for people all around the world as one of the only openly LGBT leaders in history, and you so graciously talked last year here about the work that you and I have done to support and fight for the rights of (the LGBT community).”

Ms Harris said Mr Varadkar had also worked in the early part of his career to “strengthen the ties” with the Irish diaspora.

“America has, of course, served as a place of hope for millions of Irish immigrants and their descendants, including those who have held the highest offices in our land, and currently, of course, our president, Joe Biden,” she said.

In response, Mr Varadkar said he understands the difficulties of being deputy leader of a country, and added he finds being the leader “a little bit easier”.

Mr Varadkar explained how he went from Taoiseach, or Irish prime minister, to Tanaiste, or deputy prime minister, before returning to the role of Taoiseach at the end of 2022.

“I’m not going to lie, I know which one I prefer,” he said, prompting laughs from those present. “I do even find it a little bit easier, even when it’s hard.”

He said the best vice presidents are the “trailblazers” who “spoke from the heart”.

He added: “I believe you, madam vice president, showed great courage and leadership in recent weeks, when you spoke publicly in favour of a ceasefire in Gaza.

“I’m sure it can’t have been easy but it was the right thing to do and your words echoed all over the world.”

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Sturgeon tells PM referendum block will not mean Scots ‘refused right to choose’*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65VF-VXS1-DY4H-K3S0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 4, 2022 Monday 8:35 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 558 words

**Byline:** Dan Barker

**Highlight:** The Scottish First Minister told Boris Johnson the absence of a Section 30 order “will not mean Scotland is refused the democratic right to choose.”

**Body**

[*Nicola Sturgeon*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nicola-sturgeon) has told the Prime Minister that Holyrood was “ready and willing” to negotiate steps towards holding a second referendum but warned any block would not mean [*Scots*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scots) are “refused the democratic right to choose”.

The [*First Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/first-minister) and [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) spoke in a brief telephone conversation on Monday in which they discussed “a range of topics”, a Scottish Government spokesman said.

On Ms Sturgeon’s push for a second independence referendum next year, she told the Prime Minister that Holyrood was “ready and willing to negotiate” steps towards holding another vote, but said if blocked it would not mean voters north of the border are “refused the democratic right to choose”.

However, Mr Johnson told [*MPs*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mps) earlier there was a vote in 2014 and added: “I think right now the priorities of the country should be rebuilding after Covid.

“They should be taking us forward together as a united country, and that’s what we want to do.”

Last month Ms Sturgeon outlined plans to hold the vote on Scotland’s place in the union on October 19 2023.

With the UK Government refusing to grant consent for such a ballot to be held, Ms Sturgeon is asking Supreme Court judges to rule if Holyrood can hold a referendum without the backing of Westminster.

If the bid fails, Ms Sturgeon told MSPs, the SNP will fight the next general election as a “de facto referendum” on the single issue of whether Scotland should be an independent country.

A Scottish Government spokesman said: “In discussing Scotland’s future the First Minister again made clear that the Scottish Government is ready and willing to negotiate a Section 30 order to secure a referendum on independence but reiterated that the absence of a Section 30 order will not mean Scotland is refused the democratic right to choose.”

I've just spoken to [*@NicolaSturgeon*](https://twitter.com/NicolaSturgeon?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) to herald the success of UK collaboration supporting Ukraine. I thanked the [*@ScotGov*](https://twitter.com/scotgov?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) ’s £65 million contribution in upping UK’s military aid to Ukraine to £2.3 billion & efforts to help house 6,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.Thank you, Scotland.— Boris Johnson (@BorisJohnson) [*July 4, 2022*](https://twitter.com/BorisJohnson/status/1544025410526126085?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

A Section 30 order refers to the part of law which allows Holyrood to pass laws which would otherwise only be reserved to Westminster, such as constitutional questions.

The first independence referendum was passed through a Section 30 order as part of the Edinburgh Agreement.

On the call between the leaders in Westminster and Edinburgh, the spokesman added: “There was a shared recognition of the efforts of both the Scottish and UK Governments in supporting the people of Ukraine including recent financial support for military assistance and the work that has gone into helping citizens choosing to temporarily make their home in Scotland.

“The two leaders agreed that a heads of government meeting will take place in the near future to discuss the current cost-of-living crisis.

“Both governments will work together to develop proposals ahead of that meeting to help those most in need of support.”

After their discussion, Mr Johnson said he had spoken to Ms Sturgeon to “herald the success of UK collaboration supporting Ukraine”.

“I thanked the Scottish Government’s £65 million contribution in upping UK’s military aid to Ukraine to £2.3 billion & efforts to help house 6,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***,” he wrote.

“Thank you, Scotland.”

**Load-Date:** July 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Watch: Ukrainian refugees who found love for Irish dancing surprised by Riverdance stars*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:692N-5XP1-JBNF-W0M2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 31, 2023 Thursday 5:53 PM GMT

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**Section:** LIFESTYLE,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 108 words

**Byline:** Oliver Browning

**Body**

***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) who have found a love for Irish [*dancing*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dancing) since moving to [*Dublin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dublin) were treated to a lesson of a lifetime when [*Riverdance*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/riverdance) stars dropped in to pass on some tips.

The group attends a weekly dancing class in south Dublin taken by 17-year-old Kristina Bondarenko.

The schoolgirl, who is originally from Odesa, began teaching herself Irish dancing six years ago using online videos.

Kristina and her mother Oksana moved to [*Ireland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ireland) following the outbreak of war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) last year and they have lived in Lucan, west Dublin, for the past year.

The teenager was giving her usual dance class on Wednesday when two special guests joined them.

**Load-Date:** August 31, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Homes for Ukraine scheme flounders on day of launch*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651J-8GT1-F072-41KT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 19, 2022 Saturday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 5

**Length:** 875 words

**Byline:** MAY BULMAN SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

Fears have been raised that there is no clear route for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to apply to come to Britain under its new sponsorship scheme. On the day that the scheme launched, charities said that the number of refugees who will be granted sanctuary in the UK under the Homes for Ukraine scheme will be only a "trickle", despite the fact that more than 150,000 people in Britain have registered to host them, because of the confusion around how they can be "matched" with hosts.

It is unclear what action the government is taking to communicate information about the scheme to refugees stranded in Europe. The Independent revealed earlier this week that Ukrainians in Poland hoping to seek refuge in the UK had "no idea" how to go about it. The government said that when it launches "phase two" of the scheme - it is not yet known when this will be - it will work more closely with charities to identify Ukrainians in need of protection in the UK.

Ministers launched the Ukraine sponsorship scheme yesterday, with the webpage stating that Ukrainian nationals and their family members may apply to come to the UK if they have a "named sponsor". The scheme, announced on Monday by the secretary of state for levelling up,Michael Gove, will allow Ukrainians with no family links to come to the UK and be hosted by members of the public, who will be paid £350 per month for sharing their homes.

The government is yet to release data on the number of refugees who have applied to the scheme, but lawyers and charities warn that the figure is likely to be moderately low due to the lack of information on how refugees can connect with suitable sponsors.

Jenni Regan, chief executive at iMix, which represents refugee and asylum charities in the UK, said that while the sector "welcomed" the speed at which the scheme had been implemented, there were "concerns about just how many people from Ukraine this is actually going to help at this stage".

"Currently, hosts need to have the name and details of the person they wish to sponsor before they can even apply, and there is no clear way of linking up with people seeking sanctuary from Ukraine," she said. "The government have made it clear that they are not in a position to support the matching process, instead relying on charities [as well as] faith and community groups to provide outreach and matching opportunities."

Announcing the scheme, Mr Gove saidhe hoped individuals and community groups would be able to "match" with refugees using social media, adding that charities would help with the process. But Ms Regan raised concerns about this, saying that it would only benefit those who are "digitally savvy", and adding: "This method is also concerning in terms of safeguarding on both sides."

Robina Qureshi, executive officer at Positive Action in Housing, a charity that has been matching refugees and asylum seekers with hosts in the UK for decades, said it had so far been contacted by 16,000 people offering to host Ukrainians, and just 160 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

"What the government has is a spreadsheet with names on it of people expressing an interest. That register is going to go nowhere. Only a trickle of people will ever see a Ukrainian refugee," she said. "Heartbreakingly, the people whose lives depend on that visa and that hosting programme are struggling and waiting. For all the goodwill that there is in the UK, the people whose lives depend on this process are not in the country."

Immigration lawyer Simon Cox, who is supporting a number of Ukrainians with applications to come to the UK, said it was "clear" that the programme "hadn't been thought through".

"There's certainly a role for the voluntary sector in the matching process, but it does need to be supervised by the government to ensure that those matches take place and are safe," he said. "[The scheme] may have seemed like a great idea in turning down the political heat, but it's actually a huge operation. The government wants to go out and say they're doing something so the public move on and think about something else."

The government has said it will be working closely with charities, faith groups, universities and others to ensure people who want to help are matched to people from Ukraine. It advises on its website that if someone wishing to host does not currently know a Ukrainian refugee, they "may wish to get in touch with charities, faith groups or local community organisations who are starting to make connections between individuals".

Scotland's first minister Nicola Sturgeon announced yesterday that the country had opened its "super-sponsor" scheme, meaning ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** can apply via the UK sponsorship scheme by selecting "Scottish government" on the application.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, click here. To sign the petition click here. If you would like to donate then please click here for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 19, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Immigration reforms risk criminalising Ukrainians arriving in UK, ministers told*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6528-X7R1-DY4H-K0GK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 22, 2022 Tuesday 8:03 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 913 words

**Byline:** Richard Wheeler

**Highlight:** The Nationality and Borders Bill makes it a criminal offence to knowingly arrive in the UK without permission.

**Body**

Ministers were warned they risk criminalising ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** entering the UK as [*MPs*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mps) reinstated a series of controversial proposals to flagship immigration legislation.

The Nationality and Borders [*Bill*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/bill) makes it a criminal offence to knowingly arrive in the UK without permission rather than via a designated scheme or route, with a maximum sentence of four years in prison.

Labour and other opposition MPs warned such a measure could result in Ukrainians being prosecuted if they do not arrive through official schemes and "without the right papers".

What will we do for those Ukrainians who flee from the murderous despot Putin and come here via the irregular routes? Do they have to come on an inflatable?

Tim Farron

Peers had voted to remove the new offence that punishes those who arrive in the UK without a valid entry clearance, but MPs reinstated the measure by 317 votes to 220 - majority 97.

MPs also voted 318 to 220, majority 98, to reinstate a proposal to treat asylum seekers differently based on how they enter the UK.

The [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) has argued the planned differentiation in the treatment of asylum seekers, depending on how they arrived in the country, is aimed at discouraging people from travelling to the UK other than by safe and legal routes, given the continuing problem of English Channel crossings.

Liberal Democrat MP [*Tim Farron*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/tim-farron) (Westmorland and Lonsdale) said the UK is willing to accept Ukrainians who have relatives in the UK or are sponsored, but asked: "What if somebody from Ukraine just turns up?

There is absolutely no reason why any Ukrainian should be paying an evil people smuggler to come to the United Kingdom to be in safety

Tom Pursglove

"Will they be removed to a safe country that they have come from? Will they be removed to a third country to apply from? What will we do for those Ukrainians who flee from the murderous despot Putin and come here via the irregular routes? Do they have to come on an inflatable?"

Home Office minister Tom Pursglove replied: "There is absolutely no reason why any Ukrainian should be paying an evil people smuggler to come to the United Kingdom to be in safety.

"We have these two generous schemes that I have set out the detail of, which are uncapped and wide in capturing the many and varied circumstances that people gave.

"What I would not want anybody to do - this applies with any group - is to put their life in the hands of those evil criminal gangs who have only one regard, which is to turn a profit, putting those individuals in great danger.

"We have had many debates about the nature and construction of the Ukrainian scheme and I am confident that there is no reason why people should resort to that means of travelling to the United Kingdom. Nobody should encourage Ukrainians, or anybody else for that matter, to make those perilous journeys."

At a time when the British people have made clear that we need to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, this is deeply shameful

Yvette Cooper

Shadow home secretary [*Yvette Cooper*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/yvette-cooper) , in a statement after the votes, said: "Today, Tory MPs voted to make it a criminal offence for Ukrainian families to arrive in the UK without the right papers with a penalty of up to four years in prison.

"At a time when the British people have made clear that we need to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, this is deeply shameful."

The Bill includes clauses to allow the UK to send asylum seekers to a "safe third country" and to submit claims at a "designated place" determined by the secretary of state.

Officials believe the Bill gives the potential for offshore processing centres to be set up overseas, akin to policies used in Australia.

MPs voted 302 to 232, majority 70, to reinstate this measure after it was stripped out by peers.

The division list showed three Conservative MPs - former ministers David Davis and Andrew Mitchell, plus Simon Hoare (North Dorset) - rebelled to oppose reviving this proposal.

Bella Sankey, director of Detention Action, said in a statement: "These new laws will effectively segregate refugees by race and nationality. Black and brown people fleeing war and persecution will be the ones predominantly forced into cruel detention camps on remote islands, at an alarming human and financial cost.

"Now the House of Lords must save what they can from the rubble and ensure that the most vulnerable people seeking asylum in the UK, including children and pregnant women, will not be persecuted by this Bill."

It is horrifying that Conservative MPs have just voted to send orphaned children, rape survivors, modern slavery victims, pregnant women and other groups of traumatised refugees to offshore detention camps.This barbaric policy has no mandate & no place in our democracy. [*https://t.co/MG6VikB7fI*](https://t.co/MG6VikB7fI) - Bella Sankey (@BellaSankey) [*March 22, 2022*](https://twitter.com/BellaSankey/status/1506324203150225414?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

MPs also voted to reinstate proposals to allow the Government to strip people of their British citizenship without notice.

Peers had voted to remove the clause from the Bill, but the Commons voted 318 to 223, majority 95, to disagree with the Lords.

MPs went on to approve Government amendments to reword this section of the Bill in a bid to ease concerns over how the power could be used.

The Commons also voted against a Lords amendment which sought to guarantee the UK takes in at least 10,000 refugees a year.

The division list showed seven Tory MPs rebelled to try to retain this measure but it was rejected by 313 votes to 227, majority 86.

The Bill will return to the Lords for further consideration.

**Load-Date:** March 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Eurovision grand final tickets sell out in around an hour*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6834-4691-JBNF-W508-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 24, 2023 Monday 12:58 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 274 words

**Byline:** Jacob Phillips

**Highlight:** The majority of Eurovision tickets are sold, the BBC has said.

**Body**

The final remaining tickets to the Eurovision Song Contest grand final in [*Liverpool*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/liverpool) have sold out in over an hour.

Thousands waited in online queues for their chance to purchase a ticket via [*Ticketmaster*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ticketmaster) with the majority of tickets selling out.

Standing tickets for the event’s grand final cost up to £380 while seated tickets were on sale for between £160 and £380.

Suite tickets for the grand final, with space for 12 people, were also on sale for £45,000.

Announcing that most tickets were sold out, the official BBC [*Twitter*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/twitter) account of the 2023 contest tweeted: “The majority of Eurovision 2023 tickets that went on sale today have now been sold.

“A small number of tickets are still available to purchase for some shows.

“For those of you with tickets, we’ll see you in Liverpool.

“And to everyone else, we’ll see you on BBC One!”

Last week Eurovision announced a second wave of tickets for each of the nine live shows at ACC Liverpool arena.

When Eurovision tickets were released in March, passes to the grand final sold out in just over half an hour.

Tickets to the remaining shows had disappeared by 1.32pm following a 12pm release.

The event is being held in Liverpool after the UK was chosen to host the competition on behalf of war-torn 2022 winner [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** living in the UK have also been able to apply for cheaper tickets.

[*Outside*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/outside) of the arena live shows, a two-week series of mostly free events will run around the same time as the song contest in Liverpool.

The semi-finals will be broadcast on the BBC on May 9 and May 11 with the grand final on May 13 also being shown in cinemas in addition to the corporation’s airing.

**Load-Date:** April 24, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Pope Francis warns of rising nationalism in Europe as he begins Hungary trip*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6840-BDX1-DY4H-K25M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 28, 2023 Friday 3:36 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:2

**Length:** 741 words

**Byline:** Philip Pullella and Krisztina Than

**Highlight:** The pontiff plans to meet with some of the 35,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in Hungary during his three-day visit

**Body**

Pope [*Francis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/pope-francis) has warned of the dangers of rising nationalism in [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) , and told the Hungarian government that accepting migrants, as the rest of the continent does, would be a true sign of Christianity.

At the start of a three-day trip to [*Hungary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hungary) , the pontiff made a hard-hitting speech to government leaders including the prime minister, Viktor Orban, who has had a series of run-ins with the European Union. Francis urged a rejection of “self-referential forms of populism” and strictly nationalist interests.

The Pope also called for a return to the “European soul” envisioned by those who had laid the groundwork for modern Europe after the Second World War, saying nations had to “look beyond national boundaries”.

Speaking on a day on which Russia hit [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) with the first large-scale air strikes in nearly two months, Francis made another appeal for an end to the war there, calling for “creative efforts for peace” to drown out the “soloists of war”.

Hungarian officials said the Pope’s visit was designed primarily to let him minister to the country’s Catholic community. But with the war in neighbouring Ukraine, and Mr Orban butting heads with other EU nations over rule-of-law issues and LGBT+ rights, the pontiff’s words and deeds in the heart of Europe carried strong political undertones.

The visit is the 86-year-old Pope’s first trip since he was admitted to hospital for bronchitis in March. Looking cheerful, Francis, who has a knee ailment, used a cane to walk past dignitaries and children in national dress who had gathered to welcome him at the airport. On other recent visits, he has used a wheelchair. Asked about his health by reporters who joined him on the flight from Rome, the Pope joked, saying “I’m still alive” and “Stubborn weeds never die.”

Francis is keeping his promise to make an official visit to Hungary, after a stop-off for only seven hours to close a Church congress in Budapest on his way to Slovakia in 2021 left many feeling slighted.

The views of Mr Orban, 59, differ from those of the Pope on how to handle migration from the Middle East and Africa to Europe. Francis believes that migrants fleeing poverty should be welcomed. Mr Orban, whose government built a steel fence on the border with Serbia to keep these people out, has refused to let Hungary be transformed into an “immigrant country” like he says others in Europe have become. He asked the Pope in 2021 “not to let Christian Hungary perish”.

In his speech in the presidential palace overlooking the River Danube, following separate private meetings with Hungary’s president, Katalin Novak, and Mr Orban, Francis quoted St Stephen, the 11th-century founder of Christian Hungary.

“Those who profess themselves Christian, in the company of the witnesses of faith, are called to bear witness to and to join forces with everyone in cultivating a humanism inspired by the gospel and moving along two fundamental tracks: acknowledging ourselves to be beloved children of the father, and loving one another as brothers and sisters,” Francis said.

“In this regard, St Stephen bequeathed to his son extraordinary words of fraternity when he told him that those who arrive with different languages and customs ‘adorn the country’,” Francis continued, quoting the saint’s command to “welcome strangers with benevolence and to hold them in esteem”.

In her address to the Pope before he spoke, Ms Novak praised him as a man of peace and urged him to do everything he could to stop the war in Ukraine, on Hungary’s eastern border. Francis has called for peace in Ukraine in nearly every public appearance since Russia’s invasion in February 2022, and has said he wants to go to Kyiv and Moscow in a single peace mission.

Mr Orban has said that Hungary and the Vatican are the only two European states that can be described as “pro-peace”.

Hungary supports a sovereign Ukraine, but still has strong economic ties to Russia. Mr Orban’s government has refused to send weapons to Ukraine. While the Pope has often called for a general ban on arms trafficking and a reduction in weapons manufacturing, he has also said that sending arms to Ukraine is morally acceptable if they are used for self-defence.

Pope Francis plans to meet over the weekend with some of the 35,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who remain in Hungary. Nearly 2.5 million refugees entered the country during the initial months following Russia’s invasion.

Reuters

**Load-Date:** April 28, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Royal family 'providing accommodation to Ukrainian refugee families'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65H0-N3K1-DY4H-K120-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 21, 2022 Saturday 5:34 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 554 words

**Byline:** Benjamin Cooper

**Highlight:** Some 53,800 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have arrived in the UK under visa schemes, including the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

**Body**

The royal family are reportedly providing accommodation to Ukrainian families who have been forced to flee their homeland.

Members of the royals have vowed to "do their bit" and are housing refugees but the family has "no wish" for publicity, according to the Daily [*Express*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/express).

Some 53,800 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have arrived in the UK under visa schemes, including the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine programme, which amounts to just over half the number of visas granted.

A Buckingham Palace spokesman told the Express: "We are assisting in a number of ways but will not be commenting further."

It is not known which royals are housing refugees or where the accommodation is being provided, with the palace contacted for further information.

The palace was used to house royal refugees during the Second World War, with Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands as well as Norway's King Haalon and his son Prince Olaf staying there after fleeing the Nazis in 1940.

The [*Prince of Wales*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prince-of-wales) said last month he hopes Britain is welcoming to Ukrainians, in an "emotional" meeting with families who have fled Vladimir Putin's invasion.

Charles made the comments on April 28 during a visit to the World Jewish Relief (WJR) charity in north London, which has sent food, money and medicine to the war-torn country.

Charles, a patron of the group since 2015, has made a financial contribution to its efforts although the sum has not been made public.

Charles and Camilla met members of the Ukrainian community at a cathedral in Ottawa during their tour of [*Canada*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/canada) earlier this week, with the Duchess of Cornwall telling a family who fled from Lutsk and were forced to leave their father there to fight: "We are so behind you."

Ukraine's President [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) , meanwhile, at the start of March thanked the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge for expressing their solidarity with the people of his homeland.

The people of Ukraine remain deeply in our thoughts. Canada is home to 1.4 million people of Ukrainian descent -the world's third-largest Ukrainian population. It was an honour to spend time with a number of you today. [*#RoyalVisitCanada*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/RoyalVisitCanada?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/Q28LfS0k6l*](https://t.co/Q28LfS0k6l) - The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall (@ClarenceHouse) [*May 18, 2022*](https://twitter.com/ClarenceHouse/status/1526989787332214784?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

The foreign leader said he was "grateful" to the couple who tweeted on February 27 that they stood with "the President and all of Ukraine's people as they bravely fight" for their future.

The reported royal housing of those fleeing the conflict comes days after the minister in charge of Homes for Ukraine called for the scheme to become a model for dealing with future refugee crises.

Lord Harrington, who was drafted in to run the programme in March, told an audience in Westminster on Thursday: "My vision is for this system to be a permanent part of Government, so that when refugee crises happen - and unfortunately they do all the time - we have a machinery."

He added: "We've got lots of goodwill, we've got this machinery of Government in place - it's not perfect but it's improving day by day - and I hope it will become a permanent part of how this country deals with refugees."

The programme has, however, been criticised for the length of time it has taken for the refugees to reach the UK and the fact that some Ukrainians have reportedly been made homeless after falling out with their hosts.

**Load-Date:** May 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Channel crossings continue for a fourth consecutive day*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65G5-KSG1-JBNF-W3TS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 17, 2022 Tuesday 10:43 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:5

**Length:** 563 words

**Byline:** Flora Thompson

**Highlight:** More than 600 migrants have arrived in the UK since Saturday.

**Body**

Large numbers of people have arrived on a Kent beach after Channel crossings continued for a fourth consecutive day.

More than 600 migrants have arrived in the UK since Saturday, with more brought to Dungeness beach by lifeboat on Tuesday.

Officers processing the arrivals were seen carrying out security checks on a long queue of men with handheld scanners, while a small number of women and children were also pictured on board the lifeboat.

The crossings continued, with more people including young girls arriving in Dover later in the day.

Since the start of this year, 8,412 people have reached the UK after navigating busy shipping lanes from France in small boats, according to analysis of [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) data by the PA news agency.

There were 19 people who made the crossing in one boat on Monday, after 436 in nine boats on Sunday and 167 in 13 boats on Sunday, according to Ministry of Defence (MoD) figures.

The crossings come as the minister for refugees faced questions over whether he supports the Government's plan to deport migrants to Rwanda.

Asked by Matt Chorley during an interview on Times Radio whether he is "comfortable" with the policy, [*Lord*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/lord) [*Richard Harrington*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/richard-harrington) said: "Well, I'm the minister for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and it's my job to resettle them.

"They come in on legal routes ... illegal routes are different and the Government has to do what it thinks (is) right to try and stop these people smugglers from smuggling people in there."

Asked if the Rwanda deal "sends the right message", Lord Harrington, who Boris Johnson appointed to take charge of Britain's response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis, said: "As I say, I'm the minister for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. I was given this project to do by this Government ... and that's what I'm doing."

Mr Chorley added: "It doesn't sound like you're that happy about it, Richard", to which Lord Harrington replied: "I'm doing what I've been asked to do by the Prime Minister."

According to the Government's website, Lord Harrington's responsibilities include overseeing the Ukraine visa schemes and the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme.

Meanwhile councillors in North Yorkshire said the [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) intends to move 60 asylum seekers into a disused RAF base by the end of the month, despite opposition from locals.

Hambleton District Council, which is seeking a judicial review of the plans, says it has asked ministers to pause the controversial proposal "immediately".

According to The Times, the reception centre will hold 500 migrants in its first year, with a total capacity of 1,500.

In 2020, the village had an estimated population of around 800.

Councillor Mark Robson, leader of the council, said: "At a meeting late this morning, we ... have been told by the Home Office that they intend for 60 people to arrive at the centre at the end of this month.

"We have in the strongest possible terms asked that the Home Office pause this proposal immediately to allow for consultation to be carried out and are awaiting their response to this ask."

In an update published on his website on Monday, [*Conservative*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/conservative) MP for Thirsk and Malton Kevin Hollinrake said he met Home Office officials and "made it clear the lack of response to residents' concerns has been unacceptable", adding that the council was continuing to pursue a legal challenge to the plans and he "fully" supports the "quest for a legal route to reverse this".

**Load-Date:** May 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Why is the Government facing legal action over the Homes for Ukraine scheme?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65C6-5NS1-JBNF-W24B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 3, 2022 Tuesday 12:04 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 617 words

**Byline:** Jemma Crew

**Highlight:** There have been widespread concerns about the length of time refugees have been waiting for visas under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

**Body**

The [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) is facing legal action over "inordinate and unreasonable delays" in processing hundreds of visa applications made in March by ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Would-be hosts have instructed lawyers on behalf of hundreds of refugees who have spent weeks waiting to come to the UK.

Here is some information about the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme and the waits refugees and their UK sponsors have been experiencing.

- What is the scheme?

The Homes for Ukraine programme allows individuals, charities, community groups and businesses to bring people escaping the war to safety even if they have no ties to the UK.

Anyone with a room or home available for at least six months can offer it to a Ukrainian individual or a family, though those offering to host will be vetted and Ukrainian applicants will undergo security checks.

The scheme opened for applications more than six weeks ago on March 18.

- How many UK sponsors have offered up their homes?

More than 200,000 would-be hosts have registered their interest.

Members of the public have been praised for their "amazing" and "incredible" generosity.

- How many Ukrainians have applied and how many have arrived?

As of last week, some 74,700 refugees had applied for visas through the sponsorship scheme, according to official figures.

Some 11,110 have arrived in the UK - about a fifth of the 51,300 people with visas granted under the scheme.

Government officials believe some people applied for visas so they have the option of coming to the UK but are staying in countries bordering Ukraine so they can return home sooner, while others have changed their minds.

There are also multiple cases where Ukrainians are unable to travel because some family members, usually young children, are waiting for longer than their relatives for their documents.

And there are reports of some refugees not being made aware that they have permission to travel.

- Why is the Government facing legal action?

There have been widespread concerns about the length of time refugees have been waiting for their visas under the scheme.

Would-be hosts have compiled figures showing that hundreds of Ukrainians who applied for visas within the first two weeks of its launch are still waiting.

The groups who are threatening legal action on behalf of those waiting - Vigil 4 Visas and Taking Action Over The Homes For Ukraine Visa Delays - say the delays have put people in Ukraine and border countries at risk and heaped "considerable pressure and strain" on UK hosts.

A judicial review could be brought on the grounds that the Home Office has a policy of delaying the March applications and deciding later applications instead - or that the system is "so chaotic and unstable" that it is unreasonable.

- What has the Government said?

In an interview with ITV's Good Morning Britain, [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) admitted the UK could have reacted faster in helping ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, though he said "large numbers" are now coming to Britain.

Previously, the Government has acknowledged that waits of several weeks for some refugees are "unacceptable".

In early April, Home Secretary [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) apologised "with frustration" after coming under fire over the time it was taking for refugees to arrive.

And refugees minister Lord Harrington previously said the process was too long and not "as seamless as it should have been".

A Government spokesman said it has streamlined the visa system, simplified the forms, and boosted staff numbers and that officials are "now processing visas as quickly as they come in".

**Load-Date:** May 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Homes For Ukraine refugee scheme 'appears designed for people to fail' whistleblower claims*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6599-XT51-DY4H-K08J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 24, 2022 Sunday 9:34 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 587 words

**Byline:** Thomas Kingsley

**Highlight:** 'We don't really know what we're doing,' a whistleblower claiming to work on the scheme said

**Body**

The UK's Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme has been "designed to fail" in order to limit numbers entering the[*country, it has been claimed.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/uk)

A whistleblower who claims to be working on the initiative said he and his colleagues feel like they "don't know what they're doing", according to reports.

It comes amid criticism over the numbers of Ukrainians so far allowed to come to the UK and claims that red tape has needlessly delayed the process.

Staff working on the helpline for the scheme - introduced after widespread fury over the UK [*government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) 's initial response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis - claim they received only three hours of training with no follow-up help, and said any complaint or suggestion to improve the system was met with 'silence'.

Around 200,000 people in the UK registered their interest in hosting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** through a [*government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) website after it launched two weeks ago will now be asked to sign up on a separate platform in order to be considered for a "match".

"We don't really know what we're doing," a person claiming to work for the private company responsible for processing documentation of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** told the Observer. "The system is designed, it would appear, for people to fail. They want to keep the numbers down.

"Everything they do feels as if it is to do that. I've even had a barrister and lawyers on the phone saying they couldn't understand the system."

The Homes for Ukraine scheme, which opened on 18 March, enables Ukrainians with no family links to come to the UK and live in homes offered by members of the public or charities and organisations.

Individuals offering their homes are offered a monthly payment of £350 and local councils receive £10,500 per refugee in the first year.

The scheme has attracted criticism after minister for Levelling Up Michael Gove said he hoped individuals and community groups would be able to match with refugees using social media.

Latest government figures show that 40,000 UK visas have been issued under the Homes for Ukraine scheme since it was launched five weeks ago - yet just 6,600 Ukrainians have actually arrived.

Even former members of the cabinet have been critical of the way the scheme has been handled.

Former minister [*Robert Jenrick*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/robert-jenrick) was the first MP to take in a Ukrainian refugee family but criticised the "bureaucracy" involved.

"I do think the process has been overly bureaucratic and I think the Home Office often falls into this trap," he previously said.

But the government says changes have been made to the scheme already and it hopes to speed up the turnaround of applications.

A spokesperson said: "Thanks to the generosity of the public who have offered their homes to Ukrainians fleeing the war and through the Ukraine Family Scheme, more than 71,800 visas have been granted with 21,600 Ukrainians arriving safely in the UK.

"The Home Office are now processing thousands of visas a day - this shows the changes made to streamline the service are working and we'll continue to build on this success so we can speed up the process even further."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here.*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Ftopic%2Frefugees-welcome-0&data=04%7C01%7CKaty.Clifton%40independent.co.uk%7C2a2d4959602a48a7514408d9fbc3eb4d%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817641167117856%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=RZ7crcxX9U9jftiU38S4VVIl8uiLT6BXiwvDblkPG%2Fo%3D&reserved=0)

**Load-Date:** April 24, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Poland’s Donald Tusk meets Zelensky in Ukraine amid tensions over food exports*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B5H-4VT1-JBNF-W0HH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

January 23, 2024 Tuesday 7:18 AM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 491 words

**Byline:** Arpan Rai

**Highlight:** Polish PM agrees military aid and a loan to Kyiv for buying arms to defend itself against Russia’s invasion

**Body**

Polish prime minister [*Donald Tusk*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/donald-tusk) met Ukrainian president [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) on a [*solidarity visit*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/donald-tusk-ap-ukraine-poland-russia-b2482584.html) to [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) on Monday as the closest regional ally of Kyiv announced a fresh military aid package and a loan to the war-hit nation.

The leaders met in Kyiv in the latest show of unity between [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) and Ukraine amid growing difference between the two nations over Ukrainian food exports, amplified by [*protesting truckers on their shared border*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-war-poland-border-deaths-lorries-b2465444.html).

Mr Tusk noted that it was his[*first visit to a foreign capital*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-war-russia-eu-talks-viktor-orban-b2463756.html) since being re-elected prime minister.

He said the leaders reached “an understanding” to resolve through talks any differences between their countries over grain shipments and truck exports.

The war, Mr Tusk said, was a wider struggle between Europe and Russia with repercussions beyond Ukraine and hence a priority for Poland.

“Today, Ukraine is shouldering the security matters of the entire European continent, today Ukraine is paying the huge price of blood for the values that are fundamental to the free world,” Mr Tusk said, adding that “Poland’s security is also at stake in this struggle”.

The Polish leader also met with his Ukrainian counterpart Denys Shmyhal.

Mr Zelensky said the talks were “very productive” and he had a meaningful conversation with the Polish leader about issues between the two countries.

“There will be a defence package from Poland. And to strengthen our positions, we talked about joint production of weapons, about increasing our capabilities in using Polish equipment and weapons systems,” he said in his nightly address. Poland’s loan will allow Kyiv to buy big-ticket weapons.

The Ukrainian president spoke about political cooperation with Poland. “Of course, we talked in detail about political cooperation. About the fact that all the problems between Ukraine and Poland can be overcome mutually – at the level of our states.”

He said he was confident that “we can overcome the critical situations on the border – the blockade – which significantly undermine solidarity now, and can find pragmatic solutions to any critical situations.”

Mr Tusk’s visit came amid a growing Russian threat to Ukraine’s Nato-member neighbours after it positioned tactical nuclear weapons on Belarusian soil for the first time.

Last week, Belarus’s security council secretary Alexander Volfovich claimed the deployment of Russian nuclear weapons in Belarus was aimed at deterring aggression from Poland, a Nato member.

Russia ally Belarus, which was used as a launchpad for Russian soldiers invading Ukraine in February 2022, has amended its military doctrine to permit the use of nuclear weapons for the first time, months after its decision to [*host Vladimir Putin’s nukes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/belarus-nuclear-weapons-russia-poland-doctrine-b2479884.html) sent alarm bells ringing across Europe.

Located on Nato’s eastern flank, Poland has been one of Ukraine’s strongest allies. Warsaw has provided weapons and humanitarian aid, and opened its borders to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** since Moscow invaded in February 2022.

**Load-Date:** January 23, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Olena Zelenska reveals how she woke up to Russia's invasion of Ukraine: 'I didn't realise it was an explosion'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6569-NK81-DY4H-K41D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 10, 2022 Sunday 5:18 PM GMT

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**Section:** WOMEN,LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 560 words

**Byline:** Kate Ng

**Highlight:** The First Lady of Ukraine speaks to Vogue Ukraine about the plight of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***

**Body**

Olena Zelenska, the First Lady of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) and wife of president [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) , has revealed how she first came to realise that her country was under siege.

The 44-year-old screenwriter, who appeared on the cover of Vogue Ukraine in 2019, spoke to the magazine again about what life has been like since [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) launched a full-scale [*invasion*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/invasion) on Ukraine more than five weeks ago.

She recalled the very beginning of the invasion, in the early hours of Thursday 25 February, and described how she woke up "because of a 'clunk'".

"I didn't immediately realise it was an explosion," she said. "I didn't understand what it could be. My husband wasn't in bed."

Zelenska said she got up to see Zelensky, who she married in 2003, already dressed "in a suit as usual", but she added that this would be the last time she saw him in a white shirt and suit jacket.

"From then on it was military [clothing]," she said. "'It started.' That's all he said."

Ukraine's First Lady, Olena Zelenska, on Life Under Siege - and How Her Country Is Moving Forward [*https://t.co/6MMcdCKf9A*](https://t.co/6MMcdCKf9A) - Vogue Ukraine (@VogueUkraine) [*April 8, 2022*](https://twitter.com/VogueUkraine/status/1512465400541368327?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) She said there was "confusion", but not panic, and Zelenskyy told her to "gather essentials and documents" while she waited for him to provide further details.The mother of two children - 17-year-old Oleksandra and nine-year-old Kyrylo - also revealed that the couple had already "discussed everything" with them."Children are very honest and sincere. You can't hide anything from them. Therefore, the best strategy is the truth," she said. "We talk a lot, because to say what hurts , to not remain silent within yourself - this is a proven psychological strategy. It works."Zelenska [*recently wrote in France's Le Parisien newspaper*](https://www.leparisien.fr/international/olena-zelenska-premiere-dame-dukraine-nos-enfants-noublieront-jamais-ce-que-vous-faites-pour-nous-21-03-2022-SX6Y4NVJBVGC3MPA4HSNJ7GP5E.php) thanking the first ladies of other countries and "all Europeans" for helping ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) who have fled the war.Seven people were killed in the Russian missile strike on the building of the regional state administration of Mykolaiv, Ukraine. 22 people were found alive. The building is partially destroyed -one section collapsed from the first to the sevens floor.[*#standforukraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/standforukraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/k8MYOGePaH*](https://t.co/k8MYOGePaH) - Olena Zelenska (@olena\_zelenska) [*March 29, 2022*](https://twitter.com/olena_zelenska/status/1508770505058304007?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

The United Nations estimated more than 10 million people have fled their homes in Ukraine because of the invasion, with 4.3 million moving into neighbouring countries and a 6.5 million displaced within the country itself.

She wrote in March: "I want to thank all Europeans who are now helping our people, giving them homes, feeding them, encouraging them... like us, you weren't prepared for having so many traumatised people in your country.

"But the way you have reacted is worthy of a collective Nobel Peace prize. Ukrainians are marvellous people and very grateful. Our children will never forget what you have done for us."

Elsewhere in [*her interview with Vogue Ukraine*](https://www.vogue.co.uk/news/article/olena-zelenska-interview) , Zelenska highlighted the challenges that Ukrainian women are facing amid the invasion.

She described the plight of women giving birth or raising children in bomb shelters, adding that women living in occupied cities faced "complete insecurity, the threat of violence".

"What is it like to live when you can't even wear your personal clothes? How to explain to a child why she is not sleeping in her bed? This is a test you would not wish on anyone," she added.

**Load-Date:** April 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'Stand Up for Ukraine' plan gets political, celebrity help*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:653J-35P1-JBNF-W09J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 28, 2022 Monday 5:00 PM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 615 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's call for humanitarian help has been answered by the European Commission, the government of Canada and dozens of celebrities assembled by advocacy nonprofit Global Citizen, including Oscar winners Billie Eilish and Finneas, actor Hugh Jackman, as well as Madonna and top Grammy nominee Jon Batiste

**Body**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's call for humanitarian help has been answered by the [*European Commission*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/european-commission) , the government of Canada and dozens of celebrities assembled by advocacy nonprofit [*Global Citizen*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/global-citizen) , including Oscar winners Billie Eilish and Finneas, actor [*Hugh Jackman*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hugh-jackman) , as well as Madonna and Grammy nominee Jon Batiste.

"Stand Up for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) ," which organizers are calling a "social media rally," will take place April 8 to raise awareness for a global pledging summit on April 9. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will host the pledging summit in hopes of raising funds from governments, companies, philanthropies and individuals for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, as well as for refugees from conflicts in Afghanistan, South Sudan and Yemen.

According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi, more than 10 million Ukrainians have been displaced by the war, with 3.5 million already fleeing the country and 6.5 million fleeing their homes, but remaining in Ukraine. Billions will be needed to provide those refugees food and shelter, as well as to support the countries that are currently hosting the refugees.

"A Ukrainian child has become a refugee almost every single second since the start of the war," von der Leyen said in a statement. "The world must stand up for them."

Global Citizen hopes its supporters will help encourage donors to act quickly and more generously, with help from a wide range of A-list stars. Celebrities - ranging from Pharrell Williams to Billy Joel, Stevie Nicks to Stevie Wonder, Usher to Juanes --plan to use their talents and social media clout to direct fans to forukraine.com. At that site, supporters can donate to GlobalGiving's Ukraine Crisis Relief Fund, or take actions to encourage governments or companies to make donations.

"History has shown us that conflict and poverty are closely interconnected, resulting in the weakening of the rule of law, a collapse in economic development and often catastrophic humanitarian situations," Global Citizen CEO Hugh Evans said in a prepared statement. "Global Citizen has a history of responding rapidly to humanitarian crises, and this is no different."

Throughout the war, Zelenskyy and other officials in his government have emphasized the power of celebrities to amplify the plight of the Ukrainian people around the world, including in Russia. Recently, Zelenskyy thanked actors Mila Kunis and Ashton Kutcher for raising $35 million through a GoFundMe campaign for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. Over the weekend, he thanked U2 and its singer Bono for helping organize "Stand Up for Ukraine," which Zelenskyy hopes will raise funds "to restore our homes, to restore our Ukraine."

"Millions of Ukrainians had their own home, had their own dreams, had their own quiet place," Zelenskyy said in a video message. "They had their own home until Russian missiles, bombs, shells came in - until the invaders have come and have destroyed and burned down absolutely everything."

Zelenskyy said he did not want to call the people fleeing their homes "refugees." He wants to call them "displaced people," because he believes it is only temporary.

"We are doing everything possible to bring peace back," Zelenskyy said. "We are doing everything possible to help each of our citizens wait for this horrible period to end. Wherever they are."

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Associated Press coverage of philanthropy and nonprofits receives support through the AP's collaboration with The Conversation US, with funding from Lilly Endowment Inc. The [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) is solely responsible for this content. For all of AP's philanthropy coverage, visit [*https://apnews.com/hub/philanthropy*](https://apnews.com/hub/philanthropy).

**Load-Date:** March 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ireland to keep sanctioning Russia over 'brutal' Ukraine invasion*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64X7-G1G1-JBNF-W29J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 3, 2022 Thursday 8:47 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 209 words

**Byline:** Rebecca Black

**Highlight:** The Irish Cabinet has reiterated its full solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

**Body**

[*Ireland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ireland) will continue imposing sanctions on [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) over the invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Premier Micheal Martin chaired a ministerial meeting on Thursday afternoon to discuss the latest situation.

All ministers present reiterated their full solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

They also reportedly condemned the "brutal invasion" and called on Russia to "withdraw immediately without further needless loss of life and devastation".

In view of the situation being "very volatile" with "outcomes hard to predict", ministers agreed to develop a range of possible scenarios to inform policy consideration.

Ministers also agreed that Ireland will continue to work as part of the international community, particularly through the [*European Union*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/european-union) and [*United Nations*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/united-nations) , to "bring maximum pressure to bear on Russia and to support the Ukrainian people".

They also pledged to continue to impose economic sanctions on Moscow as part of the most severe set of sanctions imposed by the EU and other international partners.

Departments and agencies are to work together to prepare for the possibility of significant numbers of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** being offered protection in Ireland.

Arrangements are also to be made to co-ordinate offers of practical assistance across the country.

**Load-Date:** March 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Majority of Britons back a no-visa policy for refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6537-WJC1-JCS0-D4G1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 27, 2022 Sunday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 3

**Length:** 980 words

**Byline:** ANDREW WOODCOCK, ADAM FORREST

**Body**

More than half of UK voters think Boris Johnson's government should ditch visa requirements for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to allow unlimited numbers to seek sanctuary here, a new poll for The Independent has found. Just one in five (21 per cent) said the government should stick to its requirement for visas for those fleeing Vladimir Putin's invasion, compared to 54 per cent who said the policy should be dropped.

Charities have warned that the visa process for the Homes for Ukraine scheme, which seeks to match refugees with British sponsors who have spare rooms, was proving much too "slow and bureaucratic". Lawyers also said long delays getting visas under the family scheme meant some refugees were close to running out of money and becoming increasingly vulnerable to traffickers.

The Savanta ComRes poll found that the government's policy on refugees was souring public opinion on Mr Johnson's response to the Ukraine war. Unlike EU nations which have opened their doors to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** for up to three years, the UK is insisting on visas for all those taking part in schemes to come to Britain.

The poll found strong support for Mr Johnson's overall approach to the war, with 53 per cent of those asked saying he had done a good job, against 35 per cent who said he had not. But on the welcome the government has offered to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, the picture was reversed, with 47 per cent saying Mr Johnson had done a bad job; meanwhile, just 42 per cent said he had done well.

The mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said yesterday that the government should be making it "far, far easier for those who are fleeing Ukraine to come here". Speaking at a march in support of Ukraine, Mr Khan said: "You compare our government's actions versus the actions of Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Poland, it's embarrassing - we've got be doing much more."

The Ukraine Advice Project, a group of hundreds of volunteer lawyers helping both sponsors and refugees, said they had not seen a single Ukrainian able to get to the UK under the scheme. Refugee Council chief executive Enver Solomon said: "It's been so slow and bureaucratic. It looks like there's going to be significant delays before we get many visas granted by this route. It's going to be very slow."

The charity chief added: "The visa application is a real barrier - we should be waiving the complicated requirements, or setting up a humanitarian scheme that allows people to come here quickly through one simple form." The Refugee Council is one of 16 charities and anti-trafficking organisations to have written to levelling up secretary Michael Gove warning that the sponsorship scheme remains open to abuse and risks becoming "Tinder for sex traffickers".

They called for leading charities to be accredited to help in the matching process to help ease concerns about the flood of amateur Facebook pages which could leave the process open to abuse. Nearly half of the 35,500 Ukrainians who have applied to the scheme launched on 4 March are still waiting for a decision.

Labour's shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper said problems with visa processes were "shameful", while the Liberal Democrats home affairs spokesperson Alistair Carmichael said that"Ukrainians are being left stranded in purgatory by a visa scheme in shambles".

JenniferBlair, a barrister volunteering with the Ukraine Advice Project, said the lengthy delays could leave people vulnerable to traffickers. "While people are waiting on the UK government to make a decision, they are not making a decision to go somewhere else. The longer it takes, the more it puts some people at risk of human trafficking."

Anti-slavery commissioner Dame Sara Thornton also said she was "gravely concerned" about the "very real threat of human trafficking facing refugees ??? at the Ukrainian borders and along their journey to destination countries, including the UK".

But home secretary Priti Patel has warned that lifting security checks would allow Mr Putin to send operatives into the UK, claiming that the Russian president could use female agents to unleash chemical and biological attacks like the 2018 Salisbury poisonings.

However, today's poll for The Independent found that support for a visa waiver for Ukrainians is backed by substantial majorities in every age group, every social class and every region of the UK. Some 55 per cent of Conservative voters backed the waiver, against just 22 per cent who opposed it. And it was backed by 62 per cent of Labour supporters, 71 per cent of Liberal Democrats, 54 per cent of Greens and 61 per cent of SNP voters.

There was strong backing for Mr Johnson's policy of providing military and financial assistance to the Ukrainian government. Almost two-thirds (65 per cent) said the UK should continue to supply money and defence equipment to the Ukrainians, compared to just 11 per cent who said it should not. Many said the UK should impose sanctions on Russia, even if it means energy prices rising for domestic consumers, with 65 per cent backing the measures and 12 per cent opposed.

However, there was considerable wariness at the prospect of UK troops being deployed to fight Russia alongside the Ukrainians. Some 44 per cent said they would oppose direct UK involvement in the war, compared to 31 per cent who said they would support it. Savanta ComRes questioned 2,203 UK adults on 19 and 20 March.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered.

To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign,click here. To sign the petitionclick here. If you would like to donate then pleaseclick herefor our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Fire engulfs 400-year-old Sussex hotel ‘housing Ukrainian refugees’*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67SS-XV51-DY4H-K30N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 16, 2023 Thursday 10:37 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 92 words

**Byline:** Holly Patrick

**Body**

A 400-year-old hotel in Midhurst, Sussex, was engulfed by a fire in Midhurst, [*West Sussex*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/west-sussex) , in the early hours of Thursday, 16 March.

According to local resident Hilton Holloway, the hotel was housing ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

West Sussex Fire said that 15 fire engines were deployed to the scene.

More than 30 people were evacuated from the building and a relief centre was set up in the town for those who have been displaced, a statement from West Sussex County Council said.

The cause of the fire has not been confirmed.

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters?itm_channel=native&itm_campaign=newsletters&itm_content=video-articles) to sign up for our newsletters.

**Load-Date:** March 16, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Politicians should think of Ukraine amid asylum reforms, British Red Cross says*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650R-Y2V1-JBNF-W17F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 15, 2022 Tuesday 1:53 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 565 words

**Byline:** Helen William

**Highlight:** Jon Featonby, of British Red Cross, says the Ukraine situation has made the way refugees are treated 'very real for people'.

**Body**

The experiences of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** fleeing for their lives should be at the "forefront" of the minds of politicians as they consider sweeping asylum reforms, the [*British Red Cross*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british-red-cross) (BRC) has said.

The [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) says it wants to stop people using illegal routes but the BRC has concerns about the Nationality and Borders [*Bill*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/bill).

Provisions in the Bill will make it a criminal offence to knowingly arrive in the UK illegally and introduce life sentences for those who facilitate illegal entry into the country.

The horror of the [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) situation has made the way refugees are treated "very real for people," including politicians, according to Jon Featonby, of the BRC.

Mr Featonby, the BRC's refugee and asylum policy manager, said the nation has seen refugees "struggling to access" some of the routes which have been introduced by the Home Office.

The proposed legislation is going through [*Parliament*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/parliament) and due to enter the final stages in the House of Lords.

With up to 89,000 households having now signed up to offer a home to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in the UK, Mr Featonby added there was "really strong public support to provide protection for people".

He said: "Our hope as the British Red Cross is that over the next few weeks as MPs and then members of the House of Lords are considering the Bill is that they have got some of those experiences and some of those people who they have been fleeing for their lives on their television pictures at the forefront of their minds."

The BRC says the overhaul of the asylum system would for the first time see people seeking protection as a refugee having their claim assessed on how they arrived in the UK, rather than the dangers they have fled.

All we are really asking the UK Government to do is to really make sure that those relatively small proportion of people who do want to reach the UK, can reach the UK and then be able to find the protection and safety they need to be able to rebuild their lives here

Jon Featonby, British Red Cross

Under the proposed changes, those who arrive in an unofficial way such as by crossing the Channel would no longer receive the same protection, even if they then go on to be recognised as a refugee.

Instead, they would have temporary protection in the UK with limited rights to reunite with their families or access welfare support.

The BRC says it is concerned that a person seeking asylum could be prevented from accessing vital services and that the changes could make it difficult for them to have their asylum claim heard.

Mr Featonby said that "certainly one of our concerns is that this Bill will reduce the opportunity for people to seek safety in the UK" as people who manage to get to the UK through irregular means could potentially face being criminalised or having a second tier status.

He feared there could be a "domino effect" that may impact refugees if other nations followed the UK's approach.

Pointing to the refugee crisis in Ukraine, Afghanistan and Syria, he said: "At the moment the vast majority of people, more than 80 per cent of people who are forced to flee their homes, do so in those countries neighbouring them.

"All we are really asking the UK Government to do is to really make sure that those relatively small proportion of people who do want to reach the UK, can reach the UK and then be able to find the protection and safety they need to be able to rebuild their lives here."

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Wizz Air suspends Moldova flights over security fears*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67NC-2GW1-DY4H-K3X2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 28, 2023 Tuesday 9:09 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS & ADVICE,TRAVEL; Version:1

**Length:** 325 words

**Byline:** Joanna Whitehead

**Highlight:** The news follows an ‘elevated risk’ to the country’s airspace

**Body**

[*Wizz Air*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/wizz-air) has confirmed it will suspend all flights to and from [*Moldova*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/moldova) due to safety concerns.

The announcement comes after a [*Russian missile was fired over Moldovan airspace*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-war-rockets-kyiv-b2280082.html) earlier this month.

In a statement, the Hungarian budget airline said: “Safety of the passengers and crew remain Wizz Air’s number one priority.

“Following the recent developments in Moldova and the elevated, but not imminent, risk in the country’s airspace, Wizz Air has made the difficult but responsible decision to suspend all flights to [the capital] ChiÈ™inÄƒu from 14 March.”

Moldova's civil aviation authority described the move as sudden and regrettable, claiming in a statement that flights “which respect a number of procedures could be carried out safely”.

Located between Romania and Ukraine, the eastern European country and former Soviet republic has been heavily impacted by [*Russia’s war against Ukraine.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine-crisis)

The pro-European republic of 2.6 million people has reported “attempts at destabilisation” in recent weeks.

The territory has been [*hit by debris*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/ap-moldova-interior-ministry-ukraine-chisinau-b2262366.html) from the neighbouring war several times, struggled with an influx of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and suffered energy blackouts.

Moldova is also home to Transnistria, a breakaway pro-Moscow region, where 1,500 Russian soldiers are stationed.

In recent weeks, Moldova’s President, Maia Sandu, [*outlined a plot by Moscow to use external saboteurs to overthrow the country's government, put the nation “at the disposal of Russia” and derail its aspirations to one day join the European Union.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/moldova-ap-maia-sandu-president-chisinau-b2281186.html)

Her comments follow those made by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in which he claimed his country had intercepted plans by Russian secret services to destroy Moldova, claims that were later confirmed by Moldovan intelligence officials.

Wizz Air is the first airline to confirm a suspension of flights to Moldova.

Turkish Airlines, Air Moldova and the Romanian national airline, Tarom, continue to fly to the Moldovan capital.

**Load-Date:** February 28, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Drive to recruit Ukraine hosts branded ironic amid plan to stop asylum seekers*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67SB-9WB1-DY4H-K0B9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 14, 2023 Tuesday 6:37 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 718 words

**Byline:** Aine Fox

**Highlight:** One host and co-founder of Vigil for Visas said the Illegal Migration Bill is ‘in complete contradiction’ with the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

**Body**

A government drive to recruit more hosts for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** has been branded hollow and ironic as it coincides with plans to stop asylum seekers arriving in the UK having crossed the Channel.

Tuesday marks one year since the announcement of the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) sponsorship scheme, which allows people and organisations to give Ukrainians fleeing the war a place to stay.

Since it officially opened on March 18 last year, a few days after being announced, some 117,100 people have arrived in the UK under the visa scheme.

There is something wrong with a system that results in categorisation of refugees, that we are categorising one set of refugees as more important than another

Kitty Hamilton, Vigil for Visas

Ukrainians who come via this route can live, work and study in the UK and access public funds.

Host Kitty Hamilton, co-founder of the advocacy group Vigil for Visas, said while she and others had wanted to look at ways to encourage more hosts to come forward, they were left feeling “decidedly queasy at the prospect of trying to rally support for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** at a time when the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) was pushing for the most inhumane anti-immigration policy so far”.

She said the timing is “terrible” as the Illegal Migration Bill “stands in complete contradiction with what the Homes for Ukraine Scheme is about”.

She noted two government recruitment logos which she had been sent as part of a roundtable discussion on how to attract more hosts under the scheme and said the wording of the planned social media campaign was “ironic”.

One of the logos read: “Help transform the lives of people who have fled the devastating war in Ukraine.”

We're very grateful that the Government has acknowledged that we need support in this way, but the timing is terrible and the messages sound hollow

Kitty Hamilton, Vigil for Visas

Ms Hamilton, who has had a Ukrainian mother and her two children living in her home since May, said: “Replace it (Ukraine) with [*Syria*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/syria) , replace it with [*Yemen*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/yemen) , replace it with any number of different countries.

“There is no difference for people fleeing devastating war.”

She said refugees are being “categorised” depending on where they are from, as she called for people from other war-torn countries to be allowed to enter the UK under similar conditions.

She told the PA news agency: “There is something wrong with a system that results in categorisation of refugees – that we are categorising one set of refugees as more important than another.”

She said she believed, despite a number of difficulties along the way including matching refugees with hosts, the Ukraine scheme had been successful.

But she questioned the “unfairness” when refugees from other countries are considered.

She said: “We’re very grateful that the Government has acknowledged that we need support in this way, but the timing is terrible and the messages sound hollow.

“How can we, hand on heart, talk about getting people to transform the lives of people who have fled the devastating war in Ukraine, how can we hand on heart say that to the people of Ukraine and not others?

“The unfairness of the scheme is not the fault of the hosts. We would love to have this scheme available to all so that we have a choice.”

She acknowledged that there are areas of the country and communities which “feel under great strain” as a result of immigration, but said if refugees were allowed “to work from the day they get here – this would be such a good thing for the country as a whole”.

She added: “This is why genuinely I believe that as a nation we are bigger than we are being told we are. I think that actually, genuinely, people want to help those in need and we’ve been able to do that with the Ukraine scheme in a way that we have never been able to do with any other refugee group.”

A Home Office spokesperson said: “The UK has a proud history of providing safe and legal routes for those who genuinely need it, and since 2015 we have offered a place to almost half a million men, women and children seeking safety.

“We are committed to creating more routes to safety for vulnerable people across the globe, but we must first grip the rise in illegal migration and stop the boats.

“Which is why we are introducing new legislation that will see people who come to the UK illegally, liable for detention and swift removal.”

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Ireland needs to have 'fundamental rethink' over security: Coveney*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YG-STP1-JBNF-W43N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 9, 2022 Wednesday 5:05 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 569 words

**Byline:** Jonathan McCambridge

**Highlight:** Simon Coveney said that there was 'no target' on how many ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** would be supported to come to Ireland.

**Body**

Ireland needs a "fundamental rethink" of its approach to security following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Foreign Affairs minister Simon Coveney has said.

In an address to the Institute of International and [*European*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) Affairs (IIEA), Mr Coveney said the world had changed and the crisis was a "watershed moment" for the EU.

Mr Coveney also said that there was "no target" on how many ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** would be supported to come to Ireland.

He said that Ireland should not rush to an answer in deciding on any changes to its position of military neutrality.

He added: "I think it is important not to fundamentally change direction in terms of foreign policy and defence policy overnight.

"But I certainly think that what we are experiencing today in Europe does need to result in quite a fundamental rethink of Ireland's approach to its own security and how we contribute to the collective security of the European Union."

Mr Coveney added: "Ireland is a militarily neutral country but the Irish people are neither ethically, morally or politically neutral. We stand unambiguously and unapologetically with Ukraine at this time.

"The world has changed. This is a historic moment and, in many ways, a historic test. It is a moment of principle that defends everyone's right to define their own future and to live without threat. It is a moment of law, the rules-based international order in which Ireland's foreign policy is based and enshrined."

He continued: "Many thousands of Ukrainians who are forced to leave their homes may arrive in Ireland. We welcome the adoption by the EU to activate the temporary protection directive and we will play our part in supporting its implementation.

"There is no target on how many people we will support.

"We are committed to doing the right thing and responding with speed to what is a growing and enormous humanitarian crisis. They are welcome here and that is a message that we want to be very clear on.

"I am confident that families across Ireland, alongside the state's efforts, will open their homes to Ukrainians."

Mr Coveney said the EU had never acted with "such urgency or resolve" as it had in its response to the Ukrainian war.

He added: "In these most testing of times I think we are showing our best selves.

"While we regret that the UK is no longer with us on our shared European journey, they too are today showing their best selves. Today the EU and the UK are fully aligned against Russia's aggression and the protection of European values.

What we are seeing in Ukraine reminds us of just how precious peace is

"I hope that spirit of partnership will now also be the path to find an agreed approach to the protocol in [*Northern Ireland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/northern-ireland) and I urge the UK [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) to respond to the EU's focus on finding durable, practical solutions to the issues of concern to the people of Northern Ireland.

"Our overriding ambition here is to preserve lasting peace, stability and reconciliation in Northern Ireland.

"What we are seeing in Ukraine reminds us of just how precious that peace is."

Mr Coveney said sanctions introduced by the EU against Russia were a "watershed moment".

He added: "They demonstrate the EU's credibility as a political actor with economic weight which can bring significant pressure to bear in a crisis.

"We must decide how to position ourselves through our second century of independence to ensure security at home as well as contributing to security abroad."

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Visas granted for fleeing Ukrainians will rise 'very quickly', says minister*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y1-VCD1-JBNF-W216-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 7, 2022 Monday 11:32 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 569 words

**Byline:** Amy Gibbons

**Highlight:** The Home Office is under pressure to do more to help refugees after it revealed on Sunday that only 'around 50' visas have been granted.

**Body**

The [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) expects the number of Ukrainians being granted visas for the UK to increase "very, very quickly", a minister has said.

The [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) has been under pressure to do more to help people feeing the war after it revealed on Sunday that only "around 50" visas had been issued under the Ukraine Family Scheme as of 10am that morning.

Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Tom Tugendhat, said the rate was "certainly not a success", while shadow home secretary [*Yvette Cooper*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/yvette-cooper) tweeted: "This is too slow."

Total chaos from Govt. This isn't good enough. Families are struggling, being turned away or waiting days for visas. We need urgent action to get people to sanctuary in UK. Home Office were warned wks ago by British intelligence that an invasion was coming. Why didn't they plan? [*https://t.co/aDw4GxbyqT*](https://t.co/aDw4GxbyqT) - Yvette Cooper (@YvetteCooperMP) [*March 7, 2022*](https://twitter.com/YvetteCooperMP/status/1500763931488444424?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

It was reported on Sunday that Home Secretary [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) is examining "legal options" to create a "humanitarian route", which would offer all ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** the right to come to the UK, regardless of whether they have family ties here.

But it is unclear whether this referred to a sponsorship scheme that has already been announced, with Europe minister [*James Cleverly*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/james-cleverly) saying on Monday that there had been no change to the plans over the weekend.

Speaking to Sky News on Monday morning, Mr Cleverly said the Government has made it "absolutely clear" it wants to support Ukrainians seeking refuge.

He acknowledged that "only small numbers have come so far" but "the process has only just started".

Mr Cleverly also told LBC that the number of Ukrainians being granted visas for the UK will increase "very, very quickly" but the scale of the crisis is "unprecedented".

"This is the largest refugee flow that we have seen since the Second World War," he said.

The Home Office "had to create a system pretty much from scratch", he said, and the process "will get quicker and slicker and faster".

"It will take a little time to get the system up and running, that's now there, I have no doubt that the numbers will start coming through," he said.

Ms Patel said over the weekend that the UK is "doing everything possible" to speed up efforts to grant visas to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, and told the Sun she is examining a "humanitarian route" to allow all those fleeing the conflict to come to the UK.

But it is unclear whether this "humanitarian route" is actually a new concept, or refers to a sponsorship scheme already announced - whereby individuals and organisations will be able to bring Ukrainians to the UK.

Ms Patel told the newspaper: "In response to the desperation I saw with my own eyes at the Polish border two days ago, I'm urgently escalating our response to the growing humanitarian crisis.

"I am now investigating the legal options to create a humanitarian route.

"This means anyone without ties to the UK fleeing the conflict in Ukraine will have a right to come to this nation."

Mr Cleverly told BBC Breakfast on Monday: "We've got two routes by which Ukrainians can come to the UK.

"One is where they have family connections, but we also have a broader humanitarian route for Ukrainians who do not have family who are already here in the UK - there is no particular target or limit on that route."

Asked whether there had been a change to the plans over the weekend, he said: "No, no, no. This is what's been in place previously."

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[*PM vows to be generous with fleeing Ukrainians*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WJ-4X71-JCS0-D0XM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

February 28, 2022 Monday

Third Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 6

**Length:** 983 words

**Byline:** LAMIAT SABIN

**Body**

Boris Johnson vowed that the UK will be "very generous" with ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** coming to Britain - but stopped short of scrapping visa requirements for all those fleeing the war.

In a speech to yesterday service at a Ukrainian cathedral in London, the prime minister said that the UK "cannot shut our eyes" to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which he said resulted in "the darkest times in modern memory" for Ukrainians.

At the Ukrainian Cathedral of the Holy Family, in Mayfair, Mr Johnson said the UK has a system that grants people permission to enter for the longer-term when they are in fear of persecution, to reunite with family or "other purposes".

But this means that, under current rules, ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** fleeing the invasion who do not have immediate family connections to the UK will be denied entry.

The European Union has agreed to host ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** for three years without asking them to apply for asylum, and regardless of whether they have a family connection in any of the 27 member states.

Speaking on the BBC's Sunday Morning programme, foreign secretary Liz Truss said the UK was "urgently looking" at what the government can do to "facilitate" the arrival of people fleeing war.

About 370,000 people have fled Ukraine since Vladimir Putin commanded the invasion, the United Nations estimates.

Mr Johnson confirmed that, in response to the worry of Ukrainians in the UK about their families in Ukraine, any person settled in the UK will be able to bring their Ukrainian immediate family members to join them.

His comments came afterThe Independentlaunched itsRefugees Welcomecampaign, calling on the government to set up a resettlement scheme to grant sanctuary in the UK to Ukrainians fleeing thebloody conflict.

The prime minister's announcement was welcomed by the shadow home secretary, Yvette Cooper. But she said it "should have happened days ago as too many desperate family members have been struggling and delays have been deeply damaging".

She added: "We hope this announcement includes wider family as well as just the closest relatives - and it is vital that we see those details as soon as possible.

"Now, the government should also work with European countries on a wider sanctuary arrangement so the UK can also do its bit alongside others to help Ukraine."

Scotland's first minister called on the UK government to scrap visa requirements for Ukrainian citizens fleeing the conflict with immediate effect.

In a tweet yesterday, Nicola Sturgeon said the Home Office must give entry now on humanitarian grounds "to any Ukrainian seeking refuge in the UK", and to "sort paperwork later".

She described the UK immigration system as "inhumane" and "indefensible".

In his cathedral speech, Mr Johnson also announced that the government will make £40m more available in humanitarian aid for Ukraine.

Downing Street said the funding will help aid agencies respond to the deteriorating humanitarian situation, creating access to basic necessities and medical supplies such as medicines, syringes, dressings and wound care packs.

Mr Johnson said: "In the last days the world has witnessed awe-inspiring displays of bravery and heroism from the Ukrainian people in response to those who seek to obliterate their freedom by force.

"The UK will not turn our backs in Ukraine's hour of need. We are providing all the economic and military support we can to help those Ukrainians risking everything to protect their country."

The PM went on to describe Ukraine as the UK's "neighbour" and said that this was partly because Ukrainians have made "immeasurable contribution to British society".

Mr Johnson said: "We are neighbours in the words of the gospel. We are neighbours to Ukraine because Ukrainians are literally our neighbours.

"Hundreds of thousands have come to live and work in this country over the decades, making an immeasurable contribution to British society and that is the reason why we are neighbours. That's one reason."

He then went on to refer to the story of the Good Samaritan in the Bible.

Mr Johnson said: "And then we are neighbours because we share Ukrainian ideals of freedom and democracy and independence.

"We must not and cannot allow those ideals to be trampled on and crushed on our European continent and we will not - and that is the second reason why we are your neighbours.

"There is a more fundamental point and this is the point that Jesus was actually getting at in that parable of the Good Samaritan, which is that, even if we did not feel those emotional ties as we do, even if we did not have that political bond, the geo-strategic bond between us, it would still be right to help Ukraine in any way that we can."

Also yesterday, the foreign secretary, Liz Truss, said ministers were "urgently" examining the current visa rules for Ukrainians fleeing war.

When Ms Truss was told that anyone who has no connection to the UK cannot get in, and asked if that will be changed, Ms Truss said: "We are looking urgently at what we can do.

"We're working with European partners about how we support refugees who are leaving Ukraine. So, yes, is the answer."

Her Labour counterpart David Lammy described the current visa restrictions for Ukrainians seeking sanctuary in the UK as "totally unacceptable" and "bureaucratic".

Labour leader Keir Starmer has also called on ministers to take a "humanitarian approach" to provide "sanctuary for those who are fleeing from Russian aggression, fleeing from this invasion, fleeing for their lives".

While Tory grandee Sir Roger Gale has tweeted: "We have to offer a safe haven for refugees from Soviet oppression as we have done in the past.

"We must do this with the minimum of bureaucracy and the maximum of compassion. Time to roll out the welcome mat."

The Independent's Refugees Welcome campaign is calling for the UK government to set up a resettlement scheme to give Ukrainians fleeing the invasion sanctuary in Britain

**Load-Date:** February 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Yousaf’s wife demands resettlement scheme as brother remains trapped in Gaza*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B36-49F1-DY4H-K0H8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

January 12, 2024 Friday 10:41 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 433 words

**Byline:** Rebecca McCurdy

**Highlight:** Nadia El-Nakla said her sister-in-law and her four children have fled the region but her brother has not been allowed to leave.

**Body**

The wife of Scotland’s [*First Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/first-minister) has said her brother has been unable to flee [*Gaza*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/gaza) , leading to calls for a resettlement scheme similar to that offered to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Nadia El-Nakla, an [*SNP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/snp) councillor in [*Dundee*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dundee) , told the Guardian newspaper her sister-in-law has been able to take refuge in Turkey with the couple’s four children, who are aged between six months and nine years.

But she said her brother’s name was removed from the list provided by the Turkish administration – meaning the emergency doctor must remain in the war-torn region alongside his 93-year-old grandmother, who requires round-the-clock care.

Ms El-Nakla, who is married to [*Humza Yousaf*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/humza-yousaf) , is now urging the UK Government to allow those with family in Britain to live in the UK while the conflict with Israel continues.

I feel like a second-class citizen in my own country, because I don’t have the right to bring my own brother to stay in my own home

Nadia El-Nakla

She told the Guardian: “The Ukrainian resettlement programme saved so many lives. Gazans should also have that opportunity, especially those with family in Britain.

“I feel like a second-class citizen in my own country, because I don’t have the right to bring my own brother to stay in my own home.

“I can see people across the street hosting Ukrainian families, and rightly so, But I can’t host my own brother, to me that feels beyond upsetting.”

But Ms El-Nakla, who attended a summit of leaders’ spouses in Istanbul prior to her family’s escape, said she is “so grateful” her sister-in-law and her children are safe, adding: “My brother keeps thanking me for saving his kids.”

The politician has been outspoken about her family’s situation in Gaza, regularly joining Mr Yousaf in calling for a ceasefire.

Her parents – Elizabeth and Maged El-Nakla – were in Gaza visiting relatives at the time of the October 7 attack by Hamas on Israel and the subsequent initial retaliation.

They were trapped with limited supplies for almost a month before being granted permission to leave through Egypt along with other British nationals.

They returned to Dundee, but remain “traumatised” by their experience, Ms El-Nakla said, and they have now travelled to Turkey to support their daughter-in-law.

Meanwhile, Ms El-Nakla said her brother continues to work in dangerous circumstances.

“There’s nothing I can say to comfort him,” she told the newspaper.

“I said to him remember the line from the Koran that says with difficulty comes ease, and that ease should come soon. He replied: ‘I say that line about 100 times a day.’

“They’re just so tired of it. There’s no respite.”

**Load-Date:** January 12, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine war: French interior minister warns that refugees could be 'pushed to take small boats' by UK visa delays*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y2-VHY1-JBNF-W27H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 7, 2022 Monday 5:19 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 949 words

**Byline:** Lizzie Dearden

**Highlight:** Priti Patel says a new visa processing centre has been set up en route to Calais

**Body**

The French interior minister has warned that a failure to process ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) ' visas quickly could push some into taking small boats across the [*English Channel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/english-channel).

[*Gerald Darmanin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/gerald-darmanin) wrote to [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) on Saturday saying that around 400 Ukrainians wanting to reach the UK had so far arrived in Calais, and at least 150 had been turned back and told to obtain visas at British embassies in Paris or Brussels.

In a press conference the following day, he said he had contacted the [*home secretary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-secretary) twice before writing the letter, urging her to set up a consulate in Calais where visas could be issued.

"Imagine four kids, sometimes disabled children, in a car, setting off again after having done Kiev to Calais -told to do Calais to Paris, or Brussels," Mr Darmanin added. "It's a bit inhumane."

He called for the British government to put its generous rhetoric into action and "to open their arms a little and stop the technocratic nit-picking".

"Otherwise, you will once again push people to take small boats to cross the Channel to England," the interior minister said.

"I am sure that Ms Patel is a good person and she will solve this problem, but she has to solve it quickly."

More than 28,500 people crossed the English Channel by small boat in 2021, mostly asylum seekers from countries including Iran, Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan.

Addressing the House of Commons on Monday afternoon, the home secretary said the UK had set up a "bespoke visa application centre en route to Calais but away from the port" for Ukrainians.

"We have staff in Calais, we have support on the ground, it is wrong to say we are just turning people back, we are not," Ms Patel added.

"It is important we do not create choke points in Calais but encourage a smooth flow of people."

The government has rebuffed previous calls to set up a centre to process asylum applications in northern France, saying it could act as a "magnet" for migrants.

Ms Patel and her French counterpart have clashed several times about asylum seekers and small boat crossings over the English Channel.

In November, Mr Darmanin said France would not accept the home secretary's planned operations to force dinghies back into its waters and accused the UK of "not taking its share" of asylum seekers.

The proposal came as the government backed new laws that would see asylum seekers arriving in British waters "without permission" criminalised and jailed for up to four years.

The Home Office has been under pressure to do more to help people fleeing [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) after it revealed on Sunday that only "around 50" visas had been issued under the new family scheme.

It has not provided an update on the figure, but The Independent understands that over 10,000 applications have been received since the route opened on Friday.

Speaking to Sky News on Monday morning, Europe minister James Cleverly acknowledged that "only small numbers have come so far" but said "the process has only just started".

Mr Cleverly also told LBC that the number of Ukrainians being granted visas for the UK will increase "very, very quickly" but the scale of the crisis is "unprecedented".

"This is the largest refugee flow that we have seen since the Second World War," he added.

"It will take a little time to get the system up and running, that's now there, I have no doubt that the numbers will start coming through."

Ms Patel previously said the UK was "doing everything possible" to speed up efforts to grant visas to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, including through a sponsorship scheme allowing individuals and organisations to bring Ukrainians to the UK.

Sonya Sceats, chief executive at Freedom from Torture, commented: "Despite months of warnings, this cruel government has been caught woefully unprepared for the scale of this humanitarian crisis because they are trapped in an anti-refugee logic that is becoming more unpopular by the day.

"The fact that only 50 visas have been granted to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** [under the new family route] shows the dangers of insisting on visa-based schemes when the whole point of the Refugee Convention is to allow people to run to safety and claim asylum on arrival.

"This government's anti-refugee bill drives a coach-and-horses through the Refugee Convention just as Europe is facing the largest displacement of people since the wake of World War Two."

A government spokesperson said it was doing everything possible to help those fleeing the war in Ukraine, and that "many have already successfully applied" to the family scheme.

"Staff have been surged across Europe to support people in coming to the UK and all visa application centres remain open with thousands of appointments available to carry out essential security checks, and a dedicated helpline has been set up," a statement added.

"The Ukrainian Family Scheme is already working and unlimited sponsorship route will be opening for Ukrainians without family ties in the UK so community groups, local authorities and others can sponsor and support those in need to come to the UK."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Fresh measures will help Ukrainians seek refuge in UK, Defence Secretary hints*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WH-WBT1-JBNF-W4P7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 28, 2022 Monday 10:09 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:4

**Length:** 958 words

**Byline:** Sam Blewett

**Highlight:** The Government is under pressure to go further to help people fleeing the Russian invasion.

**Body**

Fresh measures to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** fleeing the Russian invasion are likely to be introduced, the [*Defence Secretary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/defence-secretary) has hinted, as the [*UK Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/uk-government) came under pressure to act.

[*Ben Wallace*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ben-wallace) said on Monday that the move to allow immediate family members to join Ukrainians settled in the UK is only a "first step" as Vladimir Putin's assault continued.

Mr Wallace dismissed the Russian president putting his nuclear forces on heightened alert as being a part of the Kremlin's "battle of rhetoric" rather than a real threat.

With Western sanctions biting, the Russian central bank was forced to sharply raise its key interest rate to save the rouble from collapse as the war worsened the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine.

The UK Government announced the relaxation of visa rules for immediate family members of Ukrainians settled in the UK after coming under intense criticism over the weekend.

But Labour called for ministers to immediately extend the opportunity to wider relatives before setting out a "broader sanctuary route" to help other Ukrainians.

Mr Wallace said he does not doubt the UK will go further to match the "very generous" schemes that have helped in other conflicts.

"I think what I would say is, you know, our track record so far, both with Afghans and (the) Arap (Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy) scheme, and indeed with the Hong Kong nationals who were suffering persecution, has been actually very generous," he told BBC Radio 4's Today programme.

"So there's no reason to doubt we won't continue on that path."

He said it is not yet clear whether the European Union's approach will be to support refugees on the border, with the hope they will be able to return to Ukraine soon.

But he added that the UK response will be discussed by senior ministers on Monday.

Home Secretary Priti Patel is understood to be preparing to address further measures to support refugees when she takes questions in the Commons on Monday afternoon.

[*Tom Tugendhat*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/tom-tugendhat) , the senior Conservative MP who chairs the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, also anticipated further measures for refugees as being "likely".

"I've been speaking to ministers this morning and I can tell you there are many who are hopeful that this will be something that's reviewed in the coming days," he told Today.

Asked about the EU scheme to grant asylum to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** for up to three years, Mr Tugendhat said: "I suspect that's likely to be where we end up, to be honest."

Shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper said it is "shameful" for the Government to "refuse to even help other relatives in a terrible European war like this".

Mr Putin cited "aggressive statements" from the Nato defence alliance and the financial sanctions imposed in response to his invasion in issuing orders to increase the readiness of Russia's nuclear weapons.

The Treasury is targeting Russia's central bank with sanctions in a response co-ordinated with the US and European allies.

Chancellor Rishi Sunak said the move shows the "steadfast resolve in imposing the highest costs on Russia and to cut her off from the international financial system so long as this conflict persists".

Mr Wallace said his 12-year-old son called him, worried about Moscow's nuclear alert, but the Cabinet minister played down the shift's significance as not being a change to the current "nuclear posture".

"We will not do anything to escalate in that area, we will not do anything to feed any miscalculation, we take it very, very seriously," he told Today.

"But at the moment this is a battle of rhetoric that President Putin is deploying, and we just have to make sure we manage it properly."

He warned that the Russian offensive in Ukraine is likely to become "more violent", as troops close in around the capital, Kyiv.

Despite the continued assault, Ukraine has agreed to talks with Moscow and is sending a delegation to the border with Belarus for the meeting.

A rare emergency meeting of the United Nations General Assembly will discuss the crisis in Ukraine on Monday.

In other developments:

- Ukrainian President [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) said 16 children have been killed and another 45 injured during the Russian invasion, adding "every crime, every shelling by the occupiers bring our partners and us even closer".

- The UK Government is fast-tracking plans to tackle "dirty money" and expose foreign oligarchs who launder their wealth through the UK's property market in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Talked to Prime Minister [*@BorisJohnson*](https://twitter.com/BorisJohnson?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) and President [*@AndrzejDuda*](https://twitter.com/AndrzejDuda?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) about the current security situation. Agreed on further joint steps to counter the aggressor. Anti-war coalition in action!- (@ZelenskyyUa) [*February 27, 2022*](https://twitter.com/ZelenskyyUa/status/1498076908860456964?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

- The European Union said it will supply arms to Ukraine while imposing a fresh round of sanctions banning Russian aircraft from EU airspace and barring the Kremlin-backed media, RT and Sputnik.

- BP shares dropped sharply after the company announced it is selling its £10 billion stake in oil producer Rosneft, which it co-owns with the Kremlin, after pressure from the Government.

During a call on Saturday, Boris Johnson told Mr Zelensky that Britain will do all it can to get more arms to his military.

Mr Zelensky warned the Prime Minister that the next 24 hours will be a "crucial period" for Ukraine as his army puts up a fierce resistance against invading forces.

The sanctions imposed by Britain and allies appear to be having an impact, with the rouble having sunk by nearly 26% against the US dollar by Monday morning.

Mr Johnson said on Sunday that ministers "want to be as generous as we possibly can" in helping ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, adding "certainly we want people who have relatives in Ukraine to be able to bring them over as fast as possible".

**Load-Date:** February 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Boris Johnson vows to be 'generous' with fleeing Ukrainians - but falls short of welcoming all refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WG-3VK1-DY4H-K2C3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 27, 2022 Sunday 11:43 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:3

**Length:** 987 words

**Byline:** Lamiat Sabin

**Highlight:** Refugees Welcome: Ukrainians currently need to have family connection to UK to be granted refuge

**Body**

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) vowed that the UK will be "very generous" with [***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) ***refugees*** coming to Britain - but stopped short of scrapping visa requirements for all those fleeing the war.

In a speech to a Sunday service at a Ukrainian cathedral in London, the prime minister said that the UK "cannot shut our eyes" to the Russian invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , which he said resulted in "the darkest times in modern memory" for Ukrainians.

At the Ukrainian Cathedral of the Holy Family, in Mayfair, Mr Johnson said the UK has a system that grants people permission to enter for the longer-term when they are in fear of persecution, to reunite with family or "other purposes".

But this means that, under current rules, ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** fleeing the invasion who do not have immediate family connections to the UK will be denied entry.

The European Union has agreed to host ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** for three years without asking them to apply for asylum, and regardless of whether they have a family connection in any of the 27 member states.

About 370,000 people have fled Ukraine since Vladimir Putin commanded the invasion, the United Nations estimates.

Mr Johnson confirmed that, in response to the worry of Ukrainians in the UK about their families in Ukraine, any person settled in the UK will be able to bring their Ukrainian immediate family members to join them.

His comments came after The Independent launched its [*Refugees Welcome*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) campaign, calling on the government to set up a resettlement scheme to grant sanctuary in the UK to Ukrainians fleeing the [*bloody conflict.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-crisis-latest-putin-kyiv-zelensky-war-update-b2024247.html)

The prime minister's announcement was welcomed by the shadow home secretary, Yvette Cooper. But she said it "should have happened days ago as too many desperate family members have been struggling and delays have been deeply damaging".

She added: "We hope this announcement includes wider family as well as just the closest relatives - and it is vital that we see those details as soon as possible.

"Now, the government should also work with European countries on a wider sanctuary arrangement so the UK can also do its bit alongside others to help Ukraine."

This is a first step which will help desperate families, tho delays in doing this have been very damagingBut Govt must clarify it includes wider family not just closest relativesAnd must set out wider sanctuary plan working w other countries so UK does its bit to help Ukraine [*https://t.co/dIqiYsuGCm*](https://t.co/dIqiYsuGCm) - Yvette Cooper (@YvetteCooperMP) [*February 27, 2022*](https://twitter.com/YvetteCooperMP/status/1498035338555666438?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Scotland's first minister called on the UK government to scrap visa requirements for Ukrainian citizens fleeing the conflict with immediate effect.

In a tweet on Sunday, Nicola Sturgeon said the Home Office must give entry now on humanitarian grounds "to any Ukrainian seeking refuge in the UK", and to "sort paperwork later".

She described the UK immigration system as "inhumane" and "indefensible".

In his cathedral speech, Mr Johnson also announced that the government will make £40m more available in humanitarian aid for Ukraine.

Downing Street said the funding will help aid agencies respond to the deteriorating humanitarian situation, creating access to basic necessities and medical supplies such as medicines, syringes, dressings and wound care packs.

Mr Johnson said: "In the last days the world has witnessed awe-inspiring displays of bravery and heroism from the Ukrainian people in response to those who seek to obliterate their freedom by force.

"The UK will not turn our backs in Ukraine's hour of need. We are providing all the economic and military support we can to help those Ukrainians risking everything to protect their country."

The PM went on to describe Ukraine as the UK's "neighbour" and said that this was partly because Ukrainians have made "immeasurable contribution to British society".

Mr Johnson said: "We are neighbours in the words of the gospel. We are neighbours to Ukraine because Ukrainians are literally our neighbours.

"Hundreds of thousands have come to live and work in this country over the decades, making an immeasurable contribution to British society and that is the reason why we are neighbours. That's one reason."

He then went on to refer to the story of the Good Samaritan in the Bible.

Mr Johnson said: "And then we are neighbours because we share Ukrainian ideals of freedom and democracy and independence.

"We must not and cannot allow those ideals to be trampled on and crushed on our European continent and we will not - and that is the second reason why we are your neighbours.

"There is a more fundamental point and this is the point that Jesus was actually getting at in that parable of the Good Samaritan, which is that, even if we did not feel those emotional ties as we do, even if we did not have that political bond, the geo-strategic bond between us, it would still be right to help Ukraine in any way that we can."

Also on Sunday, the foreign secretary, Liz Truss, said ministers were "urgently" examining the current visa rules for Ukrainians fleeing war.

When Ms Truss was told that anyone who has no connection to the UK cannot get in, and asked if that will be changed, Ms Truss said: "We are looking urgently at what we can do.

"We're working with European partners about how we support refugees who are leaving Ukraine. So, yes, is the answer."

Her Labour counterpart David Lammy described the current visa restrictions for Ukrainians seeking sanctuary in the UK as "totally unacceptable" and "bureaucratic".

Labour leader Keir Starmer has also called on ministers to take a "humanitarian approach" to provide "sanctuary for those who are fleeing from Russian aggression, fleeing from this invasion, fleeing for their lives".

While Tory grandee Sir Roger Gale has tweeted: "We have to offer a safe haven for refugees from Soviet oppression as we have done in the past.

"We must do this with the minimum of bureaucracy and the maximum of compassion. Time to roll out the welcome mat."

**Load-Date:** February 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Berlin expands old airport shelter as refugee housing scarce*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66TR-FYH1-DY4H-K4BR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

November 9, 2022 Wednesday 4:15 PM GMT

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**Length:** 698 words

**Byline:** Kirsten Grieshaber

**Highlight:** The German capital is expanding a temporary refugee shelter at a former airport to accommodate 3,600 Ukrainians, as it struggles to put up more civilians fleeing Russian attacks on Ukraine’s vital infrastructure ahead of the upcoming cold winter months

**Body**

The German capital is expanding a temporary refugee shelter at a former airport to accommodate 3,600 Ukrainians, as it struggles to put up more civilians fleeing Russian attacks on vital infrastructure ahead of the upcoming cold winter months.

While two former terminals at Tegel Airport were already opened for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in the spring, [*Berlin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/berlin) 's state government is now racing to outfit two big tents on the tarmac with heaters for the winter. It has also opened a third terminal for the registration of further arrivals and put up 900 new beds, officials said Wednesday.

“With Russian President Putin targeting the country's heat and water infrastructure and the temperatures going down below zero soon, the numbers of refugees can skyrocket at any time,” said Katja Kipping, the Berlin state government’s senator for social issues, as she toured newly opened registration facilities at terminal C.

“We must be prepared,” Kipping said, adding that most regular refugee and asylum shelters in Berlin and elsewhere in the country were already overcrowded, and finding new space for more people looking for protection in Germany needed to become a top priority.

Germany has taken in 1 million refugees from Ukraine since Russia attacked the eastern European country almost nine months ago. In addition, more asylum seekers than in previous years are coming here from countries such as Syria, [*Moldova*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/moldova) or [*Afghanistan*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/afghanistan). Elsewhere in Europe, the number of people applying for international protection has also reached highs not seen since well over 1 million people sought refuge on the continent seven years ago.

Last week, the head of the German association of cities warned that many cities around the country are no longer able to provide decent housing for refugees.

“We will have to start relying on emergency solutions, because the regular housing that would actually be provided for this purpose is not available in quantity and quality,” Straubing mayor Markus Pannermayr said on Bayern 2 radio.

The federal government tried to allay local communities' concerns last week, saying it is willing to provide 4.25 billion euros ($4.26 billion) for this and next year to help take care of refugees and migrants. But even with new federal funds, new housing units cannot be built as quickly as people keep arriving, city officials say.

At Tegel airport, some 1,500 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have currently found a temporary home — most of them mothers with their children — as the German capital's regular refugee homes with almost 28,000 beds are full. On Wednesday, some new arrivals were sitting on long in the vast former arrival hall, slurping down hot vegetable soup, while others crouched close together on old metal seats near the walls charging their phones on multiple sockets.

A family of five with a baby in a stroller and the father using a wheelchair was lining up in the old boarding pass and security control area to get registered, while several elderly women huddled up in big coats were standing in front of the former airline gates to go through police checks and have their fingerprints and biometric pictures taken.

Berlin has welcomed more than 100,000 Ukrainians so far, and while many have found private accommodation with relatives or [*Germans*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/germans) who have opened their homes to them, some 3,000 currently rely on the city for accommodation.

Ukrainians can enter Germany without visas, but migrants from other countries looking for refuge in Germany need to apply for asylum to get into shelters.

From January through the end of September, 134,908 people applied for asylum in Germany, with about 10,700 of them now living in Berlin.

In October alone, 3,454 people applied for asylum in the German capital, which was an increase of 30% compared to September, city officials said.

To make sure all of them — as well as those expected to come — have a roof over their heads in the winter, Berlin wants to create 10,000 extra accommodation spaces until the end of this year.

“We have a Herculean task to tackle here,” Kipping said.

\_\_\_

Follow all [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) stories about global migration at [*https://apnews.com/hub/migration*](https://apnews.com/hub/migration) and of the war in Ukraine at [*https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine*](https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine)

**Load-Date:** November 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Belgium imposes a ban on shelter for single men seeking asylum to make place for families*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:692C-X1F1-DY4H-K36X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 30, 2023 Wednesday 10:20 AM GMT

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**Length:** 370 words

**Byline:** Raf Casert

**Highlight:** Belgium is imposing a ban on providing shelter for single men seeking asylum, arguing its insufficient reception capacity should be freed for families, women and children first

**Body**

The Belgian government said Wednesday it is imposing a ban on providing shelter for single men seeking asylum, arguing its insufficient reception capacity should be freed for families, women and children first. Aid organizations condemned the move as reneging on international commitments.

[*Belgium*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/belgium) has long come under criticism for failing to provide enough shelter to the thousands of people who are seeking protection from persecution back home and long lines of tents along streets outside the main processing center in [*Brussels*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/brussels) have become a stain on Belgium's reputation.

On Wednesday, Asylum State Secretary Nicole de Moor said increasing pressure on asylum housing was expected over the coming months and she “absolutely wants to avoid that children will end up in the streets this winter.” Instead, single men will have to fend for themselves.

The move was met with scathing criticism from human rights organizations.

“We thought we’d seen it all, but no. The Belgian government isn’t just sitting on human rights, it’s burying them by ‘suspending’ the reception of single male asylum-seekers,” said Philippe Hensmans, director of Amnesty International Belgium.

De Moor was complaining that the influx of asylum-seekers over the past two years in the nation of 11.5 million had filled the shelter centers to near capacity of 33,500. Last year, Belgium had nearly 37,000 applications for protection, the federal agency Fedasil said.

On top of the asylum-seekers, Belgium is also giving help to some 62,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who fled Russia’s war in their country.

Last year alone, labor courts convicted Fedasil over 5,000 times for failing to provide proper shelter.

Still, said de Moor, “our country has already done more than its share for a long time,” and called on some other EU nations to increase their effort instead.

Last December, Europe’s top human rights body already urged Belgian authorities to provide better assistance to asylum-seekers after hundreds of people slept on Brussels streets in freezing temperatures.

The Council of Europe’s commissioner for human rights said that a lack of available spots in reception facilities was damaging asylum-seekers’ rights to health and other basic needs.

**Load-Date:** August 30, 2023

**End of Document**



[*More of UK’s aid budget spent inside UK than in poor countries – OLD*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66R6-T911-JBNF-W4GJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

October 28, 2022 Friday 11:15 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:4

**Length:** 739 words

**Byline:** Sophie Wingate

**Highlight:** Much of the pot is being spent on housing ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, leaving less to fund humanitarian programmes in Africa and Asia.

**Body**

The UK is now spending more of its international development budget at home than in poor developing countries, development experts have said.

That is because a large proportion of the pot is being spent on housing refugees, mainly from Ukraine, according to the Centre for Global Development (CGD).

[*Rishi Sunak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rishi-sunak) was criticised for slashing the foreign aid budget from 0.7% to 0.5% of national income when he was chancellor, as well as setting a precedent for letting the [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) and other departments use the pot, and stretching the rules on what can be counted as aid.

Saying we spend 0.5% of our national income on aid is becoming meaningless, when such a huge proportion of this pot is being spent domestically, rather than on helping people facing enormous hardship across the world

Ranil Dissanayake, Center for Global Development

The UK aid budget is around £11 billion, with some £4 billion going to multilateral institutions including the World Bank.

Of the remaining £7 billion, which is administered by the UK directly, more than half will be spent domestically this year, including some £3 billion on housing refugees, according to CGD’s analysis.

While the UK is allowed to count refugee-hosting costs as official development assistance (ODA) under internationally agreed rules, it is one of only a few countries – and the only one in the G7 – to fund all the costs of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** from its existing aid budget, the Washington and London-based think tank said.

The Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP has been appointed a Minister of State (Minister for Development) in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office [*@FCDOGovUK*](https://twitter.com/FCDOGovUK?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw). He will attend Cabinet. [*#Reshuffle*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Reshuffle?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/XO9dZZampD*](https://t.co/XO9dZZampD) — UK Prime Minister (@10DowningStreet) [*October 25, 2022*](https://twitter.com/10DowningStreet/status/1584990717931245569?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Ranil Dissanayake, policy fellow at CGD, said: “The development budget – the pot of money we put aside to help the world’s poorest people – is being squeezed from every angle.“Not only was it slashed by almost a third, Rishi Sunak then set a precedent as chancellor for letting other departments claim whatever they could back from this pot.“Saying we spend 0.5% of our national income on aid is becoming meaningless, when such a huge proportion of this pot is being spent domestically, rather than on helping people facing enormous hardship across the world.”One of the key Tory [*MPs*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mps) who rebelled against Mr Sunak’s aid budget cuts last year, Andrew Mitchell, has now been appointed by the Prime Minister as development minister in the Foreign Office.The appointment was seen as significant as Mr Mitchell, a former international development secretary, could increase pressure on Mr Sunak to honour his pledge to return to 0.7% international aid spending by 2024-25.One area in which costs ODA are soaring are the refugee and asylum seekers costs, mainly for Ukraine. Of course, we should help them, but entirely on the back of the poor in Africa and Asia? 6/n— Stefan Dercon (@gamblingondev) [*October 26, 2022*](https://twitter.com/gamblingondev/status/1585163285443510278?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

However, the Prime Minister is considering freezing the budget for an extra two years – saving £4 billion a year – as he eyes ways to plug a multi-billion pound fiscal black hole, the Telegraph reported.

Mr Mitchell “focused strongly on results for the poor, and value for money – at the moment, the way budgets are handled they deliver neither,” according to Stefan Dercon, professor of economic policy at Oxford University’s Blavatnik School of Government.

He tweeted on Wednesday: “Aid is now only 0.3% of GNI (gross national income) once we account for all asylum/refugee costs and other spending programmes for Ukraine inside the UK. That is now less than it was before 1997.”

He blamed the Home Office’s “(poor) management of accommodation costs in the UK” and predicted “more cuts to humanitarian spending for [*African*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/africa) and [*Asian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/asia) crises, and less for those things the UK built a reputation for doing well.”

A spokesperson at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office said: “Across government, there are significant pressures on the 0.5% ODA budget due to the costs of accepting refugees from Afghanistan and Ukraine as well as wider migration challenges. Obviously how many refugees arrive in any particular period is not certain, so there is not a fixed cost.

“We remain one of the largest global aid donors, spending more than £11 billion in aid in 2021, and UK aid has recently gone towards those in need in the Horn of Africa and Pakistan.”

**Load-Date:** October 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[*More of UK’s foreign aid budget spent in Britain than poor countries, study finds*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66RB-YBY1-JBNF-W1PM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

October 29, 2022 Saturday 12:26 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK NEWS,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:1

**Length:** 737 words

**Byline:** Sophie Wingate

**Highlight:** Much of the pot is being spent on housing ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, leaving less to fund humanitarian programmes in Africa and Asia.

**Body**

The UK is now spending more of its international development budget at home than in poor developing countries, experts have said.

That is because a large proportion of the pot is being spent on housing refugees, mainly from Ukraine, according to the Centre for Global Development (CGD).

[*Rishi Sunak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rishi-sunak) was criticised for slashing the foreign aid budget from 0.7% to 0.5% of national income when he was chancellor, as well as setting a precedent for letting the [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) and other departments use the pot, and stretching the rules on what can be counted as aid.

The UK aid budget is around £11 billion, with some £4 billion going to multilateral institutions including the World Bank.

Of the remaining £7 billion, which is administered by the UK directly, more than half will be spent domestically this year, including some £3 billion on housing refugees, according to CGD’s analysis.

While the UK is allowed to count refugee-hosting costs as official development assistance (ODA) under internationally agreed rules, it is one of only a few countries – and the only one in the G7 – to fund all the costs of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** from its existing aid budget, the Washington and London-based think tank said.

Saying we spend 0.5% of our national income on aid is becoming meaningless, when such a huge proportion of this pot is being spent domestically, rather than on helping people facing enormous hardship across the worldRanil Dissanayake, Center for Global DevelopmentRanil Dissanayake, policy fellow at CGD, said: “The development budget – the pot of money we put aside to help the world’s poorest people – is being squeezed from every angle.“Not only was it slashed by almost a third, Rishi Sunak then set a precedent as chancellor for letting other departments claim whatever they could back from this pot.“Saying we spend 0.5% of our national income on aid is becoming meaningless, when such a huge proportion of this pot is being spent domestically, rather than on helping people facing enormous hardship across the world.”The Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP has been appointed a Minister of State (Minister for Development) in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office [*@FCDOGovUK*](https://twitter.com/FCDOGovUK?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw). He will attend Cabinet. [*#Reshuffle*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Reshuffle?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/XO9dZZampD*](https://t.co/XO9dZZampD) — UK Prime Minister (@10DowningStreet) [*October 25, 2022*](https://twitter.com/10DowningStreet/status/1584990717931245569?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) One of the key Tory [*MPs*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mps) who rebelled against Mr Sunak’s aid budget cuts last year, Andrew Mitchell, has now been appointed by the Prime Minister as development minister in the Foreign Office.The appointment was seen as significant as Mr Mitchell, a former international development secretary, could increase pressure on Mr Sunak to honour his pledge to return to 0.7% international aid spending by 2024-25.However, the Prime Minister is considering freezing the budget for an extra two years – saving £4 billion a year – as he eyes ways to plug a multi-billion pound fiscal black hole, the Telegraph reported.Mr Mitchell “focused strongly on results for the poor, and value for money – at the moment, the way budgets are handled they deliver neither,” according to Stefan Dercon, professor of economic policy at Oxford University’s Blavatnik School of Government.He tweeted on Wednesday: “Aid is now only 0.3% of GNI (gross national income) once we account for all asylum/refugee costs and other spending programmes for Ukraine inside the UK. That is now less than it was before 1997.”One area in which costs ODA are soaring are the refugee and asylum seekers costs, mainly for Ukraine. Of course, we should help them, but entirely on the back of the poor in Africa and Asia? 6/n— Stefan Dercon (@gamblingondev) [*October 26, 2022*](https://twitter.com/gamblingondev/status/1585163285443510278?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

He blamed the Home Office’s “(poor) management of accommodation costs in the UK” and predicted “more cuts to humanitarian spending for [*African*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/africa) and [*Asian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/asia) crises, and less for those things the UK built a reputation for doing well.”

A spokesperson at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office said: “Across government, there are significant pressures on the 0.5% ODA budget due to the costs of accepting refugees from Afghanistan and Ukraine as well as wider migration challenges. Obviously how many refugees arrive in any particular period is not certain, so there is not a fixed cost.

“We remain one of the largest global aid donors, spending more than £11 billion in aid in 2021, and UK aid has recently gone towards those in need in the Horn of Africa and Pakistan.”

**Load-Date:** October 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[*The King to meet with refugee families in Aberdeen*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66MR-VBY1-DY4H-K1WM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

October 17, 2022 Monday 2:45 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 257 words

**Byline:** Lauren Gilmour

**Highlight:** The monarch will meet families resettled in Aberdeen as part of an ongoing programme in the city.

**Body**

The King will meet with families settled in [*Aberdeen*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/aberdeen) from [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , [*Syria*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/syria) and [*Afghanistan*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/afghanistan) as part of a programme to re-settle refugees in the city.

On Monday, the monarch will hear how Aberdeen City Council programmes have supported people as well as meet with local dignitaries including Inna Skvortsova, the lead welcome hub officer and a Ukrainian woman who arrived earlier this year as part of the Ukrainian resettlement programme and now has a full-time role at the council.

He will join a reception in the Town and County Hall in the Town House where he will meet Afghan, Syrian and Ukrainian families who have been supported by Government Schemes in Aberdeen.

The King will also have an opportunity to hear personal stories from families on their evacuation, their arrival in Aberdeen and some of the challenges they have faced.

Before his departure, a choir made up of school children, university students and some of the refugee families will sing The Northern Lights Of Old Aberdeen.

As Prince of Wales, Charles carried out a number of engagements with refugee communities.

During an official visit to [*Jordan*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jordan) in November 2021, the King visited the Al Nuzha Community Centre which is supported by UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and met refugee families receiving UK assistance through UNHCR.

Aberdeen has resettled around 1,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, with capacity for more.

Approximately 170 Afghan refugees are currently staying in two hotels in the city and around 30 Syrian families have also been resettled in the city since 2014.

**Load-Date:** October 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*More of UK’s foreign aid budget spent in Britain than poor countries, study finds*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66RB-8XR1-DY4H-K4YX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

October 29, 2022 Saturday 8:24 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 737 words

**Byline:** Sophie Wingate

**Highlight:** Much of the pot is being spent on housing ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, leaving less to fund humanitarian programmes in Africa and Asia.

**Body**

The UK is now spending more of its international development budget at home than in poor developing countries, experts have said.

That is because a large proportion of the pot is being spent on housing refugees, mainly from Ukraine, according to the Centre for Global Development (CGD).

[*Rishi Sunak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rishi-sunak) was criticised for slashing the foreign aid budget from 0.7% to 0.5% of national income when he was chancellor, as well as setting a precedent for letting the [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) and other departments use the pot, and stretching the rules on what can be counted as aid.

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A spokesperson at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office said: “Across government, there are significant pressures on the 0.5% ODA budget due to the costs of accepting refugees from Afghanistan and Ukraine as well as wider migration challenges. Obviously how many refugees arrive in any particular period is not certain, so there is not a fixed cost.

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**Load-Date:** October 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Archbishop of Canterbury prays for peaceful 2024 in New Year message*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B0S-N3P1-DY4H-K1M9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

January 1, 2024 Monday 12:01 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 456 words

**Byline:** Gwyn Wright

**Highlight:** The Most Rev Justin Welby said ‘wars seem everywhere at the moment’ as he delivered his annual start-of-the-year address.

**Body**

The [*Archbishop*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/archbishop) of [*Canterbury*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/canterbury) called on people to “stand with those suffering because of war and to seek to make peace” as he prayed for a peaceful 2024 in his New Year message.

The Most Rev [*Justin Welby*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/justin-welby) said “wars seem everywhere at the moment” as he delivered his annual start-of-the-year address.

Speaking from RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire, he said: “Wars seem everywhere at the moment.

“Wars we know about, wars forgotten.

“I’ve seen for myself the ongoing human cost of war.

Jesus Christ tells us to stand with those suffering because of war, and to seek to make peace

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby

“In Ukraine I went to [*Bucha*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/bucha) where evidence of atrocities was found.

“I’ve met ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, most recently in Georgia and Romania: families having to start again in a new country.

“I’ve met refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh (a territory disputed between Azerbaijan and Armenia) after they left their homes because of conflict.

“And in Jerusalem last October I sat and listened to some of those traumatised by war, Palestinian and Israeli.

“Jesus Christ tells us to stand with those suffering because of war, and to seek to make peace.”

It came after Russia launched a fresh drone assault on Ukraine on Saturday night, hitting the capital, Kyiv, and border city Kharkiv after promising that strikes on the Russian border city of Belgorod hours earlier, which killed 24 people, would “not go unpunished”.

The health ministry in Gaza said on Saturday that another 165 people were killed in the previous 24 hours.

In his address, the archbishop also praised the armed forces as he said they embody the theme of the King’s coronation last year.

He said soldiers were at the centre of the celebrations not “just because the world marvelled at their displays of pageantry” but because they, “like many, many others in the country”, embodied service.

He added: “Here at RAF Brize Norton, almost 6,000 service personnel are living out that oath every day, working to keep us safe and the country secure, delivering humanitarian aid following natural disasters, like the earthquake in Turkey last year, or supporting civilians in the midst of conflict in places like the Middle East.

“We’re learning more and more how the horrors and traumas of war impact service personnel, sometimes long after.

“But there are also traumas for their loved ones.

“[*Families*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/families) across the country feel the absence of relatives and those they love who are serving their country abroad.

“We fear for those of our fellow citizens who risk their lives defending and protecting the vulnerable and ensuring security.”

– The Archbishop of Canterbury’s New Year Message will be broadcast on BBC1 and iPlayer at 12.55pm on Monday January 1.

**Load-Date:** December 31, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Oleksandr Zinchenko hails Ukrainian soldiers after ‘dream’ win sends nation to Euro 2024*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BN5-8GW1-JBNF-W3TT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 27, 2024 Wednesday 7:32 AM GMT

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**Section:** FOOTBALL,SPORT; Version:1

**Length:** 577 words

**Byline:** Nick Said

**Highlight:** A 2-1 win over Iceland sends Ukraine to their fourth straight European Championship

**Body**

Ukraine’s qualification for the [*Euro 2024*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/euro-2024) soccer finals has cheered a country [*suffering hardship in its conflict with Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-poland-airspace-war-latest-lviv-b2517702.html) and for a few weeks in June and July the tournament will provide a welcome distraction from the harsh reality of war.

The team came from behind to [*defeat Iceland 2-1 in their playoff final*](https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/football/ukraine-euro-2024-mudryk-goal-iceland-b2519192.html) in neutral Poland on Tuesday and book a fourth successive appearance in the continental finals.

They will be in Group E with Belgium, Slovakia and Romania, who they face in their opening game in Munich on June 17.

Russia’s war with Ukraine has now entered a third year and, despite heavy casualties on both sides, it shows no sign of coming to an end following Russia’s invasion of February 2022.

“I am very proud to be a Ukrainian, to be of the same blood as those who are now giving their lives for our freedom,” [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine-football) captain [*Oleksandr Zinchenko*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/oleksandr-zinchenko) said after Tuesday’s victory.

“We need to talk about it, shout about it every day. This is the only way we can win. It was one of our most emotional games.

“It is an amazing feeling. I am very happy because it is another dream come true. A big thank you to our fans, they helped us through these difficult times amazingly.”

Coach Serhiy Rebrov said in the build-up to the Iceland match that it was hard for his team to concentrate on football.

“The missiles are flying every day. Our mission is to show that we’re all alive and fighting against the Russians and that we need Europe’s support,” Rebrov said.

He added that his players were “watching the news about the shelling of Odessa and Kyiv (and made) even more angry and eager to show our potential on the football field”. The coach hailed the “character of our players and our nation” to keep going in a qualifying campaign where, as refugees from the war themselves, Ukraine have staged ‘home’ matches spread across Europe.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy praised the team’s resilience in difficult times.

“Thank you, team. For the important victory and making it to EURO,” Zelenskiy said in a post on X. “For proving once again, whenever Ukrainians face difficulties they do not give up and continue to fight, Ukrainians certainly win.

“In times, when the enemy tries to destroy us, we demonstrate every day that Ukrainians are and will be. Ukraine is, and will be! Glory to Ukraine!”

Ukraine successfully completed its qualification mission in Poland, which has the largest concentration of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** of any country.

Still, it has been no easy path to the finals.

Rebrov’s side came through a tough qualifying group that included European champions Italy and runners-up England, managing draws against both sides.

It followed the disappointment of losing to Wales in a playoff for a place at the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, after which former Ukraine striker Rebrov took over in June last year.

With Roman Yaremchuk and Artem Dovbyk in attack, the pace of winger Mykhailo Mudryk, guile of Zinchenko in midfield and steel of Illya Zabarnyi and Vitaliy Mykolenko at the back, Ukraine have a capable squad. What they have proven now is that they can battle against the odds in the face of adversity and win the day, hoping that will become a unifying message for the country.

“It was very difficult to be on the coaching bench today, I saw how difficult it was for the guys,” Rebrov said. “I am grateful to all of them for this gift for our country. In such a difficult time, it is very important.”

Reuters

**Load-Date:** March 27, 2024

**End of Document**



[*250,000 demand action for Ukrainian refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657R-88P1-F072-42XS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 17, 2022 Sunday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 1

**Length:** 104 words

**Byline:** RORY SULLIVAN

**Body**

More than 250,000 people have signed <em>The Independent</em>'s petition urging the UK government to step up support for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. The milestone reached by the Refugees Welcome appeal has fuelled calls for Boris Johnson to listen to the public and open up Britain to those fleeing conflict. This newspaper launched the campaign days after Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February. Since then 10 million civilians have been displaced and many thousands killed by Vladimir Putin's conflict. Refugees Welcome is pushing ministers to provide more food, clothing and shelter to care for refugees who have fled Ukraine.

**Load-Date:** April 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Scottish Government to end contract for cruise ship used to house Ukrainians*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:679D-7WN1-DY4H-K3PW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

January 12, 2023 Thursday 8:22 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 276 words

**Byline:** Katrine Bussey

**Highlight:** The agreement for the use of the MS Ambition, which is docked near Glasgow, will end on March 31.

**Body**

***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** currently living in a cruise ship are to be moved off the boat and into “longer term accommodation”, the [*Scottish Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scottish-government) has said.

It confirmed that the contract to use the MS Ambition, which is currently docked near [*Glasgow*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/glasgow) , would come to an end on March 31 this year.

Neil Gray, the minister with special responsibility for refugees from Ukraine, said use of the vessel – currently home to about 1,170 Ukrainians, including 420 children – was always intended to be a temporary measure.

He added that the [*Scottish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scottish) Government would now look to make “full use” of both existing and new volunteer hosts to provide somewhere to stay for the refugees.

The announcement that its use is being ended comes after ministers last month extended the contract for another ship being used to house refugees, the MS [*Victoria*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/victoria) which is docked outside [*Edinburgh*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/edinburgh) , for a further five months.

Mr Gray said: “The MS Ambition was a temporary measure to ensure Scotland could respond to the humanitarian crisis facing people in Ukraine and provide an immediate place of safety for displaced people.

“Our focus now is to secure sustainable longer term accommodation for the Ukrainians currently on MS Ambition and in other welcome accommodation to ensure they have the support they need to build a home in Scotland for as long as they need it.

“This includes making full use of existing and new volunteer hosts. I’m extremely grateful to people who are already hosting, as well as those who have already put their details forward and are still waiting to be matched.

“And I encourage anyone considering becoming a host to come forward and provide a warm welcome.”

**Load-Date:** January 12, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Czech government OKs bill for 2% GDP spending on military*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:677N-N4F1-DY4H-K54Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

January 4, 2023 Wednesday 3:55 PM GMT

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**Length:** 282 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** The Czech government has approved a bill aimed at bringing defense spending at the required NATO goal of 2% of gross domestic product as Russia's war in Ukraine continues

**Body**

The Czech government on Wednesday approved a bill aimed at bringing defense spending at the required NATO goal of 2% of gross domestic product as Russia’s war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) continues.

Defense Minister Jana Cernochova said the move would“ensure a stable and transparent financing of big defense strategic projects in the future."

Cernochova said the war in Ukraine “made it clear we have to be ready for the current and future conflicts and that's why a fast modernization of the army is absolutely necessary.”

Although the Czechs will spend only 1.52% of [*GDP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/gdp) on defense this year, the 2% target should be reached in 2024 once the bill is approvied in parliament where the governing coalition has a majority in both chambers.

NATO members agreed in 2014 to commit to the 2% spending target by 2024. Currently, only nine of the Western military alliance’s 30 members meet or surpass that goal.

The U.S., which provides the bulk of NATO forces, has had a long-standing complaint that several of its European allies don’t pitch it enough.

The [*Russian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) invasion of Ukraine has expedited the modernization of the Czech military with the planned, multi-billion euro procurement of new armaments. The Czechs have been negotiating with the U.S. about a possible purchase of 24 F-35 fighter jets and holding talks with [*Sweden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sweden) for the acquisition of 210 CV90 armoured vehicles.

Czechia has been a staunch supporter of Ukraine, donating Soviet-era weaponry to Ukrainian forces, including tanks. It has also issued almost 475,000 visas to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** affording them access to health care, financial help, work permits and other benefits.

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Follow all of AP’s coverage of NATO at [*https://apnews.com/hub/nato*](https://apnews.com/hub/nato)

**Load-Date:** January 4, 2023

**End of Document**



[*‘God bless you’: Biden praises Poland for taking in Ukrainian refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67KX-S7N1-DY4H-K4H3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 21, 2023 Tuesday 5:56 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 90 words

**Byline:** Oliver Browning

**Body**

[*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) has praised [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) for taking in more than 1.5 million ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) in the year since [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) ’s invasion.

The US president spoke from [*Warsaw*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/warsaw) ahead of the one-year anniversary of the beginning of the conflict, calling the compassion “extraordinary”.

“Look at what you’ve done so far. Poland is hosting more than 1.5 million refugees from this war, God bless you,” Mr Biden said to cheers.

“Poland’s generosity, your willingness to open your hearts and your homes is extraordinary.”

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**Load-Date:** February 21, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Homes for Ukraine shows up our broken housing market*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66J6-8R11-F072-41G3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

October 5, 2022 Wednesday

First Edition

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**Section:** VOICES; Pg. 31

**Length:** 728 words

**Byline:** OLIVIA BLAKE

**Body**

This month is the sixth since the first Ukrainians were resettled in Britain through the government's "Homes for Ukraine" scheme. Many people across the country were keen to help those fleeing violence and generously opened their homes. I was proud that in Sheffield alone, 500 Ukrainian refugee households were matched with hosts. The scheme has certainly been successful in highlighting the widespread desire in this country to help those escaping a war zone.

However, the government's failure to plan ahead now risks exacerbating the homelessness crisis. Government data has revealed that 1,335 Ukrainian households, including 945 families with children, have registered as homeless since February. And there are fears that up to 50,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** could still become homeless next year, as hosting periods are coming to an end and some households decide not to renew their commitment.

With the escalating cost of living crisis set to hit many families this winter, this could be a factor in why some chose not to renew. To counter this, Lord Harrington, who was until recently a refugee minister, lobbied for an increase in hosts' allowance to £700 per month if they agree to house Ukrainians for longer than the initial six-month period. However, thus far, the new government has not committed to any further support packages.

Perhaps the government anticipated that most Ukrainians will, after this initial period, be able to move into homes supplied by the privately rented sector. But the UK's ongoing housing crisis means that this is no easy option. Rents across the country have risen by 3.2 per cent in the 12 months up to July 2022, which marks the highest increase since December 2008. Rents in major UK cities have risen even more, and prospective tenants have to compete against each other in "bidding wars" or pay enormous amounts of money up front to secure tenancies.

Ukrainians who will have been in the country only for a few months will find this overheated market difficult to navigate. They might lack the funds for a deposit, have no rental references, and might not be in secure, long-term employment which is required for many tenancies. Some people in this situation might be able to rent with the help of a guarantor; however, without a larger personal network in the UK, this option - again - looks unrealistic for refugees.

When the scheme was conceived, several organisations highlighted the concern that these problems could arise without careful planning. Now they have materialised. We need urgent government action to ensure refugees have secure, safe housing - and in the long term, we need to address the housing crisis at the root of the issue.

Whether it is the privately rented sector or social housing, there are just not enough affordable homes available. There are currently over a million households on waiting lists for social housing. While housing estates across the country are being demolished, far too little social housing is being rebuilt.

This is also affecting other refugees. As of August, there were still 10,000 Afghan refugees in temporary hotel accommodation. These hotel rooms are clearly not suitable for people's long-term housing needs. Not having the security of a permanent home will prevent many from settling into a new life here. One year on from the evacuation of Kabul, this is clearly an unacceptable situation.

There is a danger that the shortage becomes an opportunistic excuse to lapse into the cliched far-right anti-migrant refrain: "Refugees, migrants and asylum seekers are stealing our homes - shut the borders". This would be to draw all the wrong lessons from what is happening. The housing shortage isn't caused by the arrival of more people, but decades of failed housing policy which has brought us to breaking point, as rents and house prices become increasingly unaffordable.

The emerging housing shortage for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** shines a light on already-existing systemic issues prevalent in our housing market. To tackle them, the government must urgently prioritise building more social housing and bring forward controls to relieve all renters - asylum seeker, migrant or otherwise - of extortionate rents. Only then can we make progress towards secure housing for all, whatever your background or the border you crossed to be here.

Olivia Blake is the Labour MP for Sheffield Hallam

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Voices: Homes for Ukraine proves how broken our housing market really is*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66J1-BH61-JBNF-W4Y4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

October 4, 2022 Tuesday 10:27 AM GMT

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**Section:** VOICES; Version:2

**Length:** 765 words

**Byline:** Olivia Blake

**Highlight:** Whether it is the privately rented sector or social housing, there are just not enough affordable homes available

**Body**

This month is the sixth since the first Ukrainians were resettled in Britain through the government’s “Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) ” scheme. Many people across the country were keen to help those fleeing violence and generously opened their homes. I was proud that in Sheffield alone, 500 Ukrainian refugee households were matched with hosts. The scheme has certainly been successful in highlighting the widespread desire in this country to help those escaping a war zone.

However, the government’s failure to plan ahead now risks exacerbating the homelessness crisis. Government data has revealed that 1,335 Ukrainian households, including 945 families with children, have registered as homeless since February. And there are fears that up to 50,000 ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) could still become homeless next year, as hosting periods are coming to an end and some households decide not to renew their commitment.

With the escalating cost of living crisis set to hit many families this winter, this could be a factor in why some chose not to renew. To counter this, Lord Harrington, who was until recently a refugee minister, lobbied for an increase in hosts’ allowance to £700 per month if they agree to house Ukrainians for longer than the initial six-month period. However, thus far, the new government has not committed to any further support packages.

Perhaps the government anticipated that most Ukrainians will, after this initial period, be able to move into homes supplied by the privately rented sector. But the UK’s ongoing [*housing crisis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/housing-crisis) means that this is no easy option. Rents across the country [*have risen by 3.2 per cent*](https://www.bigissue.com/news/housing/rents-in-the-uk-are-rising-at-the-highest-rate-for-14-years-will-they-keep-going-up/) in the 12 months up to July 2022, which marks the highest increase since December 2008. Rents in major UK cities have risen even more, and prospective tenants have to compete against each other in [*“bidding wars”*](https://www.standard.co.uk/homesandproperty/renting/london-renting-rent-rise-bidding-war-b1019154.html) or pay enormous amounts of money up front to secure tenancies.

Ukrainians who will have been in the country only for a few months will find this overheated market difficult to navigate. They might lack the funds for a deposit, have no rental references, and might not be in secure, long-term employment which is required for many tenancies. Some people in this situation might be able to rent with the help of a guarantor; however, without a larger personal network in the UK, this option – again – looks unrealistic for refugees.

[*When the scheme was conceived*](https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/homes-for-ukraine-refugees-welcome-b2036441.html) , several organisations highlighted the concern that these problems could arise without careful planning. Now they have materialised. We need urgent government action to ensure refugees have secure, safe housing – and in the long term, we need to address the housing crisis at the root of the issue.

Whether it is the privately rented sector or social housing, there are just not enough affordable homes available. There are currently over a million households on waiting lists for social housing. While housing estates across the country are being demolished, far too little social housing is being rebuilt.

This is also affecting other refugees. As of August, there were still [*10,000 Afghan refugees in temporary hotel accommodation*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/afghan-taliban-government-kabul-watford-b2144028.html). These hotel rooms are clearly not suitable for people’s long-term housing needs. Not having the security of a permanent home will prevent many from settling into a new life here. One year on from the evacuation of Kabul, this is clearly an unacceptable situation.

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There is a danger that the shortage becomes an opportunistic excuse to lapse into the cliched far-right anti-migrant refrain: “Refugees, migrants and asylum seekers are stealing our homes – shut the borders”. This would be to draw all the wrong lessons from what is happening.

The housing shortage isn’t caused by the arrival of more people, but decades of failed housing policy which has brought us to breaking point, as rents and house prices become increasingly unaffordable.

The emerging housing shortage for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** shines a light on already-existing systemic issues prevalent in our housing market. To tackle them, the government must urgently prioritise building more social housing and bring forward controls to relieve all renters – asylum seeker, migrant or otherwise – of extortionate rents. Only then can we make progress towards secure housing for all, whatever your background or the border you crossed to be here.

Olivia Blake is the Labour MP for Sheffield Hallam

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Pro-Russian hackers spread hoaxes to divide Ukraine, allies*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GM-CDJ1-DY4H-K4SK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 19, 2022 Thursday 3:48 PM GMT

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**Length:** 698 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** As ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** flooded into Poland to escape Russia's invasion, a hacking group aligned with the Kremlin tried to spread rumors and hoaxes intended to divide Ukraine from its allies

**Body**

As Ukrainians flooded into [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) earlier this year to flee Russian invaders, a hacking group aligned with the [*Kremlin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kremlin) sought to spread rumors that criminal gangs were waiting to harvest the organs of child refugees.

The network, known to cybersecurity experts as Ghostwriter, seemingly aimed to sow distrust between [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) and Poland. It's one of several tactics outlined in a new report that outlines how Russia has used disinformation, fear and propaganda alongside bullets, tanks and soldiers in an effort to demoralize Ukraine and divide its allies.

The unfounded claim made its way into Russian-state media and online platforms popular with far-right groups in the U.S., where posts spreading the hoax have been shared many thousands of times on sites like Telegram and [*Twitter*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/twitter). The disinformation operation exploited legitimate concerns that ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** could be kidnapped by human traffickers, but no evidence of organ harvesting has surfaced.

"Ghostwriter operations will often piggyback on news stories or recent events," said Alden Wahlstrom, a senior analyst at Mandiant, the cyber security firm that published the report Thursday. "There are certain motives that are consistent: Undercutting trust in NATO. Creating tensions."

The report detailed several other Russian-aligned disinformation and propaganda campaigns, including bogus online claims that Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelenskyy had committed suicide or fled Ukraine. In some cases, the campaigns relied on Russian state media or fake social media accounts to disseminate the disinformation. Mandiant also identified cases in which groups linked to Russian intelligence disguised their disinformation as independent journalism. Russian diplomats have also emerged as a key vector for disinformation.

In one instance in March, groups linked to Russia spread claims online that Zelenskyy had surrendered on the same day he was preparing to address the U.S. Congress.

"Influence efforts and propaganda are used to shape public opinion, to impact the morale of participants in a conflict," said Renee DiResta, research manager at the Stanford Internet Observatory and an expert on disinformation and social media. DiResta said Russia relies on this sophisticated network to "wage narrative warfare around the globe."

Ghostwriter has been linked to Belarus, a key Russian ally. The network was also blamed for attempting to hack into the social media accounts of dozens of Ukrainian officers earlier this year. That operation was revealed by Meta, the parent company of Facebook, who said the hackers were foiled before they could use the officers' accounts to post videos of surrendering Ukrainian soldiers.

The organ harvesting hoax was further amplified by Russian state media and ultimately seeped into English-language websites and platforms. It can now be found on major platforms including Twitter and Telegram, where Russian forces are portrayed as the saviors of trafficking victims.

"The pro-Russian government... foiled a massive kidnapping plot organized by organ traffickers," reads one example on Twitter. "US Government is complicit," reads another post, from a user in Texas.

Mandiant's report also highlighted pro-Chinese and Iranian disinformation networks that sought to leverage the war in Ukraine for their own ends.

The pro-Chinese network amplified a discredited Russian claim that the U.S. was running secret bioweapon research in Ukraine. That claim is similar to ones spread by Chinese officials who sought to blame the U.S. for the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Iranian network, by contrast, seemingly sought to create tensions between Russians and Israel by spreading claims that Israel had taken Ukraine's side in the conflict.

In both cases, researchers at Mandiant stopped short of attributing the work to government agencies in either Iran or China, noting the difficulty in proving such linkages. Nonetheless, Wahlstrom said, they are using online disinformation to further Iran and China's objectives, and using Russia's invasion to do it.

"They're parroting official Russian narratives," Wahlstrom told The [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap). "They've also given it their own twist."

\_\_

Klepper reported from Providence, R.I.

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainians in US mobilize to help 100,000 expected refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6544-07C1-DY4H-K0S3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 31, 2022 Thursday 5:33 AM GMT

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**Length:** 1055 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Ukrainians already living in the United States are working through formal and informal networks to provide housing, food and a sense of community to as many as 100,000 refugees expected to arrive in the country

**Body**

As the United States prepares to accept up to 100,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** following Russia's invasion of their country, existing communities in cities like [*Sacramento*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sacramento) and [*Seattle*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/seattle) are already mobilizing to provide food, shelter and support to those fleeing the war.

The federal government hasn't said when the formal resettlement process will begin, but Ukrainian groups in the U.S. are already providing support to people entering the country through other channels, including on visas that will eventually expire or by flying to [*Mexico*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mexico) and crossing over the border.

"No refugee is waiting for you to be ready for them," said Eduard Kislyanka, senior pastor at the House of Bread church near Sacramento, which has been sending teams of people to Poland and preparing dozens of its member families to house people arriving in California.

Since the war began in late February an estimated 3.6 million people have fled Ukraine and millions more have been displaced within the country. President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) said last week that the U.S. would admit up to 100,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and provide $1 billion in humanitarian assistance to countries affected by the exodus.

The federal government has yet to provide a timeline for refugee resettlement - often a lengthy process - or details on where refugees will be resettled. It's unlikely the United States will see a massive influx of Ukrainians on charter and military flights like happened with Afghan refugees last year.

Krish O'Mara Vignarajah, president of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, said the White House commitment of accepting up to 100,000 Ukrainians does not come with a minimum. Aside from the refugee resettlement program, their main avenues will be seeking humanitarian parole and appearing at the border with Mexico, she said.

Many who reach the United States will likely go to cities that already have strong Ukrainian communities.

The Sacramento region is home to the highest concentration of Ukrainian immigrants in the country, with about 18,000 people, according to census data analyzed by the Migration Policy Institute. The Seattle, Chicago and New York City areas are also hubs.

Word is spreading about the resources available in Sacramento, where churches like House of Bread are connecting Ukrainians who have already arrived with host families who can offer shelter and help access government resources and transportation. Kislyanka called the church's actions a "stop gap" measure designed to help as people await more clarity about the formal government resettlement process.

"Most of these people do not have any relations, like they don't know anybody here," said Kislyanka, who came to the U.S. as a child in the early 1990s. "Having somebody who can help them navigate the cultural shock and navigate the system. . . it just makes things a lot easier and smoother."

Sacramento has been a destination for Ukrainians since the late 1980s and early 1990s, when many of those arriving were Christians taking advantage of a U.S. law offering entrance to anyone escaping religious persecution in the former Soviet Union.

Another wave of refugees began arriving after Russia's initial invasion of Ukraine in 2014. Of the 8,000 Ukrainians resettled by the organization World Relief since then, 3,000 have come to Sacramento, said Vanassa Hamra, the group's community engagement manager in Sacramento.

Beyond the dozens of Slavic churches in the Sacramento region, there are schools that serve mainly Ukrainian and Russian students. Eastern European grocery stores and restaurants offer favorite foods like borscht, a type of beetroot soup, and varenyky, a boiled dumpling. Businesses started by Ukrainians try to hire others from their country.

All of that makes it easy for younger people to maintain a sense of connection to their heritage and for older immigrants to adapt without having to become fluent in a new language and culture.

"It's very easy when you come here. Every door, it's open for you," said Oleksandra Datsenko, who came to the U.S. six years ago and works as a waitress at Firebird Russian Restaurant, which serves Eastern European fare in a Sacramento suburb.

Valeriy Goloborodko, who immigrated to Southern California in 2006, wanted to return to Ukraine until he settled with his wife in the Seattle area. There, he found a thriving Ukrainian community and went on to become the country's honorary consul in Seattle in 2015, helping organize an annual festival where as many as 16,000 people a day would show up to feast on traditional food, listen to Ukrainian musicians and wear traditionally embroidered clothing.

"The Ukrainian community in Washington helped me to feel like I was at home - and this is my home now," Goloborodko said. "We feel like this is a Little Ukraine."

Since the invasion, Goloborodko and others in the Washington state Ukrainian community have lobbied hard for support from state officials. Democratic Gov. Jay Inslee has vowed that Washington will welcome Ukrainians fleeing the violence. The Legislature has set aside nearly $20 million to help pay anticipated costs of housing, job training, health care and legal aid for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. The Port of Seattle has promised to help welcome the refugees at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, where they can begin to be connected with services.

In Sacramento, meanwhile, the state's housing crisis could prove challenging as resettlement and community organizations look for lodging for new arrivals. Like much of California, the region is facing a housing crunch with limited supply and rising rents.

"People are coming here; we can help them; we can provide something. But it's going to get swamped so quick," said Kislyanka, the head pastor at House of Bread.

The International Rescue Committee's Sacramento branch has an affiliated immigrant welcome center that's already assisting people who entered the country illegally, said Lisa Welze, director of IRC Sacramento. Many are nervous to engage with resettlement agencies but in need of resources - particularly housing - as well as help navigating the immigration system to see if they can find a legal path to stay.

As for when the more formal resettlement process will begin, "we've been told we just need to wait," Welze said.

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Associated Press journalist Gene Johnson in Seattle contributed.

**Load-Date:** March 31, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Majority of Britons back a no-visa policy for refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6537-WJC1-JCS0-D4HG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 27, 2022 Sunday

Second Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 3

**Length:** 1091 words

**Byline:** ANDREW WOODCOCK, ADAM FORREST

**Body**

More than half of UK voters think Boris Johnson's government should ditch visa requirements for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to allow unlimited numbers to seek sanctuary here, a new poll for The Independent has found. Just one in five (21 per cent) said the government should stick to its requirement for visas for those fleeing Vladimir Putin's invasion, compared to 54 per cent who said the policy should be dropped.

Charities have warned that the visa process for the Homes for Ukraine scheme, which seeks to match refugees with British sponsors who have spare rooms, was proving much too "slow and bureaucratic". Lawyers also said long delays getting visas under the family scheme meant some refugees were close to running out of money and becoming increasingly vulnerable to traffickers.

The Savanta ComRes poll found that the government's policy on refugees was souring public opinion on Mr Johnson's response to the Ukraine war. Unlike EU nations which have opened their doors to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** for up to three years, the UK is insisting on visas for all those taking part in schemes to come to Britain.

The poll found strong support for Mr Johnson's overall approach to the war, with 53 per cent of those asked saying he had done a good job, against 35 per cent who said he had not. But on the welcome the government has offered to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, the picture was reversed, with 47 per cent saying Mr Johnson had done a bad job; meanwhile, just 42 per cent said he had done well.

The mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said yesterday that the government should be making it "far, far easier for those who are fleeing Ukraine to come here". Speaking at a march in support of Ukraine, Mr Khan said: "You compare our government's actions versus the actions of Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Poland, it's embarrassing - we've got be doing much more."

The Ukraine Advice Project, a group of hundreds of volunteer lawyers helping both sponsors and refugees, said they had not seen a single Ukrainian able to get to the UK under the scheme. Refugee Council chief executive Enver Solomon said: "It's been so slow and bureaucratic. It looks like there's going to be significant delays before we get many visas granted by this route. It's going to be very slow."

The charity chief added: "The visa application is a real barrier - we should be waiving the complicated requirements, or setting up a humanitarian scheme that allows people to come here quickly through one simple form." The Refugee Council is one of 16 charities and anti-trafficking organisations to have written to levelling up secretary Michael Gove warning that the sponsorship scheme remains open to abuse and risks becoming "Tinder for sex traffickers".

They called for leading charities to be accredited to help in the matching process to help ease concerns about the flood of amateur Facebook pages which could leave the process open to abuse. Nearly half of the 35,500 Ukrainians who have applied to the scheme launched on 4 March are still waiting for a decision.

Labour's shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper said problems with visa processes were "shameful", while the Liberal Democrats home affairs spokesperson Alistair Carmichael said that"Ukrainians are being left stranded in purgatory by a visa scheme in shambles".

JenniferBlair, a barrister volunteering with the Ukraine Advice Project, said the lengthy delays could leave people vulnerable to traffickers. "While people are waiting on the UK government to make a decision, they are not making a decision to go somewhere else. The longer it takes, the more it puts some people at risk of human trafficking."

Anti-slavery commissioner Dame Sara Thornton also said she was "gravely concerned" about the "very real threat of human trafficking facing refugees ??? at the Ukrainian borders and along their journey to destination countries, including the UK".

But home secretary Priti Patel has warned that lifting security checks would allow Mr Putin to send operatives into the UK, claiming that the Russian president could use female agents to unleash chemical and biological attacks like the 2018 Salisbury poisonings.

However, today's poll for The Independent found that support for a visa waiver for Ukrainians is backed by substantial majorities in every age group, every social class and every region of the UK. Some 55 per cent of Conservative voters backed the waiver, against just 22 per cent who opposed it. And it was backed by 62 per cent of Labour supporters, 71 per cent of Liberal Democrats, 54 per cent of Greens and 61 per cent of SNP voters.

There was strong backing for Mr Johnson's policy of providing military and financial assistance to the Ukrainian government. Almost two-thirds (65 per cent) said the UK should continue to supply money and defence equipment to the Ukrainians, compared to just 11 per cent who said it should not. Many said the UK should impose sanctions on Russia, even if it means energy prices rising for domestic consumers, with 65 per cent backing the measures and 12 per cent opposed.

However, there was considerable wariness at the prospect of UK troops being deployed to fight Russia alongside the Ukrainians. Some 44 per cent said they would oppose direct UK involvement in the war, compared to 31 per cent who said they would support it. Savanta ComRes questioned 2,203 UK adults on 19 and 20 March.

The London stands with Ukraine march drew 'tens of thousands' of people to the city centre yesterday, demonstrating their support for the beleaguered country. The huge sea of protesters, draped in blue and yellow colours, started near Hyde Park, before snaking through the roads towards Trafalgar Square. They chanted "stand with Ukraine" and "stop the war", with roads being closed off and traffic stopped.

The crowd, many from Ukraine, also marched beneath Yoko Ono's Imagine Peace message on a billboard in Piccadilly. Cheers rang out at Trafalgar Square as a message from Ukraine president Volodymyr Zelensky was played on a huge screen in front of Nelson's Column.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered.

To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign,click here. To sign the petitionclick here. If you would like to donate then pleaseclick herefor our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Hungary's Orbán casts doubt on European Union accession talks for Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:698S-VM71-DY4H-K16T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

September 29, 2023 Friday 8:54 AM GMT

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**Length:** 386 words

**Byline:** Justin Spike

**Highlight:** Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has cast doubt on the prospect of the European Union beginning negotiations any time soon for Ukraine to join the bloc

**Body**

Hungarian Prime Minister [*Viktor Orbán*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/viktor-orban) cast doubt Friday on the prospect of the [*European Union*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/european-union) beginning negotiations any time soon for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) to join the bloc, saying it was unrealistic to launch the accession process with a country that's at war.

Speaking to state radio, Orbán noted that unanimity among the EU's 27 member states is required to admit a new country into the bloc. In the case of Hungary, he said, the parliament would have to give the go-ahead to Ukraine, which has ambitions to join the EU within two years.

“When I'm in the chamber, I don’t feel the insurmountable desire for the Hungarian parliament to vote for Ukraine’s membership of the European Union within two years. So I would be careful with these ambitious plans,” Orbán said.

Ukraine was officially granted EU candidate status last year — an unusually rapid decision for the EU and its go-slow approach to expansion, prompted by the war in Ukraine. The European Council is expected to begin negotiations on Ukraine's accession in December.

Hungary, which has been sanctioned by the EU for alleged rule-of-law violations and corruption, has sparred with Kyiv over the rights of an ethnic Hungarian minority in western Ukraine. While it has admitted ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and condemned Russia's invasion, it has — uniquely among EU countries — maintained close relations with Moscow and argued against supplying arms to Ukraine or providing it with economic assistance.

On Friday, Orbán said the EU “will have to answer very long and difficult questions until we get to the point where we can even decide whether to start negotiations.”

“When we are discussing the future of Ukraine in Brussels in the autumn, we will not be able to avoid the question of whether we can think seriously about the membership of such a country,” he said. “Can we start negotiations with a country that is in a territorial war? We do not know the size of this country’s territory since it is still at war, and we do not know what its population is, because they are fleeing. ... To admit a country without knowing its parameters would be unprecedented.”

On Monday, Orbán told the Hungarian parliament that his government would “not support Ukraine on any international issue” until the language rights of the Hungarian minority in western Ukraine are restored.

**Load-Date:** September 29, 2023

**End of Document**



[*1972 'Napalm Girl' escorts Ukraine refugees to Canada*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65VF-HF11-DY4H-K16P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 4, 2022 Monday 6:42 PM GMT

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**Length:** 225 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Phan Thị Kim Phuc, the girl in the famous 1972 Vietnam napalm attack photo, is escorting 236 refugees from the war in Ukraine on a flight from Warsaw to Canada

**Body**

Phan Thá»‹ [*Kim*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kim) Phuc, the girl in the famous 1972 [*Vietnam*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vietnam) napalm attack photo, on Monday escorted 236 refugees from the war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) on a flight from Warsaw to [*Canada*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/canada).

Phuc’s iconic Associated Press photo in which she runs with her napalm-scalded body exposed, was etched on the private NGO plane that is flying the refugees to the city of Regina, the capital of the Canadian province of Saskatchewan.

Kim, 59, a Canadian citizen, said she wants her story and work for refugees to be a message of peace. With her husband, Bui Huy Toan, she travelled from Toronto to board the humanitarian flight.

The refugees, mostly women and children from across Ukraine, are among thousands of Ukrainians that Canada has provided humanitarian visas in the wake of Russia’s invasion of their country. Millions of Ukrainians have fled since Russia attacked on Feb. 24. Almost 5.5 million have registered with humanitarian organizations in Europe, according to the U.N.

Canada is among many Western countries offering ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** safe haven.

The founder of the NGO Solidaire, Argentinian philanthropist and pilot Enrique Pineyro, piloted the Boeing 787. Oscar Camps, from the Catalan NGO Open Arms was also aboard.

[*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) photographer Nick Ut took the Pulitzer Prize-awarded photo of Kim and other children fleeing a napalm attack in south Vietnam in June 1972.

**Load-Date:** July 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[*UK sending missile system and troops to protect Poland from Russian aggression*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6516-1WY1-JBNF-W434-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 17, 2022 Thursday 2:02 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 1054 words

**Byline:** Gerlaidne Scott

**Highlight:** Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said it is right to protect Poland as the country takes in the bulk of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

**Body**

The UK is to deploy a medium-range missile system and 100 personnel to [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) to "protect her airspace from any further aggression by Russia", the Defence Secretary has said.

Speaking on a visit to Warsaw, [*Ben Wallace*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ben-wallace) said Poland - which is taking the brunt of refugees fleeing Ukraine after the country's invasion by Russia - is a "very old ally".

He told a news conference: "It is very right that Britain stands by Poland as Poland carries much of the burden of the consequence of this war and stands tall and brave to stand up to the threats from Russia."

The announcement comes as Nato pledged to send more troops to defend its eastern flank, and just days after Russian missiles struck a military base in Yavoriv, Ukraine, a few miles from the border with Poland.

Downing Street said the deployment of the Sky Sabre system would be "supporting the Polish armed forces at the request of the Polish government".

The Prime Minister's official spokesman said: "It is, as ever, a purely defensive capability which we are providing on a bilateral basis to Poland.

"It will remain under UK control at all times."

He said it is a "short-term deployment".

The increased support comes as Foreign Office minister [*James Cleverly*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/james-cleverly) said a Russian air strike on Ukrainians sheltering in a theatre "looks to be specific targeting" of a civilian building and a "self-evident breach of international law".

Survivors have begun to emerge as authorities work to rescue hundreds of civilians trapped in the basement of a Mariupol venue where they were bunkered down, with images showing that an entire section of the three-storey building had collapsed after a strike on Wednesday evening.

Shelter officials said it miraculously stood firm, with people "coming out alive", according to a post on Facebook by Ukrainian MP Sergiy Taruta.

Fellow MP Dmytro Gurin told BBC Radio 4's World At One that it "looks like people are OK" in the theatre - which he said was occupied by around 1,200 people, mostly women and children - after being hit by a "super-powerful bomb".

It is not yet known whether any injuries or deaths were suffered among those inside.

The Russian defence ministry has denied bombing the theatre, but Mr Gurin said: "It is impossible it was an accident. It was intentional".

Mr Cleverly, asked on ITV's Good Morning Britain whether he thought the bombing of the shelter "looked like a war crime", said: "The targeting of civilian infrastructure is against international humanitarian law and the law of armed conflict.

"Ultimately it is for international courts and tribunals to make the formal decision, but self-evidently this is civilian infrastructure which we've seen had the word 'Kids' painted in Russian outside of this building.

"This looks to be specific targeting of civilian infrastructure and, as I say, that is a self-evident breach of international law and the law of armed conflict."

Foreign Secretary [*Liz Truss*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/liz-truss) , asked whether Russian President [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) was a war criminal, told Radio 4's Women's Hour: "There is very, very strong evidence that he is."

However, she repeated her junior minister's assertion that it was for international criminal courts to formally decide whether war crimes had been committed.

Her comments come after US President Joe Biden branded Mr Putin a "war criminal" in response to a reporter's question in Washington.

The White House incumbent's remarks have been criticised by the Kremlin but Ms Truss said it was not a mistake for Mr Biden to give the Russian leader that label.

It comes amid suggestions that peace talks are beginning to show signs of progress.

[*#BREAKING*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/BREAKING?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The UK and have called for a Security Council meeting on [*#Ukraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Ukraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw). Russia is committing war crimes and targeting civilians.Russia's illegal war on Ukraine is a threat to us all. [*pic.twitter.com/SRi76OAszm*](https://t.co/SRi76OAszm) - UK at the UN (@UKUN\_NewYork) [*March 16, 2022*](https://twitter.com/UKUN_NewYork/status/1504204076921274373?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov said after a meeting on Tuesday that a neutral military status for Ukraine is being "seriously discussed" by the two sides, while Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Russia's demands for ending the war are becoming "more realistic".Mr Cleverly said any peace deal with Russia must be "one the Ukrainians genuinely believe in".As part of the resolution discussions, Russia has demanded that Nato pledges never to admit Ukraine to the alliance or station forces there. In its stipulations, Ukraine has pushed for a ceasefire, the withdrawal of Russian troops and security guarantees for Ukraine from several countries.Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer said it was for the Ukrainians to decide how to advance the talks, but added: "It is very important that in principle we can't allow Russian aggression to triumph in any manner or form."According to the Associated Press, an official in Mr Zelensky's office said the main subject under discussion between the warring countries is whether Russian troops would remain in separatist regions in eastern Ukraine after the conflict and where the borders would be.Ukraine wants one or more western nuclear powers involved in the negotiations, with the outcome set out in a legally binding document.Kyiv would be ready to discuss a neutral status if those terms are met, according to AP.I've written to Liz Truss and Priti Patel to call for an immediate, emergency airlift operation to resettle ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** currently arriving in Poland who want to come to the UK.The British people are ready to welcome refugees with kindness and compassion.- Ed Davey MP (@EdwardJDavey) [*March 17, 2022*](https://twitter.com/EdwardJDavey/status/1504397218358468611?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Domestically in Britain, ministers are under pressure to do more to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** gathering at the Polish border to reach the UK.

Liberal Democrat leader Sir Ed Davey, in a letter to the Foreign Secretary and Home Secretary following a visit to Poland this week, called for the UK Government to provide free flights to those wanting to come to Britain, with coaches to the nearest Polish airports from key border crossing points.

Meanwhile, more than 150,000 people have now registered their interest in the Homes for Ukraine scheme, Downing Street said.

The Prime Minister's official spokesman said when the programme formally launches on Friday "we will see what that translates to".

He said 6,100 visas had been issued through the Ukraine Family Scheme as of Wednesday afternoon.

**Load-Date:** March 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Huge fire breaks out at Galway hotel before asylum seekers were set to move in*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:69WP-65G1-DY4H-K47D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

December 17, 2023 Sunday 6:50 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:3

**Length:** 460 words

**Byline:** Matt Mathers

**Highlight:** A criminal damage investigation has been launched after the blaze at the Ross Lake House hotel in County Galway at around 11.35pm on Saturday

**Body**

A major fire broke out at a hotel in Galway after protesters blocked the entrance over plans to [*house asylum seekers*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/rishi-sunak-migrants-overwhelm-uk-b2465290.html%22%20title=%22Rishi%20Sunak%20says%20migrants%20threaten%20to%20‘overwhelm’%20UK) at the site.

The Gardia has launched a [*criminal damage investigation*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/ambulances-vandalised-ramsgate-thanet-kent-police-coronavirus-a9440831.html%22%20title=%22https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/ambulances-vandalised-ramsgate-thanet-kent-police-coronavirus-a9440831.html) after the blaze at the Ross Lake House hotel in [*County Galway*](https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/europe/ireland/galway-travel-guide-best-hotels-city-restaurants-things-to-do-b1909902.html%22%20title=%22https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/europe/ireland/galway-travel-guide-best-hotels-city-restaurants-things-to-do-b1909902.html) at around 11.35pm on Saturday.

Fire crews attended and the blaze was brought under control. No one was inside the building when the fire started and there were no injuries.

The hotel in Rosscahill, which has been out of use for several years, was due to accommodate 70 [*asylum seekers*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/rishi-sunak-migrants-overwhelm-uk-b2465290.html%22%20title=%22Rishi%20Sunak%20says%20migrants%20threaten%20to%20‘overwhelm’%20UK) this week, RTE, Ireland’s national broadcaster, reported.

The accommodation was due to be used under a one-year contract to house “international protection” applicants from Thursday.

It led to protests on Saturday, before the fire, when people formed a blockade at the entrance of the hotel to show their opposition to the government’s plans.

Following the fire, a cordon was put up at the scene as investigation were carried out to establish the exact cause of the fire.

Leo Varadkar, the Irish Taoiseach, said: “I am deeply concerned about recent reports of suspected criminal damage at a number of properties around the country which have been earmarked for accommodating those seeking international protection here, including in County [*Galway*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/galway) last night.

“Even with robust border controls, extra checks at airports, faster processing times and record numbers of refusals, like much of the world we are dealing with a major step-change in the numbers arriving here, seeking protection.

“This is driven by war, poverty, climate change and human rights abuses in their home countries.”

“I want to assure people we have a rules-based system and are processing applications in record time. All asylum-seekers are registered, fingerprinted, checked against watch lists, and the circumstances surrounding their request for asylum are examined thoroughly. We aim to treat them with dignity and respect while their applications are considered.”

Some 11,850 people have applied for asylum in Ireland this year, according to the most recently available government figures.

This is down slightly from the record 13,651 logged in 2022 and in addition to the more than 70,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have fled the Russian invasion of their country.

Ireland, a small island with a population of just over 5 million, is not used to dealing with such numbers and services have been put under pressure due to the large influx of people.

Earlier this month the government said it had run out of accommodation to place asylum seekers amid a severe housing crisis in the country.

The International Protection Accommodation Service, a government agency, was forced to offer tents, sleeping bags and extra money to new arrivals who faced sleeping on the streets

**Load-Date:** December 17, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Simon Coveney visiting Kyiv to discuss Irish support for Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6573-X641-DY4H-K066-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 14, 2022 Thursday 7:18 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 241 words

**Byline:** David Young

**Highlight:** The Irish minister will meet Ukrainian foreign minister Dmytro Kuleba and Ukrainian defence minister Oleksii Reznikov.

**Body**

Ireland's Foreign Minister [*Simon Coveney*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/simon-coveney) is visiting [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) on Thursday.

Mr Coveney will visit areas in the Ukrainian capital directly affected by the Russian invasion and meet Ukraine's foreign minister Dmytro Kuleba and defence minister Oleksii Reznikov.

He is the first foreign minister on the [*UN Security Council*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/un-security-council) to visit Kyiv since the war began.

[*#Ireland*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Ireland?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) continues to be a strong supporter of [*#EU*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/EU?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) enlargement. [*#Ukraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Ukraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*#Moldova*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Moldova?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*#Georgia*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Georgia?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*https://t.co/SPfHbafqWN*](https://t.co/SPfHbafqWN) - Simon Coveney (@simoncoveney) [*April 11, 2022*](https://twitter.com/simoncoveney/status/1513543012772728840?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

A statement from the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said: "His discussions with the Ukrainian government will focus on how Ireland can continue to provide political, security and humanitarian support to [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , assist Ukraine in its application for EU candidate status, take forward further EU sanctions on Russia and hold Russia to account for its brutal and unjustified invasion."

Ireland has provided 20 million euro in humanitarian aid to the country and ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in neighbouring counties, and 33 million euro in non-lethal assistance for the Ukrainian military through the European Peace Facility.

The DFA statement added: "Ireland has been at the forefront of putting in place a robust EU sanctions regime and of supporting international mechanisms to hold Russia to account for grave violations of international humanitarian law, including referring the situation in Ukraine to the International Criminal Court."

**Load-Date:** April 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*King Charles praises Germany’s generosity in hosting millions of Ukrainian refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67WT-19F1-DY4H-K3D5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 30, 2023 Thursday 2:36 PM GMT

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**Section:** LIFESTYLE,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 105 words

**Byline:** Oliver Browning

**Body**

[*King Charles III*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/king-charles-iii) has praised [*Germany*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/germany) for showing “extraordinary hospitality” in hosting more than one million [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) from [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) since the outbreak of war.

In the first state banquet speech of his reign on Wednesday evening (29 March), Charles also pledged to “strengthen the connections” between the [*UK*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/uk) and Germany after arriving in [*Berlin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/berlin).

“I did want to pay a particular tribute to Germany’s extraordinary hospitality in hosting over one million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***,” the King said.

“This, it seems to me, so powerfully demonstrates the generosity and spirit of the German people.”

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters?itm_channel=native&itm_campaign=newsletters&itm_content=video-articles) to sign up for our newsletters.

**Load-Date:** March 30, 2023

**End of Document**



[*King travels to Romania for private visit*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68CF-0F31-DY4H-K27H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 2, 2023 Friday 12:56 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 333 words

**Byline:** Tony Jones

**Highlight:** Charles has developed a close relationship with the eastern European country he has regularly visited since 1988.

**Body**

[*The King*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/the-king) has begun his first overseas visit since his coronation, travelling to Romania for a private solo stay in the country’s Transylvanian region.

[*Charles*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/charles) is taking a break from official engagements in the UK but will begin his trip with a formal bilateral meeting with Romania’s [*President*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/president) [*Klaus Iohannis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/klaus-iohannis) in the capital Bucharest.

President Iohannis was a guest at the King’s crowning on May 6 and the two men sat down for talks during the [*Cop26*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/cop26) UN climate summit hosted by Glasgow in 2021.

It is not known how long Charles will spend in Romania, but he is expected to visit the country’s Transylvanian region where he has a number of properties.

The King has developed a close relationship with Romania, a country he first visited in 1988, and last year he travelled to Bucharest to tour a donation centre for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and chatted to those who had fled the Russian invasion of their homeland.

In 2015 he established the Prince of Wales’ Foundation Romania, which offers heritage preservation training courses to both local people and international apprentices.

He owns a number of properties in Romania’s Transylvania region, including a holiday let – which helps fund the foundation – and a 17th century peasant’s house, which acts as the foundation’s headquarters, both in the village of Viscri.

The King is thought to be related to a well-known figure from Romanian history, Vlad the Impaler – said to be the inspiration behind Bram Stoker’s Dracula.

His links to the infamous leader are through his great-grandmother Queen Mary, the consort of George V, who was descended from the German Wurttembergs and thereby linked to the bloodthirsty Vlad.

Charles’s trip will begin with the visiting head of state being welcomed by a guard of honour at the Cotroceni Palace in the capital before his meeting with President Iohannis.

Romania’s president will later host a reception in the King’s honour in the palace’s Union Hall to mark the 25th anniversary since his first visit to the country.

**Load-Date:** June 2, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine: Sponsor route 'falls short', say charities as Britons asked to 'match' with refugees on social media*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650B-TRV1-JBNF-W00C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 13, 2022 Sunday 6:15 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 1001 words

**Byline:** Adam Forrest

**Highlight:** 'This is a serious crisis - it's not an online dating situation,' says Labour

**Body**

Refugee charities said the government's new sponsorship route for ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) falls short of the response required, as fears grow that it will be too "slow and cumbersome" to meet the scale of the crisis.

Cabinet minister [*Michael Gove*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/michael-gove) said he hoped "tens of thousands" would be able to use the route set to be opened up this week, as he announced that local authority areas would get £10,000 per Ukrainian refugee sponsored in their area.

But opposition parties said the scheme - which will also provide £350 per month to Britons who provide homes to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** - placed too much of the burden on the public and community groups.

The minister for levelling up said he hoped individuals and community groups would be able to "match" with refugees using social media, adding that charities would help in the process.

Labour cautioned that "too many questions remain unanswered" about the new scheme - and ridiculed its reliance on social media.

Shadow levelling up minister Lisa Nandy told LBC: "We're asking people to ask to take to social media at a time they're fleeing a war zone. This is a serious crisis - it's not an online dating situation."

Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer claimed the government's handling of refugees fleeing [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) was "far too slow, far too mean" and had been "an embarrassment for the United Kingdom".

Questioning the lack of detail in the sponsorship plan, Sir Keir told Sky News: "What would comfort me more frankly is if I heard from Michael Gove that there were plans in place for the support that's actually going to be needed on arrival."

The Refugee Council said ministers were still putting too many "bureaucratic hurdles" in the way of those in danger. Chief executive Enver Solomon said the new scheme "falls short" of what is needed and would "inevitably be restricted to those who are known to people in the UK".

Louise Calvey of Refugee Action said the government were "tinkering at the margins" and had not set out a "well resourced" programme that deals with the scale of the refugee crisis now enveloping Europe.

She said it was "really disappointing that we haven't been able to collaborate on the development of this programme", adding: "It worries me enormously ... scaling up at this type of pace in a safe and sustainable fashion."

Mr Gove told Sky News the public could register interest in housing a refugee when a new website launches on Monday, and said he expects the first refugees making use of the route to come to the UK "in a week's time".

Asked how sponsors and refugees were supposed the find each other, the minister told Sky News' Sophy Ridge on Sunday that the government believed they could try to form links on Instagram or Twitter.

"We know charities, and we are working with them, who are working to identify people on the ground, and helping to identify people here to create the matching process," he added.

Sponsors will be expected to guarantee a minimum stay of six months - but will be encouraged to keep up the offer for as long as they can. Both those offering accommodation and Ukrainian applicants will undergo security checks.

Sponsored refugees will be granted 36 months leave to remain in the UK, and will be entitled to work, benefits and public services.

Councillor James Jamieson, chairman of the Local Government Association, said councils "will be central in helping families settle into their communities". He called on Mr Gove's department to work closely with local leaders so the scheme "can move at pace and scale".

First minister and SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon said on Sunday that Scotland "stands ready" to take 3,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** immediately as a "super sponsor".

But Ms Sturgeon said she was worried the UK sponsorship scheme would be too "slow and cumbersome", and may not be sustainable for the length of time that people may need to stay in the UK.

Mr Gove revealed he was personally interested in housing someone from Ukraine, saying he was "exploring" how to personally support those fleeing the Russian forces.

Asked on BBC's Sunday Morning programme if he would take someone in, he said: "I'm exploring what I can do, I know that there are others who have. Without going into my personal circumstances, there are a couple of things I need to sort out - but yes."

Mr Gove said on Sunday that "more than 3,000 visas" have now been issued to those fleeing the war with family in the UK, as the government came in for more criticism over its failure to follow the EU approach and waive visa requirements.

Liberal Democrat leader Sir Ed Davey said it was time for Boris Johnson to sack home secretary Priti Patel over her department's handling of the Ukrainian refugee crisis.

"Her inaction does not befit the British people, with all our compassion and generosity," he told his party's spring conference. "It couldn't be clearer that Priti Patel is not up to the job. The buck stops with the prime minister. So Boris Johnson must sack her, now."

Ireland's premier Micheal Martin said his country's humanitarian response trumps security checks on arriving Ukrainians. "Our primary impulse is to assist those fleeing war," he told the BBC.

The Taoiseach has said the state has so far accepted 5,500 people fleeing the Russian invasion, a response to what he termed "the worst displacement of people since World War Two".

The Independent is also raising money for the people of Ukraine - if you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gofundme.com%2Frefugeeswelcome&data=04%7C01%7CKaty.Clifton%40independent.co.uk%7C2a2d4959602a48a7514408d9fbc3eb4d%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817641167117856%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=%2FDXULZcjP0zOpL9jB%2FpDx3Z10K6NwyORJy68hlaIVYY%3D&reserved=0) for our GoFundMe page.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here.*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Ftopic%2Frefugees-welcome-0&data=04%7C01%7CKaty.Clifton%40independent.co.uk%7C2a2d4959602a48a7514408d9fbc3eb4d%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817641167117856%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=RZ7crcxX9U9jftiU38S4VVIl8uiLT6BXiwvDblkPG%2Fo%3D&reserved=0)

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Mormons convene in-person for signature conference in Utah*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654K-XB81-DY4H-K10F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 2, 2022 Saturday 5:04 PM GMT

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**Length:** 232 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is scheduled to open its twice-yearly conference on Saturday

**Body**

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is scheduled to open its twice-yearly conference on Saturday, with top leaders expected to deliver speeches to thousands of in-person attendees for the first time since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.

The nearly 17 million-member faith, which is widely known as the [*Mormon*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mormon) church, plans to host 10,000 people at its [*Utah*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/utah) headquarters. Though the general conference regularly drew 100,000 attendees pre-pandemic, for two years, it's been held mostly remotely, with the majority of viewers watching livestreams from afar.

Though disagreement exists among members of the faith, throughout the pandemic, church officials have repeatedly encouraged vaccinations and adherence to public health guidelines like masks. For a period of time, they closed temples, suspended in-person services and sent missionaries back home.

Church leaders routinely discuss matters of spirituality and new initiatives at the Latter-day Saints' signature general conference and, in the past, have also discussed current events and politics - denouncing abortion, reaffirming opposition to same-sex marriage and condemning racism.

The church, which has historically prioritized humanitarian aid for refugees as among its top charitable causes, has recently donated millions of dollars to initiatives in [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) as ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** seek to escape war with [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia).

**Load-Date:** April 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian visa delays are a 'national embarrassment', says British host*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:658N-6WS1-DY4H-K3JC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 21, 2022 Thursday 4:25 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 619 words

**Byline:** Lottie Kilraine

**Highlight:** David Turner, from Surrey, said only one visa for the four refugees he is sponsoring has been approved in almost five weeks.

**Body**

Visa delays under the Government's [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine scheme is a "national disgrace and a national embarrassment", a [*British*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british) host has said.

David Turner, 53, a lawyer from Farnham, [*Surrey*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/surrey) , is sponsoring four ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** but said only one visa has been approved almost five weeks after applying to the scheme.

"The way that the Home Office is performing is a national disgrace and a national embarrassment," Mr Turner told the PA news agency.

"I never dreamed when I filled out the application form that five weeks later, we'd still be waiting.

"It is soul-destroying listening to the accounts of what the people in Ukraine have been through and they desperately need the stability of these visas coming through.

"These people are all in a desperate situation and need to be in a place where they are safe and secure, and able, at least in some respects, to pick up their lives as soon as possible."

Fewer than a third of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have been issued with visas have arrived in the UK, Government figures show.

A total of 71,800 visas had been issued as of Wednesday under the Ukraine Family Scheme and the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, the Government said.

But, as of Monday, just 21,600 Ukrainians had arrived in the UK, according to figures from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Home Office.

These people are all in a desperate situation and need to be in a place where they are safe and secure, and able, at least in some respects, to pick up their lives as soon as possible.

David Turner

Mr Turner and his wife [*Bridget*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/bridget) , who have a 16-year-old daughter and two sons aged 20 and 21, applied to the Homes for Ukraine scheme the day after it opened on March 18.

The family have offered three rooms to two Ukrainian families who have been forced to flee their homes in the capital [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) after Russia began shelling the city.

"We are sponsoring two middle-aged ladies, one has a 17-year-old son and one has a 19-year-old daughter, and both their husbands have not been allowed to leave Kyiv," Mr Turner said.

"The 17-year-old is now in Latvia but his mother is still in Ukraine, but on the border because she can't afford the cost of accommodation outside of Ukraine.

"The other two have ended up in Switzerland and as far as I know they are sleeping on a floor surviving on handouts.

"On one occasion they were reduced to eating baby food for three days in a row to survive."

Mr Turner said it seems as though the visa applications are "disappearing into a black hole" and has turned to his local MP, Conservative Angela Richardson, for help.

"I think the application form itself is rubbish, but it's not the obstacle here," Mr Turner said.

"The big turnoff is the fact your application seems to end up disappearing into a black hole and you've got no idea whether you're going to come out or when you're going to come out.

"One of the other big problems is that I don't think this issue is getting the political or media attraction as that it should be, because of the combination of partygate and Boris Johnson's behaviour.

"Angela Richardson and her staff have been faultless. I am sure they are just as frustrated by the whole thing but they are working night and day to try to move things along."

A spokesperson for the Home Office said: "In response to Putin's barbaric invasion we have launched one of the fastest and biggest visa schemes in UK history.

"Our Ukraine Schemes have reached a turning point, thanks to the changes we've made to the streamline the visa system, including simplifying the forms, and boosting staff.

"Around 3,500 applications have been processed a day in the last few days, enabling thousands more Ukrainians to come through our uncapped routes."

**Load-Date:** April 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Shelters for migrants are filling up across Germany as attitudes toward the newcomers harden*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:698J-CN01-JBNF-W1XR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

September 28, 2023 Thursday 6:06 AM GMT

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**Length:** 1000 words

**Byline:** Kirsten Grieshaber

**Highlight:** Officials across Germany are sounding the alarm that they are no longer able to accommodate migrants who are applying for asylum

**Body**

Dozens of people from around the world lined up on a sunny morning this week in front of a former mental health hospital in [*Berlin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/berlin) to apply for asylum in [*Germany*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/germany).

There were two older women from Moldova. A young man from [*Somalia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/somalia) sat next to them on a bench. A group of five young Pakistanis chatted loudly, standing behind two pregnant women from Vietnam.

The newcomers are among more than 10,000 migrants who have applied for asylum in the German capital this year, and are coming at a time when Berlin is running out of space to accommodate them.

“The situation is not very good at the moment,” Sascha Langenbach, the spokesperson for the state office for refugee affairs in Berlin, said in an interview this week. “This is much more than we expected last year.”

The former mental health hospital in Berlin's Reinickendorf neighborhood was turned into the city's registration center for asylum-seekers in 2019 and can house up to 1,000 migrants.

But it's full.

Officials have put an additional 80 beds in a church on the premises. Beyond that, there are another 100 asylum shelters in Berlin, but those are at capacity too.

Berlin's state government says it will open a hangar at the former Tempelhof airport to make space for migrants, put up a big tent at the asylum seekers' registration center, and open a former hardware store and hotels and hostels in the city to provide another 5,500 beds for more migrants the city is expecting will come through the end of the year.

There are also not enough places in kindergartens and schools. In addition to the asylum seekers, Berlin has also taken in another 11,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** this year who fled Russia's war.

The lack of space and money for migrants and ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** isn't unique to Berlin. It's a problem across Germany, where local and state officials have been demanding more funds from the federal government without success.

More than 220,000 people applied for asylum in Germany between January and August — most of them from Syria, Afghanistan, Turkey, Moldova and Georgia. In all of 2022, 240,000 people applied for asylum in Germany.

That's a far cry from the more than 1 million people who arrived in Germany in 2015-16. But Germany has also taken in more than 1 million Ukrainians since the outbreak of the war in 2022. Unlike others who arrive, Ukrainians immediately receive residency status in Germany and the 26 other European Union countries.

While Germans welcomed asylum seekers with flowers, chocolates and toys when they first arrived in 2015, and many opened their homes to house Ukrainians in 2022, the mood toward new arrivals has profoundly changed since then.

“After two years of the (coronavirus) crisis, then the Ukraine war with its increasing prices for basically everything — heating, gas, also food — it’s sometimes pretty tough to convince people that they have to share places and capacities with people who just arrived,” Langenbach said.

Germany's far-right Alternative for Germany party, or AfD, has been successfully exploiting Germans' hardening attitudes toward migrants. Polling now puts it in second place nationally with around 21%, far above the 10.3% it won during the last federal election in 2021.

AfD's rise in the polls and the party leaders' relentless anti-migrant rhetoric, including calls to close Germany's borders to prevent migrants from entering, have put pressure on the national and state governments and other mainstream parties to toughen their approach toward migrants.

On Wednesday, Germany's interior minister announced the country would increase border controls along “smuggling routes” with Poland and the Czech Republic to prevent irregular migrants from entering.

In June, German Chancellor [*Olaf Scholz*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/olaf-scholz) defended plans to stop migrants from entering the EU altogether until their chances of getting asylum have been reviewed, arguing that the bloc’s existing arrangements on sharing the burden of asylum seekers among the different European countries is “completely dysfunctional.”

Germany has been taking in more migrants than most other European countries, but those efforts still pale in comparison with countries such as Turkey and Lebanon, which shelter millions of migrants from Syria.

Despite the changing sentiment toward migrants in Germany, those who make it and apply for asylum are generally grateful to be here.

Abdullah al-Shweiti, from Homs, Syria, recently arrived in Berlin and was waiting for the results of his medical checkup at the asylum welcome center. He said he was relieved to be “in a safe place.”

The 29-year-old said he had run away from home because his family's house had been bombed in the war and he didn't want to fight in the army. He said he'd paid 3,000 euros ($3,180) to smugglers who helped him get from Lebanon to Europe. He took the Balkans route, trekking with other young Syrians north via Bulgaria through forests. They traveled on foot, by taxi and by bus until smugglers dropped them off in the German capital.

Mirbeycan Gurhan, a Kurdish man from Bingol in eastern Turkey, said he'd fled suppression by Turkish authorities. He paid 6,000 euros ($6,360) for smugglers to arrange a flight from Ankara to Belgrade, Serbia, and then a car to Germany.

“I hope I will have a better future here. I hope I can find work,” the 24-year-old said with a shy smile as his uncle, who applied for asylum in Berlin four years ago, stood next to him and translated.

Michael Elias, head of the Tamaja company that runs the asylum registration center in Berlin, said the arrival of migrants from all over the world is simply a reflection of the many crises around the globe, such as climate change and wars, and that Germany needs to be prepared for even more people to arrive.

“Yes, a lot of people are coming here, but look at what's going on in the world," Elias said. “We must simply anticipate that we’re not an island of the fortunate here, that things will reach us too.”

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Follow AP’s coverage of migration issues at [*https://apnews.com/hub/migration*](https://apnews.com/hub/migration)

**Load-Date:** September 28, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Taoiseach: Ireland will be 'stretched' on Ukrainian refugee accommodation*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655W-2X41-JBNF-W131-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 8, 2022 Friday 1:07 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 664 words

**Byline:** Cate McCurry

**Highlight:** Micheal Martin, speaking in Helsinki, admitted that Ireland will face challenges housing refugees set to arrive into the country.

**Body**

Ireland's housing of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** will leave the country "stretched", the [*Irish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/irish) premier has said.

Micheal Martin, speaking in [*Helsinki*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/helsinki) , admitted the Republic of [*Ireland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ireland) will face challenges housing the refugees set to arrive into the country.

Around 20,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have reached Ireland already after fleeing Russia's invasion of their home country.

It comes as Tanaiste [*Leo Varadkar*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/leo-varadkar) played down suggestions Ireland may expel the Russian ambassador after two Irish diplomats were asked to leave the Irish embassy in Moscow.

The move came two weeks after four senior Russian officials were asked to leave Ireland because their activities had not been "in accordance with international standards of diplomatic behaviour".

Mr Martin, who is visiting [*Finland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/finland) and Estonia, said he had a "very good" meeting with Finland's President Sauli Niinisto.

"We had a very broad discussion in terms of the international situation, particularly the war in Ukraine and the degree to which the multilateral order has been turned upside down, the sheer barbaric nature of attacks on Ukrainian civilians and the implications for the security architecture of Europe well into the future and the capacity of open economies to continue to do what we do best," Mr Martin said.

"All of that is under threat by the Russian attack so we had a very interesting discussion around those issues and how all has changed in terms of this Russia attack and these implications for the future."

Asked how close Ireland is to running out of accommodation for refugees, Mr Martin said: "What is remarkable is that over 20,000 refugees have come into Ireland from Ukraine. We have never experienced such a rapid inflow of refugees fleeing war before.

"On the accommodation front, it is stretched but then there are lots of new initiatives coming on stream. It will be difficult in the coming weeks, of that there is no doubt.

"We are bringing more staff in, particularly on the pledging side, to get through that list faster and to release homes faster for refugees coming into the country."

He indicated the Government is looking at options "through local authorities, through vacant properties and the reconfiguration of properties".

And he said housing minister Darragh O'Brien is working to "fast-track decisions to get facilities on stream more quickly".

He said: "We will fulfil our obligations as best we can in relation to that and we are in close solidarity with Ukraine.

"There is no doubt that there is a strategic approach behind the Russian bombardment of cities and towns and the intimidation and desire to create migration as a leverage.

"We have got to resist that and we are all part of a community within Europe and we have stand up against that type of naked aggression. It will be challenging for us.

"This war will have impacts on us all and our challenge is to put humanity first and do everything we can to protect the lives.

"We have strengths and resources as a country and they will be stretched."

Speaking in the Dublin suburb of Inchicore, Mr Varadkar said a response from Moscow to the decision to expel Russian diplomats was anticipated.

While he rejected calls for an immediate ejection from Ireland of Yury Filatov, he said expelling the Russian representative had not been ruled out.

"I suppose the reason why we don't want to expel the Russian ambassador at this stage is that if we get to that point where we're expelling ambassadors, we could see an end to diplomatic relations between the two countries. That's very hard to put back on again. We do have citizens of Russia that we want to look out for.

"And also, ultimately, there will be peace talks. There will be a ceasefire. There will be some sort of foreign peace agreement. And I don't think it would make sense for us to cut off diplomatic relations in that context."

He said he would rather "get to the point where we have a ceasefire and where we can start to talk about de-escalation of this conflict and coming to a solution".

**Load-Date:** April 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Homes for Ukraine service launched to 'match' hosts*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654H-PH01-JCS0-D3HN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 2, 2022 Saturday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 7

**Length:** 681 words

**Byline:** MAY BULMAN SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

An official "matching service" has been launched with government support to link refugees with UK hosts under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Around 200,000 people in the UK who registered their interest in hosting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** through a government website after it launched two weeks ago will now be asked to sign up on a separate platform in order to be considered for a "match".

The service will be managed by Reset Communities and Refugees, a charity leading UK community refugee sponsorship since 2018, which will receive government funding. The charity has been given an initial grant of £300,000 to help design the matching process. It will bring together sponsors and refugees and assess their eligibility and suitability for the scheme, as well as providing training and advice to the sponsors and community groups.

Refugees minister Lord Harrington, who was appointed by Boris Johnson earlier this month to facilitate safe and speedy passage of vulnerable Ukrainian evacuees, said: "I am delighted and grateful that Reset are working with us to bring more people safely to the UK."

The Homes for Ukraine scheme, which opened on 18 March, enables Ukrainians with no family links to come to the UK and live in homes offered by members of the public or charities and organisations. Individuals offering their homes are offered a monthly payment of £350 and local councils receive £10,500 per refugee in the first year.

The scheme has attracted some criticism after the minister for levelling up, Michael Gove,saidhe hoped individuals and community groups would be able to match with refugees using social media.

***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** subsequently started to "advertise" themselves on social media in a bid to find hosts in the UK, with a swathe of unregulated Facebook pages being set up for this purpose, prompting concerns that the programme could expose vulnerable people to abuse. Boris Johnson admitted this week that the scheme could place people at risk of abuse, and indicated that the National Crime Agency may need to be involved to prevent this from happening.

Reset said the new service would facilitate a "rigorous" matching system, with trained caseworkers and volunteers, led by safeguarding experts, assessing the sponsors' intent, suitability, and availability while checking that the accommodation they are offering is appropriate.

The charity set up the matching website on 15 March, but will now begin the formal matching process. The website has so far seen more than 7,000 refugees register, along with more than 8,000 UK households offering places for more than 20,000 refugees. Sponsors will also need to complete an online mandatory training programme before the matching process begins. The matching team will also carry out assessments of refugees to understand their personal circumstances and if they have particular ties to a place.

Once the match has been made, the sponsors and refugees will need to submit a visa application to the Home Office, and local authorities will be responsible for the formal vetting process. Kate Brown, chief executive of Reset, described the launch of the matching service as "an extraordinary moment for the refugee welcome movement in the UK".

"With 200,000 people signed up to offer their homes under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, and hundreds of thousands more offering support, we are in a position to help more refugees than ever before," she said. "We must make sure that there are fair and rigorous systems in place to support the refugees and sponsors as they embark on this programme."

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**Load-Date:** April 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Homes for Ukraine scheme launched to 'match' hosts*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654H-PH01-JCS0-D3JB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 2, 2022 Saturday

Second Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 7

**Length:** 681 words

**Byline:** MAY BULMAN SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

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**Load-Date:** April 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Homes for Ukraine: Official 'matching service' launched to link hosts with refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654C-45T1-DY4H-K2B9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 1, 2022 Friday 12:02 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 710 words

**Byline:** May Bulman

**Highlight:** People wishing to host Ukrainians invited to register with government-funded, charity-run matching system

**Body**

An official "matching service" has been launched with government support to link [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) with UK hosts under the Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme.

Around 200,000 people in the UK who registered their interest in hosting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** through a government website after it [*launched two weeks ago*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/homes-for-ukraine-refugees-government-sponsor-b2035528.html) will now be asked to sign up on a separate platform in order to be considered for a "match".

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Refugees minister Lord Harrington, who was appointed by Boris Johnson earlier this month to facilitate safe and speedy passage of vulnerable Ukrainian evacuees, said: "I am delighted and grateful that Reset are working with us to bring more people safely to the UK."

The Independent is also raising money for the people of Ukraine - if you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gofundme.com%2Frefugeeswelcome&data=04%7C01%7CKaty.Clifton%40independent.co.uk%7C2a2d4959602a48a7514408d9fbc3eb4d%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817641167117856%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=%2FDXULZcjP0zOpL9jB%2FpDx3Z10K6NwyORJy68hlaIVYY%3D&reserved=0) for our GoFundMe page.

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***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** subsequently started to [*"advertise" themselves on social media*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugees-social-media-sponosrship-scheme-uk-b2040480.html) in a bid to find hosts in the UK, with a swathe of unregulated Facebook pages being set up for this purpose, prompting concerns that the programme could expose vulnerable people to abuse.

Prime minster Boris Johnson admitted this week that the scheme could place people at risk of abuse, and indicated that the National Crime Agency (NCA) may need to be involved to prevent this from happening.

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**Load-Date:** April 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Over £100,000 raised for Indy's humanitarian fund*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y0-MC51-F072-4121-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 7, 2022 Monday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 8

**Length:** 253 words

**Byline:** ZOE TIDMAN

**Body**

The Independent's campaign to raise funds for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** fleeing their homes to escape the war waged by Russia has raised more than £100,000 in less than a week. The donations will go towards providing vital support for those displaced by the conflict, who have been forced to leave behind homes, jobs and families as they seek out safety.

The fundraiser, part of our Refugees Welcome appeal, will help charities to deliver humanitarian aid, including accommodation, clothing, food, sanitary goods and medicine.

From Thursday, The Independent announced that all new funds raised would go to the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal launched that day. This brings together 13 leading UK aid charities providing support overseas, including the Red Cross and Save the Children, whose efforts donations had supported up to that point.

And every donation from our readers to the DEC appeal will be matched pound-for-pound by the UK government, up to £20m.

The 13 member charities who will receive donations from our appeal are: Action Against Hunger, ActionAid UK, Age International, British Red Cross, Cafod, Care International UK, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide UK, International Rescue Committee UK, Oxfam, Save the Children UK, Plan International UK, and World Vision UK.?????????

These work to provide essential aid, including medical help, warm clothes, beds and psychosocial support, both inside Ukraine and in neighbouring countries.

To donate, please click here for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Biden in Poland to see US troops, Ukraine refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:652W-TMD1-DY4H-K4SG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 25, 2022 Friday 2:57 PM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 604 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** President Joe Biden is following a day of diplomacy with a visit to Poland to discuss aid for refugees and to meet with U.S. troops stationed near the border with Ukraine

**Body**

President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) will hear directly from U.S. troops stationed near Poland's border with [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) on Friday and learn about the growing humanitarian response to the millions of Ukrainians who are fleeing to Poland to escape Russia's assault on their homeland.

Biden planned to meet with members of the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Division, who are serving alongside Polish troops. He arrived Friday afternoon at the airport in Rzeszow, the largest city in southeastern Poland, where some U.S. troops are based about an hour's drive from the Ukrainian border.

He will be in Warsaw on Saturday for talks with Polish President Andrzej Duda and others. The Polish leader was to welcome Biden at the airport on Friday, but his plane was delayed by a technical problem.

The European Union says some 3.5 million Ukrainians - half of them children - have fled the country, with more than 2.2 million ending up in Poland.

The U.S. Congress this month approved spending more than $13 billion on humanitarian and military assistance for Ukraine. The administration has begun allocating those funds.

White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said Biden will hear directly from the American troops and humanitarian experts about the situation on the ground and "what further steps need to be taken to make sure that we're investing" U.S. dollars in the right place.

Biden, who spent Thursday lobbying U.S. allies to stay united against [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) , speculated that what he sees in Poland "will reinforce my commitment to have the United States make sure we are a major piece of dealing with the relocation of all those folks, as well as humanitarian assistance needed both inside Ukraine and outside Ukraine."

Speaking in Brussels after meetings with other world leaders, Biden said he had visited many war zones and refugee camps during his political career and "it's devastating" to see young children without parents or men and women with blank looks on their faces wondering, "My God, where am I? What's going to happen to me?"

He said Poland, Romania and Germany shouldn't be left on their own to deal with the largest refugee crisis in Europe since World War II.

"This is an international responsibility," Biden said shortly after he announced $1 billion in additional assistance to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. He also announced that the United States would take in up to 100,000 of those refugees. The White House has said most ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** eventually want to return home.

Biden said the United States is obligated to be "engaged and do all we can to ease the suffering and pain of innocent women and children and men" who make it across the border.

He said, "I plan on attempting to see those folks ... I hope I get to see a lot of people."

Some refugees interviewed Friday at the train station in Przemysl, Poland, said they hoped to eventually return to Ukraine. They also weren't very hopeful about Biden's visit.

"For sure I do not have any expectations" about Biden, said a tearful Ira Satula, 32, from Kremenchug. Satula was grateful for all the support and Poland's warm reception.

"But home is home, and I hope we'll be there soon," Satula said.

Olga Antonovna, 68, from Chernigov, said "it's really 50-50" that Biden will help enough.

"I think that we needed help a long time ago, long before," she said.

Sullivan said Biden will give a speech Saturday on "the stakes of this moment, the urgency of the challenge that lies ahead, what the conflict in Ukraine means for the world."

\_\_\_

Superville reported from Washington. Associated Press video journalist Srdjan Nedeljkovic in Przemysl, Poland, contributed to this report.

**Load-Date:** March 25, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Queen holds audience with UK armed forces chief at Windsor*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YG-M8K1-JBNF-W28T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 9, 2022 Wednesday 4:40 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 201 words

**Byline:** Laura Elston

**Highlight:** The monarch received Chief of the General Staff Admiral Sir Tony Radakin in person on Wednesday.

**Body**

The Queen has met with the UK's armed forces chief, holding an in-person audience with [*Chief of the Defence Staff*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/chief-defence-staff) [*Admiral*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/admiral) Sir Tony Radakin.

The monarch, 95, received Admiral Sir Tony on Wednesday at [*Windsor*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/windsor) Castle.

He was greeted by the monarch upon relinquishing his appointment as First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff, and assuming his appointment as Chief of the Defence Staff, the professional head of the armed forces.

The Queen was not pictured carrying out the official engagement.

The monarch is head of the armed forces and the pair are likely to have discussed the war in Ukraine.

Admiral Sir Tony said on Sunday that the invasion in Ukraine "is not going well" for the [*Kremlin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kremlin) , with Russia's military might not proving as strong as expected in the face of the Ukrainian resistance.

The Queen, who has recovered after catching Covid just over a fortnight ago, has donated to the Disasters Emergency Committee appeal to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

She met with Canadian prime minister [*Justin Trudeau*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/justin-trudeau) on Monday, and in her sitting room was a large bouquet of blue and yellow flowers, the colours of the Ukrainian flag.

The gesture was seen as a symbol of the Queen's support for the people of Ukraine.

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*The government must set up a parallel Homes for Afghans plan*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:653N-TVN1-JCS0-D1HF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 29, 2022 Tuesday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 2

**Length:** 663 words

**Byline:** EDITORIAL

**Body**

It is a question that should haunt a nation: if so many people are willing and generous enough to open their own homes to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, and with official encouragement, why is the same approach not being taken to genuine refugees from other wars, conflicts and violence?

Indeed, the fact the Homes for Ukraine scheme might set a precedent for refugees from other war zones may have been one reason why the package of support has been so long in coming, why gaining eligibility was bureaucratic and demanding, and why the scheme was eventually taken away from the hostile custody of the Home Office.

Even as things stand now, charities complain the scheme remains too inaccessible; the relevant sponsorship form had not been translated into Ukrainian until Thursday, while refugees have also struggled with the requirement to convert forms into PDF format.

The Refugee Council is one of 16 charities and anti-trafficking organisations to have written to levelling up secretary Michael Gove - now in charge of the Ukraine scheme - warning the sponsorship scheme remains open to abuse and risks becoming "Tinder for sex traffickers".

Still, the Ukraine scheme is in place, it is working and it represents the best traditions of Britain. Yet the uncomfortable corollary remains: why are genuine ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** the sole beneficiaries of a bespoke scheme, and those from other well-documented wars and violence - such as Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia and the Sahel - have no such path to safety? Why do they have to apply for visas or take their chances on dinghies in the English Channel? The obvious answer is too shameful for the authorities to dwell upon.

But not others. A coalition of civic society think tanks and refugee support groups led by More in Common and British Future are publishing a Homes for Afghans action plan and a joint open letter to Michael Gove MP. The challenge is, once again, to do the right thing, and at least extend the Homes for Ukraine scheme and allow the British public to help the thousands of Afghans who escaped Kabul and are still in hotel accommodation seven months later.

As with the war in Ukraine, the suffering of the Afghan people has provoked widespread sympathy, charitable donations and an urge to do something. When the British and their allies retreated from Kabul last autumn there was a sense of abandonment, even betrayal of those that had personally risked their lives to help British forces and agencies.

Of course not everyone is in a position to assist with a spare room, or indeed is sympathetic to the cause; but many are, and they have no officially sanctioned way of turning their goodwill and generosity into a firm offer of a roof over someone's head and a safe place to sleep.

There is an Afghan resettlement scheme in place, but it is not as connected to the public as the Ukraine scheme, and it too, is facing its own problems.

To help redress the disparity in esteem between Ukrainians and Afghans, and to hasten the resettlement of Afghans, the government should set up a parallel Homes for Afghans plan. Though there will be some who would refuse all migrants, even those fleeing war, the fair-minded British people and their political representatives would support such a move.

In recent months, and paradoxically since the Brexit referendum and labour shortages after Brexit itself, there has been an increasing realisation of the general benefits of migration, and a more open welcome for refugees and asylum seekers.

The deaths of refugees in the Channel and the Mediterranean has underlined just how desperate and fearful they are, and how much they cherish the dream of sanctuary in Britain, a land of freedom and opportunity for those who wish to work hard and get on.

Afghans are no different to Ukrainians in their hopes and aspirations for themselves and their families - and the same goes for Somalians or Malians for that matter. They need help; people want to help them; the government's role is obvious.

**Load-Date:** March 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Thousands of Ukraine refugees expected to arrive in UK next week - minister*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6510-3391-JBNF-W3Y4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 16, 2022 Wednesday 2:21 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 617 words

**Byline:** Flora Thompson

**Highlight:** So far, more than 120,000 British families have registered their interest in opening their doors to Ukrainians fleeing the war.

**Body**

Thousands of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** could arrive in the UK next week but checks on accommodation may not be carried out in time, a minister has warned.

Refugee minister [*Lord*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/lord) [*Richard Harrington*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/richard-harrington) told MPs he expects "thousands of people" to arrive next week under the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) sponsorship scheme, but said it "may not be possible" for all accommodation being offered to be checked first.

Asked about the council checks, Lord Harrington told the Commons Home Affairs Committee on Wednesday: "I mean, I'm talking next week ... I'm expecting thousands of people to come but it will be their responsibility and, particularly where there's a possibility of vulnerability with children, this sort of thing, that would take priority.

"But if we started saying we're going to pre-view it, it's just not possible."

I'm assured the electronic checks that can be done really quickly take place ... and then the local authorities will be responsible for the full DBS checks and they will inspect properties and inspect the situations

Lord Harrington

Asked if he could give assurances that ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** will not be housed in hotels, he replied: "I honestly can't give you that undertaking. I'd like to but it's not our intention. But if all else fails, it's our duty to make sure they've got a roof over their head and they're fed properly."

So far, more than 120,000 [*British*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british) families have registered their interest in opening their doors to Ukrainians fleeing the war.

Those who have expressed interest and found someone to sponsor will be able to apply from Friday, MPs heard.

Councils will get £10,500 per refugee for the first year to help with education, English language support, safeguarding and social care services.

In response to questions over how hosts would be vetted, Lord Harrington said: "The reality is we're having to do this very quickly.

"I'm assured the electronic checks that can be done really quickly take place ... and then the local authorities will be responsible for the full DBS checks and they will inspect properties and inspect the situations."

Asked if councils will be told before refugees move into their area, Lord Harrington said: "I'm hoping that it will be simultaneous ... I can't quite promise it because we've not seen things on this volume in our history."

Responding to concerns about whether councils already under "enormous pressure" will be able to provide the services needed if there is a "concentration of refugees" in some areas, Lord Harrington accepted it was a "very valid point".

But he said: "For the moment, we just have to get these people in".

He added: "We're going to have to find school places and we're going to have to find extra social workers."

Some 5,500 visas have now been granted under the Ukraine Family Scheme and 20,000 applications had been submitted as of 4pm on Tuesday.

Conservative MP Adam Holloway accused the Government of making it "extraordinarily difficult" for Ukrainian women and children to reach the UK, calling the situation "utterly farcical".

He said: "I don't know how many people crossed the Channel yesterday but I wonder what criminal record checks or checks for war crimes were carried out on them. I mean, are we having a kind of a bit of a double standard?

"We're completely failing to stop what are essentially economic migrants, mostly fit young men, and yet we're making it incredibly difficult for women and children to come here with enormous reputational damage to a government is doing really well overall."

Mr Foster said people arriving from France are detained and have their biometrics taken, with some exceptions for unaccompanied children and families, and "are subject to the very checks you've just talked about".

**Load-Date:** March 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Home news in brief*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:664N-VV41-JCS0-D3C9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

August 12, 2022 Friday

Second Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 23

**Length:** 741 words

**Body**

Musical Youth drummer Frederick Waite Jr dies aged 55

Grammy-nominated reggae band Musical Youth announced that drummer Frederick Waite Jr has died at the age of 55. The Birmingham band revealed the news yesterday, hailing him as a "musical legend who inspired many young musicians".

In a statement on Twitter, they wrote: "We are sad to announce the passing of Musical Youth's drummer Frederick Waite Jr. Our thoughts go out to him and his family during this sad time. We have lost a musical legend, who inspired many young musicians over the last 40 years."

Musical Youth were formed in 1979 and are best known for their hit "Pass The Dutchie", which went to No 1 in 1982. They went on to release two albums, 1982's The Youth Of Today and Different Style! in 1983, and some members performed at the closing ceremony of the Commonwealth Games on Monday. PA

Greville denies staging Giggs photo to manipulate public

Ryan Giggs' ex-girlfriend denied she staged a newspaper photograph in the days that followed his alleged headbutting to "turn the public against him". PR executive Kate Greville, 36, told Manchester Crown Court she arranged for the picture to be taken of her walking her dog along a country lane because she wanted members of the media to leave her doorstep.

Jurors at the trial of Giggs, 48, heard that an article appeared in The Sun on 16 November, 2020 with the photograph and a story which read: "Living hell. Ryan Giggs's ex spotted with a bruised lip in first outing since Wales manager's assault arrest".

Chris Daws, QC, accused her of staging the picture, which she admitted, adding: "I wanted control of that first photograph and then it would end because [photographers] kept harassing me."

Giggs denies using controlling and coercive behaviour against Ms Greville between August 2017 and November 2020, assaulting her, causing actual bodily harm and the common assault of her younger sister. PA

Police officer sacked for faking fake girlfriend's death

A police officer who claimed his fake girlfriend died of cancer to get days off work would have been sacked for the "odious" gross misconduct had he not resigned, chief constable Sir David Thompson said.

Harry Sarkar, 21, a constable with West Midlands Police, "maintained a detailed tissue of lies to colleagues and supervisors about a fake girlfriend, her fake illness, her fake death, and subsequent fake funeral", the force said. The student officer resigned before the fast-track misconduct hearing at the force's Birmingham headquarters yesterday, which would have seen him dismissed without notice had he still been on the payroll. PA

Charity calls for front row Eurovision seats for Ukraine refugees

A UK-based charity has called for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and their UK host families to be given "priority tickets" to Eurovision 2023. British Future has proposed Welcomers Eurovision, designed to celebrate the efforts of those in Britain and other European nations who have offered their homes to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Speaking about the proposal, the director of British Future Sunder Katwala said: "The 2023 Eurovision is the perfect opportunity to celebrate the warm welcome that thousands of Brits have offered to Ukrainians fleeing the war. Britain is hosting the contest on behalf of 2022 winners Ukraine - what better way to embody that than by inviting some of the thousands of citizens who are now hosting Ukrainian families in their homes?" PA

Half of six-year-olds not meeting exercise targets

Just under half of British six-year-olds are not meeting their daily recommended exercise targets, according to a new study. Researchers found that 47 per cent of children that age are not doing enough physical activity. Experts say children aged five to 18 should get at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous exercise a day to benefit their physical and mental health.

University of Cambridge and University of Southampton researchers provided 712 six-year-olds with accelerometers, which measure heart rate and movement and found that they were, on average, sedentary for an average of five hours each day, according to the study, published in the Journal of Physical Activity and Health.

On average, the youngsters engaged in 7.5 hours of "low level" physical activity and 65 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity. Boys were more likely to reach the target than girls, with 63 per cent of boys adhering to the current UK guidelines compared with 42 per cent of girls. PA

**Load-Date:** August 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Amnesty presses NI top official on response to Ukraine crisis*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650B-G991-JBNF-W0MT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 13, 2022 Sunday 4:45 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 655 words

**Byline:** Rebecca Black

**Highlight:** Responding the Stormont Executive Office said the sponsorship scheme will operate in Northern Ireland.

**Body**

The head of [*Amnesty*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/amnesty) International in Northern Ireland has written to the region's top official to express concern at the response to the [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) crisis.

It comes as the UK [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) is set to launch a scheme where individuals and organisations can sponsor ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to come into the country.

[*Scotland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scotland) and Wales reacted to the development, pledging to become "super sponsors" for refugees.

While the [*Republic of Ireland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/republic-ireland) has so far received 5,500 refugees and may take in more than 100,000.

Responding, the Stormont Executive Office said the sponsorship scheme will operate in Northern Ireland and they strongly encourage expressions of interest in providing accommodation.

Well said [*@MichealMartinTD*](https://twitter.com/MichealMartinTD?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw). The response of the Irish Government and the EU as a whole puts [*@10DowningStreet*](https://twitter.com/10DowningStreet?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*@ukhomeoffice*](https://twitter.com/ukhomeoffice?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) to shame for its slow and mean-spirited approach.[*#RefugeesWelcome*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/RefugeesWelcome?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*https://t.co/jhlec9B3g5*](https://t.co/jhlec9B3g5) - Patrick Corrigan (@PatrickCorrigan) [*March 13, 2022*](https://twitter.com/PatrickCorrigan/status/1503009362985508873?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Patrick Corrigan has written to the head of the Northern Ireland civil service Jayne Brady and executive ministers to ask for "more urgent action".

The Stormont first minister and deputy first minister are not currently in post following the resignation of Paul Givan, as part of the DUP protest over the Northern Ireland Protocol.

Mr Corrigan said Northern Ireland "appears to be largely absent from these planning responses, whether at a UK or cross-border level".

"I am concerned that the absence of a first minister and deputy first minister, who have lead responsibility for refugee matters, has led to Northern Ireland being left behind when it comes to playing our part in offering a welcome to refugees from Ukraine," he said.

"The first ministers of Scotland and Wales have already been in contact with the UK's Secretary of State for Levelling Up to confirm their commitment in contributing to the newly announced community sponsorship scheme and to offer to act as 'super sponsors' to allow Ukrainians to arrive faster than would be possible by having to await individual or charity sponsorship.

"We urge you to match this response from the Scottish and Welsh governments to ensure that Northern Ireland is part of this welcome to refugees and to work with statutory and non-statutory agencies to put the necessary arrangements in place without further delay."

Mr Corrigan added: "Given the unique position of Northern Ireland and our border with the Republic of Ireland - which has rightly lifted all visa requirements - we must liaise with the Irish government to prepare support to those who may arrive via this route.

"The slow and wholly inadequate response of the UK government has meant that the rest of Europe has been shouldering the responsibility while the UK has shirked its own. That must change.

"We continue to urge the waiving of visa requirements to match the response of the European Union and we would ask that you join with us and the Scottish and Welsh first ministers in making that call."

In a statement, a spokesperson for the Executive Office confirmed the sponsorship scheme will operate in Northern Ireland and said expressions of interest can be made from Monday.

"While not all the details have yet been announced by Westminster, we are working at pace, making preparations so we stand ready to provide sanctuary to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***," they said.

"Mindful of the pressure on social housing stock, officials are also engaging with councils and the voluntary and community sector to find creative ways of bringing suitable accommodation into use and identifying all available capacity.

"We are in close contact with the Home Office and the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing and with colleagues in other jurisdictions.

"We will participate fully in this humanitarian effort. Partnership across sectors and wider society will be key to ensuring we can support as many Ukrainian people seeking sanctuary here as possible."

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*UK government red tape stopping 48 Ukrainian orphans coming to Scotland, says SNP*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650Y-XC71-JBNF-W3G3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 16, 2022 Wednesday 1:56 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 631 words

**Byline:** Adam Forrest

**Highlight:** Home Office 'proving to be the only obstacle in the way', says Ian Blackford

**Body**

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) 's government has been urged to remove red tape preventing a Scottish charity from bringing a group of 48 Ukrainian orphans to safety in the UK.

The [*SNP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/snp) 's Westminster leader [*Ian Blackford*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ian-blackford) said the Home Office was the main "obstacle" to getting the vulnerable children from [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) on a flight out of Poland.

"There is a plane ready and waiting in Poland to bring these orphans to the UK on Friday," the senior MP told deputy prime minister [*Dominic Raab*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dominic-raab). "But that flight will be leaving empty without the necessary paperwork from the Home Office."

Mr Blackford said Edinburgh charity Dnipro Kids, Edinburgh City Council, the Scottish government and the Polish authorities were all trying to get the matter resolved - but home secretary Priti Patel's department was the main barrier.

"The Home Office is still proving to be the only obstacle in the way, and it risks leaving thses children stranded," the SNP chief told the Commons.

He added "I'm pleading with the deputy prime minister - remove these obstructions before it's too late. Will he work with me, and the Ukrainian authorities to guarantee, that those 48 orphans will get on this plane this Friday?"

Mr Raab replied: "This is a heart-rendering situation, and we want to do everything we can."

The deputy PM and justice secretary said there were range of "safeguarding" issues in the case - including whether "necessary permissions have been sought from the Ukrainian and Polish governments".

Mr Raab added: "This isn't actually about bureaucracy, it's about genuine safeguarding issues. But I certainly want to work with him in the best interests of those children."

Dnipro Kids, set up by fans of Hibernian FC, managed to help the group of 48 Ukrainian orphans across border to immediate safety in Poland, but has struggled to clear the paperwork to welcome them to Edinburgh.

Children between the ages of six and 17 came from orphanages around Dnipro were able to cross the border in a bus organised by the Scottish charity last Thursday.

First minister and SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon said charity's efforts were "amazing" and said the Scottish government was "pressing hard" for UK government to help the children come to UK

"When they do, I've no doubt Scotland will surround them with love," said Ms Sturgeon.

What [*@DniproKids*](https://twitter.com/DniproKids?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) are doing is amazing -thanks so much. [*@scotgov*](https://twitter.com/scotgov?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) is pressing hard for UK government to now let the children (and thousands more Ukrainians in need of sanctuary) come to UK -when they do, I've no doubt Scotland will surround them with love. [*https://t.co/8qtTsmUkpZ*](https://t.co/8qtTsmUkpZ) - Nicola Sturgeon (@NicolaSturgeon) [*March 11, 2022*](https://twitter.com/NicolaSturgeon/status/1502351253686345728?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Earlier on Wednesday, Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer urged government to "up its game" in supporting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, calling their approach "too narrow, too slow and too mean".

Ukrainians have described the government's Ukraine family visa application process as "a shambles" after spending the past fortnight trying to get loved ones to the UK.

On Tuesday new measures were brought in, meaning Ukrainians with passports will no longer have to go to a visa application centre to give their biometrics before they come to the UK.

It came as refugee minister Lord Harrington told MPs he expects "thousands of people" to arrive next week under the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme - but warned it "may not be possible" for all accommodation being offered to be checked beforehand.

Asked by the Commons Home Affairs Committee if he could give assurances that ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** will not be housed in hotels, Lord Harrington replied: "I honestly can't give you that undertaking.

The refugees minister added: "I'd like to but it's not our intention. But if all else fails, it's our duty to make sure they've got a roof over their head and they're fed properly."

**Load-Date:** March 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Who will sort out Britain's response to refugee crisis?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6508-FG51-JCS0-D4MB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 13, 2022 Sunday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 9

**Length:** 682 words

**Byline:** ADAM FORREST

**Body**

The government's response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis is not going well. The refusal to follow the EU and drop visa requirements has caused public outrage. Britain has proved to be a safe haven for only a tiny trickle of the millions of people fleeing the Russian assault.

Plans to open up an additional route have been subject to above-average levels of chaos in Whitehall, as No 10 and Home Office officials squabble over who is to blame for the failure to set out a clear plan that meets the scale of the crisis.

Home secretaryPriti Patel has come in for the fiercest criticism from MPs of all parties. Tory backbenchers have attacked the "disgraceful" approach taken by her department and the "snail's pace" at which help has been offered. But Patel's allies are now briefing that Boris Johnson and Downing Street are to blame for the sluggish rollout of routes for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to come to Britain.

No 10 intervened earlier this week to stop a plan by Patel to open up a more generous "humanitarian route" forrefugees fleeing the war, sources told Sky News, saying: "The problem is No 10 - the PM and [chief of staff] Steve Barclay - who are personally slapping this down."

So who will sort out the mess? Could Michael Gove, a man never shy of adding a job or three to his ministerial portfolio, come to the rescue? The fact that the prime minister chose Gove to take back control of the government's new sponsorship scheme - expected to be set out tomorrow - doesn't say much for his faith in Patel and her department.

The sponsorship route is aimed at allowing Britain's local authorities, community groups and individuals to provide a home and a support network to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. It is not a resettlement route, like the one opened up to 20,000 Afghan refugees, since it will not grant Ukrainians indefinite residence in the UK.

Although the government is branding the route a "humanitarian sponsorshippathway", it doesn't appear to amount to the kind of humanitarian protection offered by the EU, which has lifted all restrictions on a temporary basis.

Refugee charities have warned that the existing community sponsorship scheme in the UK - which has taken in only around 660 refugees since 2016 - is wholly inadequate for dealing with mass displacement. Charities have toldThe Independentthat sponsorship also requires a lot of time, training and paperwork to organise. They warned that Ukrainians may end up in hotels and hostels, like Afghan refugees, because of the "decimation" of government funding in recent years.

A lot remains unclear. There is a lot of last-minute arguing between Whitehall departments about how this new route is really supposed to work, who will provide housing, and what benefits the new arrivals will be allowed to claim.

It was thought that Ukrainians welcomed under the sponsorship scheme would be allowed to stay for an initial period of 12 months. But there are concerns that this would put them at odds with refugees arriving via the Ukrainian family visa scheme, who are entitled to remain in the UK for 36 months. Further, will the sponsored refugees be entitled to full benefits, like the visa arrivals?

Gove has certainly proved more adept than Patel at adapting to these fast-moving events, and Johnson will have to hope he can also work sufficiently well with council chiefs, who are bound to take on much of the responsibility for arranging housing needs.

Conservative MPs will have to hope so, too. Tired Tories are pretty content with the prime minister's handling of the big diplomatic issues around Ukraine, after several months stuck in the purgatory of Partygate. But there are fears that the refugee response - if it continues to be viewed as an almighty shambles - could damage the party's hoped-for poll recovery ahead of the local elections in May.

Ultimately, the responsibility lies with the prime minister. Ukraine may have put No 10's birthday cake ambush antics and drinks parties in perspective, but failure to address the current crisis on his plate could put him back in the bad books of his notoriously fickle backbenchers.

**Load-Date:** March 12, 2022

**End of Document**



[*The refugee sponsorship scheme is innovative but not a long-term solution*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6502-G7M1-JCS0-D4D4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 12, 2022 Saturday

Second Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 2

**Length:** 646 words

**Byline:** EDITORIAL

**Body**

After chaos comes innovation, of sorts. Ever since the Russians invaded Ukraine - an eventuality the intelligence services were warning about for weeks in advance - ministers have found themselves scrambling to devise suitable ways of getting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** safely to Britain (or not, all too often) and playing catch-up with the remarkable wave of public sympathy for the plight of the Ukrainian people.

As home secretary for a party that has spent more than a decade creating hostile environments and erecting bureaucratic obstacles to offering shelter to those in need, suddenly Priti Patel has had to contort her usual scowls and smirks into a warm, beaming face of welcome. Or rather, she will have to bite her lip while Michael Gove, who has been given responsibility for this part of Ms Patel's usual brief, gets on with delivering it.

Even now, after some hasty U-turns, the schemes are not yet in place, and once they are they may prove inadequate to the challenge, just as in the past. But one, the sponsorship scheme, looks to be one of the most radical social experiments tried by any government since the end of the Second World War.

Charities, businesses and community groups will be able to volunteer to help house and feed refugees, and find them useful work. For the first time, private British citizens will be able to officially "sponsor" a complete stranger to come and share their home, apparently for a period of at least six months.

To give the government credit, the usual counterproductive restrictions on asylum seekers are being lifted (begging the question of what makes the Ukrainians so special). Once in Britain, the ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** will be permitted to work (for pay) as well as being eligible for social security and NHS care. It is a better offer.

There are some obvious questions, though. How, for example, will Mr Gove's Department for Levelling Up organise this new matchmaking function, allocating refugees to different households? Who's going to do the promised vetting, on both sides? How will they police the conditions the refugees will be housed in? What is there in place to prevent economic exploitation, and worse, of these vulnerable people, who will be predominantly women and children? What happens if things go wrong? After the six months is up, then what? Is there to be a route to permanent settlement?

Ministers - as well as those individuals and families confident enough to participate in the scheme - need to have some workable ground rules and sources of advice and help. The Ukrainians have fled a war zone, left partners and families behind, may not speak good English, and will have been traumatised. It will not simply be a matter of showing them where the spare room is.

There is also the danger that the sponsorship scheme will feel a touch condescending. Worse still, it may provide a new battleground in Britain's unending culture wars, with every liberal celebrity and opposition politician asked about precisely how many Ukrainians they will be allowing to live in their big houses, with the depressingly predictable charge of "hypocrisy" not far behind. Elements of the press will no doubt pursue those refugees sharing the Starmer or Cooper-Balls households to find out how things are going. And some places, sadly, will be hostile to the newcomers.

For a government with little inclination to devote resources to caring for refugees, or to spend money on putting them up in hotels or hostels, the notion of tapping up the public's generosity for a low-cost solution at the same time as being seen to "do the right thing" must be very tempting. It is, though, the privatisation of compassion - and it wrongly limits the extent of the unqualified, and unlimited, legal and moral obligation to offer assistance to those seeking asylum. Whatever else, it is not a long-term solution to the challenge Europe faces.

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian refugees in UK reunited with dog they had to leave behind*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67M9-HW11-DY4H-K4GR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 23, 2023 Thursday 10:46 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 93 words

**Byline:** Holly Patrick

**Body**

[***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) ***refugees*** in the UK have been reunited with their pets that they had to leave behind when they fled the Russian invasion.

Viktoriia Lahodynska adopted her dog Betty after her previous owners had to leave her behind when they came to stay with a sponsor.

After a spell in quarantine, Betty stayed at a [*Blue Cross*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/blue-cross) rehoming centre before enjoying a long-awaited cuddle with her family.

“I am really very happy to have an organisation like this who can take care of pets, the most important things in the world,” Lahodynska said.

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**Load-Date:** February 23, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Mordaunt wins backing of Ukrainian MPs in bid to become new Tory leader*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65YB-27J1-JBNF-W28K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 18, 2022 Monday 12:01 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 251 words

**Byline:** Gavin Cordon

**Highlight:** Ten MPs from three different Ukrainian parties were supporting the international trade minister, her campaign team said.

**Body**

Tory leadership contender [*Penny Mordaunt*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/penny-mordaunt) has won the backing of a group of Ukrainian [*MPs*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mps) , her campaign has said.

Ten MPs from three different parties – some of whom met her on a recent visit to [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) – are supporting her bid to succeed [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) , her campaign team said.

In a statement released by the campaign, Lesia Vasylenko of the Holos (Voice) Party said: “In the last six months, the UK has proven to be not just a strategic partner for Ukraine but a true friend.

“The next [*Conservative*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/conservative) leader will need to be 110% dedicated to Ukraine’s victory and with it the victory of democracy.

“Penny Mordaunt was the first minister I have met, back in March, and she struck me with her determination to have Ukraine win at all cost. This is exactly the kind of uncompromising stance we in Ukraine require from our partners today.”

Vasyl Virastyuk of Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky’s Servant of the People party said: “Penny Mordaunt has repeatedly expressed her support for Ukraine and stated that ‘Russia must lose the war’.

“She herself sheltered ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** at home. I am sure that this is the prime minister who will become a new great friend of Ukraine.”

In response, Portsmouth North MP Ms Mordaunt said: “I am humbled to have been endorsed by my brave colleagues from Kyiv, their fight against Putin and his invaders is our fight too.

“Putin must fail. Under my leadership, Britain will ensure he does. I will stand with President Zelensky and ensure Britain remains their strongest ally.”

**Load-Date:** July 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Irish premier due to travel to Kyiv*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65VN-5PP1-JBNF-W3B6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 5, 2022 Tuesday 4:46 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 282 words

**Byline:** Grinne N. Aodha

**Highlight:** Details of the trip emerged after the Taoiseach did not appear in parliament for Leaders’ Questions.

**Body**

[*Irish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/irish) premier Micheal Martin is due to travel to the Ukrainian capital [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) on Wednesday for a number of engagements in the city.

Mr Martin was travelling on Tuesday and so did not appear as scheduled in the Dail for Leaders’ Questions.

The trip comes two weeks after Ukrainian President [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) invited Mr Martin to visit Ukraine, which would represent the first Irish state visit to the country.

Talked to [*@MichealMartinTD*](https://twitter.com/MichealMartinTD?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) on the eve of the historic [*#EUCO*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/EUCO?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) meeting. Thanked for active support of Ukraine's European aspirations and the status of a candidate for EU membership. Invited to make the first visit to in the history of bilateral relations. [*#EmbraceUkraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/EmbraceUkraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) — Володимир Зеленський (@ZelenskyyUa) [*June 21, 2022*](https://twitter.com/ZelenskyyUa/status/1539314822155747328?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Foreign Affairs Minister [*Simon Coveney*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/simon-coveney) visited Kyiv in April and met with his counterparts, Ukraine’s foreign minister Dmytro Kuleba and defence minister Oleksii Reznikov.

He also visited the town of Bucha on the outskirts of the capital, where suspected killings of civilians prompted global condemnation.

Ireland has taken in more than 36,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** since Russia invaded neighbouring Ukraine at the end of February, and has given millions of euro in humanitarian support and assistance to the country, as well as health equipment and medical donations worth over 4.5 million euro.

Mr Martin has also been a vocal advocate for Ukraine’s fast-tracked membership of the EU.

“Ireland is ready to walk every step of that journey with Ukraine, providing whatever support and encouragement we can along the way,” the [*Taoiseach*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/taoiseach) has previously said.

Mr Zelensky has thanked Ireland for its “active support of Ukraine’s European aspirations”.

**Load-Date:** July 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Voices: The Turkey-Syria earthquake should act as a massive wake-up call*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67K8-1791-JBNF-W1NB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 18, 2023 Saturday 12:43 PM GMT

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**Section:** VOICES; Version:1

**Length:** 941 words

**Byline:** Ibrahim Özdemir

**Highlight:** Our approach – or rather the lack of one – to climate-related displacement needs drastic reform, writes Ibrahim Özdemir

**Body**

A week ago, my home country, [*Turkey*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/turkey) , suffered the [*deadliest earthquake for almost a century*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/turkey-earthquake-live-rescue-recovery-b2284842.html) : over 40,000 people were killed, tens of thousands more injured, and over six million were displaced in Turkey and in neighbouring [*Syria*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/syria).

Countries rushed to help, [*pledging millions in aid*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/uk-government-turkey-rishi-sunak-prime-minister-disasters-emergency-committee-b2283011.html) and flying in crews to assist rescue operations in the rubble of cities – which I am extremely grateful for. But the unprecedented devastation is only a glimpse of what’s yet to come. Ultimately, last week’s events are a long-overdue wakeup call for the international community: the climate refugee crisis is here. And we are far from ready.

In the past decade global migrant flows have doubled, and over a billion people are at risk of displacement by environmental disasters by 2050. Since 2008, [*climate change has displaced three times more people*](https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/exxonmobil-reparations-climate-change-lord-deben-b2276728.html) compared to armed conflicts. Most of these climate refugees come from sub-Saharan Africa and the MENA region, already plagued with natural disasters and severe droughts.

Repeatedly, international summits such as COP27 and Davos keep failing climate refugees. At COP27 “displacement by climate change” remained a side-line discussion, and Davos turned into a billionaires’ playground, driven by “corporate greed”. With over 3 billion people living in countries considered to be highly vulnerable to climate change, we simply cannot keep ignoring the existence of the [*climate refugee crisis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/cop27-mia-mottley-climate-refugee-b2220276.html).

Under international law, climate refugees are not eligible for protection. In fact, there is not even consensus on who qualifies as one, since climate refugees are not covered by the 1951 United Nations’ Refugee Convention which only gives legal protection to people fleeing persecution due to their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or social group.

While the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, acknowledges the dangers climate refugees face in their home countries, international law fails to prevent nations from deporting them. And with no legal status, climate refugees are left with no legal migration options.

Meanwhile, policymakers are in denial. Days after the [*earthquake*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/earthquake) , the EU’s migration summit was hijacked by the far right calling for tougher immigration laws and more border fences. Ahead of the largest mass displacement in history, migration has become a political weapon characterised by “Trumpist strategies”.

The current climate towards refugees – most of them arriving from Muslim-majority countries – is increasingly hostile, with many Europeans hoping to ban them altogether. Therefore, leveraging values of common humanity will be crucial in prepping our societies for what’s to come.

Our approach – or rather the lack of one – to climate-related displacement needs drastic reform: one which could potentially model the temporary protection of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. That said, policymakers alone are unlikely to eradicate the public hostility towards migrants. This is where it becomes important to incorporate civil society leaders in the climate migration debate.

Civil society leaders, including religious leaders, could be invaluable in galvanising public support in favour of climate refugees. For example, a group of religious leaders recently joined forces with the European Commission, urging the EU to reaffirm its moral values and build upon the movement of solidarity [*created by the Ukraine war*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-war-putin-nuclear-latest-b2284354.html).

Another example comes from, Dr. Mohammed bin Abdul Karim Al-Issa, the Secretary-General of the world’s largest Islamic non-governmental organisation, Muslim World League (MWL), who has made his mission to leverage moral frameworks like faith to mobilise public support for refugees displaced by climate change.

By establishing a pioneering global interfaith coalition, [*Faith For Our Planet (FFOP)*](https://faithforourplanet.org/) , MWL is effectively utilising interfaith solutions and our shared moral values in the climate battle. For Western nations, battling against a growing anti-immigration sentiment, initiatives like these are crucial to secure social cohesion and to build up resilience ahead of the greatest humanitarian crisis of our time.

Some governments have also started to implement new visa categories for people displaced by the climate crisis. For instance, back in May, Argentina established a special three-year humanitarian visa for climate refugees from Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean – paving way for a new more elastic approach to climate change-fuelled mass migration.

Moreover, [*AI holds massive untapped potential*](https://www.independent.co.uk/tech/chatgpt-ai-chatbot-what-google-b2278921.html) and could be used by governments as a preventative method to predict climate disasters before they strike. It can also be used to forecast where refugees are able to integrate more easily based on data of previous refugee and migrant patterns – as already done by programs like GeoMatch by Stanford University’s Immigration Policy Lab.

After all, Western nations won’t be able to cope with their aging populations without an additional labour force. By 2050, North America and Europe will have 300 million people above the retirement age. Last year, Europe already saw the highest number of unauthorised migrants entering the continent since the 2015 refugee crisis. And this number doesn’t even include the nearly [*eight million* ***Ukrainian******refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugees-visa-home-office-hotels-b2256853.html) across Europe who fled their homes after the Russian military invasion a year ago.

Back then, one million migrants caused an unparalleled political and humanitarian crisis. Now, we are at risk of facing a crisis a thousand times worse – it is high time the international community woke up to this realisation.

Ibrahim Özdemir is a consultant to the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)

**Load-Date:** February 18, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Action needed now on surge in Ukrainians becoming homeless, MPs warn*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67KK-V8T1-DY4H-K3PM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 20, 2023 Monday 12:03 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK NEWS,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:2

**Length:** 862 words

**Byline:** Holly Bancroft

**Highlight:** More than 70 MPs and peers including Priti Patel have signed an open letter to government

**Body**

The government must act immediately to help thousands of [***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) who are facing [*homelessness*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homeless) in the UK, a cross-party coalition of MPs and peers has warned.

More than 4,200 Ukrainian households have presented as homeless to English councils since February last year, [*with 30 per cent of those doing so in the period from November to January.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukrainians-homelessness-homes-for-ukraine-england-councils-b2279121.html)

More than 70 MPs and peers, including the former home secretary Priti Patel and deputy speaker Dame [*Rosie Winterton*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rosie-winterton) , have signed an open letter calling on the government to widen the funding available to sponsors to ensure that no Ukrainian seeking refuge in the UK is[*left facing homelessness.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukrainian-refugees-homes-for-ukraine-councils-b2239834.html)

The letter also calls for the appointment of a new minister for refugees following the resignation of Lord Harrington. “In the midst of the cost of living crisis there are growing concerns that increasing numbers of Ukrainian arrivals are facing homelessness or destitution,” the letter adds.

MPs also urged the government to consider the policy recommendations put forward by the All-Party Parliamentary Groups for Ending Homelessness, which include increased flexibility in funding for hosts and more money for those on the family scheme. The co-chairs of the APPG, Bob Blackman MP and Florence Eshalomi MP, said “more must be done” to address the crisis.

Ukrainian refugee Anna\*, who has a medical degree, came to the UK via Poland in May last year. Since then, she has lived in three different homes with three different sponsors due to the living arrangements breaking down. She had to register herself as at risk of homelessness with her local London council but struggled to get sufficient help from the local authority. She has also struggled to find work or private accommodation.

“My sponsorship is ending next month and I haven’t heard from the council in the last two weeks. I don’t have any opportunity to live independently at the moment so I am looking for a new sponsor. The council said they would help me look but that doesn’t guarantee that they will find any. Previously, at the end of May, when I was in a similar situation, they told me that I should look for a sponsor myself,” she told The Independent.

Anna had to leave her second sponsorship after she found a month’s work project in a different part of the UK. The host wouldn’t let her hold onto the placement while she was away, she explained. Her first sponsorship broke down when the landlord told her sponsor he didn’t want any refugees in his property.

“I struggle to rent anywhere privately because I need deposits and a guarantor who would sign on the contract. Nobody wants to rent to people on benefits. It’s the same problem that local UK people have with renting but just double it for people who don’t speak English that well,” she added.

She said her ordeal has affected her mental health. “My journey to the UK already traumatised me and I am very grateful for my life here but sometimes I am finding it hard,” she said.

The number of Ukrainian families facing homelessness in England has increased by 44 per cent over the winter months as sponsorship arrangements continue to break down. As of November 2022, 199,500 visa applications had been granted to Ukrainians under the family scheme or the sponsorship scheme.

The Independent has previously revealed that some [*Ukrainians are facing a very real choice between becoming homeless in the UK or returning to their wartorn country.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukrainian-refugees-homes-for-ukraine-councils-b2239834.html) Councils offer a varying range of support across the country, despite their legal obligations to house Ukrainians if they do not have anywhere to live.

In one case, Ealing council told a 23-year-old woman that it was unlikely to be able to help her because she did not have “severe health needs”. [*Thousands of Ukrainians have also been placed in hotel accommodation*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugees-visa-home-office-hotels-b2256853.html) by councils which are struggling to deal with the rising number becoming homeless.

Mr Blackman and Ms Eshalomi said: “As we approach a year since the Russian invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , it is unacceptable that thousands of people who arrived in the UK to escape the conflict are now facing homelessness.

“While the announcement of continued funding under the existing schemes for both sponsors and refugees is welcome, more must be done to prevent increasing numbers of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** from being forced into homelessness.”

Matt Downie, chief executive of homelessness charity Crisis, said that the “severe shortage of affordable housing” is preventing Ukrainians from moving on from sponsorships and rebuilding their lives. “We urge the government to consider implementing changes to the existing schemes, as well as the introduction of a dedicated refugee resettlement strategy,” he said.

A government spokesperson said: “We are giving councils more resources to help them address these challenges. For those on the Homes for Ukraine scheme, we are providing councils with per-person funding, as well as £150m to support guests into their own homes and £500m to find housing, and we also extended and increased ‘thank you’ payments for sponsors to try to ensure sponsorships last as long as possible.”

\* Anna’s name has been changed

**Load-Date:** February 21, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Irish premier due to arrive in Kyiv for series of engagements*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65VS-F8M1-JBNF-W40W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 6, 2022 Wednesday 12:01 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 279 words

**Byline:** Grinne N. Aodha

**Highlight:** The State visit comes two weeks after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky invited Micheal Martin to visit Ukraine.

**Body**

[*Irish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/irish) premier Micheal Martin is due to travel to the Ukrainian capital [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) on Wednesday for a number of engagements in the city.

The visit comes two weeks after Ukrainian President [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) invited Mr Martin to visit Ukraine, which would be the first visit by a [*Taoiseach*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/taoiseach) to the eastern European country.

It also comes after Russian President [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) on Monday declared victory in seizing the eastern Ukrainian province of Luhansk, with his troops escalating their offensive in neighbouring Donetsk.

Mr Martin has warned previously that the Russian president appeared to be leveraging its natural gas supplies to exert maximum pressure on Europe ahead of the winter period.

Mr Martin has also been a vocal advocate for Ukraine’s fast-tracked membership of the EU.

“Ireland is ready to walk every step of that journey with Ukraine, providing whatever support and encouragement we can along the way,” the Taoiseach has previously said.

Mr Zelensky has thanked Ireland for its “active support of Ukraine’s European aspirations”.

Ireland has also taken in more than 36,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** since Russia invaded neighbouring Ukraine at the end of February.

The Irish State has given 20 million euro in humanitarian support and assistance to the country, as well as health equipment and medical donations worth over 4.5 million euro.

In April, Simon Coveney became the first foreign minister of the UN Security Council to visit Kyiv, and met with Ukraine’s foreign minister Dmytro Kuleba and defence minister Oleksii Reznikov.

Mr Coveney also visited the town of Bucha on the outskirts of the capital, where suspected killings of civilians prompted global condemnation.

**Load-Date:** July 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Jill Biden has company on trip to Spain*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65SY-R4D1-DY4H-K4FW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 27, 2022 Monday 6:44 PM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 261 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Jill Biden has some company on a trip to Spain this week

**Body**

U.S. first lady [*Jill Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jill-biden) has some company on a trip to Spain: two of her granddaughters.

Biden opened the visit to [*Madrid*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/madrid) on Monday by meeting with Queen Letizia at the Palacio de la Zarzuela. They later toured the headquarters of the Spanish Association Against Cancer.

The first lady is an advocate for research into a cancer cure. She lost her adult son, Beau, to brain cancer in 2015. Several of her girlfriends also succumbed to breast cancer.

She arrived in Madrid on Sunday, before President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) , who is set to arrive Tuesday to attend the annual NATO summit.

“I brought my two granddaughters,” the first lady told Letizia as they chatted at the palace. “We stayed up and, you know, had a glass of wine.”

Her adult granddaughters Maisy and Finnegan, who were already in [*Spain*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/spain) when the first lady arrived Sunday night, did not join her palace visit. They were at the U.S. Embassy visiting with Ambassador Julissa Reynoso, formerly the first lady's chief of staff, Biden said.

The first lady also paid a courtesy call on Begoña Gómez, the wife of President Pedro Sanchez.

On Tuesday, Jill Biden and Letizia will visit a greeting center in Madrid for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** taken in by Spain and meet with Ukrainian families in Madrid.

She and the president will attend a NATO dinner on Tuesday.

On Wednesday, the first lady will participate in the agenda for spouses of the NATO country leaders, including visits to Madrid’s Prado and Reina Sofia museums, before she flies back to Washington.

President Biden will depart on Thursday after the NATO summit ends.

**Load-Date:** June 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Who is in the Royal Box at Wimbledon today?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65TS-FX31-JBNF-W548-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 1, 2022 Friday 12:08 PM GMT

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**Section:** LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 265 words

**Byline:** Joanna Whitehead and Laura Hampson

**Highlight:** Two royal family members make an appearance in the box today

**Body**

Andrew Lloyd Webber, HRH Princess Michael of Kent, and the chairman of Swarovski are among the guests sitting in the Royal Box at [*Wimbledon*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/wimbledon) today.

The Royal Box, which is located on [*Centre Court*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/centre-court) at the legendary SW19 sports venue, has 74 seats reserved for the royal family and invited guests of the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club (AELTC).

Wimbledon organisers handed out [*hundreds of free tickets*](https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/tennis/wimbledon-tickets-free-ukraine-refugees-b2107957.html) to ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) in a bid to welcome them to their new homes last week.

In a couple of weeks, the special ticket holders will be able to spend the day at No.1 Court, an opportunity to see some “amazing tennis”, according to Wimbledon Foundation head Paige Murphy.

She said: “It’s an incredibly proud moment for us – it’s really part of our mission… to give people a really special experience after a really traumatic few months.

“To be able to provide a unique day when they can hopefully have a bit of respite and really get some enjoyment out of it is incredibly inspiring for us.”

Who is in the Royal Box today?

Two members of the royal family are in the box today: HRH Princess Michael of Kent (the wife of Prince Michael of Kent, the Queen’s first cousin), and HRH The Duchess of Gloucester (the wife of Prince Richard, Duke of Gloucester, another first cousin of the Queen).

They are joined by Swarovski chairman Helmut Swarovski, the Earl of St Andrews, and his daughter, Lady Marina Windsor.

Elsewhere in the box sees Andrew Lloyd Webber; London Fire Brigade commissioner Andy Roe; golfer Justin Rose; and Welsh singer Katherine Jenkins.

**Load-Date:** July 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*German official vows culprits 'will pay' for arson attack*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66RC-Y7T1-JBNF-W3GN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

October 29, 2022 Saturday 6:06 PM GMT

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**Length:** 265 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** A top security official in eastern Germany says those behind a suspected arson attack on a hotel intended to house refugee families would be tracked down and held to account

**Body**

Those behind a suspected arson attack on a German hotel intended to house refugee families will be tracked down and held to account, a top security official in eastern Germany said Saturday.

[*Police*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/police) said windows were broken and a fire broke out shortly after 5 a.m. Friday at the Spreehotel on the outskirts of Bautzen in what authorities believe was an anti-foreigner attack. Four employees staying in the building managed to escape unharmed and the fire was extinguished.

Armin Schuster, the interior minister of Saxony state, said he believed the attackers intended to “lay waste” to the entire building, which was to house an initial group of 30 refugees from countries including [*Syria*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/syria) , [*Afghanistan*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/afghanistan) and [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) starting next week.

Schuster said everything would be done to find the culprits and insisted they did not represent German society.

“On the contrary! They will pay for this,” German news agency dpa quoted him saying.

The former hotel already was used to house refugees between 2015 and 2017, and was the target of an attempted arson attack in 2016. Bautzen saw tensions between migrants and locals flare that year amid an influx to Germany of people seeking shelter from conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq.

The city, located east of Dresden near the borders with Poland and the Czech Republic, has become a stronghold of the far-right Alternative for Germany party.

Last week, a fire destroyed a shelter for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** on Germany's Baltic coast in what authorities say could have been arson.

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Follow all [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) stories on migration at [*https://apnews.com/hub/migration*](https://apnews.com/hub/migration)

**Load-Date:** October 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian boys team embracing respite from horrors back home*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67HP-3TF1-DY4H-K0PB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 10, 2023 Friday 11:47 PM GMT

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**Length:** 778 words

**Byline:** John Wawrow

**Highlight:** A 21-player boys hockey team of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** aged 11 and 12 is enjoying the respite from the horrors back home while preparing to compete in the International Peewee Tournament in Quebec City on Saturday

**Body**

The travel, the diplomatic paperwork and out-of-pocket cost of $20,000 Sean Berube estimated spending crisscrossing [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) to gather a group of 21 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to form a hockey team of 11-and 12-year-old boys is a mere pittance compared to the payoff.

The [*Quebec City*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/quebec-city) businessman would do it all over again in a heartbeat based on the transformation in the children’s demeanor — from worrying to wowed — Berube has witnessed over the past two weeks.

“When I met them first in [*Romania*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/romania) , I could see that some of them were reserved, quiet to themselves. Some of them, I didn’t see them smile,” Berube told The Associated Press on Friday. “And now, I mean they’re totally embracing the moment.”

That moment will come Saturday, when the Ukrainian Selects make their debut facing the Boston Junior Bruins in the Class AA division of the International Peewee Tournament before what is expected to be a capacity crowd of 18,000 — the first sellout in the tournament’s 63-year history — at Quebec City’s Videotron Centre.

Whatever the outcome, the boys have already won as far as Berube is concerned for the two-week respite they will have enjoyed from the daily horrors of the Russian invasion of Ukraine back home.

And that includes getting a good night’s sleep.

“In Ukraine, usually there’s sirens at 4 in the morning, so they always have to wake up and rush to the most fortified area of their building,” Berube said, referring to what one player told him of experiencing near daily rocket warnings. “Now, he can sleep the whole night.”

The game in the two-loss elimination tournament is the culmination of a process Berube and tournament organizers first launched in August, when the possibility of the team being assembled was first broached by Evgheniy Pysarenko.

A former tournament participant and friend of Berube, Pysarenko was inspired after watching many refugee children fleeing Ukraine and crossing into Romania with hockey equipment in tow. He started holding practices as a way to keep the boys occupied before realizing they were talented enough to compete.

The idea, coupled with the team’s arrival in Quebec City some 10 days ago, has resulted in an outpouring of support from across [*Canada*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/canada) , and generated international attention at a time the strife in Ukraine is intensifying a little less than a year since the war began.

Fans attending the game have been asked to wear white as a statement of peace. A contingent of Quebec City’s small Ukrainian community will be on hand waving yellow and blue in cheering on a team considered to be a symbol of hope for their country’s future.

Olga Grayvoronska Sharpe never cared much for hockey during the 11 years she has lived in Canada after leaving behind her family in Kharkiv, Ukraine. She's now eagerly excited to be attending her first game on Saturday.

“I’m sure I won’t be able to hold my tears back out of joy for those young men,” she said. “It’s for the future, the future of life, that life no matter what — no matter (Russian President) Vladimir Putin’s plan — will prevail and young people would win.”

What hit home for Grayvoronska Sharpe is the memory of crossing into Ukraine by foot last summer and seeing her bombed-out hometown devastated, while visiting her 82-year-old parents, who refused her pleas to leave Karkhiv by saying, “If we leave, who would stay?”

She then turned her attention to Berube by saying, “this wouldn’t be possible without Sean. I view him as a hero.”

Berube deflected the attention.

“I’m doing this because I want to give back to Ukraine and to those boys,” he said. “The heroes are their fathers who risk their lives.”

One player’s father died in action. Another five have fathers fighting on the front line defending Ukraine. In the meantime, the remainder of their families are scattered around Europe.

Berube is impressed by how the players have handled the spotlight, while enjoying themselves during tours of the city, which included a shopping spree at a local sports equipment store.

“They’re like rock stars,” he said. “They’re very mature for their age. I think probably what they went through, they have a big sense of duty for their country. And that’s how the coaches prepared them too, that they’re doing that for Ukraine and they want to prove to the world that Ukrainians are proud and can be great hockey players.”

There’s little doubt Berube will grow emotional once the game begins on Saturday.

“I think it’s a message of unity,” Berube said. “Tomorrow is going to be a celebration of hockey and how hockey unites people. And it’s going to be an event for peace for Ukraine.”

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[*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) sports: [*https://apnews.com/hub/apf-sports*](https://apnews.com/hub/apf-sports) and [*https://twitter.com/AP\_Sports*](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

**Load-Date:** February 10, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Where can I donate items for Ukraine and which items are most needed?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65T3-JDP1-DY4H-K1NF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 27, 2022 Monday 2:36 PM GMT

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**Section:** LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 1390 words

**Byline:** Joe Sommerlad and Kate Ng

**Highlight:** Support for refugees fleeing Russian invasion floods in across Britain

**Body**

People across Britain and the wider world have been deeply moved by the courage and resilience shown by the citizens of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) since their country came under attack from [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) ’s [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) in February 2022, an invasion that brought international condemnation and has made the aggressor become a pariah state on the world stage.

While many have been caught up in the violent warfare playing out across Ukrainian cities, more than 12 million refugees have been forced to flee for safety in neighbouring states like [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) , [*Slovakia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/slovakia) , [*Hungary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hungary) , [*Romania*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/romania) and [*Moldova*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/moldova).

Both the resistance and the refugees need the help and generosity of Ukraine’s European neighbours to survive their ordeal and millions of Britons have already [*donated generously to fundraising drives*](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ukraine-help-emergency-appeal-how-donate-b2024293.html) and supported causes like The Independent’s [*Refugees Welcome*](https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/editorials/ukraine-war-russia-refugees-welcome-b2025033.html) campaign, which seeks to persuade the British government to do more to help asylum seekers escape the conflict.

At a local level, charitable endeavours have meanwhile sprung up across the country to take in and deliver supplies to the frontline.

Below is a list of some of the places across Britain currently accepting donations of goods like clothing, toys, medicine and food to help those under siege in their hour of need.

It is by no means a definitive record, however, so please check your local listings for other collections in your area.

Readers are also encouraged to share further information and links to other regional hubs in the comments section that follows.

Anyone planning to vist a drop-off centre is further advised to check up on the site’s social media accounts or call ahead beforehand for more information on which resources are most in demand to avoid a surplus, given that the situation on the ground is changing all the time.

London

The Polish White Eagle Club in Balham, South London

[*The organisers*](http://go.redirectingat.com/?id=44681X1458326&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fkluborlabialego%2F&sref=https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ukraine-appeal-donation-russia-war-b2110237.html) are accepting first aid kits, baby formula and nappies, hygiene products and other items to help refugees in Ukraine. They say they have already been overwhelmed with donations, however, so members of the public are advised to contact them before dropping off supplies.

Address: 211 Balham High Road, SW17 7BQ

02086721723

UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies

Students and staff at the university have [*put together a list of ways people can help*](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ssees/ssees-ukraine/ways-help) ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, including donating to its Ukraine Response Fund and volunteer opportunities to support them.

Address: 16 Taviton Street, WC1H 0BW

What began as a 3 day drive has now wrapped up after 11 days! 1,600+ boxes, 4 lorries to Ukraine, 70+ student volunteers, and 4 Universities involved! What a testament to the strength of the student community at [*@UCLSSEES*](https://twitter.com/UCLSSEES?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) , [*@ucl*](https://twitter.com/ucl?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) , and across London! THANK YOU [*#СлаваУкраїні*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/%D0%A1%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%A3%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%97%D0%BD%D1%96?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/kFhcwMejS0*](https://t.co/kFhcwMejS0) — Freya Proudman (she/her) (@freyaproudman) [*March 10, 2022*](https://twitter.com/freyaproudman/status/1501998289625010179?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Little Village HQ This baby clotyhing bank collects children’s clothing, nappies and children’s essentials for young kids aged between 0 to five years old who are arriving or residing in London. You can check if they operate in your borough and donate [*through their webpage*](https://littlevillagehq.org/news/). Kensington & Chelsea Mutual AidKensington & Chelsea Mutual Aid [*runs a clothes bank*](https://www.mutualaidkc.com/clothes-bank) that is open on Mondays, Wednesdaya nd Fridays. You can donate clothes, shoes and toiletries, as well as toys, bags and suitcases that will go to newly-arrived refugees and asylum seekers in the borough.GursevaThis not-for-profit charity is actively collecting food, medical supplies, sleeping bags and funding for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. Visit their GoFundMe page here for more info on where to donate [*here*](https://www.gofundme.com/f/ku2sje-fundraiser-for-ukrainian-refugees?utm_campaign=p_cp+share-sheet&utm_medium=copy_link_all&utm_source=customer). Filling up the next transport heading to the [*#Ukraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Ukraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) to help those [*#refugees*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/refugees?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) in desperate need. Thanks to Lana and John making this all happen. Donations from both [*@Metro\_Bank*](https://twitter.com/Metro_Bank?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) West London branches and from [*@JasparFound*](https://twitter.com/JasparFound?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*#charity*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/charity?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*#StandWithUkraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/StandWithUkraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*https://t.co/eXzRd6R3mJ*](https://t.co/eXzRd6R3mJ) [*pic.twitter.com/a22dKJQsdk*](https://t.co/a22dKJQsdk) — Gurseva (@Gurseva\_London) [*May 31, 2022*](https://twitter.com/Gurseva_London/status/1531745641453572096?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Rest of England[*The Polish Integration Support Centre*](https://www.pisc.uk/) ’s British and Polish Solidarity with Ukraine campaign has sent 837 tonnes of aid to people fleeing the war in Ukraine, and has raised more than £2 million in donations. They are asking the public to donate towards their ongoing transport costs to continue delivering aid to the country.It previously asked for foil survival blankets, toys, nappies, sanitary towels, crayons, towels, first aid kits, sleeping bags, metal cups, thermal clothing, hair brushes, shampoos, toothbrushes, children’s clothes and bandages.Donors are advised to call ahead to check what’s needed as the situation is constantly evolving.Other sites around the country include:CoventryCoventry Comfort Carers Crisis Support are gathering sleeping mats and bags, duvets and pillows, blankets, towels, clothes, batteries, power banks and torches.Drop off times and locations can be found [*on their Facebook page*](http://go.redirectingat.com/?id=44681X1458326&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2FCoventrycomfortcarers&sref=https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ukraine-where-donate-clothes-food-b2070440.html). The same city’s Feed The Hungry charity is getting together shipments of dry food, snacks and biscuits, travel mugs, water bottles, tea, coffee, sugar and dry milk. Address: Halo Centre, Progress Way, Binley Industrial Estate, Coventry, CV3 2NTNewcastleNewcastle upon Tyne’s [*Polish Community Centre*](http://go.redirectingat.com/?id=44681X1458326&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fosrodekpolski%2F&sref=https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ukraine-where-donate-clothes-food-b2070440.html) has just completed a major collection of its own but offers the following useful information on other donation points in the north east.OxfordThe [*Donation Drive for Ukraine*](http://go.redirectingat.com/?id=44681X1458326&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fgroups%2F735194297428998&sref=https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ukraine-where-donate-clothes-food-b2070440.html) Facebook page shares information on efforts being undertaken locally to bring gifted items to refugees in Eastern Europe, from [*individual van trips*](http://go.redirectingat.com/?id=44681X1458326&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fgroups%2F735194297428998%2Fpermalink%2F743532453261849%2F&sref=https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ukraine-where-donate-clothes-food-b2070440.html) to local events like the collection currently being mounted from [*Oxford Business Park in Cowley*](http://go.redirectingat.com/?id=44681X1458326&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fgroups%2F735194297428998%2Fpermalink%2F741793816769046%2F&sref=https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ukraine-where-donate-clothes-food-b2070440.html) on Tuesdays and Thursday this week.A vital regional resource.Polish Social Club, SouthamptonThis organisation is collecting supplies to be sent specifically to Medyka on the Polish-Ukrainian border to support refugees fleeing the fighting in their homeland.Their most recent delivery of donations was made at the end of May, but you should contact them to check if they are still actively seeking donations.For more information, check out [*the club’s Facebook page*](http://go.redirectingat.com/?id=44681X1458326&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2FPolskiKlubSouthampton%2F&sref=https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ukraine-where-donate-clothes-food-b2070440.html). Address: 507 Portswood Road, SO17 2THWalesWomen of Newport, NewportThe Women of Newport group recently opened a free shop for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have arrived in Wales with no clothes or personal items. They currenly support between 200 to 300 people and are asking for donations of summer clothes, new underwear and socks, and toiletries.Thank you Nick for coming and supporting us. Please, everyone. We had just news that we should have extra 300-400 new people coming to the shop. We already support 200-300 people with our donations. Please, donate if you can: summer clothes, new underwear and socks, toiletries [*https://t.co/BxN03wIIeQ*](https://t.co/BxN03wIIeQ) — Women Of Newport (@WomenOfNewport) [*June 24, 2022*](https://twitter.com/WomenOfNewport/status/1540351517110288384?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Wales Online has [*more information*](https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/ukraine-collections-wales-donations-russia-23232480) on other donation sites open across the country.

Scotland

Edinburgh

Donations are being taken at many of the city’s Polish supermarkets, cafes and at St Andrew’s Ukrainian Catholic Church, the details of which are as follows.

Address: 24 Dalmeny Street, Edinburgh Ehl 8SA

01315563447

Aberdeenshire

There are donation points in Inverurie, Fraserburgh, Banff and Ellon in Aberdeenshire while the [*Ukrainian Crisis Pet Appeal Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire*](http://go.redirectingat.com/?id=44681X1458326&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2FUkranian-Crisis-Pet-Appeal-Aberdeen-and-Aberdeenshire-104249642206239%2F&sref=https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ukraine-where-donate-clothes-food-b2070440.html) is working to coordinate drop-offs and donations to support animals caught up in the conflict.

Oban, Argyll and Bute

The [*Oban Helps Ukraine*](http://go.redirectingat.com/?id=44681X1458326&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fgroups%2F1129956034433174%2F&sref=https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ukraine-where-donate-clothes-food-b2070440.html) Facebook page is meanwhile a useful resource for updates on [*where you can donate*](http://go.redirectingat.com/?id=44681X1458326&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fgroups%2F1129956034433174%2Fpermalink%2F1130027884425989&sref=https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ukraine-where-donate-clothes-food-b2070440.html) in that region.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. We are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** June 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Kamala Harris news -VP meets Trudeau, refugees in Poland as White House says Russian economy 'crushed'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YP-S4J1-DY4H-K3MT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 10, 2022 Thursday 5:31 PM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:4

**Length:** 249 words

**Byline:** Oliver O'Connell

**Body**

Vice President [*Kamala Harris*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kamala-harris) is visiting [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) and [*Romania*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/romania) as part of the United States' response to [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's assault on [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , and part of Ms Harris's increasingly visible foreign policy role in the Biden administration.

Ms Harris has emerged as a international emissary for President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) having recently met with multiple heads of state and attended the Munich Security Conference.

On Thursday she met with Poland's President [*Andrzej Duda*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/andrzej-duda) and at a press conference after the meeting called for an international [*war crimes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/war-crimes) investigation into [*Russia's bombing of civilians*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/ukraine-russia-war-crimes-harris-probe-b2032886.html) in Ukraine.

Ms Harris unveiled more financial support for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and met with a group, but evaded a question on civilians fleeing the conflict coming to America.

She also met with Canadian Prime Minister [*Justin Trudeau*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/justin-trudeau) who is visiting Warsaw.

Meanwhile, in Washington, DC, President Biden is trying to balance the international situation with pressures on the domestic front. Gas prices are at record highs and inflation has soared 7.9 per cent over the past year - the biggest spike since 1982.

Responding to questions regarding the response to the invasion of Ukraine, White House press secretary Jen Psaki pointed to historically-tough sanctions, declaring: "We have basically crushed the Russian economy."

The president also met with the President [*Ivan Duque*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ivan-duque) of Colombia, designating the country as a major non-Nato ally of the US.

Here are the developments that unfolded throughout 10 March 2022.

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Deli owner overwhelmed by public's response to Ukraine appeal*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y9-0G81-DY4H-K2HJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 8, 2022 Tuesday 6:45 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 215 words

**Byline:** Jonathan McCambridge

**Highlight:** Monica Rawson said she first made the appeal for donations after she was left "heartbroken" by scenes from the war-torn country.

**Body**

An east Belfast restaurant owner has told how she has been overwhelmed by the generosity of people after she began collecting items for those caught up in the humanitarian crisis caused by the invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Monica Rawson, originally from [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) , runs the Smokey Deli in east Belfast which has been transformed into a store for items which will be shipped out to help refugees fleeing Ukraine.

Ms Rawson said she first made the appeal for donations after she was left "heartbroken" by the scenes in the war-torn country.

Since then she has collected several tons of clothes, toys and food.

She said: "We have been doing this collection for the ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

"The donations have been overwhelming, lots of people supporting, it has been great.

"It is breaking my heart because these are my neighbours and I need to do something to support them in this crisis."

Ms Rawson said that her grandparents are originally from Ukraine and she has family in Poland who live just 40km away from the border.

She said: "We have been asking for what is needed at the moment. We have asked for clothes, blankets, baby clothes, toys, food, medicine.

"At this moment we need more medicines, baby foods and cosmetics."

Ms Rawson said the goods would be taken by lorry to Poland to be distributed to refugees.

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ashley Biden positive for COVID-19, skips Latin America trip*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GF-JYR1-JBNF-W1HK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 18, 2022 Wednesday 10:45 PM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 241 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** The White House says Ashley Biden, the daughter of President Joe Biden and Jill Biden, has COVID-19 and will no longer accompany her mother to Latin America trip

**Body**

[*Ashley Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ashley-biden) , the daughter of President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) and [*Jill Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jill-biden) , has COVID-19 and is no longer accompanying her mother on a trip through Latin America, the White House said Wednesday.

She is not considered a close contact to either of her parents, said Michael LaRosa, the first lady's spokesperson. White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said it had been "several days" since the president and first lady last saw their daughter.

Ashley Biden's positive test result was announced just before Jill Biden's flight Wednesday to Ecuador, the first stop on her six-day Latin America trip. The first lady also planned to visit Panama and Costa Rica before returning to [*Washington*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/washington) next week.

It's the second time that the coronavirus has caused Ashley Biden, 40, to miss out on traveling abroad with her mother.

Earlier in May, she was bumped from the first lady's trip to Eastern Europe to visit with ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** after learning that she had been a close contact of someone who later tested positive for COVID-19. Ashley Biden had tested negative after that exposure, LaRosa said.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines "close contact" with an infected person as spending 15 minutes or more with them over a 24-hour period. The CDC says people with "close contact" do not need to quarantine if they are up to date on their vaccines but should wear well-fitting masks around other people for 10 days after the contact.

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ryan Reynolds and Blake Lively pledge to match Ukraine donations up to £750,000*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64W8-XDS1-JBNF-W0DT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 27, 2022 Sunday 4:57 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 257 words

**Byline:** Mike Bedigan

**Highlight:** The Hollywood couple urged fans to donate to humanitarian charity US For UNHCR to help the thousands of citizens displaced by the conflict.

**Body**

[*Ryan Reynolds*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ryan-reynolds) and [*Blake Lively*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/blake-lively) have pledged to match donations up to 1,000,000 dollars (£750,000) to support the growing number of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

The [*Hollywood*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hollywood) power couple urged fans to donate to humanitarian charity US For [*UNHCR*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/unhcr) to help the thousands of citizens displaced by the conflict, and said they would double the support shown.

View this post on Instagram [*A post shared by Ryan Reynolds (@vancityreynolds)*](https://www.instagram.com/p/Cac3CUYpR9O/?utm_source=ig_embed&utm_campaign=loading) Violence continues to rage across the region following the commencement of military operations ordered by Russian President Vladimir Putin."In 48 hours, countless Ukrainians were forced to flee their homes to neighbouring countries," the Deadpool star wrote online."They need protection. @usaforunhcr is providing it. When you donate, we'll match it up to 1,000,000 dollars, creating DOUBLE the support.Actress Lively added: "@usaforunhcr is on the ground helping the 50,000+ Ukrainians who had to flee their homes in less than 48 hours. View this post on Instagram[*A post shared by Blake Lively (@blakelively)*](https://www.instagram.com/p/Cac6_pJpQI1/?utm_source=ig_embed&utm_campaign=loading)

"@usaforunhcr is providing life saving aid, and also working with neighbouring countries to ensure protection for these families."

The couple's generous offer comes as other famous faces posted messages of support for those caught up in the crisis.

Oscar winning actress [*Penelope Cruz*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/penelope-cruz) and rock star Pink also posted links to charities seeking to help young people and others affected by the fighting.

**Load-Date:** February 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[*King Charles III visits Hamburg on final leg of foreign trip*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67X0-0HM1-DY4H-K2WC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 31, 2023 Friday 8:28 AM GMT

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**Length:** 336 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** King Charles III is getting ready to board a carriage, though not the horse-drawn kind, for the final leg of his three-day visit to Germany

**Body**

King [*Charles III*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/charles-iii) is boarding a carriage, though not the horse-drawn kind, for the final leg of his three-day visit to Germany, which will bring him and Camilla, the queen consort, by train Friday to the northern port city of [*Hamburg*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hamburg).

German President [*Frank-Walter Steinmeier*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/frank-walter-steinmeier) plans to accompany the British royals on the two-hour high-speed journey from Berlin.

The couple arrived Wednesday in the German capital for Charles' first foreign trip as king. Steinmeier greeted them at the Brandenburg Gate with full military honors and later hosted a banquet in their honor.

On Thursday, Charles became the first monarch to address the German parliament, telling assembled lawmakers that "together we must strive for the security, prosperity and well-being that our people deserve.” He then met with ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and a German-British military unit before visiting an organic farm where he tried his hand at making cheese.

Charles' trip is part of a carefully calibrated effort by the British government to mend frayed ties with its continental partners after the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union.

Charles originally planned to visit France first, but anti-government protests in the country led both governments to postpone that part of his trip. The new itinerary put the focus on Germany, where Charles has family roots and the royals have long been the subject of fascination.

In Hamburg, the royal couple are scheduled to visit a memorial to the Kindertransporte, or children’s transports, that resulted in more than 10,000 Jewish children receiving refuge from [*Nazi Germany*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nazi-germany) in the U.K. 85 years ago.

Charles and Camilla also are set to lay a wreath at the remains of St. Nikolai church to commemorate the more than 30,000 people, mostly German civilians, who were killed in Operation Gomorrah, the Allied bombing of Hamburg in July 1943.

A boat trip and a farewell reception involving musical performances, including by a Beatles cover band and a sea shanty group, will round off the king's visit.

**Load-Date:** March 31, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Prince of Wales pays tribute to fallen soldiers in Poland*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67V8-J841-JBNF-W476-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 23, 2023 Thursday 10:25 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK NEWS,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:2

**Length:** 321 words

**Byline:** Ted Hennessey

**Highlight:** William placed a weath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Warsaw.

**Body**

The [*Prince of Wales*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prince-of-wales) has echoed his late grandmother the Queen by laying a wreath at a monument dedicated to soldiers in [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland).

William, on the second day of his surprise trip to the country, placed down the wreath at the [*Tomb of the Unknown Soldier*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/tomb-of-the-unknown-soldier) in [*Warsaw*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/warsaw) on Thursday morning.

Queen [*Elizabeth II*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/elizabeth-ii) and the late Duke of Edinburgh did the same during their state visit to Poland in 1996.

William was greeted by a guard of honour and carried the assortment of flowers to the monument, spending around 10 minutes there before leaving.

On the wreath was a note reading: “In memory of those who made the ultimate sacrifice”.

Passers-by waved to William before he was driven off.

The prince will later visit the Hala Koszyki food hall to hear from those who have left Ukraine after Russia’s invasion last year and is set to meet Polish President Andrzej Duda at the Presidential Palace.

William has said the two-day trip will allow him to personally thank troops and “underline” his support and gratitude for the Polish people who have aided ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

It came after he thanked British troops roughly an hour’s drive from the Ukrainian border for “defending our freedoms” by “keeping an eye on” the situation in Ukraine.

After arriving at the defence military base in the south-eastern Polish city of Rzeszow on Wednesday afternoon, the prince, dressed casually in a black puffer jacket and trousers, was shown a missile launcher.

Speaking to the soldiers, he said: “I just wanted to come here in person to say thank you for all that you’re doing, keeping everyone safe out here and keeping an eye on what’s going on.

“So, just a big thank you for what you do on a day-to-day basis.”

He added: “You’re doing a really important job out here and defending our freedoms is really important, and everyone back home thoroughly supports you.”

It is his first trip to Poland since he visited in 2017 with his wife, the Princess of Wales.

**Load-Date:** March 23, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Yellen meets war refugees in Poland, pushes food crisis plan*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65G0-SYX1-JBNF-W50X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 16, 2022 Monday 5:25 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 716 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen has met with ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and urged the need to confront Russian brutality as she visited Poland ahead of a meeting of finance ministers for the Group of Seven leading economies

**Body**

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen on Monday met with ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and urged the need to confront Russian brutality as she visited Poland ahead of a meeting of finance ministers for the Group of Seven leading economies.

Yellen applauded Poland for helping refugees fleeing the fighting and working with neighboring countries to find ways to get Ukraine's wheat and other critical food supplies to the world. She thanked them for responding to "rising food insecurity" exacerbated by the war.

"The devastation in Ukraine in the past months reminds us not to take our next meal for granted, and how quickly events can take a turn for the worse," Yellen said at a visit to the World Central Kitchen site in [*Warsaw*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/warsaw).

She met with refugees from Ukraine who are running the kitchen and said she will release an action plan later this week to address the global food crisis threatening parts of the developing world.

The conflict's interruption to wheat, barley, sunflower oil and other staples that normally flow from Ukraine and Russia has further raised already high food prices worldwide. Countries in Africa, the Middle East and parts of Asia that rely on those affordable supplies face the risks of food insecurity and unrest.

Yellen also met with Prime Minister [*Mateusz Morawiecki*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mateusz-morawiecki) to discuss tougher sanctions on Russia and strengthening NATO, which Sweden and Finland are now seeking to join.

"Poland is of an opinion that Russia should be made responsible for all damage incurred on Ukrainian territory," Morawiecki's office said in a statement.

Yellen also vowed to work with Poland on pressing forward with a global minimum tax of 15% on multinational corporations, which is meant to target tax havens, the Treasury Department said.

"This is our common denominator, that we have with the United States, meaning to put limits on the functioning of such places where business people run and don't pay tax in the [*European Union*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/european-union) or in other countries in the world," Polish government spokesman Piotr Mueller said.

Poland has blocked the tax meant to deter global companies from stashing profits in countries where they pay little or no taxes. It got final approval from more than 130 countries at a meeting of the Group of 20 economies last October, but Polish officials have questioned if the tax will actually apply to online giants and insists it does.

Yellen also will stop in Brussels before attending the Group of Seven finance ministers' summit in Bonn, Germany, this week.

In Warsaw, she spoke at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews at the site of the World War II-era Warsaw Ghetto, mentioning her father's family left a town not far away for the United States.

"We must use the tools at our disposal to fight oppression. And that lesson must be applied today," she said. Russian President Vladimir "Putin's ongoing attacks on Ukraine require that we think about what we can do to confront brutality."

She cited the sanctions that the U.S. and its partners have imposed, even as the European Union struggles to pass it's sixth round of penalties. Landlocked countries heavily reliant on Russian oil haven't signed on to a phaseout of the fuel.

In addressing food insecurity, Yellen said she will release an action plan this week by the International Financial Institution.

The U.S. Treasury said the details will focus on how the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Bank and the other global financial institutions are "stepping up, surging, and scaling their work on food security and agriculture."

World Bank President David Malpass said last month that his organization will provide $17 billion per year to strengthen food security worldwide.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development last week committed 1 billion euros this year for the Ukrainian economy, set to be a mix of donor funds and bank funding.

Looking to more funding sources, within U.S. President Joe Biden's supplemental appropriations request for assistance to Ukraine, Treasury wants $500 million for the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. That will include money for food security and $150 million for the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program, which channels funding to agricultural projects in impoverished countries.

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Hussein reported from Washington.

**Load-Date:** May 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*12-year-old Ukrainian refugee scores 90th minute winner in Shakhtar friendly*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657C-P951-JBNF-W4NX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 15, 2022 Friday 5:37 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 247 words

**Byline:** Henry Jones

**Highlight:** Shakhtar Donetsk were playing Lechia in Gdansk, Poland, as part of the team's 'Global Tour for Peace' series.

**Body**

A 12-year-old Ukrainian refugee scored the winning goal for [*Shakhtar Donetsk*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/shakhtar-donetsk) on Thursday after coming onto the pitch with just a minute to go in the team's charity match against Lechia.

The game, held in [*Gdansk*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/gdansk) , [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) , was part of Shakhtar Donetsk's government-backed "Global Tour for Peace" series.

The tour is aiming to raise money for Ukraine's military in the war against [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) , and also help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** displaced by the war.

12- «» «».[*#Shakhtar*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Shakhtar?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*#*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/%D0%A3%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%97%D0%BD%D0%B0?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*#Ukraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Ukraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*#StandWithUkraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/StandWithUkraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/Yr8S3euKIG*](https://t.co/Yr8S3euKIG) - FC SHAKHTAR DONETSK (@FCShakhtar) [*April 14, 2022*](https://twitter.com/FCShakhtar/status/1514696130159955972?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Both teams took to the pitch wearing a "stop war" slogan on their shirts, while the game began with a minute's silence for those killed in Ukraine.

With just one minute to go, and the teams tied at 2-2, 12-year-old Dmytro Keda - who had fled his hometown of [*Mariupol*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mariupol) amid Russia's invasion - took to the pitch.

Running onto the field, he exchanged passes with his new teammates amid cheers from the crowd.

Just 30 seconds later, he was through on goal, and with Lechia's defenders standing back, he scored the winning goal and was promptly lifted into the air by his teammates.

Commenting on the result, Shakhtar head coach Roberto De Zerbi denied the goal was planned, saying "everything was spontaneous".

Clubs around Europe have been offering to play games against Ukrainian clubs and host youth players after football in the country was shut down when Russia invaded in February.

**Load-Date:** April 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Refugees minister quits government and declares his job ‘essentially complete’*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:669N-W851-JBNF-W208-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

September 4, 2022 Sunday 8:32 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 717 words

**Byline:** Dominic McGrath

**Highlight:** Lord Harrington says process now in place ‘that means there won’t necessarily be need for minister like myself’

**Body**

Lord Harrington, who was appointed refugees minister in the wake of the war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , has quit the government before a new leader takes over.

In government since March, Lord Harrington stressed his resignation is no reflection on either [*Liz Truss*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/liz-truss) or [*Rishi Sunak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rishi-sunak) and he instead feels it is the right time to leave a “temporary” position.

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) was among those to pay tribute to his efforts, with the outgoing prime minister saying that the government would miss his “wealth of experience”.

Lord Harrington, who thanked Mr Johnson for appointing him, said his decision means the next prime minister can “save” on a ministerial position.

Thank you, Richard, for your work on welcoming 120,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to the UK, following Putin's war in Ukraine. Your wealth of experience in government will be sorely missed. [*https://t.co/UZ3ECzvCMs*](https://t.co/UZ3ECzvCMs) — Boris Johnson (@BorisJohnson) [*September 4, 2022*](https://twitter.com/BorisJohnson/status/1566491497326907398?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The former Conservative MP said he had spoken to both No 10 and Tory leadership candidates Ms Truss and Mr Sunak before publicly confirming his decision.“We now have the permanent machinery in place to deal with human misery coming to this country from wherever they come from without the need for a designated minister to be in charge,” he said.I’m not walking out on the role or either candidate and will continue to support where helpful. But what I was specifically asked to do is essentially complete

Lord Harrington

“With monthly reports for the Secretary of State, whoever he or she may be, there should now be a permanent delivery mechanism.

“Never again will we have people arrive in the UK and go into hotels without a plan, as happened with those coming from Afghanistan and from the Ukraine, where at the beginning we didn’t have any idea where to put them all.”

He said he will take on a voluntary role helping refugees after he leaves government.

More than 100,000 Ukrainians have arrived in the UK since the invasion began.

“I was brought in to do a very specific job, which was to set up working machinery across Government to deal with helping the Ukrainians in need,” Lord Harrington said.

“I believe we now have a process and procedure in place that means there won’t necessarily be the need for a minister like myself.

“I’m not walking out on the role or either candidate and will continue to support where helpful. But what I was specifically asked to do is essentially complete so it seems right that I make clear to both leadership contenders that they may be able to save on a ministerial post when they take over.

“Or at least have the option to shape the role for the next phase with a new person now I’ve established a successful system.”

Mr Johnson tweeted on Sunday evening: “Thank you, Richard, for your work on welcoming 120,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to the UK, following Putin’s war in Ukraine.

“Your wealth of experience in government will be sorely missed.”

Other Tory MPs paid tribute to Lord Harrington on Sunday, with former health secretary Sajid Javid tweeting: “I saw first hand how you did a brilliant job, helping thousands of desperate people. Thank you.”

And Caroline Nokes tweeted: “You worked so hard on this Richard and I have always welcomed your willingness to engage and discuss all the challenges for refugees.”

Mr Johnson, who leaves office on Tuesday, has been praised by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

He wrote a piece in the Mail On Sunday and also spoke to the Sunday Times about his gratitude to the outgoing prime minister.

He also expressed his hope for future “close relations” with Mr Johnson’s successor, who could be in line for an invitation to visit [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv).

Mr Zelenksy told the Sunday Times that it would be a “priority” to extend an invitation to the next prime minister, while he also admitted he was “concerned” when he heard Mr Johnson was resigning.

“When we learned that there would be a change of government, all of us were concerned,” he told the paper.

“Johnson was supporting us and a lot depends on the leader. The leader is the one who communicates. The leader is the one that mediates between a country and its people, and a leader has an impact upon society.”

Speaking about Mr Johnson’s successor, he said of that relationship: “I can only pray that it will be at the same level as I had with prime minister Johnson.”

**Load-Date:** September 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[*King hails quarantine agency as Ukrainians reunited with their pets*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67RB-M8V1-JBNF-W3TY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 9, 2023 Thursday 7:27 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 344 words

**Byline:** Tony Jones

**Highlight:** Charles also learnt about the potential threat posed by mosquitos.

**Body**

The King sympathised with pet lovers after ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** speedily reunited with their quarantined animals sent videos of appreciation to thank [*British*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british) workers.

[*Charles*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/charles) visited the headquarters of the Animal and Plant Health Agency (Apha) in [*Weybridge*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/weybridge) , [*Surrey*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/surrey) , where experts combat diseases and pests in animals and plants and maintain a surveillance of possible threats.

Agency staff worked round the clock to ensure safety procedures were followed – to keep out threats like rabies – but ensure dogs and cats were quickly returned to their Ukrainian owners welcomed to the UK after fleeing the war in their homeland.

They have received videos of owners being reunited with their beloved pets – a gesture that was described as making the job “worthwhile” by staff.

During the visit, Charles also learnt about the potential threat posed by mosquitos – which may become more prevalent in the UK due to increases in temperature as a result of climate change.

He peered down a microscope at some dead specimens and nearby was a small tent that was home to some live insects.

And he thanked staff for their work, especially their efforts combating Avian flu, which has been kept under control by the testing for the virus in suspect birds 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

In an impromptu speech, the King said: “I’m full of admiration for what you do, what you manage to achieve against these huge challenges in all directions, I know many have been working such late hours for days and days.

“So I can only say you are totally heroic, we’re incredibly lucky to have you battling away for our safety and our future.”

Around 2,500 pets have been reunited with their owners and Emily Perry, head of international trading in endangered species and the Ukrainian pets initiative, said they had received videos showing some of those moments.

She said: “They lost everything, so to see them being united with their pets we all feel it makes this job worthwhile.”

Speaking about the King, she added: “He said ‘we all love our pets’ so he could understand being an animal lover.”

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Moscow court orders arrest of Russian novelist living in London for criticising Putin*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B8P-5BX1-F072-400Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

February 7, 2024 Wednesday

First Edition

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**Section:** WORLD; Pg. 17

**Length:** 642 words

**Byline:** TOM WATLING

**Body**

A Moscow court has ordered the arrest of a bestselling novelist living in London on charges of "justifying terrorism" - the latest incident in a Kremlin crackdown on Russians opposing the war in Ukraine.

Grigory Chkhartishvili, known under the pen name Boris Akunin, was charged in absentia by Moscow's Basmanny District Court on Tuesday. He is now under an arrest warrant and will be detained if he returns to Russia.

In December last year, after Mr Akunin expressed support for Ukraine on a call with two Russian pranksters, known as Vovan and Lexus - who were posing as Ukrainian officials - the Kremlin escalated its crackdown on the novelist.

Russian authorities added the writer to Russia's register of "extremists and terrorists" over the call. At that time, the novelist wrote: "A seemingly minor event, the banning of books, the declaration of some writer as a terrorist, is actually an important milestone. Books have not been banned in Russia since Soviet times.

"Writers have not been accused of terrorism since the Great Terror. This is not a bad dream, this is happening to Russia in reality."

A criminal case was subsequently opened against Mr Akunin, who has sold millions of detective, historical and fantasy novels internationally, for "discrediting the army". Specifically for "justifying terrorism" and spreading "fake news" about the Russian military.

Russian publishers had already pulled his books from the country's largest bookstore chain, while all Russian theatres staging plays based on Mr Akunin's works removed his name from posters.

Mr Akunin, a dual Russian-Georgian national, has been an outspoken critic of Vladimir Putin for years. In 2014, the year that Mr Putin annexed the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea before sending his forces into eastern Ukraine, Mr Akunin moved to London, where he has remained ever since.

A year before, he accused Mr Putin of destroying the country's hopes of progress. "Putin has become a real obstacle to the development of the country," he said. "It is impossible to survive with this level of corruption."

On the day Putin launched Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, Mr Akunin branded the Kremlin leader a "mentally abnormal dictator" and described the war as "absurd". He wrote: "I could not believe that Putin would start this absurd war - and I was wrong. I always believed that reason would win in the end - and I was wrong. The insanity has won.

"People are dying, blood is shed. Russia is ruled by a mentally abnormal dictator, and, most terrible of all, she submissively follows his paranoia. I know that Putinland and Russia are not the same thing, but now there is no difference for the whole world." He later co-founded the True Russia platform, which helps ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and exiled anti-war Russians.

Meanwhile, Russian prison authorities have moved jailed opposition figure Alexei Navalny, 47, into a one-man punishment cell in the remote Arctic penal colony where he is serving a 19-year sentence, his team announced.

His press secretary Kira Yarmysh did not specify the reason, but said Mr Navalny had already spent months in solitary confinement since he was jailed in 2021, facing the punishment over two dozen times over minor infractions such as failing to properly button his prison uniform.

Vladimir Kara-Murza, another Russian opposition figure being held in a Siberian penal colony, was transferred to a one-man punishment cell last month. He is serving a 25-year sentence for spreading "fake news" about what the Kremlin calls its "special military operation" in Ukraine.

Mr Kara-Murza's wife, Evgenia, told The Independent that he had been moved after being labelled a "consistent violator of the rules", just like Mr Navalny. "In Russia, they use this accusation against political prisoners very often for absolutely ridiculous reasons," she said.

**Load-Date:** February 6, 2024

**End of Document**



[*'Are they going to come and kill me?' Children in UK fear Putin's deadly war in Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6598-F361-JBNF-W3J4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 24, 2022 Sunday 7:57 AM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 1098 words

**Byline:** Maryam Zakir-Hussain

**Highlight:** One British-Ukrainian mother describes her daughters crying because classmates laughed at bombs falling on Ukraine

**Body**

"Do you think they are going to come and kill me?" a seven-year-old asked his British-Ukrainian father shortly after the war with Russia broke out.

Almost two months have passed since the war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) began, killing thousands and creating millions of refugees.

Disturbing images of suspected war crimes have been shared around the world, and inevitably the conflict has an impact on children growing up in an age of renewed nuclear fear.

Volodymyr Muzyczka, a board member of the UK-based [*Association of Ukrainians*](https://www.augb.co.uk/) , was looking forward to visiting Ukraine at Easter with his family, having missed out on seeing relatives back home for the three years due to the pandemic.

But instead of playing with his cousins in his father's homeland, his seven-year-old son is "continually worried" about the war.

"When everything kicked off we tried to keep [information] from him as much as possible, we wouldn't listen to the news, we turned the radio down," he said.

After hearing people talk about the war at school, Mr Muzyczka's son came home very upset, worried the Russian army would come to kill him, "because I'm Ukrainian and I've been to Ukraine".

"It takes you down blind alley," the 60-year-old said, as he spoke about how difficult it is to have such conversations with a child.

His son also asked him what a nuclear bomb was one night as he was falling asleep, having heard friends at school talk about it.

Fears of a full-blown nuclear war were triggered after Vladimir Putin put his [*nuclear deterrent forces on high alert*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/putin-russia-nuclear-weapons-ukraine-war-b2060012.html%22%20title=%22How%20likely%20is%20it%20that%20Russia%20will%20launch%20a%20nuclear%20attack?) in the first few weeks of war.

"There are some kids whose TV is on at home and the kids have taken it in via osmosis, and then sometimes kids are nasty and may bring it up in a way that is hurtful.

"He's had a few incidents like that."

Olena Davie, 44, a British Ukrainian mother of two teenage girls, said her daughters had also experienced upsetting encounters with their classmates about the conflict.

When the war broke out in February, Ms Davie said her girls were "heartbroken, of course".

"They were crying a lot and supporting me," she said. "Their cousin had to cross the border with just her dog and a little suitcase - she's just 15."

But considering the difficult news they were confronted with, they were saddened by the lack of awareness from local [*children*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/children).

"They came home from school and were quite upset cause other kids were just laughing and making jokes about it," Ms Davie said as she revealed her youngest daughter, aged 13, felt the need to defend Ukraine to her class.

"Some of her classmates were laughing at bombs falling in Ukraine, she was quite emotional.

"She stood up in the class and said 'How dare you? You don't know what's happening, you don't know the fears'.

"I was very proud of my daughter for standing up for what she believes in. She's one of those kids who doesn't normally speak up, she is very quiet."

The 44-year-old comforted her daughters by telling them their classmates were not mature enough to understand the situation.

Teachers navigate the conflict

Adam Gill, assistant principal of Penistone Grammar School in Barnsley, said his students seemed more prepared to understand the Ukraine war because "they're used to two or three years of bleak news and massive societal changes".

However, he was still faced with many questions such as: "Is it going to continue or are we going to be expected to fight? Is conscription going to happen again?"

As a history teacher, he said he had seen his students making connections between the rise of Hitler and Putin's invasion.

"The students made the link of how it started with one area and then expanded without us having to point it out."

Sean Connolly is a primary school teacher at Eastbury Community School in East London.

He described comforting a six-year-old girl in his Year Two class after her mother told him she was very upset seeing the news.

"Her main fear seemed to come from 'will it happen to us, why is it happening, why aren't we fighting as well with them?'" the 32-year-old said.

"She accepted that it's not going to come here and it won't affect her day-to-day life," he added, "but not the deeper reasons of why it's happening."

Mr Connolly said: "When we were younger, when we [Britain] were involved actively in the military, the news that came from it seemed like we had to do it for our own safety.

"But the narrative is so different now, people who are being invaded are seen as victims, but we're not getting involved in the military. It's tough for them to get their head around."

Gurpreet Gill is the head of geography at the same school. She said a Polish student in her GCSE class expressed concern for what may happen if her country was dragged into the conflict, worrying that her family will have to go back there.

As well as reassuring her student, the 34-year-old said it was important to "focus on raising awareness and listening to key facts rather than fake news," adding that she reminded her pupils to be wary of polarising narratives that have come out of the war.

She told her students: "Don't go round and say to any of the Russian students that this is your fault. Their lives are also being ripped apart."

She also noted there were more observations on the [*difference in treatment between* ***Ukrainian******refugees*** *and other war-torn countries*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-refugees-response-europe-racist-b2024840.html) among older students.

"They immediately picked up on the fact that Europe has been a lot more warming and welcoming to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** compared to Syria," Ms Gill said, with one student branding the different response as Islamophobic.

Others asked if ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** fleeing the war would end up in the Channel, like in images they had seen before of young Syrian children found swept ashore.

Ms Gill said the school "do not shy away from these topics" and has tried to have "open and frank conversations" with students, ensuring they are "as unbiased as possible".

"Students see a lot of these things and they don't quite understand so it's for us to navigate that for them," she added.

Adam Gill, from Penistone Grammar School, works for[*Minds Ahead*](https://www.mindsahead.org.uk/about-2/) , a social enterprise that supports the mental health needs of schools.

He gave the following advice to parents and teachers when speaking about the conflict to children: "It is important that we educate ourselves so we are in the position to have those answers and relieve those anxieties.

"Social media can be an echo chamber, so engage with the wider news.

"Bring them back to the here and now. If they have a panic attack, re-regulate them through their breathing, focus on what they can see, hear and touch."

**Load-Date:** April 24, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'Classmates were laughing at bombs falling in Ukraine'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:659F-1PG1-JCS0-D2HD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 25, 2022 Monday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 15

**Length:** 1088 words

**Byline:** MARYAM ZAKIR-HUSSAIN

**Body**

"Do you think they are going to come and kill me?" a seven-year-old asked his British-Ukrainian father shortly after the war with Russia broke out. Almost two months have passed since the war in Ukraine began, killing thousands and creating millions of refugees. Disturbing images of suspected war crimes have been shared around the world, and inevitably the conflict has an impact on children growing up in an age of renewed nuclear fear.

Volodymyr Muzyczka, a board member of the UK-based Association of Ukrainians, was looking forward to visiting Ukraine at Easter with his family, having missed out on seeing relatives back home for the three years due to the pandemic. But instead of playing with his cousins in his father's homeland, his seven-year-old son is "continually worried" about the war.

"When everything kicked off we tried to keep [information] from him as much as possible, we wouldn't listen to the news, we turned the radio down," says Mr Muzyczka.

After hearing people talk about the war at school, his son came home very upset, worried the Russian army would come to kill him, "because I'm Ukrainian and I've been to Ukraine".

"It takes you down a blind alley," the 60-year-old says, as he speaks about how difficult it is to have such conversations with a child. His son also asked him what a nuclear bomb was one night as he was falling asleep, having heard friends at school talk about it.

Fears of a full-blown nuclear war were triggered after Vladimir Putin put his nuclear deterrent forces on high alert in the first few weeks of war. "There are some kids whose TV is on at home and the kids have taken it in via osmosis, and then sometimes kids are nasty and may bring it up in a way that is hurtful. He's had a few incidents like that."

Olena Davie, 44, a British Ukrainian mother of two teenage girls, says her daughters have also experienced upsetting encounters with their classmates about the conflict. When the war broke out in February, Ms Davie says her girls were "heartbroken, of course".

"They were crying a lot and supporting me," she says. "Their cousin had to cross the border with just her dog and a little suitcase - she's just 15." Considering the difficult news they were confronted with, they have been saddened by the lack of awareness from local children.

"They came home from school and were quite upset cause other kids were just laughing and making jokes about it," Ms Davie says as she reveals her youngest daughter, aged 13, felt the need to defend Ukraine to her class. "Some of her classmates were laughing at bombs falling in Ukraine, she was quite emotional.

"She stood up in the class and said, 'How dare you? You don't know what's happening, you don't know the fears'. I was very proud of my daughter for standing up for what she believes in. She's one of those kids who doesn't normally speak up, she is very quiet."

The 44-year-old comforted her daughters by telling them their classmates were not mature enough to understand the situation.

Teachers navigate the conflict

Adam Gill, assistant principal of Penistone Grammar School in Barnsley, says his students seem more prepared to understand the Ukraine war because "they're used to two or three years of bleak news and massive societal changes". However, he is still faced with many questions such as: "Is it going to continue or are we going to be expected to fight? Is conscription going to happen again?"

As a history teacher, he says he has seen his students making connections between the rise of Hitler and Putin's invasion. "The students made the link of how it started with one area and then expanded without us having to point it out."

Sean Connolly, 32, is a primary school teacher at Eastbury Community School in east London. He describes comforting a six-year-old girl in his Year Two class after her mother told him she was very upset seeing the news. "Her main fear seemed to come from, 'Will it happen to us, why is it happening, why aren't we fighting as well with them?'" he says.

"She accepted that it's not going to come here and it won't affect her day-to-day life," he adds, "but not the deeper reasons of why it's happening. When we were younger, when we [Britain] were involved actively in the military, the news that came from it seemed like we had to do it for our own safety.

"But the narrative is so different now, people who are being invaded are seen as victims, but we're not getting involved in the military. It's tough for them to get their head around."

Gurpreet Gill is the head of geography at the same school. She says a Polish student in her GCSE class expressed concern for what may happen if her country is dragged into the conflict, worrying that her family will have to go back there.

As well as reassuring her student, the geography teacher says it is important to "focus on raising awareness and listening to key facts rather than fake news", adding that she reminds her pupils to be wary of polarising narratives that have come out of the war. She told her students: "Don't go round and say to any of the Russian students that this is your fault. Their lives are also being ripped apart."

She also notes there are more observations on the difference in treatment between ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and other war-torn countries among older students. "They immediately picked up on the fact that Europe has been a lot more warming and welcoming to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** compared to Syria," Ms Gill says, with one student branding the different response as Islamophobic.

Others have asked if ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** fleeing the war would end up in the Channel, like in images they had seen before of young Syrian children found swept ashore. Ms Gill says the school "does not shy away from these topics" and has tried to have "open and frank conversations" with students, ensuring they are "as unbiased as possible".

"Students see a lot of these things and they don't quite understand so it's for us to navigate that for them," she adds.

Adam Gill, from Penistone Grammar School, works for Minds Ahead, a social enterprise that supports the mental health needs of schools. He gave the following advice to parents and teachers when speaking about the conflict to children: "It is important that we educate ourselves so we are in the position to have those answers and relieve those anxieties.

"Social media can be an echo chamber, so engage with the wider news. Bring them back to the here and now. If they have a panic attack, re-regulate them through their breathing, focus on what they can see, hear and touch."

**Load-Date:** April 24, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Refugees minister quits Government and declares his job ‘essentially complete’*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:669M-WG91-DY4H-K3JX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

September 4, 2022 Sunday 1:56 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:3

**Length:** 717 words

**Byline:** Dominic McGrath

**Highlight:** Lord Harrington said a ‘process and procedure’ is now in place ‘that means there won’t necessarily be the need for a minister like myself’.

**Body**

Lord Harrington, who was appointed refugees minister in the wake of the war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , has quit the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) before a new leader takes over.

In Government since March, Lord Harrington stressed his resignation is no reflection on either [*Liz Truss*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/liz-truss) or Rishi Sunak and he instead feels it is the right time to leave a “temporary” position.

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) was among those to pay tribute to his efforts, with the outgoing [*Prime Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prime-minister) saying that Government would miss his “wealth of experience”.

Lord Harrington, who thanked Mr Johnson for appointing him, said his decision means the next prime minister can “save” on a ministerial position.

Thank you, Richard, for your work on welcoming 120,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to the UK, following Putin's war in Ukraine. Your wealth of experience in government will be sorely missed. [*https://t.co/UZ3ECzvCMs*](https://t.co/UZ3ECzvCMs) — Boris Johnson (@BorisJohnson) [*September 4, 2022*](https://twitter.com/BorisJohnson/status/1566491497326907398?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

The former Conservative MP said he had spoken to both Number 10 and Tory leadership candidates Ms Truss and Mr Sunak before publicly confirming his decision.

“We now have the permanent machinery in place to deal with human misery coming to this country from wherever they come from without the need for a designated minister to be in charge,” he said.

I’m not walking out on the role or either candidate and will continue to support where helpful. But what I was specifically asked to do is essentially complete

Lord Harrington

“With monthly reports for the Secretary of State, whoever he or she may be, there should now be a permanent delivery mechanism.

“Never again will we have people arrive in the UK and go into hotels without a plan, as happened with those coming from Afghanistan and from the Ukraine, where at the beginning we didn’t have any idea where to put them all.”

He said he will take on a voluntary role helping refugees after he leaves Government.

More than 100,000 Ukrainians have arrived in the UK since the invasion began.

“I was brought in to do a very specific job, which was to set up working machinery across Government to deal with helping the Ukrainians in need,” Lord Harrington said.

“I believe we now have a process and procedure in place that means there won’t necessarily be the need for a minister like myself.

“I’m not walking out on the role or either candidate and will continue to support where helpful. But what I was specifically asked to do is essentially complete so it seems right that I make clear to both leadership contenders that they may be able to save on a ministerial post when they take over.

“Or at least have the option to shape the role for the next phase with a new person now I’ve established a successful system.”

Mr Johnson tweeted on Sunday evening: “Thank you, Richard, for your work on welcoming 120,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to the UK, following Putin’s war in Ukraine.

“Your wealth of experience in government will be sorely missed.”

Other Tory MPs paid tribute to Lord Harrington on Sunday, with former health secretary Sajid Javid tweeting: “I saw first hand how you did a brilliant job, helping thousands of desperate people. Thank you.”

And Caroline Nokes tweeted: “You worked so hard on this Richard and I have always welcomed your willingness to engage and discuss all the challenges for refugees.”

Mr Johnson, who leaves office on Tuesday, has been praised by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

He wrote a piece in the Mail On Sunday and also spoke to the Sunday Times about his gratitude to the outgoing Prime Minister.

He also expressed his hope for future “close relations” with Mr Johnson’s successor, who could be in line for an invitation to visit Kyiv.

Mr Zelenksy told the Sunday Times that it would be a “priority” to extend an invitation to the next prime minister, while he also admitted he was “concerned” when he heard Mr Johnson was resigning.

“When we learned that there would be a change of government, all of us were concerned,” he told the paper.

“Johnson was supporting us and a lot depends on the leader. The leader is the one who communicates. The leader is the one that mediates between a country and its people, and a leader has an impact upon society.”

Speaking about Mr Johnson’s successor, he said of that relationship: “I can only pray that it will be at the same level as I had with Prime Minister Johnson.”

**Load-Date:** September 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Imagine Dragons release ‘heartbreaking’ music video filmed on the front lines of Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:686N-BF31-DY4H-K1MW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 10, 2023 Wednesday 10:57 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,MUSIC,CULTURE; Version:1

**Length:** 381 words

**Byline:** Tom Murray

**Highlight:** ‘Our video for “Crushed”... follows Sasha, a young boy who endured months of shelling in his town,’ band wrote

**Body**

[*Imagine Dragons*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/imagine-dragons) have released a music video for their single “Crushed” featuring visuals from the front lines of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Announcing the release on Twitter, the American rock band wrote: “Our video for ‘Crushed’, filmed on the front lines of Ukraine, is out now. It follows Sasha, a young boy who endured months of shelling in his town.

“Sasha's story is heartbreaking, and there are thousands more like him who desperately need help. Even today, his family is without electricity and other basic utilities.”

The band then shared a [*link to U24*](https://t.co/QQoQMhCG9l) – Ukraine’s official fundraising platform – urging listeners to donate.

“Sasha’s story is heartbreaking, and there are thousands more like him who desperately need help. Even today, his family is without electricity and other basic utilities. We hope people will consider donating to UNITED24 and raising their voices for this cause,” lead singer Dan Reynolds said in a statement.

“‘Crushed’ tells the true story of a 14-year-old boy named Sasha. Russian forces occupied his village for five months until Ukrainian freedom fighters finally liberated it,” cinematographer Ty Arnold added.

Our video for Crushed, filmed on the front lines of Ukraine, is out now. It follows Sasha, a young boy who endured months of shelling in his town.Sasha's story is heartbreaking, and there are thousands more like him who desperately need help. Even today, his family is without… [*pic.twitter.com/fuz4turOBk*](https://t.co/fuz4turOBk) — Imagine Dragons (@Imaginedragons) [*May 10, 2023*](https://twitter.com/Imaginedragons/status/1656339010724442112?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

“Nevertheless, the conflict left his home, school, and surrounding neighborhood in ruins. He only survived the shelling by taking refuge in an underground shelter.

“The visual details his unbelievable story of perseverance as he walks through the wreckage. It ends with a still shot of the boy with the words, ‘And like so many others, Sasha and his family hope to rebuild their home. They are still here.’”

This week, the UK is taking over Eurovision hosting duties for Ukraine, which won the European song contest last year.

As last year’s runner-up Sam Ryder put it: “It’s Ukraine’s party. We’re just inviting them to throw it at our house.” Several thousand ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in Britain received tickets to attend.

[*Find out how to watch this year’s semi-final and Grand Final here.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/eurovision/eurovision-2023-semi-finals-what-time-b2334723.html)

**Load-Date:** May 10, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Michael Gove admits housing crisis is even worse than you think*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:69RC-TF61-DY4H-K1TN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

November 27, 2023 Monday 1:10 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:3

**Length:** 496 words

**Byline:** Adam Forrest

**Highlight:** High immigration putting ‘more pressure’ on Britain’s housing, says levelling up secretary amid cabinet row

**Body**

[*Michael Gove*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/michael-gove) has admitted that Britain’s [*housing*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/housing) crisis is even “worse” than widely believed, as he waded into the cabinet row over [*immigration*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/immigration).

The levelling up secretary suggested that the UK does not have enough homes to cope with [*record-high net migration levels*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/rishi-sunak-immigration-kemi-badenoch-b2454083.html%22%20title=%22Tory%20minister%20Kemi%20Badenoch%20pushes%20Sunak%20for%20‘much,%20much%20tougher’%20immigration%20measures).

Mr Gove also admitted that governments “have not built enough homes overall for generations”, as Britain continues to suffer from an acute shortage.

The astonishing admission comes as his close cabinet ally [*Kemi Badenoch*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kemi-badenoch) said she was “pushing” for [*Rishi Sunak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rishi-sunak) to take [*“much tougher measures” to get net migration down*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/rishi-sunak-immigration-kemi-badenoch-b2454083.html%22%20title=%22Tory%20minister%20Kemi%20Badenoch%20pushes%20Sunak%20for%20‘much,%20much%20tougher’%20immigration%20measures).

The business secretary added to pressure on the PM, after sacked home secretary [*Suella Braverman*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/suella-braverman) ’s camp revealed details of [*an alleged pact with Mr Sunak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/rishi-sunak-suella-braverman-migration-b2453995.html%22%20title=%22Revealed:%20The%20four%20promises%20Sunak%20made%20to%20Braverman%20in%20‘secret%20migration%20deal’) to crackdown on visa numbers.

Asked if housing levels were not enough to cope with rising immigration levels, Mr Gove told Times Radio: “Yes. In fact, I think actually the situation is, if anything, worse than you depict.”

Mr Gove added: “It is the case that the migratory flows put more pressure on housing, but we haven’t built enough homes overall for generations.”

With record net migration of 745,000 in 2022, the government would need to massively increase housebuilding and significantly reduce immigration to meet the challenge, the levelling up secretary said.

“I think we need to do both,” said Mr Gove. “I think it’s important when we’re looking at the migration figures to recognise that some of these figures are students, some of these figures are ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, some of them are British nationals from Hong Kong.”

“But you are right, we do need to bring migration down. And you’re also correct, we do need to build more homes,” he added.

Mr Gove claimed that the Tory government would hit its target of a million new homes in this parliament – even though the party had ditched it previous manifesto promise of 300,000 a year.

The levelling up secretary said he was “absolutely confident” his leasehold reform bill – to be introduced in parliament later – would pass before the general election.

New houses in England and Wales will be freehold from the outset. But campaigners have expressed concern that the sale and purchase of leasehold flats will still not be banned.

The standard lease extension term will be increased from 90 years to 990 years for both houses and flats, with ground rent reduced to £0.

This will ensure that leaseholders can enjoy secure ground rent-free ownership of their properties for years to come, without the hassle and expense of future lease extensions.

Meanwhile, Ms Badenoch, the business secretary, said she wanted Mr Sunak to do “whatever it takes” to bring down net migration. “I certainly will be pushing for the strongest measures possible,” she told LBC.

Despite being close political allies, Ms Badenoch reportedly fell out with Ms Gove over an alleged affair with one of her friends. A source told The Times it caused a “significant deterioration” between the two cabinet colleagues.

**Load-Date:** November 27, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Refugees minister: We have not got everything right with Ukraine scheme*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:653Y-BKN1-JBNF-W1DT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 30, 2022 Wednesday 1:18 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 701 words

**Byline:** Patrick Daly

**Highlight:** Lord Harrington told MPs the process for filling out visa applications was still taking too long.

**Body**

The process for resettling ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in the UK has not been "as seamless as it should have been", the minister in charge has admitted.

Lord Harrington, who was made a peer and appointed minister for refugees by the [*Prime Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prime-minister) following criticism of the UK's Ukrainian refugee response, said the visa application process for those fleeing the war in eastern Europe was taking too long.

But the [*Conservative*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/conservative) peer told MPs that staff were working evening and weekends in a bid to speed up the process.

A little under 60,000 applications have been received for both the [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) Family Scheme, where refugees can apply to be reunited with relatives already living in the UK, and the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine sponsorship scheme, which allows individuals and other groups to offer accommodation to those wanting to travel to Britain.

We have not got everything right

Lord Harrington

The Home Office confirmed on Wednesday that, as of March 29, the total number of visas issued was 25,500 - including 2,700 under the sponsorship scheme and 22,800 under the family scheme.

Speaking to the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee, Lord Harrington said: "If I'm positive, I can say we've got 30,000 completed forms thereabouts.

"But we have not got everything right. It is not as seamless as it should be."

He added: "We (the Home Office) are not trying to slow things up. The last time we looked, there were more than 300 staff and if we include both schemes, about 500 staff.

"We've started evening working, we've started weekend working.

"This is like an emergency operation.

"It is not that, 'Oh they will just have to wait' - it is people there who are desperate to come over, they've got through the system and we've got to get them here as quickly as possible."

Asked how many people had arrived as part of the Homes for Ukraine scheme, the former Watford MP said it was "too early to publish that data" but vowed to write to the committee by early next week with the figures.

He said he hoped civil servants would be able to process 15,000 applications per week via both schemes within the next three weeks.

Lord Harrington - who was previously involved in the Syrian resettlement scheme - said there was a need for security checks to ensure Ukrainians applying "are who they say they are", but that questions such as "are you a war criminal?" had been removed from the standard form that had been used.

"There has been some talk, quite correctly in my view, that the visa application process, the actual filling it out, is too slow," Lord Harrington added.

"I agree with that. I sat down on Saturday morning and spent just under an hour filling one out myself, and I was sitting comfortably with a cup of tea rather than being a refugee, not in the Ukraine but in Poland or wherever.

"We are going through every step of trying to shorten that form."

Emma Haddad, director general for asylum and protection at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), said the length of the form for the sponsorship scheme had been cut by a third since applications for refugees first opened after the conflict with Russia started.

Earlier in the session, MPs heard how some ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have been "presenting as homeless", despite being part of the UK Government resettlement schemes.

Councillor James Jamieson, chairman of the [*Local Government Association*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/local-government-association) (LGA), said it was an issue councils were "all worried about".

He told the committee that 144 Ukrainian arrivals had declared themselves homeless to 57 councils.

"Forty-four of which were from the family scheme, 36 of which were from the sponsorship scheme and 64 were from unknown or other," Mr Jamieson added.

"We believe there is an element of people presenting as homeless because they are coming to Ireland and then, with the free movement, able to come to the UK, so that (is) maybe an element of the unknown."

DLUHC officials said they would be working with councils to understand the "scale" of the problem and that local authorities would be able to fund accommodation out of their individual refugee grants.

More than four million people have fled Ukraine since the fighting started on February 24, according to the UN refugee agency.

**Load-Date:** March 30, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Imagine Dragons release ‘heartbreaking’ music video filmed on the front lines of Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:686P-9971-JBNF-W4HF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 11, 2023 Thursday 4:31 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,MUSIC,CULTURE; Version:1

**Length:** 381 words

**Byline:** Tom Murray

**Highlight:** ‘Our video for “Crushed”... follows Sasha, a young boy who endured months of shelling in his town,’ band wrote

**Body**

[*Imagine Dragons*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/imagine-dragons) have released a music video for their single “Crushed” featuring visuals from the front lines of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Announcing the release on Twitter, the American rock band wrote: “Our video for ‘Crushed’, filmed on the front lines of Ukraine, is out now. It follows Sasha, a young boy who endured months of shelling in his town.

“Sasha's story is heartbreaking, and there are thousands more like him who desperately need help. Even today, his family is without electricity and other basic utilities.”

The band then shared a [*link to U24*](https://t.co/QQoQMhCG9l) – Ukraine’s official fundraising platform – urging listeners to donate.

“Sasha’s story is heartbreaking, and there are thousands more like him who desperately need help. Even today, his family is without electricity and other basic utilities. We hope people will consider donating to UNITED24 and raising their voices for this cause,” lead singer Dan Reynolds said in a statement.

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“Nevertheless, the conflict left his home, school, and surrounding neighborhood in ruins. He only survived the shelling by taking refuge in an underground shelter.

“The visual details his unbelievable story of perseverance as he walks through the wreckage. It ends with a still shot of the boy with the words, ‘And like so many others, Sasha and his family hope to rebuild their home. They are still here.’”

This week, the UK is taking over Eurovision hosting duties for Ukraine, which won the European song contest last year.

As last year’s runner-up Sam Ryder put it: “It’s Ukraine’s party. We’re just inviting them to throw it at our house.” Several thousand ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in Britain received tickets to attend.

[*Find out how to watch this year’s semi-final and Grand Final here.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/eurovision/eurovision-2023-semi-finals-what-time-b2334723.html)

**Load-Date:** May 11, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Rod Stewart rents home in Berkshire for family of Ukrainian refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66N2-3RN1-DY4H-K25S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

October 18, 2022 Tuesday 4:55 PM GMT

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**Section:** CULTURE,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 95 words

**Byline:** Oliver Browning

**Body**

Sir [*Rod Stewart*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rod-stewart) has rented a [*Berkshire*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/berkshire) property to house a [*family*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/family) of [***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) ***refugees*** after they were forced to flee due to the ongoing war with [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia).

Parents Rostyslav and Olena will take residence in the star’s house, with their five children, who fled to [*England*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/england) without guarantee of a place to stay.

Stewart, who was introduced to the family during his activist work, rented and furnished the house for the family.

He has pledged to pay their rent and bills for at least a year so they can settle, The Mirror reports.

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters?itm_channel=native&itm_campaign=newsletters&itm_content=video-articles) to sign up for our newsletters.

**Load-Date:** October 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Daniel Dubois believes he can cause upset against Oleksandr Usyk in Poland*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68NJ-P6D1-JBNF-W1XP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 10, 2023 Monday 6:17 PM GMT

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**Section:** SPORT; Version:2

**Length:** 369 words

**Byline:** Pa Sport Staff

**Highlight:** Usyk has defeated British fighters in his last three contests and is a short-priced favourite to retain his belts.

**Body**

[*Daniel Dubois*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/daniel-dubois) insists he will end [*Oleksandr Usyk*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/oleksandr-usyk) ’s reign as a heavyweight world champion [*when they clash in Poland on 26 August*](https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/boxing/usyk-dubois-fight-date-venue-b2370504.html%22%20title=%22Oleksandr%20Usyk’s%20title%20defence%20against%20Daniel%20Dubois%20made%20official).

Mandatory challenger Dubois is fighting for the WBA, WBO, IBF and IBO belts that Usyk initially seized from Joshua and then defended in two dramatic fights between the 2012 Olympic gold medalists.

A crowd of 43,000 will gather at the Tarczynski Arena in Wroclaw for what is seen as a routine title defence for the Ukrainian – but Dubois has other ideas. The 25-year-old from London insists he is firing on all cylinders after coming through a tough win against Kevin Lerena in December, during which he was knocked down three times in the opening round while struggling with a knee injury.

“The knee is fine, that’s all cleared up now,” said Dubois, as the rivals came together in Warsaw on Monday for the first press conference. “I’m in a training camp, I’m running and everything is going well. I’m grateful for this opportunity and I’m ready to take it with both hands.

“This has been a long time coming and I’m ready to take it on. Usyk has been a great champion but everything with a beginning has an end and I’m ready.”

Usyk will be fighting in front of a partisan crowd after over one million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** relocated to Poland to escape Russia’s invasion of their homeland. Adding to the significance of the occasion is that the fight unfolds two days after Ukraine’s Independence Day, while Usyk also won his first cruiserweight title against Krzysztof Glowacki in Gdansk in 2016.

“First of all I want to thank the guys who are defending Ukraine now,” said the unbeaten 36-year-old. “It’s only because of them doing that, that we have the opportunity to defend our titles and bring glory to our country and the flag of our country.

“I’m really happy to be back in Poland. This country has greeted me well. I became the WBO cruiserweight champion here and then over the next years I collected several belts. Now I’m back in Poland here to defend them.

“I want thank the people of Poland for the support they are giving to Ukraine. I’ve been travelling around the world, fighting in the backyards of my opponents, but this fight here in Poland will be the closest one to my home.”

**Load-Date:** July 11, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Aeroflot removed from travel booking systems in support of Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XC-XT51-JBNF-W2DJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 4, 2022 Friday 11:12 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS & ADVICE,TRAVEL; Version:1

**Length:** 284 words

**Byline:** Lucy Thackray

**Highlight:** Tech solutions company has also donated $1m to the Polish Red Cross

**Body**

Sabre Corporation -which supplies flight-booking software to various global platforms -has removed all [*Aeroflot*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/aeroflot) flights from its systems following [*Russia's invasion of Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-latest-putin-war-nuclear-b2028400.html).

The travel technology company said that it had terminated its distribution agreement with the Russian flag carrier and removed all fares from its global distribution systems (GDS), meaning the travel agencies, booking sites and businesses that use it worldwide will no longer be able to book seats with the airline.

"Sabre has been monitoring the evolving situation in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) with increasing concern," said CEO Sean Menke.

"We are taking a stand against this military conflict. We are complying, and will continue to comply, with sanctions imposed against [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia).

"In addition, today we announced that Sabre has terminated its distribution agreement with Aeroflot, removing its content from our GDS."

The company, which has around 1,500 employees in Poland, has donated US$1m to the Polish Red Cross to assist local efforts in helping ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Spain's Amadeus IT group has also said it is beginning to remove the Russian airline's fares from its distribution systems, as well as halting new commercial projects in Russia.

This follows [*aircraft manufacturers Airbus and Boeing*](https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/airbus-boeing-russia-aircraft-planes-b2027603.html) withdrawing of support from Russia's [*aviation*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/aviation) industry following the country's invasion of Ukraine.

Boeing confirmed on Tuesday that it was suspending all parts, maintenance and technical support for [*planes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/planes) in Russia, while Airbus followed suit on Wednesday.

Hundreds of aircraft leasing contracts have also been terminated after AerCap Holdings, the world's largest plane leasing company, announced that it would stop doing business with Russia.

**Load-Date:** March 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Majority of Britons back no visa rules for Ukraine refugees, poll finds*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6537-98D1-DY4H-K528-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 26, 2022 Saturday 11:19 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 1193 words

**Byline:** Andrew Woodcock and Adam Forrest

**Highlight:** Exclusive: Public urge Boris Johnson to ditch visa limitations on Ukrainians seeking sanctuary in UK

**Body**

More than half of UK voters think [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) 's government should ditch visa requirements for ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.ukfile:///topic/refugees) to allow greater numbers to seek sanctuary here, a new poll for The Independent has found.

Just one in five (21 per cent) said the government should stick to its requirement for visas for those fleeing Vladimir Putin's invasion, compared to 54 per cent who said the policy should be dropped.

Charities have warned that the visa process for the Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme, which seeks to match [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) with British sponsors who have spare rooms, was proving much too "slow and bureaucratic".

Lawyers also said long delays getting visas under the family scheme meant some refugees were close to running out of money and becoming increasingly vulnerable to traffickers.

The Savanta ComRes poll found that the government's policy on refugees was souring public opinion on Mr Johnson's response to the Ukraine war.

Unlike EU nations which have opened their doors to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** for up to three years, the UK is insisting on visas for all those taking part in schemes to come to Britain.

The poll found strong support for Mr Johnson's overall approach to the war, with 53 per cent of those asked saying he had done a good job, against 35 per cent who said he had not.

But on the welcome the government has offered to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, the picture was reversed, with 47 per cent saying Mr Johnson had done a bad job; just 42 per cent said he had done well.

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan said on Saturday that the government should be making it "far, far easier for those who are fleeing Ukraine to come here".

Speaking at a march in support of Ukraine, Mr Khan said: "You compare our government's actions versus the actions of Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Poland, it's embarrassing - we've got be doing much more."

A small number of successful "matchups" via the Homes for Ukraine scheme have emerged since Friday. But the levelling up department has yet to reveal how many refugees have been able to join sponsors in the UK.

The Ukraine Advice Project, a group of hundreds of volunteer lawyers helping both sponsors and refugees, said they had not seen a single Ukrainian able to get to the UK under the scheme.

One solicitor told The Independent the sponsorship form had not been translated into Ukrainian until Thursday, while refugees have also struggled with the requirement to convert forms into PDF format.

Refugee Council chief executive Enver Solomon said: "It's been so slow and bureaucratic. It looks like there's going to be significant delays before we get many visas granted by this route. It's going to be very slow."

The charity chief added: "The visa application is a real barrier - we should be waiving the complicated requirements, or setting up a humanitarian scheme that allows people to come here quickly through one simple form."

The Refugee Council is one of 16 charities and anti-trafficking organisations to have written to levelling up secretary Michael Gove warning that the sponsorship scheme remains open to abuse and risks becoming "Tinder for sex traffickers".

They called for leading charities to be accredited to help in the matching process to help ease concerns about the flood of amateur Facebook pages which could leave the process open to abuse.

Meanwhile, lawyers said that refugees who have relatives in Britain and are still waiting to come under the family visa route are being asked for unnecessary documents and [*told to send passports across the continent*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-refugees-delays-family-scheme-home-office-uk-b2044276.html%22%20title=%22Ukrainians%20'stranded%20in%20purgatory'%20as%20they%20wait%20weeks%20to%20join%20family%20in%20UK).

Nearly half of the 35,500 Ukrainians who have applied to the scheme launched on 4 March are still waiting for a decision.

Labour's shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper said problems with visa processes were "shameful", while the Liberal Democrats home affairs spokesperson Alistair Carmichael said that"Ukrainians are being left stranded in purgatory by a visa scheme in shambles".

Jennifer Blair, a barrister volunteering with the Ukraine Advice Project, said the lengthy delays could leave people vulnerable to traffickers. "While people are waiting on the UK government to make a decision, they are not making a decision to go somewhere else. The longer it takes, the more it puts some people at risk of human trafficking."

Anti-slavery commissioner Dame Sara Thornton also said she was "gravely concerned" about the "very real threat of human trafficking facing refugees ... at the Ukrainian borders and along their journey to destination countries, including the UK".

But home secretary Priti Patel has warned that lifting security checks would allow Mr Putin to send operatives into the UK, claiming that the Russian president could use female agents to unleash chemical and biological attacks like the 2018 Salisbury poisonings.

However, today's poll for The Independent found that support for a visa waiver for Ukrainians is backed by substantial majorities in every age group, every social class and every region of the UK.

Some 55 per cent of Tory voters backed the waiver, against just 22 per cent who opposed it. And it was backed by 62 per cent of Labour supporters, 71 per cent of Liberal Democrats, 54 per cent of Greens and 61 per cent of SNP voters.

There was strong backing for Mr Johnson's policy of providing military and financial assistance to the Ukrainian government. Almost two-thirds (65 per cent) said the UK should continue to supply money and defence equipment to the Ukrainians, compared to just 11 per cent who said it should not.

Many said the UK should impose sanctions on Russia, even if it means energy prices rising for domestic consumers, with 65 per cent backing the measures and 12 per cent opposed.

However, there was considerable wariness at the prospect of UK troops being deployed to fight [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) alongside the Ukrainians. Some 44 per cent said they would oppose direct UK involvement in the war, compared to 31 per cent who said they would support it.

A government spokesperson: "We are moving as quickly as possible to ensure that those fleeing horrific persecution in Ukraine can find safety in the UK through the Family Scheme and our new Homes for Ukraine scheme.

"The Home Office has already acted to streamline the visa application process and we are looking to simplify this further. The first visas were granted last weekend and we will set out full details of the visas granted through this scheme next week."

Savanta ComRes questioned 2,203 UK adults on 19 and 20 March.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered.

To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine war: Germany offers to help with influx of refugees into eastern Europe*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64VP-H791-JBNF-W49G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 24, 2022 Thursday 1:35 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 252 words

**Byline:** Eleanor Sly

**Highlight:** The statement comes hours after a full scale Russian invasion of Ukraine began

**Body**

[*Germany*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/germany) has offered to support countries in eastern [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) who are facing an influx of refugees coming from Ukraine, Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said on Thursday.

"We will offer massive support to the affected states especially our neighbour Poland in the event of large refugee movements," Ms Faeser said in a statement.

She added that security authorities in Germany had stepped up protective measures against possible cyber attacks from [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia).

Poland too has said that it is drafting plans to deal with up to one million refugees.

The news comes following a Russian invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) which began in the early hours of Thursday morning.

[*Air strikes started on Ukrainian cities*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-war-pictures-photos-b2022210.html) , including Kyiv, while dozens of cars queued to leave the city, fleeing to the country's borders.

The Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia have all said that they are preparing for the possibility that war will send an influx of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** flooding their way.

According to Al Jazeera, in a worst case scenario, as many as five million people could flee the country after the invasion by Russia.

[*Western leaders have condemned the news*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-invasion-boris-johnson-b2022077.html) , and have said that Russia will face sanctions for its actions.

A series of meetings have been scheduled for Thursday, with US President Joe Biden meeting with his G7 counterparts to map out harsher measures against Russia.

Meanwhile, NATO ambassadors are also expected to meet on Thursday, as will EU leaders who are set to discuss further sanctions that could be imposed on Russia.

**Load-Date:** February 24, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Refugee website crashes as more than 122,000 Britons rush to take in Ukrainians fleeing war*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650S-FT41-JBNF-W4BK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 15, 2022 Tuesday 4:39 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 704 words

**Byline:** Joe Middleton

**Highlight:** James Cleverly says he is 'glad website crashed' as it shows 'generosity of British people'

**Body**

More than 122,000 individuals and organisations in the UK have now offered to provide a home for [***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) , just a day after the website went live.

By 9am on Tuesday morning, 88,712 households had registered for the Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme, which allows members of the public to host refugees for a minimum of six months in exchange for a monthly £350 payment.

Just hours later, Boris Johnson confirmed more than 100,000 people and organisations "have recorded their interest in supporting Ukrainians fleeing the war through the Homes for Ukraine scheme".

"Thank you to everyone across the country who has stepped up to offer their help so far," the prime minister wrote on Twitter.

By Tuesday evening, 122,305 people or organisations had come forward to offer help.

The website stopped working for a short while after the scheme opened on Monday afternoon due to the surge of interest, but foreign office minister James Cleverly said he was "glad the website crashed, because it is a reflection of that generosity of the British people".

"The irony of this is I'm actually quite proud that the system struggled," Mr Cleverly told LBC.

"We built it quickly. We could have, yes... we could have spent more time stress-testing this website and delayed it a couple of days before launching.

"But, frankly, I'm glad we moved quickly on this and we're moving quickly to ensure we're able to help the ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***."

It's fantastic that over 100,000 people and organisations have recorded their interest in supporting Ukrainians fleeing the war through the Homes for Ukraine scheme.Thank you to everyone across the country who has stepped up to offer their help so far. [*#StandWithUkraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/StandWithUkraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*https://t.co/cZWCHyLoZT*](https://t.co/cZWCHyLoZT) - Boris Johnson (@BorisJohnson) [*March 15, 2022*](https://twitter.com/BorisJohnson/status/1503733672264060929?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

The scheme has attracted criticism from refugee charities, who have said the fact households need to have the name of a refugee in order to [*take part risks "excluding vulnerable people seeking refuge".*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugees-sponsorship-name-uk-b2035310.html)

However, Mr Cleverly defended the new proposals on BBC Radio 4's Today programme saying: "There are charities, faith groups, who are already in contact with people in Ukraine, people that need help and support.

"So, actually, rather than introduce a potentially slow and bureaucratic process, where people have already got connections -and there are a huge number of people and organisations that have already got connections with Ukrainians -rather than replicate, duplicate and slow that down, we want to be as agile and as quick as possible.

"That's why we're saying that, you know, we've got organisations which are already in contact with Ukrainians. We've now set up this site so British people can register their willingness to help and support.

"And, actually, what we're looking to do is connect those both ends of that system together and do so in a way that's quick and efficient."

Asked whether he will be taking part in the scheme, he told LBC: "I have genuinely considered this. I've discussed this with my wife.

"I don't know whether our personal circumstances will allow us to do this right at the moment. As you know, Nick, my wife, she's going through medical treatment at the moment, but it's absolutely something that I'm considering."

More than 3 million people have now fled Ukraine in the first three weeks of Russian president [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) 's invasion.

It comes amid a dire warning from [*Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky that other European nations could be targeted by Russia as he urged them to help his country.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-war-latest-putin-zelensky-china-nato-b2035896.html)

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Boris Johnson refuses to say if government is considering new route for Ukraine refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y2-5R01-DY4H-K09J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 7, 2022 Monday 1:35 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:4

**Length:** 697 words

**Byline:** Ashley Cowburn

**Highlight:** 'What we won't do is have a system where people can come into the UK without any checks or controls at all,' PM says

**Body**

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) has refused to say whether the government is considering a third, more open route for the hundreds of thousands of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** fleeing war.

It comes after the home secretary, [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) , sparked confusion as she appeared to float [*a new scheme that would help those without family ties*](https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/17864334/priti-patel-ukraine-refugees-rules-relaxed/) and sponsors in the UK.

She said the [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) was examining "legal options" to create a "humanitarian route", which would offer all ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** the right to come to Britain regardless of family links.

But it was not immediately clear whether this referred to a sponsorship scheme that had already been announced, with Europe minister James Cleverly saying on Monday there had been no changes over the weekend.

Asked about the reports, the prime minister was not explicit, but appeared to play down suggestions a third route for refugees was being considered.

"What we won't do is have a system where people can come into the UK without any checks or controls at all. I don't think that is the right approach," he told reporters.

"But what we will do is have a system that is very, very generous. As the situation in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) deteriorates, people are going to want to see this country open our arms to people fleeing persecution, fleeing a war zone.

"I think people who have spare rooms, who want to receive people coming from Ukraine, will want us to have a system that enables them to do that. And that is already happening."

According to the UN Refugee Agency, which has described the situation as the "fastest growing refugee crisis since World War II", and estimated 1.5 million people have now fled Ukraine since the outbreak of war.

But on Sunday, the Home Office also provoked outrage, revealing[*that "around 50" visas*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/ukraine-visa-sky-james-cleverly-b2029942.html) for Ukrainians with family ties in the UK had been approved as of [*10 am Sunday while 5,535 applications had been completed.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/ukraine-refugees-priti-patel-visas-b2029731.html)

Tackled on the figure that just 50 visas have been approved, the prime minister said he was "not sure those numbers are right - but we're processing thousands" of applications.

But when pressed for a specific number, Mr Johnson declined, saying: "I can't give you the number, we're processing thousands right now and will continue to make sure we have a very generous approach".

Earlier, the Scottish first minister [*Nicola Sturgeon*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nicola-sturgeon) insisted the UK government was "not doing anywhere near enough" to help those fleeing the "horror" of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and challenged politicians to make it easier for those escaping conflict.

Ms Sturgeon said it was "unconscionable" that those who have made difficult journeys to escape the fighting and shelling had to "jump through bureaucratic hoops" and apply for a visa before they can enter the UK.

As rising numbers of Ukrainians look to leave their country in the wake of the Russian invasion, the first minister stressed: "All countries must step up and fully play their part, and the UK is not yet doing so."

A government spokesperson said: "Last week we announced a new sponsorship route which will allow Ukrainians with no family ties to the UK to be sponsored to come to the UK.

"This is alongside our Ukraine Family Scheme, which has already seen thousands of people apply, as well as changes to visas so that people can stay in the UK safely.

"The routes we have put in place follow extensive engagement with Ukrainian partners. This is a rapidly moving and complex picture and as the situation develops we will continue to keep our support under constant review."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Briton flying to Poland to offer his home directly to a Ukrainian refugee*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650B-5211-DY4H-K0NC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 13, 2022 Sunday 2:34 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 653 words

**Byline:** Edd Dracott

**Highlight:** Max Fox said he and his husband are open to adopting a Ukrainian orphan if they are legally allowed.

**Body**

A [*British*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british) man will fly to [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) on Monday to aid humanitarian efforts and potentially offer his home directly to a Ukrainian fleeing the Russian invasion.

Max Fox is offering a room in his two-bed flat in Poulton-le-Fylde, [*Lancashire*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/lancashire) , with his husband Arturo Echeverria and will fly from Manchester to Krakow on Monday afternoon before heading to the Ukrainian border.

Staying out there for several days, the 32-year-old will offer any help he can to aid workers while also speaking to refugees to whom he could offer his home.

It comes after the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) announced the upcoming rollout of the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine programme, which will allow individuals, charities, community groups and businesses to bring people escaping the war to safety.

"As much as it's fantastic for the Government to be putting a package like this together, it does concern me a little bit that you don't actually know the person that you're bringing into your home," Mr Fox told the PA news agency.

"I think you've got to gel ... I want to bring somebody into my home that I will have a good relationship with.

"So, I think the best thing to do is just to fly out there and get to know people, and see who actually wants to come out here and who wants to come over to the UK."

Mr Fox and his husband are open to anyone looking for a home, but would also be open to adopting an orphan if they are legally allowed to do so.

"Me and my husband started the adoption programme for a child ... I've been looking at the news (from Ukraine) and there are so many orphanages and children just stuck in squalor," Mr Fox said.

"If the Government has a process in place we could potentially adopt or provide guardianship for an orphan ... but it doesn't matter who, it could be a mother and daughter or it could be a single person."

Mr Fox said he is "apprehensive" about travelling to Poland but had been getting "increasingly stressed" by news reports on the war in Ukraine.

"I'm just increasingly getting stressed being at home, not able to do anything ... you see all this stuff on the media and you can't just sit down and just watch it happen," he said.

"I'm slightly apprehensive, I've just read an article that there's been a missile by the Polish border ... but if I can bring somebody back, if I can help save somebody, then yeah - easy - I'm there.

"I'd hope that if I lost my home, somebody else would give up theirs ... so I'm just echoing how I'd like to be treated."

As artistic director of a group of hotels in Blackpool, Mr Fox is also offering a job to those he brings to the UK working as bar or waiting staff.

Mr Fox said the government has been slow in bringing forward its plan for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and there is still a lack of information still for those looking to house people.

"We don't even know what the scheme is ... at least just give us a brief or some key points," he said.

"We don't know a date when actually people will be able to come over here, so I could go over there and find somebody but then they're still stuck in Poland for another week or two weeks.

"If you don't have a passport, can you get a refugee travel documents that bring people over? Are you allowed to bring over an orphan to look after them?

"We're going through the process but there has to be safeguarding ... you can't just take a child it would be unethical."

Britons offering accommodation to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** through the new Government scheme will receive a "thank you" payment of £350 per month, which Mr Fox said will help with payments such as food and heating.

"It will help us for sure, because we don't earn millions of pounds ... so it's definitely a good thing to support the cause,"

"A lot more people will be able to do this with that help and that support from the government."

Mr Fox is also producing a show - Cirque, a circus-themed musical show - at Blackpool Winter Gardens on April 21, to raise money for the Red Cross Ukraine crisis appeal.

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*What the papers say - March 3*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64X5-4Y41-JBNF-W1DX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 3, 2022 Thursday 6:05 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 743 words

**Byline:** PA Reporter

**Highlight:** After a week of war in Ukraine, the papers report the Kremlin is showing no signs of going home.

**Body**

Conflict in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) remains the central focus of the nation's papers as the invasion enters day seven.

The Daily Telegraph reports [*Kherson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kherson) in the country's south has become the first of Ukraine's besieged cities to fall into Russian hands. The story is accompanied by the image of a civilian crying outside homes damaged by the Kremlin's airstrikes on Kyiv's outskirts.

The front page of tomorrow's Daily Telegraph:'First city falls to Russians'[*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Sign up for the Front Page newsletter[*https://t.co/x8AV4Oomry*](https://t.co/x8AV4Oomry) [*pic.twitter.com/SPFrcQrOhw*](https://t.co/SPFrcQrOhw) - The Telegraph (@Telegraph) [*March 2, 2022*](https://twitter.com/Telegraph/status/1499145151712829444?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The Daily Mirror and i both lead with the compelling story that babies are being born in bomb shelters while missiles rain down above. Their respective headlines read: "For his sake... for his future... STOP" and "Welcome to hell".Tomorrow's front page: For his sake...for his future...STOP [*#tomorrowspaperstoday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*https://t.co/iCp3j4x4s1*](https://t.co/iCp3j4x4s1) [*pic.twitter.com/dw9u7sTIAE*](https://t.co/dw9u7sTIAE) - The Mirror (@DailyMirror) [*March 2, 2022*](https://twitter.com/DailyMirror/status/1499146161323708422?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Thursday's front page: Welcome to hell [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Latest as Russian bombing of civilians claims hundreds of lives: [*https://t.co/55cQbwIq0j*](https://t.co/55cQbwIq0j) [*pic.twitter.com/F1Oqvi0gBi*](https://t.co/F1Oqvi0gBi) - i newspaper (@theipaper) [*March 2, 2022*](https://twitter.com/theipaper/status/1499148142796754945?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The [*Daily Express*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/daily-express) also carries a photo of a baby who was born in the warzone, accompanying it with a report that Russia's soldiers were "deceived into a war against Ukraine and they don't have the heart to fight".Tomorrow's front page: Even Putin's soldiers don't want war[*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/DAU2Dm66mD*](https://t.co/DAU2Dm66mD) - Daily Express (@Daily\_Express) [*March 2, 2022*](https://twitter.com/Daily_Express/status/1499151888687804427?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) "Their finest hour" reads the front page of Metro, citing Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky as saying "there is no time to be neutral" as Russia escalates its assault on his country.Thursday's front page: THEIR FINEST HOUR[*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*#BBCPapers*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/BBCPapers?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*#skypapers*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/skypapers?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/nBODeasKae*](https://t.co/nBODeasKae) - Metro Newspaper UK (@MetroUKNews) [*March 2, 2022*](https://twitter.com/MetroUKNews/status/1499138199163125766?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The Times splashes with the pulverised scene from Zhytomyr, 90 miles outside Kyiv, which was one of the cities bombed beyond recognition. The accompanying story reports that Russia has destroyed homes, schools and hospitals across Ukraine.TIMES: Putin lays waste to cities [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/cTThnJi8UG*](https://t.co/cTThnJi8UG) - Neil Henderson (@hendopolis) [*March 2, 2022*](https://twitter.com/hendopolis/status/1499148337613881350?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) "Clear offski" declares The Sun in reference to Russian billionaire [*Roman Abramovich*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/roman-abramovich) as he confirms he is selling Chelsea FC.On tomorrow's front page: Roman Abramovich confirms he's selling Chelsea, with all proceeds going to Ukraine war victims [*https://t.co/D33txlingP*](https://t.co/D33txlingP) [*pic.twitter.com/nQxAOLkOHT*](https://t.co/nQxAOLkOHT) - The Sun (@TheSun) [*March 2, 2022*](https://twitter.com/TheSun/status/1499149811295137797?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The Daily Mail reports the Duchess of Cornwall has made a "substantial" donation to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.Thursday's [*@DailyMailUK*](https://twitter.com/DailyMailUK?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*#MailFrontPages*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/MailFrontPages?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/1c3HCTWq3b*](https://t.co/1c3HCTWq3b) - Daily Mail U.K. (@DailyMailUK) [*March 2, 2022*](https://twitter.com/DailyMailUK/status/1499148820172746761?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The Independent writes that civilian deaths have soared as Russian forces "bombard key cities".INDEPENDENT DIGITAL: Civilian deaths soar as forces bombard key cities [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/EayDDrpqII*](https://t.co/EayDDrpqII) - Neil Henderson (@hendopolis) [*March 2, 2022*](https://twitter.com/hendopolis/status/1499150112232251394?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) "Russians batter Ukrainian cities" says the Financial Times, splashing with a photograph of a crying civilian taking shelter with hundreds of others in the Kyiv metro station.Just published: front page of the Financial Times, UK edition, Thursday 3 March [*https://t.co/wzKwViLadq*](https://t.co/wzKwViLadq) [*pic.twitter.com/Ws4aVAI2Qu*](https://t.co/Ws4aVAI2Qu) - Financial Times (@FinancialTimes) [*March 2, 2022*](https://twitter.com/FinancialTimes/status/1499127195247198211?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The Guardian carries the words of the Ukrainian president as he warns of genocide.Guardian front page, Thursday 3 March 2022: Russia wants to 'erase' us, warns Ukraine's president [*pic.twitter.com/p9sR48KjKp*](https://t.co/p9sR48KjKp) - The Guardian (@guardian) [*March 2, 2022*](https://twitter.com/guardian/status/1499143827495522308?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) And the Daily Star reports a blockade of civilians stopped Russian forces from getting to a nuclear reactor.Tomorrow's front page: Nuclear heroes [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Read more: [*https://t.co/MroRWSO8AB*](https://t.co/MroRWSO8AB) [*pic.twitter.com/3mcFhlJTJ*](https://t.co/3mcFhlJTJ) - Daily Star (@dailystar) [*March 2, 2022*](https://twitter.com/dailystar/status/1499144762103943170?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

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[*One million* ***Ukrainian******refugees*** *flee as Kherson falls to Russia -live*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-latest-update-kyiv-explosion-putin-news-b2027373.html)

[*Why has Russia invaded Ukraine? The conflict explained*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/why-russia-ukraine-invasion-putin-b2026550.html)

[*Sign The Independent's petition to help the people of Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-refugees-russia-petition-help-b2025628.html)

[*ITV reveals new on-demand platform amid plans to double digital sales*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/itv-carolyn-mccall-holly-williams-love-island-britbox-b2027454.html)

[*Sarah Everard's family pay tribute and say they miss her 'all the time'*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/sarah-everard-metropolitan-police-london-met-cps-b2027440.html)

[*Neighbours axed after 37 years as Australian soap fails to find new broadcaster*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/neighbours-australian-twitter-sophie-ellisbextor-hollywood-b2027431.html)

**Load-Date:** March 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Process to enter UK 'taking ages', says man trying to help family flee Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y8-51B1-JBNF-W05R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 8, 2022 Tuesday 1:56 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 626 words

**Byline:** Ryan Hooper

**Highlight:** Vitalii Morgun, who lives in the UK, said his brother Yevgen, sister-in-law Anna, and their two children have been effectively stranded in Calais.

**Body**

A British-Ukrainian man who has spent several days in [*Calais*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/calais) trying to help his family flee their war-torn homeland has described his frustration at the red tape and delays which have halted their safe passage to the UK.

Sales manager Vitalii Morgun, 36, has spent the last week-and-a-half in continental [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) supporting his family's quest for refugee status in the UK after Russian forces waged war on [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Mr Morgun, who has lived in the UK for almost two decades, said his brother Yevgen, sister-in-law Anna, and their two young children have been effectively stranded in the [*French*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/french) port city of Calais after assurances their visas would be granted by Friday last week did not come to fruition.

They are currently living in a hotel, but say the money is running out and fully expect the lack of progress from the UK Government to continue for another week.

Speaking to the PA news agency from a sparse welcome desk at the ferry point in Calais, an exasperated Mr Morgun said: "We've tried to call all the possible offices and departments and visa centres, and no-one knows anything.

"They just keep pointing the finger at each other and say we have to wait."

Mr Morgun, who lives in Romford, east London, said the family submitted all the paperwork at a visa centre in Brussels on Thursday last week, having spent five days travelling from Kharkiv to the Hungarian border, where they met Mr Morgun and his father, Volodymyr.

Mr Morgun said his mother, who is currently in the UK, cannot stop crying due to the fear of what will happen to the family.

He said: "Our town (Kharkiv) has been almost completely destroyed.

"We don't know what the situation is there.

"There is absolutely no chance for them to go back to that town in the near future.

"They have nowhere else to go so I'm trying to get them to join me in the UK."

Government officials refused to answer questions when approached by journalists at the welcome desk on Tuesday.

Refugees were able to sit down and talk with officials, while posters advertised the telephone number for a support hotline.

But visa applications themselves are not being processed at Calais.

Mr Morgun added: "There is an option for them (family members) to join me as refugees but no-one knows how the programme works at the moment - it's been very difficult.

"I've got somewhere for them to live, I have the paperwork. We just need to get them across the border.

"I know they have a lot of bureaucracy in the UK and things are taking ages.

"I wish it could be better, because I really love the UK.

"But it's just the way things are."

He said he had lots of Ukrainian friends in similar situations, none of whom had yet been granted visas.

The [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) disclosed on Monday night that just 300 visas have been issued out of a total of 17,700 family scheme applications that have been started, 8,900 of which have been submitted.

Meanwhile Foreign Secretary Liz Truss announced on Tuesday that a new "pop-up" visa application site for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** would be set up in Lille, around 60 miles from Calais.

Clare Moseley, founder of refugee charity Care4Calais, said that in the last 24 hours, only one of the 140 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** staying in a local hostel managed to book a visa appointment - and that is not until March 17.

She said: "Most of the people here are confused by the situation, and they've had a very traumatic last few days.

"They're worried, they're scared, they have got a lot of other things to worry about.

"They are scared for their families they have left behind, they have got relatives that are actually fighting which is terrifying, they have a very uncertain future."

Mrs Moseley said increased manpower to process the applications quicker would be "a big help", but added the process needed to be simpler.

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian student fears for mother's safety in Lviv*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64X1-5G81-JBNF-W4JG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 2, 2022 Wednesday 3:34 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 670 words

**Byline:** Isobel Frodsham

**Highlight:** Lana Kozak said she fears for Ruslana Kozak's safety after Russia invaded Ukraine.

**Body**

A Ukrainian student who is studying in [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) has said she feels guilty for being in the UK while her mother is in Ukraine.

Lana Kozak, 20, said she fears for Ruslana Kozak's safety after [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) invaded Ukraine.

She moved to the UK three years ago to study a foundation course and journalism degree at [*Central St Martins*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/central-st-martins) from her hometown of [*Lviv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/lviv).

Meanwhile Ruslana Kozak is on her own in the city after her parents went on holiday before the invasion.

Lana told the PA news agency: "My mum right now is in Ukraine and everyone else from my family is out because they were on vacation in [*Egypt*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/egypt). They cannot go back to Ukraine at all, so they're just staying there.

"My mum is alone and, under the new rules, she can come over with our dog to the UK, but because of the situation right now at the border, she doesn't want to go.

"Nobody from our family wants her to go through that as the situation is so severe."

She added: "I feel really guilty being here and I think that's something that many Ukrainians are feeling at the moment.

"I want to go home. I want to be with her because she is alone right now. If I could, I'd switch places with her. I'd do anything."

Describing the situation at the border, Lana said: "My friend went through the border just when the war began and it took her four days to get through.

"They had no water, no food, no way to go to the bathroom. Thank god, there were volunteers that were giving out food and water from the nearby village.

"My friend told me that there was great panic there and a newborn got crushed to death on the second day because of the swarm of people."

Lana said her mother is staying at home most of the time and hiding in the family bunker when air raid sirens sound.

She said: "I speak to her twice a day, every day, morning and night. She's doing all right. I think what is surprising is how people in the middle of it are handling it - it's a mixture of fear and bravery. They just keep going."

Lana said she has been in touch with the Ukrainian Embassy and claimed they told her that people who want to leave have to go through the border in order to be able to get free transport to any country.

"Right now the line is 30 to 40 kilometres (19 to 25 miles) long, and it takes people days to just pass through. It's also cold and snowing," she added.

Lana has also been taking part in protests, volunteering and gathering medical supplies and clothes for refugees and members of the army.

She said she is encouraging people to donate what they can, in particular milk powder for babies, to nearby collection points in the UK to help those who are fleeing.

"I think the British Government needs to catch up with other countries that are helping refugees so much right now," she said.

"It's great that people who hold passports or are settled can now bring their extended family, but that's not enough.

"We have so many people fleeing and Poland is taking almost all of the refugees.

"It's so brave of them to do that and it will be remembered.

"We're not asking the UK to take all ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** but at least extend to more than just family members."

Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced on Tuesday that more Ukrainians will be allowed to enter the UK to join family members.

Downing Street said people living in the UK would be allowed to bring in "adult parents, grandparents, children over 18 and siblings" in addition to immediate family members, who had previously been allowed.

The Prime Minister's official spokesman said that would widen eligibility to about 200,000 people, twice the number previously estimated.

A new scheme will also allow individuals and organisations to sponsor ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to come to the UK.

The British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) currently advises against all travel to Ukraine.

It has said that people should follow the advice of the Ukrainian authorities while there and urged people who cannot leave the country safely to stay indoors and away from windows.

The Ukrainian Embassy has been contacted for comment.

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Business news in brief*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YD-JPY1-JCS0-D11Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 9, 2022 Wednesday

First Edition

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**Section:** BUSINESS; Pg. 51

**Length:** 760 words

**Body**

Volkswagen to stop taking plug-in hybrid orders

Volkswagen will stop taking orders for numerous plug-in hybrid models from today onwards, the German automaker said, citing chip shortages and supply chain troubles relating to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Orders for the plug-in hybrid versions of Volkswagen's Golf, Tiguan, Passat, Arteon, and Touareg models will be halted until further notice and delivery of already placed orders may not happen this year, the company said yesterday. The news, first reported by Handelsblatt, follows Volkswagen's decision to halt production in Russia and temporarily suspend production at several factories in Germany over the past two weeks. The carmaker's main plant in Wolfsburg will be idled from 14 March to 18 March, Volkswagen said. Its Zwickau plant, which makes electric vehicles, would also stop producing until 18 March. Ukraine and Russia are minor sales markets but delivery bottlenecks for components such as wire harnesses produced in Ukraine, as well as rising raw material prices, are hampering output for carmakers across the continent. Reuters

Domino's shrugs off inflation as profits jump

Domino's Pizza has notched up a hike in annual profits and said it expects sales growth to ramp up in 2022 despite inflation and recruitment woes. The boss of the takeaway chain told the PA news agency the firm was "passing on some inflationary pressure to franchisees" but said it hopes efficiency improvements can help reduce the need for price increases. Dominic Paul, chief executive of the group, said the company would focus on value amid uncertainty for customers due to the cost-of-living crisis. "Domino's grew really well in 2008 despite the financial crisis because customers recognised the value there and we will focus on that further," he said. "They traded down from restaurants when they assessed their spending and we think that's something we could see again." Mr Paul added that inflationary pressures "could increase" as a result of the conflict in Ukraine, which has already started to impact global wheat and oil prices. PA

'Challenges' remain Boohoo report on supply chain issues published

Sir Brian Leveson has said "challenges and difficulties" remain at Boohoo as the fast fashion giant published his fifth and final report following its supply chain scandal. The retired judge was appointed to provide oversight for Boohoo's Agenda For Change programme in late 2020 after Alison Levitt QC found that there were "serious issues" in the company's supply chain. It launched the review programme after allegations of ill-treatment of staff at warehouses in Leicester in 2020'. In his previous report, Sir Brian highlighted progress across Boohoo's work in its supply chain, responsible purchasing practices, sustainability, and ethical compliance as well as modern slavery training programmes. Yesterday, the retail group published his latest report, which said that some areas are still a "work in progress" but highlighted significant improvements across Boohoo operations. PA

Direct Line reveals claims bill of up to £40m from February storms

Insurer Direct Line has revealed a claims bill of up to £40m from the storms last month that battered the UK. It said it had helped more than 10,000 customers with claims after storms Dudley, Eunice and Franklin wrought havoc last month. Direct Line said its early estimate sees claims reaching between £30m and £40m for storm damage. More than a million homes were left without power in the immediate aftermath, while the storms also caused widespread damage and travel chaos on roads and railways as trees were brought down. The details of the storm impact came as Direct Line reported a 1.2 per cent drop in pre-tax profits to £446m for 2021 as it said it faced a "challenging market, impacted by the pandemic". PA

Vodafone to offer free mobile connectivity to 200,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***

Vodafone will offer free connectivity to 200,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** arriving in the UK, the company has said as it urged charities preparing to welcome those fleeing the Russian invasion to get in touch. The mobile operator said registered charities can apply for access to the free connectivity - which comes in the form of Sim cards with 20GB of free data every month for six months, as well as free international calls and texts - as part of its charities connected scheme. The firm has also launched a "tech appeal" for refugees and has asked individuals and businesses to donate their old smartphones, tablets or laptops, which will be gifted to those in need. PA

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*EXPLAINER: What is the US doing to help Ukraine refugees?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XV-BS81-DY4H-K2CG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 6, 2022 Sunday 2:34 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS; Version:2

**Length:** 699 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Russia's invasion of Ukraine has set off the largest mass migration in Europe in decades, with more than 1.5 million people having crossed from Ukraine into neighboring countries

**Body**

[*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) has set off the largest mass migration in [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) in decades, with more than 1.5 million people having crossed from Ukraine into neighboring countries - "the fastest growing refugee crisis in Europe since World War II," the head of the U.N. refugee agency tweeted on Sunday. Nearly all the refugees have gone to other countries in Europe, where they have generally encountered a warm welcome. But some may eventually need permanent resettlement in the United States if they are unable to return to Ukraine.

A look at the situation:

WHAT HAS THE U.S. DONE TO HELP REFUGEES SO FAR?

The U.S. has provided $54 million in food and other assistance to people inside Ukraine and has pledged to send more, according to Samantha Power, head of the U.S. Agency for International Development. That aid is critical because conditions in Ukraine are horrific and growing worse. Food is scarce as millions of displaced people inside the country try to escape the Russian attack.

On Thursday, the Biden administration announced it would offer temporary protected status to Ukrainians already inside the United States. Members of Congress and advocates welcomed the announcement, but the effects are modest. The [*Department of Homeland Security*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/department-homeland-security) estimates that about 75,000 people are eligible for the program and it's only good for 18 months unless extended. Moreover, the program leaves people in immigration limbo because beneficiaries cannot necessarily convert their status into permanent legal residency or U.S. citizenship.

WILL THE U.S. BE TAKING IN ***UKRAINIAN*** ***REFUGEES*** FOR RESETTLEMENT?

It might. [*White House*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/white-house) spokeswoman Jen Psaki says the U.S. would accept ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. But the administration says that, for now at least, most of the refugees apparently want to stay in Europe. That's where many have families, they can work and then return home if that is possible at some point.

The administration previously said it would accept up to 125,000 refugees in the 2022 budget year. That annual cap had been cut to a record low 15,000 under President Donald Trump. In setting the annual target for refugees, the Biden administration set aside 10,000 refugee visas for people from Europe, but it could expand that number to take in more Ukrainians if needed. The White House has said it will work with the United Nations and European countries to determine whether people who have fled Europe will need permanent resettlement in the U.S. or elsewhere.

The 125,000 does not include the 76,000 Afghans who came to the United States after the American withdrawal from Afghanistan in August.

One thing the U.S. could do immediately to help Ukrainians would be to expedite the processing of several thousand members of religious minority groups, including Jews and evangelical Christians, who have family in the United States and have already applied to come under what's known as the Lautenberg program.

CAN THE U.S. REFUGEE SYSTEM ABSORB A NEW WAVE OF REFUGEES?

Yes, although it won't be easy, according to refugee resettlement experts.

The Trump administration cuts to the refugee program forced resettlement agencies to lay off staff and close offices. They have been struggling for months to help the tens of thousands of Afghan refugees who came after their country fell to the Taliban, and a complex problem was made more so by high housing costs and the coronavirus pandemic.

Despite the difficulties, the U.S. could handle the arrival of more refugees, says Mark Hetfield, president and CEO of HIAS, one of the nation's nine resettlement agencies.

"There's so much interest in helping these people that the resources would be there, the volunteers would be there," Hetfield said. "It would be a challenge because we are all stretched too thin. But we would definitely make it work."

Read More

[*Ukraine-Russia war news: Zelensky responds to nuclear plant attack*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-news-putin-war-b2028568.html)

[*Why has Russia invaded Ukraine? The conflict explained*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/why-russia-ukraine-invasion-putin-b2026550.html)

[*Sign The Independent's petition to help the people of Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-refugees-russia-petition-help-b2025628.html)

[*Priti Patel urged to send emergency help for Ukraine refugees stranded in Calais*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/ukraine-refugees-priti-patel-calais-b2029674.html)

[*Mariupol evacuation halted again 'due to Russian shelling'*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-mariupol-evacuation-halted-russia-shelling-b2029671.html)

[*Mariupol evacuation halted again 'due to Russian shelling'*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-mariupol-evacuation-halted-russia-shelling-b2029670.html)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Britons opening homes to Ukrainians will receive £350 per month*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6508-25F1-JBNF-W2Y0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 13, 2022 Sunday 1:01 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 674 words

**Byline:** Amy Gibbons

**Highlight:** Individuals, charities, community groups and businesses will be able to bring people fleeing the war to safety, even if they have no ties to the UK.

**Body**

[*Britons*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/britons) offering homes to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** through a new humanitarian route will receive a "thank you" payment of £350 per month, the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) has announced.

The Homes for Ukraine scheme, to be rolled out this week, will allow individuals, charities, community groups and businesses to bring people fleeing the war to safety - even if they have no ties to the UK.

Sponsors can nominate a named Ukrainian individual or family to stay with them in their home, or offer a separate property for them to use rent-free.

It comes as the Government has faced criticism over the speed and scale of its efforts to bring fleeing Ukrainians to the UK.

People sponsoring refugees through the new uncapped route will be required to commit to the scheme for a minimum of six months, but are encouraged to keep up the offer for as long as they can.

Those offering accommodation will be vetted and Ukrainian applicants will undergo security checks.

As a "thank you", sponsors will receive payments of £350 per month. A website gathering expressions of interest is set to launch on Monday.

The Government said it is also working to enable communities, the voluntary sector and charitable and religious organisations to sponsor groups of Ukrainians.

[*Michael Gove*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/michael-gove) , the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Secretary, said the UK "stands behind Ukraine in their darkest hour", and urged people to "join the national effort" to help refugees.

But Labour cautioned that "too many questions remain unanswered" about the new scheme.

Shadow levelling-up secretary [*Lisa Nandy*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/lisa-nandy) said it was unclear what support would be offered to vulnerable children and older people, whether provision would made for unaccompanied children, and what help would go to local government, sponsoring organisations and housing providers.

She said if Britons were required to have a prior connection to a Ukrainian family to sponsor them, that would be "a severe limitation".

"The pandemic showed that in a crisis we can step up as a country," she added.

"We stand ready to do that again. So far ministers have behaved like these are ordinary times, but these are extraordinary times and we need extraordinary measures."

Mr Gove said: "The crisis in Ukraine has sent shock waves across the world as hundreds of thousands of innocent people have been forced to flee their homes, leaving everything they know and love behind.

"The UK stands behind Ukraine in their darkest hour and the British public understand the need to get as many people to safety as quickly as we can.

"I urge people across the country to join the national effort and offer support to our Ukrainian friends. Together we can give a safe home to those who so desperately need it."

Ukrainians who have sponsors will be granted three years' leave to remain in the UK, with entitlement to work and access public services.

Meanwhile, Nicola Sturgeon and Mark Drakeford have said both Scotland and Wales are willing to become "super sponsors" for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

In a letter to Mr Gove, they also renewed their calls on Westminster to waive all visa requirements for Ukrainian nationals trying to get into the UK.

The UK stands behind Ukraine in their darkest hour and the British public understand the need to get as many people to safety as quickly as we can

Michael Gove, Levelling Up Secretary

The governments in Holyrood and Cardiff said super sponsorship would enable Ukrainians to get clearance to enter each country quickly and be housed temporarily while they work with local partners to provide longer term accommodation, safeguarding and access to services.

Education Secretary [*Nadhim Zahawi*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nadhim-zahawi) announced on Saturday that online lessons will be made available to 100,000 refugee pupils as they transition to "life and safety" in the UK.

He had told BBC's Question Time earlier in the week: "What you are seeing now is a surge in our capability to take more Ukrainians.

"I can tell you in my own department in education, I have a team that's already making plans for a capacity of 100,000 children that we will take into our schools."

**Load-Date:** March 12, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Simon Harris: ‘Legitimate expectation’ Irish-UK migration deal will be honoured*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BXD-Y8V1-DY4H-K4J3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 30, 2024 Tuesday 10:36 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 701 words

**Byline:** By Grinne N. Aodha

**Highlight:** The Irish premier called for a sense of calm and said everyone needed ‘to take a deep breath and just be very factual’.

**Body**

[*Irish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/irish) premier Simon Harris says his country has a “legitimate expectation” that a migration agreement with the UK will be honoured.

The Taoiseach said the post-Brexit deal was struck in 2020 and allows asylum seekers whose applications are “inadmissible” to be “returned” to the UK and vice versa.

A [*High Court*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/high-court) ruling in March deemed the legal basis for designating the UK as a safe country to “return” asylum seekers to as unsound under EU law.

Legislation that ministers are to discuss on Tuesday aims to provide a legal basis for the agreement.

Speaking on his way into [*Cabinet*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/cabinet) on Tuesday, Mr Harris said: “Of course, this country is going to change our law to give practical legal effect to what is already agreed between Ireland and Britain and has been since 2020.”

He added: “It’s very important everybody understands that: there’s already an agreement in place between Ireland and Britain. What we’re doing is giving legal clarity in relation to that agreement, which will allow us to designate the UK as a safe country again.

“It’s also very important for people in Britain to understand that this is a two-way agreement. This is to ensure that refugees can be sent in both directions if their application is inadmissible.”

A row has developed between Ireland and the UK over the weekend after Justice Minister Helen McEntee said there was a significant increase in the number of asylum seekers arriving in Ireland from across the Northern Ireland border.

After it was suggested the increase could be driven by migrants fearing the UK’s Rwanda plan, UK Prime Minister [*Rishi Sunak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rishi-sunak) said that showed the plan’s effect.

The policy aims to send asylum seekers to the east African nation to deter others from crossing the English Channel.

Mr Harris said on Sunday that Ireland will not “provide a loophole” for other countries’ migration “challenges”, while Mr Sunak said it was “not interested” in any returns deal if the EU does not allow the UK to deport asylum seekers who had crossed the English Channel to France.

On Tuesday, Mr Harris said he does not “accept the narrative” that Ireland is waiting for another country to legislate on migration and that the Irish government was working on migration from a “number of angles”.

He called for “a sense of calm” and said everyone needed “to take a deep breath and just be very factual”.

“I’m not getting involved in British politics, I’m very well aware of where the electoral cycle is at in Britain and it’s not for me to comment on that,” he said.

“But I do welcome the comments of the Northern Ireland Secretary of State (Chris Heaton-Harris) yesterday about the importance of working together on the Common Travel Area, and the importance of the relationship. I must say I agree with everything that he said.”

There has been an increase in the number of asylum seekers arriving in Ireland in recent years, with up to 16,000 new arrivals projected to arrive every year, up from between 3,000-5,000 between 2015-2019.

As Ireland struggles to boost housing supply after falling behind during the economic crash, the influx has put more pressure on the State to house people as their asylum claim is processed.

The Irish government has implemented a number of migration policies in recent weeks, including paring back the offering to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who are automatically granted asylum.

A make-shift camp has sprung up at the International Protection Office in Dublin city as more than 1,700 asylum seekers have been left without an offer of accommodation from Ireland.

Mr Harris said that the country which Ireland is receiving the most asylum applications from at the moment is Nigeria, and those applications are now being fast-tracked.

He said: “If somebody comes here from Nigeria, and whether they’ve been to the UK or not, their application will be processed more quickly. And if they don’t have right to stay, they leave, whether that’s going back to the UK, or indeed back to Nigeria.

“We have every right to have our own migration policy. Our people have every expectation that it will be enforced, that it will be firm, that it will be rules-based. And I think we also will have a legitimate expectation that agreements between two countries are honoured.”

**Load-Date:** April 30, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Governments warns of ‘severe shortage’ of accommodation for arriving Ukrainians*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65XC-SJ21-JBNF-W342-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 13, 2022 Wednesday 9:54 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 329 words

**Byline:** David Young

**Highlight:** The Citywest transit centre in Dublin has been hit by overcrowding.

**Body**

The Irish [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) has warned of a “severe shortage” of state accommodation for arriving ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Amid worsening overcrowding at the transit centre at the Citywest hotel complex in [*Dublin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dublin) , new arrivals who do not have alternative accommodation already arranged are being asked to remain at [*Dublin Airport*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dublin-airport) overnight and into Thursday.

Ireland has taken in around 40,000 refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine – the majority of them women and children.

Asylum seekers from other countries also continue to seek sanctuary in Ireland through the International Protection Service.

Taoiseach Micheal Martin is to hold talks with other ministers on Thursday to discuss the situation as the Government attempts to put alternative accommodation arrangements in place.

“Ensuring the security, health and safety of people who are fleeing Ukraine has been, and remains, a top priority for the Government since the Russian attack began in February,” a Government statement said.

“Most of the people arriving in Ireland are women and children.

“This effort has involved, inter alia, all relevant Government departments and offices, local authorities, the Defence Forces and state agencies such as Tusla ([*Child*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/child) and Family Agency) and the [*HSE*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hse) (Health Service Executive).

“Over the past number of weeks there has been a very significant increase in the number of people seeking access to the International Protection Service (IPS) and this is causing a severe shortage of available accommodation for both people arriving from Ukraine and international protection applicants.

“This is also causing overcrowding in the Citywest Transit Hub.

“Incoming arrivals overnight will remain in Dublin Airport if they do not have an alternative source of accommodation.

“Government is working intensively to put alternative arrangements in place with immediate effect.

“The Taoiseach is meeting with relevant ministers tomorrow to discuss the situation and review the current policies and processes.”

**Load-Date:** July 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*David Beckham among guests in Royal Box at Wimbledon today*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65VW-1RP1-DY4H-K2B2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 6, 2022 Wednesday 3:58 PM GMT

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**Section:** LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 306 words

**Byline:** Joanna Whitehead and Laura Hampson

**Highlight:** Beckham is joined by his mother Sandra

**Body**

[*David Beckham*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/david-beckham) has made his first appearance at this year’s [*Wimbledon*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/wimbledon) today (6 July).

Sitting alongside his mother Sandra, he is one of several famous faces sitting in the Royal Box.

Today’s quarter final matches include games with Rafael Nadal and Australian Nick Kyrgios.

The Royal Box, located on [*Centre Court*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/centre-court) at the legendary SW19 sports venue, has 74 seats reserved for the royal family and invited guests of the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club (AELTC).

Wimbledon organisers also handed out [*hundreds of free tickets*](https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/tennis/wimbledon-tickets-free-ukraine-refugees-b2107957.html) to ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) in a bid to welcome them to their new homes last week.

In a couple of weeks, the special ticket holders will be able to spend the day at No 1 Court, an opportunity to see some “amazing tennis”, according to Wimbledon Foundation head Paige Murphy.

She said: “It’s an incredibly proud moment for us – it’s really part of our mission… to give people a really special experience after a really traumatic few months.

“To be able to provide a unique day when they can hopefully have a bit of respite and really get some enjoyment out of it is incredibly inspiring for us.”

Who else is in the Royal Box today?

After [*their appearance yesterday, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge*](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/wimbledon-royal-box-today-kate-prince-william-b2116164.html) were absent from the Royal Box today, and were replaced by William’s cousin Peter Phillips. Phillips was accompanied by his girlfriend Lindsay Wallace.

They were joined by the Prince of Wales’s principal private secretary Clive Alderton, and Crazy Rich Asians actor Gemma Chan.

Daily Telegraph editor Chris Evans also took a seat in the box, along with broadcaster Sir Michael Parkinson, and four-time men’s singles champion Rod Laver.

Other famous faces who have been guests in the box earlier this year include Anna Wintour, Edward Enninful, and Tom Daley.

**Load-Date:** July 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Schoolboys cycle distance from Manchester to Palestine for children in war zone*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B48-GHG1-JBNF-W4C3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

January 17, 2024 Wednesday 2:12 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 529 words

**Byline:** Hannah Cottrell

**Highlight:** The primary school pupils are doing a virtual 2,400-mile bike ride to send toys, clothes and aid to youngsters affected by the Israel-Hamas conflict.

**Body**

A group of primary school children is cycling the distance from [*Manchester*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/manchester) to [*Palestine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/palestine) to raise money for “any innocent child” affected by the Israel-[*Hamas*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hamas) war.

The boys, aged nine and 10, are cycling a virtual 2,400 miles (3,862km) from their homes in Manchester to their friends’ house in the Hebron Valley, raising money to send toys, clothes, nappies, milk powder and medical aid to children in the region.

They have clocked up nearly 700 miles (1,127km) so far and hope to complete the venture by Easter. They have already raised more than £700, beating their original target of £500.

They were inspired to take on the challenge by nine-year-old Liam Stewart, who is part of the group and who “just wants to help the children”, his mother, Gemma Stewart, 41, told the PA news agency.

“In Liam’s words, the aid is going to any innocent child affected,” Ms Stewart said.

“He says ‘We’re all part of the world; we’re all different but we’re all the same’.

“For a nine-year-old, the words that he comes out with sometimes and the attitude that he’s got to everything around him is just incredible.

“He just wants to help and he says it’s so unfair that there are children involved.”

The boys are using exercise bikes to clock up the miles, as well as cycling to school where possible, and going out on bike rides with their fathers when the weather allows.

Ms Stewart added: “They’re all at primary school together, they’re all in the same class and they’re all such a lovely, lovely bunch of lads.

“Liam is a really bright lad, he’s really empathetic and he takes things to heart – he’s only nine and to have this way about him, we’re so proud of him, and he’s very proud of his friends.

“All of them have got this way about them where they want to do stuff for other people.”

The mother-of-two said her son got “very upset” at the start of the Israel-Hamas conflict because “we have friends from Palestine and he wanted to do something to help the children”.

“He initially wanted to do the challenge before Christmas to send things over then because he has lots of presents at Christmas and nice family times,” she said.

“But Liam was really poorly before Christmas and he felt like he was really letting them down, but we started it up again afterwards.”

Liam’s fundraising ventures were first prompted by the war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , where he came up with the idea to go without any electricity for 24 hours and get others to sponsor him and his friends – which raised more than £1,000.

His mother said: “He went to school the next day and told his friends it was what he wanted to do and there were six of them that camped out without any electricity – they wouldn’t even use the toilet light.

“It was hilarious at one point because if you think of six boys with no electricity, they did everything – rugby tackling, football, wrestling.”

Ms Stewart said the money allowed two of their friends – a mother and son who are ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** – to visit the region to see their family, as well as to purchase equipment for injured soldiers in Ukraine.

To find out more and to support the fundraiser, visit the group’s JustGiving page at: justgiving.com/crowdfunding/Liam-Stewart-helpingthoseinneed

**Load-Date:** January 17, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Revealed: Australian firm awarded £1.6bn contract for asylum seeker barges*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68GJ-VM11-F072-43M9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

June 17, 2023 Saturday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 7

**Length:** 1160 words

**Byline:** LIZZIE DEARDEN HOME AFFAIRS EDITOR

**Body**

An Australian travel firm previously slammed for its handling of Covid quarantine hotels has been quietly handed a £1.6bn contract covering the UK's new asylum accommodation ships, The Independent can reveal.

Corporate Travel Management (CTM) was put in charge of the lucrative two-year arrangement in February, weeks before the government revealed it would use a barge as its first offshore accommodation for asylum seekers.

The contract was awarded directly to CTM without competition, and a lawyer with knowledge of the system said the government had pushed a wider deal originally drawn up for official travel "beyond what it was intended to be used for".

Ministers have repeatedly refused to detail the projected cost of Rishi Sunak's controversial asylum vessels, while insisting they will be cheaper than using hotels that are currently costing £6m a day.

This week, Suella Braverman told parliament's Home Affairs Committee she could not predict the cost of the new Illegal Migration Bill, because there are "many unknown factors".

Three vessels so far have been announced, with the Bibby Stockholm barge due to arrive in Portland, Dorset later this month and a further two ships set for undisclosed locations.

Richard Drax, the Conservative MP for South Dorset, said the public "should know how much is being paid" on the barge set-up and said the spending he was aware of so far was "alarmingly high".

"The point is this is taxpayers' money," he told The Independent. "This contract might actually be separate to what the ports are being paid.

"Then on top of that, the police want money, the health authority wants money, of course the council wants money, and yet the government continues to insist that this is cheaper than hotels. The overall figure will be alarmingly high."

Yvette Cooper, Labour's shadow home secretary, said the Home Office has "serious questions to answer". "The Tories are spending more and more taxpayers' money on their total failure to fix the asylum backlog they have created," she added.

"This is an incredibly expensive contract with no clarity on whether proper procedures have been followed, and the barges come on top of costly hotels, not instead of them, because of the government failure to take asylum decisions or get any grip."

The CTM contract, published under the title "provision of bridging accommodation and travel services", states that it has an estimated value of £1,593,535,200 over two years and could be extended beyond 2025.

The Home Office refused to answer The Independent's questions on what portion of the contract covers barges, and parts of official documents headed "pricing details" have been redacted in full because of "commercial interests".

John O'Connell, chief executive of the Taxpayers' Alliance, said: "This murky contract leaves taxpayers in the dark. The migrant crisis may require an urgent response, but bungled procurement has cost a fortune in recent years. Ministers must ensure transparency and value for money when tendering services."

Answering a parliamentary question on the Bibby Stockholm in May, immigration minister Robert Jenrick said it would be managed "by a specialist and experienced provider, which has a strong track record of providing this kind of accommodation". He added that the provider had "managed two vessels [housing ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***] in Scottish ports for the past year".

On its website, CTM describes itself as "a global provider of innovative and cost-effective travel solutions spanning corporate, events, leisure, loyalty and wholesale travel".

The firm says it was established in Brisbane in 1994 and has since grown from a "two-person start-up into one of the world's most successful travel management companies", operating across Australasia, Asia, the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Africa. It has two UK offices in London and Manchester.

The firm's most recent financial report hailed record profits, having taken A$292m (£160m) in revenue over the last six months of 2022.

A notice to its shareholders celebrated the new contract's "significant impact" on financial growth, adding: "This work involves highly complex services and logistic support??? CTM has both the experience and specialised knowledge to support this work."

The government placed the new barges under a pre-existing agreement with CTM for "travel and venue solutions", which previously covered official bookings for conferences, flights, train tickets, hotels and vehicle hire for ministers and civil servants.

A source familiar with the drawing up of the overarching framework accused the government of "pushing the scope beyond what it was intended to be used for".

"If products and services are outside scope there's a procurement failure and the contract has been awarded without following the rules," they told The Independent. "It doesn't look like the right vehicle for this kind of contract and it looks like they've done it to minimise visibility."

The remit of CTM's government work was widened during the pandemic and its general manager for northern England, Michael Healy, was made an OBE in the 2021 New Year honours list over the repatriation of British nationals stranded abroad during the Covid pandemic.

A report by parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee found that the operation was "too slow and placed too much reliance on commercial providers", but CTM was then handed a contract for operating quarantine hotels and mandatory testing.

In a series of angry Google reviews that dragged the company's rating down to 1.4 stars, one person called CTM "incompetent", while another wrote: "Shame on the Tory government UK, on whoever decided to give them this contract."

Several MPs raised their constituents' poor experiences in parliament, with one presenting a formal petition demanding compensation and saying the way the contract was awarded "avoided due process or competition".

CTM was later involved in operations to transport Afghans and Ukrainians to the UK, and operated two cruise ships used to temporarily house ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in Scotland. That contract, which was also awarded without competition under the same framework as the new barges, covered two ships and hotels, and had an estimated value of £100m.

CTM declined to comment and did not answer The Independent's request for details of what the contract covered.

A Home Office spokesperson said: "The pressure on the asylum system has continued to grow and requires us to look at a range of accommodation options, which offer better value for money for taxpayers than hotels. It is right that we explore all available options. CTM was awarded the contract to deliver accommodation for the Home Office after an extensive procurement process and has a strong track record of providing this kind of accommodation.

"We are pleased that they will be providing management for Bibby Stockholm, the two additional vessels announced by the prime minister, as well as bridging accommodation and travel services."

**Load-Date:** June 16, 2023

**End of Document**



[*£150m fund aims to help Ukrainians into their own homes*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68F2-G5T1-JBNF-W28W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 9, 2023 Friday 11:01 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 427 words

**Byline:** Neil Pooran

**Highlight:** More than 124,000 people have arrived in the UK under the Homes for Ukraine scheme since February 2022.

**Body**

A UK [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) fund of £150 million to help Ukrainians into their own homes and to continue sponsorship arrangements has been announced.

Since [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) invaded [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) in February last year, more than 124,000 people have arrived in the UK under the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine scheme.

The new money will go to councils to help Ukrainian families into private rented accommodation and find work.

It will also go towards continuing sponsorship arrangements, as many guests are in their second year in the UK.

The funding is being divided according to the number of Ukrainians in each nation – England will receive around £109 million, [*Scotland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scotland) £30 million, Wales £8 million and Northern Ireland £2 million.

Those hosting Ukrainians will continue to receive a monthly £350 thank-you payment during guests’ first 12 months, rising to £500 a month during the following year.

In March, the Red Cross warned many Ukrainians are staying in “inappropriate” accommodation.

UK housing minister Felicity Buchan said: “The UK has an honourable tradition of offering shelter to those fleeing the horrors of war.

“Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of hosts in this country, over 124,000 Ukrainians have now found safety in the UK.

“Sadly, the fighting in Ukraine shows no sign of ending soon, so we are appealing for more people to become hosts while providing councils with this additional funding to support guests into long-term housing.”

In Scotland, more than 24,000 displaced Ukrainians have arrived through an individual sponsor or the Scottish Government’s super-sponsor scheme.

Thousands remain in temporary accommodation while waiting for a permanent home.

Scotland Office minister John Lamont said: “The UK has a long, proud history of helping those fleeing danger or persecution and we will continue to help the Ukrainians whose lives were thrown into turmoil when Russia illegally invaded their country.

“Today’s announcement of a further £30 million for Scotland to help rehome people from Ukraine brings a welcome boost to the great effort already made.

“I want to thank everyone who has helped support Ukraine for more than a year now, including all those who have helped ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** make new lives in Scotland.”

Petro Rewko, of the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain, said his organisation welcomes the funding commitment during “difficult economic times”.

He added: “Ukrainians everywhere are grateful to the Government and the British people for opening their homes and hearts to Ukrainians fleeing their homes as a result of Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine.”

**Load-Date:** June 9, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Government quietly awards travel firm £1.6bn contract for asylum barges and accommodation*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68GD-DCN1-DY4H-K4FS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 16, 2023 Friday 12:03 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 1162 words

**Byline:** Lizzie Dearden

**Highlight:** Exclusive: Fury over astonishing sum to operate barges and run services to house asylum seekers in Britain

**Body**

An Australian travel firm previously slammed for its handling of Covid quarantine hotels has been quietly handed a £1.6bn contract covering the UK’s new asylum accommodation ships, The Independent can reveal.

Corporate Travel Management (CTM) was put in charge of the lucrative two-year arrangement in February, weeks before the government revealed it would use a barge as its first offshore accommodation for [*asylum seekers*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/asylum-seekers-0).

The contract was awarded directly to CTM without competition, and a lawyer with knowledge of the system said the government had pushed a wider deal originally drawn up for official travel “beyond what it was intended to be used for”.

Ministers have repeatedly refused to detail the projected cost of [*Rishi Sunak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rishi-sunak) ’s controversial asylum vessels, while insisting they will be cheaper than using hotels that are currently costing £6m a day.

This week, Suella Braverman told parliament’s[*Home Affairs Committee she could not predict the cost of the new Illegal Migration Bill*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/small-boats-bill-cost-braverman-b2357286.html%22%20title=%22MP%20blasts%20Suella%20Braverman%20in%20fiery%20Commons%20clash%20over%20small%20boats:%20‘Just%20answer%20the%20question’) , because there are “many unknown factors”.

Three vessels so far have been announced, with a barge named the “Bibby Stockholm” due to arrive in Portland, Dorset later this month and a further two ships set for undisclosed locations.

Richard Drax, the Conservative MP for South Dorset, said the public “should know how much is being paid” on the barge set-up and said the spending he was aware of so far was “alarmingly high”.

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“Then on top of that, the police want money, the health authority wants money, of course the council wants money, and yet the government continues to insist that this is cheaper than hotels. The overall figure will be alarmingly high.”

Yvette Cooper, Labour’s shadow home secretary, said the Home Office has “serious questions to answer”.

“The Tories are spending more and more taxpayers’ money on their total failure to fix the asylum backlog they have created,” she added.

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Answering a parliamentary question on the Bibby Stockholm in May, immigration minister Robert Jenrick said it would be managed “by a specialist and experienced provider, which has a strong track record of providing this kind of accommodation”. He added that the provider had “managed two vessels [housing ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***] in Scottish ports for the past year”.

On its website, CTM describes itself as “a global provider of innovative and cost-effective travel solutions spanning corporate, events, leisure, loyalty and wholesale travel”.

The firm says it was established in Brisbane in 1994 and has since grown from a “two-person start-up into one of the world’s most successful travel management companies”, operating across Australasia, Asia, the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Africa. It has two UK offices in London and Manchester.

The firm’s most recent financial report hailed record profits, having taken A$292m (£160m) in revenue over the last six months of 2022.

A notice to its shareholders celebrated the new contract’s “significant impact” on financial growth, adding: “This work involves highly complex services and logistic support… CTM has both the experience and specialised knowledge to support this work.”

The government placed the new barges under a pre-existing agreement with CTM for “travel and venue solutions”, which previously covered official bookings for conferences, flights, train tickets, hotels and vehicle hire for ministers and civil servants.

A source familiar with the drawing up of the overarching framework accused the government of “pushing the scope beyond what it was intended to be used for”.

“If products and services are outside scope there’s a procurement failure and the contract has been awarded without following the rules,” they told The Independent. “It doesn’t look like the right vehicle for this kind of contract and it looks like they’ve done it to minimise visibility.”

The remit of CTM’s government work was widened during the pandemic and its general manager for northern England, Michael Healy, was made an OBE in the 2021 New Year honours list over the repatriation of British nationals stranded abroad duringt he Covid pandemic.

A report by parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee found that the operation was “too slow and placed too much reliance on commercial providers”, but CTM was then handed a contract for operating quarantine hotels and mandatory testing.

In a series of angry Google reviews that dragged the company’s rating down to 1.4 stars, one person called CTM “incompetent”, while another wrote: “Shame on the Tory government UK, on whoever decided to give them this contract.”

Several MPs raised their constituents’ poor experiences in parliament, with one presenting a formal petition demanding compensation and saying the way the contract was awarded “avoided due process or competition”.

CTM was later involved in operations to transport Afghans and Ukrainians to the UK, and operated two cruise ships used to temporarily house ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in Scotland.

That contract, which was also awarded without competition under the same framework as the new barges, covered two ships and hotels, and had an estimated value of £100m.

CTM declined to comment and did not answer The Independent's request for details of what the contract covered.

A Home Office spokesperson said: “The pressure on the asylum system has continued to grow and requires us to look at a range of accommodation options, which offer better value for money for taxpayers than hotels. It is right that we explore all available options.

“CTM was awarded the contract to deliver accommodation for the Home Office after an extensive procurement process and has a strong track record of providing this kind of accommodation.

“We are pleased that they will be providing management for Bibby Stockholm, the two additional vessels announced by the prime minister, as well as bridging accommodation and travel services.”

**Load-Date:** June 16, 2023

**End of Document**



[*EU warns of 'solidarity fatigue' despite warm welcome for millions of Ukraine refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68DD-RC91-DY4H-K2CB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 6, 2023 Tuesday 10:41 AM GMT

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**Length:** 437 words

**Byline:** Raf Casert

**Highlight:** The EU is warning of “solidarity fatigue” toward ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** as the bloc's economy slows, affecting poor families in particular

**Body**

Despite the warm welcome given millions of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) refugees in the European Union since the Russian invasion, EU officials said Tuesday there are some fears of wavering support caused by a slowing economy that especially affects poor families and the creeping influence of Russian propaganda.

EU Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson stressed that support for the 4 million Ukraine refugees being cared for in the bloc is steadfast, but a special report said "what we might call ‘solidarity fatigue’ is beginning to set in in some member states.”

“The cost of living crisis has hit low-and medium-income families in host societies and created a context in which Russian propaganda could be more successful," special EU adviser on Ukraine [*Lodewijk Asscher*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/lodewijk-asscher) said in the report.

Russian President [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) “has a huge interest in influencing public opinion on displaced persons from Ukraine. The discourse on migration refugees can be weaponized to sow division within the EU,” the Dutch politician said, adding that some of the 27 EU member states have already reported more disinformation campaigns targeting the issue.

In contrast to the hesitancy to host migrants coming from across the [*Mediterranean*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mediterranean) and from war zones in Africa and Asia, the welcome given to Ukraine refugees has been warm since the February 2022 start of the war, when millions began fleeing to neighboring nations such as Poland, Slovakia, Romania and further afield into Germany.

Johansson said the largest movement of refugees in Europe since World War II sent 16 million across the continent, after which about 11 million went back home and 1 million went further afield to places such as Canada and Britain.

Within the EU, a Temporary Protection Directive was issued to make sure Ukrainians could take shelter and receive help with as few strings as possible. Member states have even started building temporary Ukraine “villages” to help the refugees integrate better in society.

But the report warned that refugees who are pulled both ways between their refuge and their embattled homes suffer from trauma and loss, creating a “waiting dilemma.”

It makes “it difficult to decide to start learning a new language, to embark on more serious training or education programs, or to integrate children into the education system of the host country,” Asscher said, adding that companies also hesitate to invest in them since they might be gone at short notice.

Overall, Asscher said, “solidarity is alive and kicking. But there is fatigue, especially amongst the more vulnerable refugees as well as the most vulnerable in receiving societies.”

**Load-Date:** July 18, 2023

**End of Document**



[*National service plan is a host of contradictions*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C41-GTD1-DY4H-K13C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 26, 2024 Sunday 7:19 PM GMT

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**Section:** THE INDEPENDENT VIEW,VOICES; Version:1

**Length:** 755 words

**Byline:** Editorial

**Highlight:** THE INDEPENDENT VIEW: Editorial: It is not at all clear that there would be support in the UK for all 18-year-olds to serve, in whatever capacity, unless national security were threatened

**Body**

The [*prime minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prime-minister) ’s eye-catching pledge to introduce a version of [*national service*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/national-service) for 18-year-olds as his [*opening gambit in the election campaign*](https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/national-service-rishi-sunak-general-election-b2551759.html%22%20title=%22Bringing%20back%20national%20service?%20Who%20do%20you%20think%20you%20are%20kidding,%20Mr%20Sunak?) plays to a sentiment deeply rooted in sections of the [*Conservative Party*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/conservative-party) , but also has wider appeal. That the world is a dangerous place, that the nation is not as well protected – including by its armed forces – as it once was, and that young people could do with toughening up are all common themes in the national conversation.

The enthusiasm for volunteering in the early stages of the pandemic, and the scale of [*volunteer help provided to* ***Ukrainian******refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-war-russia-putin-sumy-kharkiv-b2551517.html%22%20title=%22These%20Ukrainians%20fear%20they%20will%20be%20the%20next%20target%20for%20Putin’s%20forces%20–%20but%20they%20will%20fight%20to%20the%20last) , also showed the extent of potential that remained untapped in this country, as many young people also rose to the challenge of a cause greater than themselves. Launching an organised effort to harness more of that potential for the national good is a laudable aspiration.

A closer look at [*what Rishi Sunak has outlined*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/national-service-mandatory-sunak-latest-b2551713.html%22%20title=%22What%20is%20mandatory%20National%20Service%20and%20how%20would%20it%20work%20as%20Rishi%20Sunak%20announces%20scheme) , however, shows a host of contradictions that make such a scheme unlikely to fly, and perhaps counterproductive if it did. Granted, he said that the details would be hammered out by a commission set up for the purpose, though it is hard to see much of this working – still less appealing to those 18-year-olds it is designed for.

One major limitation is that it is [*not actually national service as the term is usually understood*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/rishi-sunak-ap-london-conservative-party-james-cleverly-b2551708.html%22%20title=%22Sunak’s%20plan%20to%20make%2018-year-olds%20do%20national%20service%20grabs%20attention%20on%20UK%20election%20trail). There would be a choice between a year’s placement in some branch of the military, and 25 days of voluntary service for the NHS or a charity – the RNLI was mentioned. Crucially, there would be no penalties for opting out. However it is dressed up, this makes service voluntary. It is doubtful that peer pressure would alter that.

The voluntary principle makes it akin to a national version of David Cameron’s National Citizen Service, designed for 18-to 22-year-olds – whose impact has [*probably been rather less than he had hoped*](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/national-service-mandatory-rishi-sunak-b2551696.html%22%20title=%22Rishi%20Sunak%20justifies%20introducing%20national%20service%20for%20teenagers:%20‘Democratic%20values%20under%20threat’) – or again, to the thoroughly admirable (but relatively small-scale) Duke of Edinburgh’s Award scheme. Any project for a form of national service designed with a view to big objectives, such as fostering “a shared sense of purpose”, as Sunak put it, will fall short if it does not involve all.

Volunteers, to a large extent, select themselves. How many of those 18-to 25-year-olds currently not in education or employment would have [*chosen at age 18 to enter one of the proposed new schemes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/rishi-sunak-labour-james-cleverly-home-secretary-teenagers-b2551704.html%22%20title=%22No-one%20will%20go%20to%20jail%20for%20refusing%20Tory%20national%20service%20plans%20–%20Cleverly) ? And how many of those currently heading to university would choose a year in the military or a year of weekend volunteering over the part-time working or gap year choices they make at present?

Of course, [*introducing, or reintroducing, national service for all*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/prime-minister-rishi-sunak-labour-teenagers-david-cameron-b2551631.html%22%20title=%22Mandatory%20national%20service%20for%2018-year-olds%20if%20Tories%20win,%20Sunak%20vows) is a very big decision for any government to take – even if there is a choice between military and civilian service, as there is in many countries that have done so. And it is not at all clear that there would be support in the UK for all 18-year-olds to serve, in whatever capacity, unless national security were threatened. The prime minister could respond that his proposals are, in a way, a test of the public mood. But it is not just the public that would have to sign up.

Those organisations receiving the volunteers – or draftees, [*if service were compulsory*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/rishi-sunak-military-service-volunteering-b2551690.html%22%20title=%22Is%20military%20service%20really%20the%20answer%20that%20Rishi%20Sunak%20(and%20Sweden)%20think%20it%20is?) – might also have something to say about it. The military has not in the past been particularly receptive to the reintroduction of conscription, on the grounds that the technological requirements mean that a modern military has to be professional. On the other hand, senior officers have recently lamented the lack of war preparedness on the part of UK civilians, so there could perhaps be a middle way.

The NHS and others have also been wary of untrained volunteers encroaching on professional territory, not to mention the practical liability they could represent. To absorb large numbers of 18-year-olds on an annual basis would be a lot to ask of already stretched public and charitable services.

As for the young people themselves, there could well be an [*appetite for more volunteering opportunities*](https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/rspb-wwf-deborah-meaden-national-trust-yougov-b2545206.html%22%20title=%22National%20Trust,%20RSPB%20and%20WWF%20urge%20employees%20to%20speak%20up%20for%20nature%20at%20work) , but also a resistance to what might be seen as employers getting work on the cheap. A year of weekends helping out with the bedpans may not have the same attraction.

It is understandable that, with the Conservatives lagging so badly in the polls and with Labour already targeting the youth vote, Rishi Sunak should be looking for a big idea that would at once compete with this appeal and persuade jaded voters to look again at his party. This gamble on a “join up, but only if you want to” national service is not it.

**Load-Date:** May 26, 2024

**End of Document**



[*National service plan is a host of contradictions*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C44-SW41-JCS0-D159-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

May 27, 2024 Monday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 2

**Length:** 754 words

**Byline:** EDITORIAL

**Body**

The prime minister's eye-catching pledge to introduce a version of national service for 18-year-olds as his opening gambit in the election campaign plays to a sentiment deeply rooted in sections of the Conservative Party, but also has wider appeal. That the world is a dangerous place, that the nation is not as well protected - including by its armed forces - as it once was, and that young people could do with toughening up are all common themes in the national conversation.

The enthusiasm for volunteering in the early stages of the pandemic, and the scale of volunteer help provided to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, also showed the extent of potential that remained untapped in this country, as many young people also rose to the challenge of a cause greater than themselves. Launching an organised effort to harness more of that potential for the national good is a laudable aspiration.

A closer look at what Rishi Sunak has outlined, however, shows a host of contradictions that make such a scheme unlikely to fly, and perhaps counterproductive if it did. Granted, he said that the details would be hammered out by a commission set up for the purpose, though it is hard to see much of this working - still less appealing to those 18-year-olds it is designed for.

One major limitation is that it is not actually national service as the term is usually understood. There would be a choice between a year's placement in some branch of the military, and 25 days of voluntary service for the NHS or a charity - the RNLI was mentioned. Crucially, there would be no penalties for opting out. However it is dressed up, this makes service voluntary. It is doubtful that peer pressure would alter that.

The voluntary principle makes it akin to a national version of David Cameron's National Citizen Service, designed for 18- to 22-year-olds - whose impact has probably been rather less than he had hoped - or again, to the thoroughly admirable (but relatively small-scale) Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Any project for a form of national service designed with a view to big objectives, such as fostering "a shared sense of purpose", as Sunak put it, will fall short if it does not involve all.

Volunteers, to a large extent, select themselves. How many of those 18- to 25-year-olds currently not in education or employment would have chosen at age 18 to enter one of the proposed new schemes? And how many of those currently heading to university would choose a year in the military or a year of weekend volunteering over the part-time working or gap year choices they make at present?

Of course, introducing, or reintroducing, national service for all is a very big decision for any government to take - even if there is a choice between military and civilian service, as there is in many countries that have done so. And it is not at all clear that there would be support in the UK for all 18-year-olds to serve, in whatever capacity, unless national security were threatened. The prime minister could respond that his proposals are, in a way, a test of the public mood. But it is not just the public that would have to sign up.

Those organisations receiving the volunteers - or draftees, if service were compulsory - might also have something to say about it. The military has not in the past been particularly receptive to the reintroduction of conscription, on the grounds that the technological requirements mean that a modern military has to be professional. On the other hand, senior officers have recently lamented the lack of war preparedness on the part of UK civilians, so there could perhaps be a middle way.

The NHS and others have also been wary of untrained volunteers encroaching on professional territory, not to mention the practical liability they could represent. To absorb large numbers of 18-year-olds on an annual basis would be a lot to ask of already stretched public and charitable services.

As for the young people themselves, there could well be an appetite for more volunteering opportunities, but also a resistance to what might be seen as employers getting work on the cheap. A year of weekends helping out with the bedpans may not have the same attraction.

It is understandable that, with the Conservatives lagging so badly in the polls and with Labour already targeting the youth vote, Rishi Sunak should be looking for a big idea that would at once compete with this appeal and persuade jaded voters to look again at his party. This gamble on a "join up, but only if you want to" national service is not it.

**Load-Date:** May 26, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Migrant border entries rise in April, boosted by Ukrainians*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65G4-0JG1-DY4H-K51D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 17, 2022 Tuesday 1:18 AM GMT

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**Section:** AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 283 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** U.S. authorities stopped migrants more than 234,000 times in April, one of the highest marks in decades as the Biden administration prepares to lift pandemic-era restrictions on claiming asylum

**Body**

U.S. authorities said Monday that they stopped migrants more than 234,000 times in April, one of the highest marks in decades as the [*Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/biden) administration prepares to lift pandemic-era restrictions on claiming asylum.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials made 234,088 stops on the [*Mexican*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mexican) border last month, a 5.8% increase from 221,303 in March, according to a Justice Department filing in a lawsuit filed by Texas and Missouri.

The April total would have been lower without more than 23,000 people - many of them ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** admitted on humanitarian parole - who went through a San Diego border crossing. The number of Ukrainians has dropped sharply since April 25, when the administration began directing those fleeing Russia's invasion to U.S. airports from Europe, instead of through Mexico.

On May 23, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention plans to end restrictions that have prevented migrants from seeking asylum under U.S. law and international treaty on grounds of preventing the spread of COVID-19. Migrants have been expelled more than 1.9 million times since March 2020 under Title 42 authority, named for a 1944 public health law.

A federal judge in Louisiana is expected to rule in favor of 24 states seeking to keep Title 42 in effect while litigation proceeds. U.S. District Judge Robert Summerhays, who was appointed by President [*Donald Trump*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/donald-trump) , has said he will rule before May 23.

Even if the judge allows Title 42 to end, Congress may try to keep it alive in an alliance between Republicans and some [*Democrats*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/democrats) who worry that a widely anticipated increase in illegal crossings will put them on the defensive in an already difficult midterm election year.

**Load-Date:** May 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Priti Patel defends UK visa system for Ukrainian refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y2-5R01-DY4H-K09M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 7, 2022 Monday 1:35 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 115 words

**Byline:** Ross Martin-Pavitt

**Body**

Home Secretary [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) has insisted the UK is "doing everything possible" to speed up efforts to grant [*visas*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/visas) to [***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) [***refugees****.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees)

The Home Office said "around 50" visas had been given the green light under the Ukraine Family Scheme as of 10am on Sunday.

Some 5,535 online applications have been completed and submitted online and 2,368 people had booked a visa appointment to submit their application and biometric information, the Government said.

To sign our [*Refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) Welcome campaign petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) and if you are able to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome)

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[*King Charles III's triumphal state visit hits French hurdle*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67VG-P6G1-DY4H-K2W5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 24, 2023 Friday 11:33 AM GMT

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**Length:** 347 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** King Charles III’s first state visit as monarch has been scaled back, dashing hopes for a triumphal tour to win hearts and minds abroad just as his mother did so successfully during her 70 years on the throne

**Body**

King [*Charles III*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/charles-iii) 's first state visit as monarch was scaled back Friday, dashing hopes for a triumphal tour to win hearts and minds abroad just as his mother did so successfully during her 70 years on the throne.

The visit by Charles and his wife, Camilla, to [*France*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/france) was postponed amid mass protests in the country over President [*Emmanuel Macron*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/emmanuel-macron) 's plans to reform the pension system. The German leg of the trip will take place as planned.

Charles' initial plan to visit France and Germany, the two biggest countries in the European Union, was meant to rebuild ties with Britain’s closest neighbors after six years of squabbling over Brexit. But [*French*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/french) domestic troubles put paid to that.

“The king and queen consort’s State Visit to France has been postponed," the British prime minister's Downing Street office said in a statement. “This decision was taken with the consent of all parties, after the president of France asked the British government to postpone the visit.”

Buckingham Palace said another date would be found.

“Their Majesties greatly look forward to the opportunity to visit France as soon as dates can be found,'' the palace said in a statement.

French labor unions have called for a day of nationwide protests and strikes on Tuesday in protest at Macron's proposal to raise the retirement age from 62 to 64. That is the day when the king had been due to travel to the western city of Bordeaux, with much security and ceremony, and the protests would have complicated his travel.

Charles and Camilla will now start their first state visit on Wednesday in Germany, where they will be welcomed with military honors by President Frank-Walter Steinmeier at Berlin’s landmark Brandenburg Gate.

On Thursday, the British king is set to give a speech to the Bundestag, meet German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and talk to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and military.

He goes to Hamburg on Friday, where he will visit the Kindertransport memorial for Jewish children who fled from Germany to Britain during the Third Reich, and attend a green energy event before returning to the UK in the evening.

**Load-Date:** March 24, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian refugees gather in temporary shelter at US-Mexico border*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655P-3S81-DY4H-K39P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 7, 2022 Thursday 7:02 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 78 words

**Body**

[***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) have gathered at a temporary shelter in Tijuana, Mexico, close to the [*United States*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/united-states) border.

Several temporary shelters have been set up as people wait to cross the US border on humanitarian parole conditions.

Oksana Dudnyk, a Ukrainian refugee from Bucha, said that the shelter was a "perfect place" compared to her home city.

"We have food, we have a place to sleep. You know, we have everything," Dudnyk said.

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters?itm_channel=native&itm_campaign=newsletters&itm_content=video-articles) to sign up for our newsletters.

**Load-Date:** April 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Moldova expels 45 Russian diplomats and embassy staff over ‘attempts to destabilise’ country*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68T4-PVM1-DY4H-K454-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 27, 2023 Thursday 8:41 AM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 473 words

**Byline:** Shweta Sharma

**Highlight:** Russia given 15 August deadline to cut its embassy staff to 25 from current strength of 80

**Body**

[*Moldova*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/moldova) has expelled 45 Russian diplomats and embassy staff members in [*Chisinau*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/chisinau) , citing [*Moscow*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/moscow) ’s "unfriendly actions" amid further deteriorating relations over the war in neighbouring [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

“We agreed on the need to limit the number of accredited diplomats from [*Russia*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/russia) , so that there are fewer people trying to destabilise the Republic of Moldova,” foreign minister Nicu Popescu said at a cabinet meeting.

The foreign ministry said the decision was based on "numerous unfriendly actions" towards Moldova, "which are not related to the diplomatic mandate, as well as attempts to destabilise" the country.

[*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) has been given the 15 August deadline to cut its embassy staff to 25 from the strength of 80 currently.

“For many years we have been the object of hostile Russian actions and policies. Many of them were made through the embassy,” Mr Popescu said.

Russian foreign ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova said the move was just another step towards “bilateral relations", and said the "unjustified and unfriendly actions ... will not go unanswered".

The Kremlin said Moldova’s decision is regretted while accusing its accused leadership of encouraging “Russophobia”.

“Unfortunately, ChiÈ™inÄƒu is deliberately driving our relations into a very miserable state,” Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

Once part of the Soviet Union, the relations between Russia and Moldova reached a new low after president Maia Sandu opposed Russia for invading Ukraine and accused Russian leadership of hatching a plan to overthrow her government.

The latest move comes just days after two local media outlets published an investigative report accusing the Russian embassy in the capital of spying with their dozens of satellite dishes and antennas installed in the building.

The joint investigation was published by the Russian investigative media site Insider and Moldova’s Jurnal TV channel. It said that 28 antennas installed on the roof of the embassy and an adjacent building could have been used for spying activities.

Russia denied the claims as “a fantasy which has nothing to do with reality”.

It prompted Moldova to summon Russia’s ambassador to the country.

Moldova‘s government spokesman, Daniel Voda, said: "In circumstances where employees are not involved in promoting bilateral relations, it becomes obvious that their diplomatic and administrative-technical representation is excessive.”

Moldova shares its borders with both Romania and Ukraine. It is one of the poorest European countries which has been heavily impacted by the war in Ukraine.

It has accused Russia of backing separatist groups which control Transnistria, a breakaway territory in Moldova witnessing conflict since 1990s.

The invasion has put a strain on its resources and services as several ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** arrived in the country to escape the fighting.

**Load-Date:** July 27, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Heavy rains leave parts of England and Europe swamped in floodwaters*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B1R-5331-DY4H-K0FW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

January 5, 2024 Friday 4:26 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 600 words

**Byline:** Brian Melley

**Highlight:** Flooding from heavy rains has swamped parts of England, France and the Netherlands, and officials say water levels are likely to continue rising for several days

**Body**

Residents of riverside towns in [*England*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/england) that were swamped by rains that washed over [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) this week bailed out Friday as flooding disrupted train service and officials warned that waters could rise in the days ahead.

A powerful storm that brought damaging winds inundated more than 1,000 homes and businesses and left several communities under muddy brown water, officials said. [*Buildings*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/buildings) and cars were submerged as streets turned to streams, farmland was flooded and boats were torn from their moorings.

A landslide and floodwaters disrupted train travel on several lines operating out of [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) and on routes in southwest England that stretch into Wales.

“It’s been a terrible start to the new year,” Ken Button said as he pumped water out of the furniture shop where he works in the town of Newark-on-Trent. “We’ll have to see what we can salvage.”

Heavy rains also left parts other parts of Europe under water as a cold snap gripped northern areas of the continent.

Water levels remained extremely high in the Netherlands on Friday. Many flood plains in the low-lying nation were inundated and residents in some towns around the Ijsselmeer inland sea near Amsterdam used sandbags to protect their homes.

Dozens of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** were evacuated overnight from a hotel near the town of Monnickendam north of Amsterdam after it was cut off by floodwaters, local broadcaster NH Nieuws reported.

Several roads in the north and northwest of the Netherlands were closed Friday because of flooding.

In France, a flood warning issued at the highest level was lifted near the Belgian border as waters receded.

But several hundred people had to be evacuated and thousands of homes were damaged in a repeat of floods that hit the same region of France in November.

French authorities warned that waterways would likely remain extremely high in the coming weeks.

In the U.K., the ground was already saturated from a series of fall tempests when Storm Henk struck with intense rainfall. Even as drier weather arrived, hundreds of flood warnings were in place Friday and the Environment Agency warned that the impact from flooding could last another five days.

“There’s really nowhere for the water to go,” Caroline Douglass, the flood director for the agency, told the BBC. “The ground is completely saturated, so in that situation we get more flooding and greater impacts than we’ve seen, and probably in areas where people aren’t used to.”

Almost every river in England was listed as exceptionally high by the agency and some set records. The River Itchen in Southampton doubled its previous record for December.

The River Trent through Nottinghamshire county topped its banks, leading the county to declare a major incident, which can help it obtain government assistance. Residents of a trailer park for those over age 55 were evacuated.

Firefighters helped about 50 people evacuate their homes in the Hackney Wick section of East London after a canal burst its banks.

Aerial footage showed where narrow rivers had escaped their channel and spread across lower-lying land.

In Gloucestershire, a county in southwest England, residents waded down a street in knee-deep water. A man with a handsaw strapped to his back canoed across a meadow in the town of Henley-on-Thames.

Cars parked in the town of Wallingford were buried up to their windows in water. A long canal boat that broke free of its tether had tipped on its side and was pinned against a bridge on the River Soar in Leicestershire county.

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Associated Press writers Sylvie Corbet in Paris and Mike Corder in Amsterdam contributed to this report.

**Load-Date:** January 5, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Murty brightens Sunak's arrival at Japan G7 summit*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:688C-P8C1-JCS0-D4RB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

May 19, 2023 Friday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 6

**Length:** 398 words

**Byline:** ARCHIE MITCHELL POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

Rishi Sunak's wife Akshata Murty has stepped out of the shadows following a series of high-profile scandals to join him on her first international trip as the prime minister's spouse.

The multimillionaire daughter of one of India's richest businessmen stood out as she stepped off an RAF plane dressed in bright green ME+EM trousers with a pink Chinti & Parker knit jumper. The prime minister kept it simple with a dark suit, white shirt and red tie.

Ms Murty, 43, has been embroiled in controversy since The Independent revealed last year that she had been avoiding tax by claiming non-dom status. She has since agreed to pay UK tax on her overseas income.

She and her husband also came under fire over her stake in Koru Kids after Mr Sunak failed to declare her involvement in the childcare agency that benefited from the Budget. He is now under investigation by parliament's sleaze watchdog over the non-disclosure.

Ms Murty also has a stake in the education tech company Study Hall, which was given £349,976 of public funds through Innovate UK.

The controversy engulfing the prime minister's wife is not just linked to her investments. Her choice of fashion has raised eyebrows in the past, including when she wore a pair of Gucci shoes costing £645 on the campaign trail in the run-up to the local elections.

And Ms Murty and Mr Sunak were in March "reminded of the rules" by the Metropolitan Police about keeping dogs on a lead when in major parks. A video appeared to show the prime minister and his family allowing their dog, Nova, to roam freely in a Royal Park.

Mr Sunak and Ms Murty were greeted off the plane in Tokyo yesterday ahead of the G7 summit in Hiroshima this weekend. They were met by the British ambassador to Japan Julia Longbottom.

Ms Murty is expected to follow a programme of activities with other world leaders' partners, who could include US first lady Jill Biden and Brigitte Macron, French president Emmanuel Macron's wife.

It is the latest in a series of recent high-profile public appearances by Ms Murty, following a coronation lunch in Downing Street for volunteers, youth groups and ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in the UK.

Ms Murty also met Ms Biden ahead of the coronation of King Charles III, spending an afternoon exploring veterans' affairs and education.

And in February she joined the prime minister visiting a "family hub" in Cornwall to promote the government programme.

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Rights body urges Belgium to better assist asylum-seekers*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:674N-JVJ1-JBNF-W53F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

December 21, 2022 Wednesday 12:30 PM GMT

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**Length:** 377 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Europe’s top human rights body has urged Belgian authorities to provide better assistance to asylum seekers as hundreds of people have been left sleeping in Brussels streets in freezing temperature in recent weeks

**Body**

Europe’s top human rights body is urging Belgian authorities to provide better assistance to asylum-seekers after hundreds of people slept on [*Brussels*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/brussels) streets in freezing temperature in recent weeks.

The Council of [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) 's commissioner for human rights, Dunja Mijatovic, wrote in a letter to Belgium’s state secretary for asylum and migration published Wednesday that a lack of available spots in reception facilities was damaging asylum-seekers' rights to health and other basic needs.

Mijatovic said [*Belgium*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/belgium) could not provide accommodations in October to more than 1,500 asylum-seekers, including families with children and unaccompanied minors.

“In addition to a lack of accommodation, people seeking international protection in Belgium reportedly experience further difficulties due to limited capacity to register their applications for asylum and to process them in a timely manner," she said.

In November, the [*European Court of Human Rights*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/european-court-of-human-rights) urged Belgium to provide assistance to 148 asylum-seekers left without accommodation.

According to Belgian authorities, the country saw a “significant increase of asylum-seekers" this year. A government agency said that in addition to 62,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who fled Russia's war in their country, 33,340 other people had filed asylum applications in Belgium by the end of November.

In her response to Mijatovic, Belgian Secretary of State for Asylum and Migration Nicole de Moor agreed that the Belgian asylum system faces structural problems but defended the measures put in place to address the accommodation shortage.

Belgium says it has 33,000 places for asylum-seekers, the most in the country's history, including “over 7,000 extra places created in the last year."

De Moor said she was doing her best to make sure people “have a roof over their head," making a priority of cases involving minors and vulnerable people.

She said not all of the court's decisions could be immediately enforced because of a “sheer material impossibility," and “by no means a political decision."

Mijatovic's criticism came just months after she urged Belgium's neighbor, the Netherlands, to drastically improve reception conditions for asylum-seekers.

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Follow [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) 's coverage of global migration: [*https://apnews.com/hub/migration*](https://apnews.com/hub/migration)

**Load-Date:** December 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Poland begins to dismantle Soviet-era monument*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6679-J051-DY4H-K12H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 24, 2022 Wednesday 4:34 PM GMT

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**Length:** 318 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Poland has started demolishing a memorial to Soviet Red Army soldiers

**Body**

Poland on Wednesday began demolishing a Soviet-era memorial to Red Army soldiers, an unwanted reminder of the power that Moscow once held over Poland and a symbol that grew even more objectionable after [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

The removal of the memorial in Brzeg, in southwestern Poland, fell on Ukraine's Independence Day and on the sixth-month anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24.

It is part of a longer effort to remove hated communist symbols from the public space in Poland and across the region. Poland, like some of its neighbors, was invaded and occupied by Germany and the [*Soviet*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/soviet) Union at the start of World War II and then endured decades of Moscow-backed rule until 1989.

The Polish state historical institute, the Institute of National Remembrance, has been working with local communities to remove dozens of similar Soviet-era memorials.

Rafal Leskiewicz, the institute's spokesman, said that in March, when a decision was announced to remove them, there were still 60 standing. The monument in Brzeg mark's the 24th to be demolished.

He said it was important to remove such memorials because of Russia's war in Ukraine, but also because a Polish law in 2015 calls for them to removed.

“It is impossible to keep such monuments in the public sphere," he told The Associated Press.

The work to dismantle the Brzeg monument is expected to last several days, he said.

Poland, which lies on Ukraine's western border, has been a key ally to Kyiv, sending military and humanitarian aid into the war-torn country. It has also become a place of exile for more ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** than any other single country.

The development in Poland comes after Estonia’s government last week started removing a Soviet World War II monument from near a city on the Russian border as part of a wider effort, prompted by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, to dismantle remaining Soviet-era symbols.

**Load-Date:** August 24, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Johnson: Back Ukraine until Putin withdraws his forces*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6677-H5T1-F072-40H7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

August 24, 2022 Wednesday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 10

**Length:** 352 words

**Byline:** DAVID HUGHES

**Body**

Vladimir Putin must not be allowed to repeat the annexation of Crimea in other parts of Ukraine, Boris Johnson has told world leaders. The prime minister said allies should continue to support Ukraine until Russian forces withdraw from the "entirety" of its territory.

Crimea was annexed by Russia in 2014 and Mr Johnson warned that Mr Putin would seek to repeat the process in other parts of Ukraine following the invasion by Moscow's forces six months ago.

In a remote address to the international Crimea Platform conference hosted by Ukraine's president Volodymyr Zelensky, Mr Johnson said the peninsula had been turned into an "armed camp" by Russia since 2014 and was used as one of the launch pads for the invasion in February.

"Putin is planning to do to other parts of Ukraine - indeed all of Ukraine - what he has done to Crimea," Mr Johnson warned. "He is preparing more annexations and more sham referendums." Mr Johnson said Russia's annexation of Crimea "or any other Ukrainian territory" must never be recognised.

"In the face of Putin's assault we must continue to give our Ukrainian friends all the military, humanitarian, economic and diplomatic support that they need until Russia ends this hideous war and withdraws its forces from the entirety of Ukraine," he said.

Mr Johnson has formed a close bond with Mr Zelensky and is keen to reassure the Ukrainian administration that the UK's support will continue when he leaves No 10 in September. His address to the Crimea Platform conference came on the eve of Ukraine's Independence Day.

The importance of the day has led to concerns that Russia might step up military action, with the United States issuing a security alert about the prospect of strikes against Ukraine's "civilian infrastructure and government facilities in the coming days".

Meanwhile, the refugees minister, Lord Richard Harrington, has said monthly payments to sponsors of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** should double, from £350 to £700, to help them carry on hosting for longer than six months while the cost of living spirals. The British Red Cross has also called on payments to increase.

PA

**Load-Date:** August 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[*How Patel got her refugee plan past top civil servants*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657R-88P1-F072-430W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 17, 2022 Sunday

Second Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 8

**Length:** 495 words

**Byline:** ASHLEY COWBURN POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

Just 11 days before Priti Patel unveiled her multi-million-pound proposal to send some asylum seekers to Rwanda for processing, one minister in her department made clear he was left in the dark. Asked to justify the idea ??' before the formal unwrapping of the policy ??' the newly appointed refugees minister, Richard Harrington, appeared visibly puzzled as he asked on LBC if it was a rumour.

"If it's happening in the Home Office, on the same corridor that I'm in, they haven't told me about it," Mr Harrington, who was drafted into No 10 by Boris Johnson during the ***Ukraine*** ***refugee crisis***, said. "I'm having difficulty enough getting them from Ukraine to our country ??' there's no possibility of sending them to Rwanda," he insisted.

But on Thursday, the prime minister and home secretary unveiled the deal with the Rwandan government, alongside an initial payment of £120m, to send asylum seekers more than 4,000 miles away to the central African country. Conservative MP David Davis described the policy plan as "bonkers".

Charities and campaign groups have also condemned the move, while the UN's refugee agency said the proposal to outsource the processing of refugees was "unacceptable" and would be an "egregious breach" of international law. It also emerged that Ms Patel faced objections from inside the Home Office but decided to use "ministerial direction" to overrule concerns raised by department officials.

A Home Office source attempted to justify the measure, saying that "Home Office officials are clear that deterring illegal entry would create significant savings. However, such a deterrent effect cannot be quantified with certainty. It would be wrong to let a lack of precise modelling delay a policy aimed at reducing illegal migration, saving lives, and breaking the business model of the smuggling gangs."

"Ministerial direction" is used by a secretary of state when their department's permanent secretary ??' the most senior civil servant ??' raises objections to a government policy, typically on value for money. In the face of such an objection, a minister can decide to formally instruct the official to proceed contrary to the advice given.

The use of ministerial direction also means that the permanent secretary will not be held personally responsible for the policy action. It falls to the minister in the department instead. Ministerial direction is a rare political tool. Research from the Institute for Government (IfG) shows that ministerial directions have been used 46 times since 2010, and only twice in the Home Office since 1990.

In recent years, especially during Brexit and the pandemic, it has been used for a range of programmes, including loan schemes and the Treasury's Eat Out to Help Out scheme, which cost taxpayers £849m. While it doesn't necessarily mean the civil service is against the Rwanda scheme proposals, it does highlight the internal objections to Ms Patel's plan, even before the parliamentary battle has begun.

**Load-Date:** April 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*How Patel got her refugee plan past top civil servants*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657R-88P1-F072-430G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 17, 2022 Sunday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 7

**Length:** 495 words

**Byline:** ASHLEY COWBURN

**Body**

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**Load-Date:** April 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Glastonbury organiser calls for immediate action to 'fix' Ukrainian visa scheme*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655N-DYD1-JBNF-W4F0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 7, 2022 Thursday 2:36 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 290 words

**Byline:** Alex Green

**Highlight:** The Eavis family has signed up to host refugees from Ukraine at Worthy Farm.

**Body**

[*Glastonbury*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/glastonbury) co-organiser Emily Eavis has said the visa system for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** is "simply not working".

The festival boss, 42, is among the thousands of [*British*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british) people who have signed up to provide shelter to those fleeing the Russian invasion through the Government's [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine scheme.

Writing on [*Twitter*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/twitter) , Eavis said her family had last month pledged to host a Ukrainian woman and her family at [*Worthy Farm*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/worthy-farm) - which is the Eavis family home as well as the site of the music festival.

[*pic.twitter.com/6rSYfHb7it*](https://t.co/6rSYfHb7it) - Emily Eavis (@emilyeavis) [*April 7, 2022*](https://twitter.com/emilyeavis/status/1512036909010329604?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

However, Veronika and her family remain stuck in the capital Kyiv.

Eavis wrote: "We need to fix the UK's visa process for Ukrainians, as it's simply not working.

"17 days ago we were introduced to Veronika and her family, and pledged to host them here at Worthy Farm.

"Their visa applications were submitted on the same day through the Homes for Ukraine scheme, but still they have not been granted. Veronika's family remains stuck in Kyiv.

"We need our government to take immediate action so that the many thousands of UK residents desperately trying to help people escape a warzone are actually able to do so."

More than 200,000 people have expressed an interest in opening their homes to a Ukrainian refugee under the scheme.

But there have been concerns that the matching system has led to people turning to strangers on social media, and being left vulnerable to being exploited by potential human traffickers.

The speed at which visas are being processed has also attracted criticism.

Emily's father Michael, a dairy farmer by trade, co-founded the festival in September 1970, while her influence, both music and political, has grown steadily since 1999.

**Load-Date:** April 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[*What is a 'ministerial direction' and why did Priti Patel issue one over Rwanda policy?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657M-9Y61-JBNF-W46N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 16, 2022 Saturday 9:30 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 494 words

**Byline:** Ashley Cowburn

**Highlight:** POLITICS EXPLAINED: Patel used the instruction, which has only been used twice at the Home Office since 1990, writes Ashley Cowburn

**Body**

Just 11 days before [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) unveiled her multi-million-pound proposal to send some [*asylum seekers*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/asylum-seekers-0) to [*Rwanda*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rwanda) for processing, one minister in her department made[*clear he was left in the dark.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/refugees-rwanda-borders-bill-harrington-b2052230.html)

Asked to justify the idea − before the formal unwrapping of the policy − the newly appointed refugees minister, [*Richard Harrington*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/richard-harrington) , appeared visibly puzzled as he [*asked on LBC*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/refugees-rwanda-borders-bill-harrington-b2052230.html) if it was a rumour.

"If it's happening in the Home Office, on the same corridor that I'm in, they haven't told me about it," Mr Harrington, who was drafted into No 10 by [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) during the ***Ukraine*** ***refugee crisis***, said. "I'm having difficulty enough getting them from [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) to our country − there's no possibility of sending them to Rwanda," he insisted.

But on Thursday, the prime minister and home secretary unveiled the deal with the Rwandan government, [*alongside an initial payment of £120m*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/boris-johnson-uk-rwanda-migrants-plan-b2057913.html) , to send asylum seekers more than 4,000 miles away to the central African country. [*Conservative MP David Davis described the policy plan as "bonkers".*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/rwanda-asylum-seekers-patel-home-office-b2058823.html)

Charities and campaign groups have also condemned the move, while the UN's refugee agency said the proposal to outsource the processing of refugees was "unacceptable" and [*would be an "egregious breach" of international law.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/rwanda-asylum-seekers-uk-priti-patel-b2059064.html)

It also emerged that Ms Patel faced objections from inside the Home Office but decided to [*use "ministerial direction"*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/rwanda-asylum-seekers-patel-home-office-b2058823.html) to overrule concerns raised by department officials.

A Home Office source attempted to justify the measure, saying that "Home Office officials are clear that deterring illegal entry would create significant savings. However, such a deterrent effect cannot be quantified with certainty. It would be wrong to let a lack of precise modelling delay a policy aimed at reducing illegal migration, saving lives, and breaking the business model of the smuggling gangs."

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In recent years, especially during Brexit and the pandemic, it has been used for a range of programmes, including loan schemes and the Treasury's Eat Out to Help Out scheme, which cost taxpayers £849m.

While it doesn't necessarily mean the civil service is against the Rwanda scheme proposals, it does highlight the internal objections to Ms Patel's plan, even before the parliamentary battle has begun.

**Load-Date:** April 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Shadow home secretary shares experience of accommodating Ukrainian refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67KF-TXT1-DY4H-K2R2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 19, 2023 Sunday 11:59 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 86 words

**Byline:** Mary-Kate Findon

**Body**

[*Yvette Cooper*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/yvette-cooper) has opened up about her personal experience of opening her home to Ukrainain refugees.

Labour's shadow home secretary told [*Laura Kuenssberg*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/laura-kuenssberg) that she has a mother and two children staying with her.

She shared how the "hardest listening" was hearing how they had to flee their home within just 20 minutes once the invasion began.

"We love having them with us, but also hate the fact that their families have been split up as a result of this truely appauling war.

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters?itm_channel=native&itm_campaign=newsletters&itm_content=video-articles) to sign up for our newsletters.

**Load-Date:** February 19, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Burger King owner says Russia operator has 'refused' to shut shops*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651B-P9J1-JBNF-W0SF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 18, 2022 Friday 5:59 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 301 words

**Byline:** Benjamin Cooper

**Highlight:** The parent company has stopped supporting the supply chain, operations and marketing for Burger King in the country.

**Body**

The owner of [*Burger King*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/burger-king) has said the operator of its 800 stores in [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) has "refused" to close them.

The president of Restaurant Brands International (RBI), which owns Burger King and has operated its restaurants in Russia for a decade in a joint venture which includes Alexander Kolobov, said the company was attempting to withdraw from the Russian market following the invasion of Ukraine.

RBI president David Shear wrote in an open letter to employees: "We contacted the main operator of the business and demanded the suspension of Burger King restaurant operations in Russia. He has refused to do so.

"We suspended all corporate support for the Russian market, including operations, marketing, and supply chain support in addition to refusing approvals for new investment and expansion."

Mr Shear said the company's "complicated" agreements with overseas partners meant it was unable to walk away from its Russia business, adding any changes "would ultimately require the support of Russian authorities on the ground and we know that practically will not happen any time soon".

The joint venture, which RBI owns 15% of, with Mr Kobolov also includes a Ukrainian investment fund and VTB Capital, an affiliate of Russia's second-largest financial institution VTB Bank.

VTB Bank has been sanctioned by the UK, the US and numerous European countries over the invasion.

Mr Shear said: "We committed to redirecting any profits we receive from the business, including our ownership stake, to the United Nations' refugee agency (UNHCR) and made an immediate donation of 1 million dollars (£760,000) toward that commitment. We've also worked with franchisees from more than 25 countries to distribute 2 million dollars (£1.5m) of free meal coupons for Burger King restaurants to [*NGOs*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ngos) supporting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***."

**Load-Date:** March 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Mila Kunis says Russian people 'aren't the enemy'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YY-74P1-JBNF-W2R1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 11, 2022 Friday 8:59 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,FILM,CULTURE; Version:1

**Length:** 261 words

**Byline:** Sam Moore

**Highlight:** 'Friends with Benefits' star was born in Ukraine

**Body**

[*Mila Kunis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mila-kunis) has called on the world not to blame the Russian people for the[*ongoing conflict*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-news-russia-war-putin-b2033928.html%22%20title=%22Ukraine%20news%20-%20live:%20Kyiv%20claims%20Putin%20preparing%20terror%20attack%20on%20Chernobyl%20plant%20in%20'nuclear%20blackmail'%20plot) in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Kunis, who was born in Ukraine, was talking to Maria Shriver on her digital series [*Conversations Above the Noise*](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLXtE2HhFlT3u6gp3PhlFn6bbirfJhluQL) when she said: "I don't think that we need to consider the people of Russia an enemy."

The Bad Moms actor added: "I do really want to emphasise that. I don't think that that's being said enough in the press."

She went on to explain: "I think that there's now [an] 'If you're not with us, you're against us' mentality. And I don't want people to conflate the two problems that are happening."

Kunis moved to the US with her parents aged seven. She was born in Chernivtsi in southern Ukraine.

"I don't think it's the people of Russia, so I don't want there to be a thing of all Russians are horrible human beings," she added. "I don't want that to be the rhetoric. I do encourage people to look at it from the perspective of, it's the people in power, not the people themselves."

Last week, Kunis and her husband Ashton Kutcher began[*fundraising for* ***Ukrainian******refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/mila-kunis-ashton-kutcher-ukraine-b2031705.html%22%20title=%22Mila%20Kunis%20and%20Ashton%20Kutcher%20have%20helped%20raise%20over%20£13m%20for%20Ukrainian%20refugees) and have so far raised over £25m. The couple, who both starred on That '70s Show, pledged to match all donations up to £2.5m.

Thank you to everyone that got us to $20m in less then a week. We can do this. We can hit out goal. Together. Because we stand together with Ukraine. [*#standwithukraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/StandWithUkraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/2nxLatv1MD*](https://t.co/2nxLatv1MD) - Mila Kunis (@MilaKunisv) [*March 10, 2022*](https://twitter.com/MilaKunisv/status/1501989849913602059?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

In a video appeal for the fundraiser, Kunis called the invasion of Ukraine an "unjust attack on humanity".

**Load-Date:** March 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[*The UK government should set up a parallel Homes for Afghans plan*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:653J-RFK1-DY4H-K1JR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 28, 2022 Monday 9:30 PM GMT

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**Section:** EDITORIALS,VOICES; Version:1

**Length:** 817 words

**Byline:** Editorial

**Highlight:** Editorial: Why is the Ukrainian approach in Britain not being taken to genuine refugees from other conflicts?

**Body**

It is a question that should haunt a nation: if so many people are [*willing and generous*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugee-scheme-homes-application-b2045738.html) enough to open their own homes to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, and with official encouragement, why is the same approach not being taken to genuine refugees from other wars, conflicts and violence?

Indeed, the fact the Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme might set a precedent for refugees from other war zones may have been one reason why the package of support has been so long in coming, why gaining eligibility was bureaucratic and demanding, and why the scheme was eventually taken away from the hostile custody of the Home Office.

Even as things stand now, charities complain the scheme remains [*too inaccessible*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugees-visas-family-home-office-uk-b2025715.html) ; the relevant sponsorship form had not been translated into Ukrainian until Thursday, while refugees have also struggled with the requirement to convert forms into PDF format.

The Refugee Council is one of 16 charities and anti-trafficking organisations to have written to levelling up secretary Michael Gove - now in charge of the Ukraine scheme - warning the sponsorship scheme remains open to abuse and risks becoming "Tinder for sex traffickers".

Still, the Ukraine scheme is in place, it is working and it represents the [*best traditions of Britain*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/ukraine-refugees-poll-russia-welcome-b2043278.html). Yet the uncomfortable corollary remains: why are genuine ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** the sole beneficiaries of a bespoke scheme, and those from other well-documented wars and violence - such as Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia and the Sahel - have no such path to safety? Why do they have to apply for visas or take their chances on dinghies in the English Channel? The obvious answer is too shameful for the authorities to dwell upon.

But not others.

A coalition of civic society think tanks and refugee support groups led by More in Common and British Future are publishing a Homes for [*Afghans*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/afghans) action plan and a joint open letter to Michael Gove MP. The challenge is, once again, to do the right thing, and at least extend the Homes for Ukraine scheme and allow the British public to help the thousands of Afghans who escaped Kabul and are still in hotel accommodation seven months later.

As with the war in Ukraine, the suffering of the Afghan people has provoked widespread sympathy, charitable donations and an urge to do something. When the British and their allies retreated from Kabul last autumn there was a sense of abandonment, even betrayal of those that had personally risked their lives to help British forces and agencies.

Of course not everyone is in a position to assist with a spare room, or indeed is sympathetic to the cause; but many are, and they have no officially sanctioned way of turning their goodwill and generosity into a firm offer of a roof over someone's head and a safe place to sleep.

There is an Afghan resettlement scheme in place, but it is not as connected to the public as the Ukraine scheme, and it too, is facing its own problems.

To keep up to speed with all the latest opinions and comment, sign up to our free weekly Voices Dispatches newsletter by [*clicking here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Fnewsletters%3Fitm_channel%3Dnative%26itm_campaign%3Dfooter%26itm_audience%3Dprospecting%26itm_content%3Dnewsletters&data=04%7C01%7CVictoria.Richards%40independent.co.uk%7C062b3d811f2541e4220808d98fb59a11%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637698832400255119%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=cljURBTtBLaWfVwBrZv8UPgOVVFGM0rPoexRmk0aRHA%3D&reserved=0)

To help redress the disparity in esteem between Ukrainians and Afghans, and to hasten the resettlement of Afghans, the government should set up a parallel Homes for Afghans plan. Though there will some who would refuse all migrants, even those fleeing war, the fair-minded British people and their political representatives would support such a move.

In recent months, and paradoxically since the Brexit referendum and labour shortages after Brexit itself, there has been an increasing realisation of the general benefits of migration, and a more open welcome for refugees and asylum seekers.

The deaths of refugees in the Channel and the Mediterranean has underlined just how desperate and fearful they are, and how much they cherish the dream of sanctuary in Britain, a land of freedom and opportunity for those who wish to work hard and get on.

Afghans are no different to Ukrainians in their hopes and aspirations for themselves and their families - and the same goes for Somalians or Malians for that matter. They need help; people want to help them; the government's role is obvious.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our [*Refugees Welcome*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome) campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page

**Load-Date:** March 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Fears over hosting scheme as Ukrainians arriving in UK already registering as homeless*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:653Y-HG41-JBNF-W3CV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 30, 2022 Wednesday 2:26 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 841 words

**Byline:** May Bulman

**Highlight:** At least 36 refugee households arriving under Homes for Ukraine have already registered as homeless

**Body**

Dozens of [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) who have come to the UK under the Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme have registered as homeless within days of arriving - prompting concern that hosting placements are already breaking down.

Figures released by the [*Local Government Association*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/local-government-association) (LGA) reveal that at least 36 Ukrainian households who have come to Britain under the new sponsorship scheme have already presented as homeless to local councils.

The scheme, launched on 18 March, is designed to enable members of the British public to host ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have fled [*Vladimir Putin'*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) s invasion into their homes, for which they are paid £350 per month. More than 150,000 people have so far registered their interest in hosting.

But the new data, revealed on Wednesday, indicates that in some cases placements are already breaking down, sparking concerns around the level of checks that are carried out before refugees move in with hosts.

The government has said 28,300 applications have been submitted under the programme since it launched, of which 2,700 have so far been issued - but it has so far refused to say how many applicants have so far arrived.

James Jamieson, chair of the LGA, told MPs in the levelling up, housing and communities committee on Wednesday that 36 Ukrainian households on the sponsorship programme had presented as homeless to councils.

The Independent is raising money for the people of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) - if you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

According to the LGA survey results he was citing, a further 44 Ukrainian families who have arrived under the family scheme have approached local authority homelessness services, while 64 whose status is unknown have also done so.

In total, 144 Ukrainian refugee households have presented as homeless since the start of the war across 57 councils. Fewer than two thirds of all councils responded to the survey, so the true figure is likely to be higher.

Mr Jamieson told MPs councils were "worried" about this, and warned that central government was not providing local authorities with adequate information on hosting arrangements before refugees arrive in the UK.

He said that while they were getting data "reasonably timely" once visas had been submitted, this data was "missing details" that would enable proper checks to be carried out to ensure the placement is suitable.

"If we knew where the sponsors were, we would have the opportunity to check the properties out before the families arrive and would meet the people offering accommodation," the LGA chair said.

"Any idea about the needs of new arrivals, particularly traumatisation, pregnancy, disability, will hopefully mean fewer breakdowns but also gives councils an opportunity before they arrive to prepare.

"At the moment my understanding is the checks are being done after the visa has been issued. There may be a situation where someone arrives and three days later it is decided it is not suitable accommodation."

Clive Betts, vice-president of the LGA, who was chairing the committee hearing, told The Independent afterwards: "The whole idea of the sponsorship scheme is that it wouldn't put pressures on local housing, but obviously it looks as if it will now.

"So what's the answer? It seems to be that they haven't got one at present."

It comes after [*The Independent first revealed*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugees-homeless-councils-family-visa-home-office-uk-b2046311.html) that newly arrived ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** were registering is homeless in the UK, leaving councils to "pick up the pieces" and arrange emergency housing for them with no additional funding from central government.

Families who have fled the Russian invasion and been granted visas on the Ukraine family scheme, which allows Ukrainians to join UK-based relatives, have arrived without anywhere to stay because their relatives do not have space in their homes to house them.

A government spokesperson said it was urgently looking at the cases raised by the LGA, adding: "These schemes are designed to ensure people who are coming to the UK fleeing the Russian invasion are provided with accommodation by their family or sponsor.

"Through Homes for Ukraine the government is giving councils £10,500 per person to provide support, including in a minority of cases where someone is left without accommodation."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 30, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Calls to boycott Subway grow as company continues doing business in Russia*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651D-62P1-DY4H-K52S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 18, 2022 Friday 3:14 PM GMT

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**Section:** AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:2

**Length:** 310 words

**Byline:** Bevan Hurley

**Highlight:** 'It's so disappointing that Subway is spreading Ukrainian blood on their Footlong sandwiches'

**Body**

[*Subway*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/subway) is facing a growing [*backlash*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/backlash) as around 450 of its [*restaurants*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/restaurants) continue to operate in [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) , nearly a month into the war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

But the sandwich conglomerate says it is powerless to shut down the stores as they are run by independent franchisees.

After more than 150 US companies withdrew from Russia in response to the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, there are growing calls on social media for [*consumers*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/consumers) to boycott Subway.

"Don't support them. They have all the business they deserve in Russia," Marty Argyle wrote on a post that received more than 6,000 retweets.

Using the hashtag Boycott Subway, former Obama administration official Jon Cooper wrote: "It's so disappointing that Subway is spreading Ukrainian blood on their Footlong sandwiches."

Vladimir Putin's decision to invade Ukraine in February led to many US multi-nationals including McDonald's, Starbucks, Coca Cola and Pepsi suspending operations.

The swift retaliation has quickly grown to include Disney, Microsoft and Netflix, while Russia has also been frozen out of global financial systems by the likes of Visa and Mastercard.

Burger King has said it wants to suspend its 800 franchise restaurants from opening, but a business partner that controls the company's franchise in Russia is refusing to comply.

Subway referred The Independent to a statement issued on Wednesday, which said the company said it has "no corporate operations in Russia".

It said its approximately 450 franchised restaurants in Russia were managed by an independent master franchisee, and it had "limited insight into their day-to-day operations".

Subway said it was providing meals for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and would redirect any profits from Russia to aid humanitarian efforts.

"Our thoughts are with the people of Ukraine, and we are committed to supporting those impacted by the tragic events in the region."

**Load-Date:** March 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*US pledges 'unwavering commitment' to Kyiv as President Biden meets Ukraine ministers*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6533-SG11-DY4H-K4JV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 26, 2022 Saturday 2:50 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:2

**Length:** 775 words

**Byline:** David Harding and Andrew Feinberg

**Highlight:** The US president is expected to speak about holding Russia to account for its invasion

**Body**

The [*US*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/us) says it has full support for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) as President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) met the country's foreign minister during a visit to [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) on Saturday.

Mr Biden met with Dmytro Kuleba and Defence Minister Oleksii Reznikov alongside other senior US officials, including Secretary of State [*Antony Blinken*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/antony-blinken) and Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin.

The White House said Mr Biden updated Mr Kuleba and Mr Reznikov on US "efforts to rally the world in support of Ukraine's fight against Russian aggression" as well as efforts to provide further defensive assistance to Ukraine.

The United States expressed "unwavering commitment to Ukraine's [*sovereignty*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sovereignty) and territorial integrity," State Department spokesman Ned Price said.

Mr Kuleba told reporters that Ukraine had received additional security pledges from the United States on developing defence co-operation.

A short time later, Mr Biden reiterated America's fidelity to the North Atlantic Treaty's mutual defence provisions during a bilateral meeting with Polish president Andrzej Duda.

"We take Article Five as a sacred commitment, not a throwaway - a sacred commitment that relates to every member of Nato," said Mr Biden, who also said he believed Russian president Vladimir Putin had been counting on divisions among Nato members - "to be able to separate Eastern flank from the West, be able to separate nations based on past histories".

"But he hadn't been able to do it - we've all stayed together," he continued, adding that Poland has taken on a "significant responsibility" by absorbing millions of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who've fled their homes in the wake of Russia's invasion.

Mr Biden said he believes the "whole world" should shoulder the responsibility of welcoming ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, and compared their plight to the many migrants from South and Central America who come to the US-Mexico border seeking refuge each day.

He added that the US would "do our part relative to Ukraine" by accepting as many as 100,000 refugees.

Later in the day Mr Biden will give what his aides have billed as a major speech on "the united efforts of the free world to support the people of Ukraine, hold [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) accountable for its brutal war, and defend a future that is rooted in democratic principles".

Biden is also scheduled to visit a refugee reception centre at Warsaw's national stadium. More than 2 million people have fled the war in Ukraine to Poland, out of the roughly 3.8 million who have left all together.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's President, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, said his country's forces had "dealt powerful blows" to Russian troops, in his Friday address to his nation. On Saturday he spoke via videolink to the Doha Forum and urged the world to hike gas outputs and avoid a global energy crisis.

He also attacked Moscow adding that their success in repelling attacks was leading the Russian leadership "to a simple and logical idea: talk is necessary".

He added: "Russia is deliberating bragging they can destroy with nuclear weapons, not only a certain country but the entire planet."

In Russia, former president Dmitry Medvedev warned that Moscow could launch a nuclear strike against an enemy which only had conconventional weapons, "when an act of aggression is committed against Russia and its allies", he said.

And defence minister, seen in public for the first time in two weeks, said nuclear "readiness" was a priority for Moscow.

There is growing speculation that Russia has reached a strategic turning point in the war and could abandon attempts to capture Kyiv and instead concentrate on fighting for control of the Donbas region in the southeast of the country.

A senior military official, Colonel General Sergei Rudskoi, deputy chief of the Russian general staff, said on Friday that the main objective of Moscow's war had been "generally" accomplished, which would allow forces to focus on "the main goal, liberation of Donbas".

In Britain, defence officials said Russia continues to besiege a number of major Ukrainian cities including Kharkiv, Chernihiv and Mariupol.

They said Russian forces are proving reluctant to engage in large scale urban infantry operations, rather preferring to rely on the indiscriminate use of air and artillery bombardments in an attempt to demoralise defending forces.

The assessment says it is likely Russia will continue to use its heavy firepower on urban areas as it looks to limit its own already considerable losses, at the cost of further civilian casualties.

There has been growing talk of Russia having committed war crimes in its assault on Ukraine and on Friday the UN said there was increasing evidence on mass graves being found in the beseiged city of Mariupol.

**Load-Date:** March 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Mila Kunis says Russian people 'aren't the enemy'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6503-HHV1-DY4H-K43W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 12, 2022 Saturday 10:12 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,FILM,CULTURE; Version:1

**Length:** 261 words

**Byline:** Sam Moore

**Highlight:** 'Friends with Benefits' star was born in Ukraine

**Body**

[*Mila Kunis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mila-kunis) has called on the world not to blame the Russian people for the[*ongoing conflict*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-news-russia-war-putin-b2033928.html%22%20title=%22Ukraine%20news%20-%20live:%20Kyiv%20claims%20Putin%20preparing%20terror%20attack%20on%20Chernobyl%20plant%20in%20'nuclear%20blackmail'%20plot) in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Kunis, who was born in Ukraine, was talking to Maria Shriver on her digital series [*Conversations Above the Noise*](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLXtE2HhFlT3u6gp3PhlFn6bbirfJhluQL) when she said: "I don't think that we need to consider the people of Russia an enemy."

The Bad Moms actor added: "I do really want to emphasise that. I don't think that that's being said enough in the press."

She went on to explain: "I think that there's now [an] 'If you're not with us, you're against us' mentality. And I don't want people to conflate the two problems that are happening."

Kunis moved to the US with her parents aged seven. She was born in Chernivtsi in southern Ukraine.

"I don't think it's the people of Russia, so I don't want there to be a thing of all Russians are horrible human beings," she added. "I don't want that to be the rhetoric. I do encourage people to look at it from the perspective of, it's the people in power, not the people themselves."

Last week, Kunis and her husband Ashton Kutcher began[*fundraising for* ***Ukrainian******refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/mila-kunis-ashton-kutcher-ukraine-b2031705.html%22%20title=%22Mila%20Kunis%20and%20Ashton%20Kutcher%20have%20helped%20raise%20over%20£13m%20for%20Ukrainian%20refugees) and have so far raised over £25m. The couple, who both starred on That '70s Show, pledged to match all donations up to £2.5m.

Thank you to everyone that got us to $20m in less then a week. We can do this. We can hit out goal. Together. Because we stand together with Ukraine. [*#standwithukraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/StandWithUkraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/2nxLatv1MD*](https://t.co/2nxLatv1MD) - Mila Kunis (@MilaKunisv) [*March 10, 2022*](https://twitter.com/MilaKunisv/status/1501989849913602059?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

In a video appeal for the fundraiser, Kunis called the invasion of Ukraine an "unjust attack on humanity".

**Load-Date:** March 12, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Benedict Cumberbatch shows support for Ukraine on Baftas red carpet*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650B-TRV1-JBNF-W00D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 13, 2022 Sunday 6:17 PM GMT

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**Section:** FASHION,LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 278 words

**Byline:** Laura Hampson

**Highlight:** The actor is nominated for his role in The Power of the Dog

**Body**

[*Benedict Cumberbatch*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/benedict-cumberbatch) has showed solidarity with the people of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) while walking [*the Baftas red carpet*](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/fashion/baftas-2022-best-dressed-red-carpet-b2034837.html) on Sunday night.

The actor, who is nominated for Best Leading Actor at the [*Baftas*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/baftas) for his role in The Power of the Dog, wore a small blue and yellow badge to the awards ceremony.

Blue and yellow are the colours of the Ukraine flag.

Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on Thursday 24 February. The war is currently entering its third week.

An estimated two million people have fled Ukraine so far, heading to border countries in Europe.

On the [*red carpet*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/red-carpet) , the actor [*told the BBC*](https://twitter.com/BBCNewsEnts/status/1503044348233011204) that it's "horrific what we're seeing daily", adding that he is "showing solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Ukraine".

The actor also told [*Sky News*](https://twitter.com/SkyNews/status/1503046984575463425) that he hopes to be part of the government's new humanitarian scheme to host ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

The scheme, which was announced last week, will see Britons asked to open their homes to people fleeing Ukraine as part of a "sponsored" humanitarian route to allow more refugees to travel to the UK.

The route will allow refugees without family links to the UK the opportunity to come to the country and escape the war.

Those who enter the UK through the new route will be allowed to stay for an initial period of 12 months. They will be entitled to work, claim benefits and access public services, it has been reported.

A spokesperson for the government said: "The routes we have put in place follow extensive engagement with Ukrainian partners.

"This is a rapidly moving and complex picture and as the situation develops we will continue to keep our support under constant review."

You can [*find out more about the scheme here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ukraine-refugee-sponsorship-scheme-b2033722.html).

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Volunteers praise donation response for Ukraine refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WT-1TG1-DY4H-K55R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 1, 2022 Tuesday 5:34 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 266 words

**Byline:** Cate McCurry

**Highlight:** The shop is owned by a Ukrainian family who are working with Green Speed delivery service, who are transporting the goods to Poland and on to Kyiv.

**Body**

Volunteers collecting supplies for shipping to [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) have praised the generosity of the public in Ireland.

Dale Johnson is among those helping co-ordinate the collection effort in Dublin.

He said that they are struggling to keep up with the large amount of donations of food, medical supplies and bed linen in recent days.

Working out of Donnybrook Bikes in Dublin, Mr Johnson has been busy organising donations for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

The shop is owned by a Ukrainian family who are working with Green Speed delivery service, who are transporting the goods to [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) and on to [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv).

One shipment of donations from the [*Irish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/irish) public has already arrived in Ukrainian capital.

"We filled four or five cars on that first delivery," Mr Johnson said.

"The shop filled up again and we had to look for somewhere to empty the goods and now we are were looking for more storage.

"We filled a few more cars. It's been a great support from everyone. Loads of people are bringing food for babies, nappies, medical supplies, bed linens, and stuff like that.

"When you fill up the car it doesn't make a difference because the donations are coming as fast as filling up the cars.

"There is a list online of what the Ukrainians need. They said they have enough clothing at the moment but they need the miscellaneous items which is stuff like batteries, power banks, and bed linens.

"They really need medical supplies because that stuff is hard to get your hands on.

"If you find that stuff in your house, they are in real need of that."

The collection effort has been repeated right across Ireland in dozens of locations.

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine war in pictures: Civilians flee as Russians break ceasefires and refugee numbers soar*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y8-TY91-JBNF-W3SD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 8, 2022 Tuesday 5:54 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 250 words

**Byline:** Furvah Shah

**Highlight:** As a Russian ceasefire was announced, Ukrainian civilians began to flee besieged cities like Sumy and Irpin as the total number of refugees reaches two million, according to the UN.

**Body**

Thirteen days into the deadly war between Russia and Ukraine and the scenes of devastation continue to mount.

Two million refugees have now fled the country as Putin's forces continue to launch strikes in cities and towns in the Eastern European nation.

On Tuesday morning a ceasefire was agreed to allow civilians from the northeast city of Sumy and town of Irpin near [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) to escape safely.

However, the ceasefire was said to have been broken by Russian shelling in Mariupol, the Ukrainians claim.

It comes after previous ceasefire attempts failed over the weekend and Moscow's armed forced continued to rain bombs on the cities.

On Sunday, at least eight [*people*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/people) were killed as they tried to leave Irpin, including a family of four with two children.

Ukrainian President [*Volodymyr Zelensky,*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) returned to his office in Kyiv late on Monday and vowed to stay put for as long as it takes to win the war.

In a broadcasted speech to the Ukrainian nation and the world, he urged for less 'empty promises' for defence from Western nations.

He said: "It's been 13 days we've been hearing promises, 13 days we've been told we'll be helped in the air, that there will be planes, that they will be delivered to us."

An ever-growing number of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have fled to neighbouring countries such as Poland and Romania, or even as far as Germany, where support and supplies are being provided to arrivals.

Here are some of the most powerful images from the last 24 hours as the war shows no sign of stopping yet.

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Total agrees to halt new Russia funding but will keep existing projects*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WS-1C01-JBNF-W3KB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 1, 2022 Tuesday 11:37 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 283 words

**Byline:** Simon Neville

**Highlight:** The French company said it will make no future investments in Russia but it will retain its stakes in gas and oil projects in the country.

**Body**

[*French*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/french) oil giant [*Total*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/total) has agreed to make no further investments in [*Russian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) projects but fell short of announcing it is severing ties in the country.

The company is one of the biggest investors in Russia, with a 19.4% stake in Novateck, the largest producer of liquefied natural gas in the country, a 20% holding in the Yamal LNG joint venture, and interests in oil fields, refineries and renewables projects.

Statement of [*@TotalEnergies*](https://twitter.com/TotalEnergies?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) concerning the war in [*#Ukraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Ukraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*https://t.co/LLiNt9ReKi*](https://t.co/LLiNt9ReKi) - TotalEnergies Press (@TotalEnergiesPR) [*March 1, 2022*](https://twitter.com/TotalEnergiesPR/status/1498592261231329284?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

On Tuesday, Total said it "condemns Russia's military aggression against [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , which has tragic consequences for the population and threatens Europe", adding it will "no longer provide capital for new projects in Russia".

But the move still gives the company a foothold in the country, unlike UK rivals BP and Shell, which both announced in recent days that they will be disposing of their own stakes in Russian projects.

BP could take a hit of as much as 25 billion dollars (£18.7 billion) by offloading its 20% holding in [*Rosneft*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rosneft) , and Shell said it expects a hit of 3 billion dollars (£2.2 billion) by ending partnerships with Gazprom.

Total added: "TotalEnergies expresses its solidarity with the Ukrainian people who are suffering the consequences, and with the Russian people who will also suffer the consequences.

"TotalEnergies is mobilised to provide fuel to the Ukrainian authorities and aid to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in Europe.

"TotalEnergies supports the scope and strength of the sanctions put in place by Europe and will implement them regardless of the consequences (currently being assessed) on its activities in Russia."

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*The British public is ahead of the government in its desire to help refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651J-8GT1-F072-41JK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 19, 2022 Saturday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 2

**Length:** 778 words

**Byline:** EDITORIAL

**Body**

Andrii Zharikov, a Ukrainian who is a senior lecturer at the University of Portsmouth's law faculty, has abandoned his plan to bring his sister and mother to the UK, having been defeated by red tape. Although the government allows Ukrainians to bring family members here, it does not apply to people like Mr Zharikov, who has a work visa - even though Sajid Javid, the health secretary, claimed this week that it did.

Home Office guidance says family members can apply to join a UK-based relative, but only if the relative is a British national, has some form of settled status in the UK, has pre-settled status from an EU country or Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland, or is entitled to refugee status or humanitarian protection in the UK. The government should think again about those with work visas.

"I was appalled by the way it has been presented, with the government saying it has an open-door policy, but the scope is very, very limited," said Mr Zharikov. "I am very grateful for the EU approach, and I know my family will stay in the EU because of this and they are better off there, and I will do my best to look after them by sending money."

UK ministers trumpet that there is "no cap" on the number of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** they will allow to enter the country, but the bureaucratic system amounts to a cap, in effect, by limiting the numbers. So far, 6,500 refugees have been allowed entry to Britain under the Ukraine family scheme, out of the 27,000 applications submitted.

The contrast with EU countries is stark, even allowing for the fact that many Ukrainians want to remain close to their country because they want to return. More than 2 million of the 3.2 million people who have so far left Ukraine have entered Poland. More than 197,000 refugees have been registered in Germany. Over 17,000 have arrived in France, which expects to welcome between 50,000 and 100,000. Ireland has already accepted more than 7,000, a response that should embarrass the UK government.

The EU's welcome decision to waive visa restrictions has not been copied by the UK. Ministers cite the need for security checks. Although they may have a point, this does not excuse the government being so slow to dismantle the bureaucratic hurdles stemming from its initial mistake of tweaking the existing system rather than creating a new one.

Another managed migration scheme does not measure up to the biggest refugee crisis since the Second World War. The irony is that the government should have seen it coming; unlike countries on the continent, the UK, along with the US, had been warning for weeks that Vladimir Putin planned to order the invasion of Ukraine.

The UK is now lagging badly behind EU countries. Although Priti Patel, the home secretary, has belatedly cut some red tape, some of her proposals to allow in more refugees have been blocked by Downing Street. The suspicion is that Boris Johnson prefers to fight the last war - the one about Brexit - rather than the real one against Russia, and wants to remind voters that Britain's departure from the EU has allowed it to "take back control" of its borders.

Yet opinion polls show that the public wants a much more generous approach to welcoming ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** than the government has managed to date. That generosity has been demonstrated by the remarkable response to the Ukraine sponsorship scheme, under which Britons can take refugees into their own homes. Some 147,513 people have registered in the UK - 122,390 in England, 8,625 in Scotland, 10,236 in Wales and 6,262 in Northern Ireland.

Yet the government has left it up to hosts and refugees to find each other. Although charities will help in the matching process, what Labour has rightly called a "DIY asylum scheme" will not be easy to navigate, and this is bound to limit the number coming to the UK.

Many practical problems are emerging. If they are to ensure that Ukrainians can be housed from early next week, local authorities will not have time to check every home taking in a refugee. There are fears that human traffickers will exploit the crisis. For some people who have offered space in their homes, there are more questions than answers. Will traumatised refugees, particularly children, get all the support they need? How will language problems be addressed? What happens if hosts and refugees don't get on?

Of course, the government has had to act quickly under great pressure, and was always going to have to learn as it went along. But there is still time for it to be more generous and flexible than it has been so far, in line with The Independent's Refugees Welcome campaign and the wishes of a majority of the British people.

**Load-Date:** March 19, 2022

**End of Document**



[*In Pictures: Europe's support for Ukrainians fleeing Russia's war*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XF-3901-JBNF-W37W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 4, 2022 Friday 6:28 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:2

**Length:** 380 words

**Byline:** Charlene Rodrigues

**Highlight:** More than 1.2 million people have fled Ukraine so far since Russia's invasion last week

**Body**

More than 1.2 million people have fled Ukraine since Russia's invasion of Ukraine last week, with the UN warning that up to 5 million people could be uprooted in the "biggest "refugee crisis this century" if the war continues to worsen.

Ukraine's president [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) on Friday urged the world to "wake up" to the dangers posed by [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) , after its forces started a fire at [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) 's largest nuclear power plant, Zaporizhzhia.

Russia is continuing to aggressively bombard major cities including [*Kharkiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kharkiv) , Odesa and Mariupol, with thousands killed or wounded and tens of thousands on the move at any given movement.

Across Europe, officials, emergency responders, families, charities and businesses have come together to welcome exhausted refugees at train stations and border points.

They have converted office spaces and sports halls into emergency shelters with children's play areas, kitchen and bathroom facilities.

Here is a round-up in pictures of how neighbouring and nearby European countries are welcoming ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** fleeing in their droves.

Hungary

Germany

Thousands of people in Berlin have gone to the central train station to offer fleeing Ukrainians a place to stay. Really moving. [*pic.twitter.com/OReuMnHcfk*](https://t.co/OReuMnHcfk) - Marcel Dirsus (@marceldirsus) [*March 3, 2022*](https://twitter.com/marceldirsus/status/1499339110502256641?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Romania

Poland

Netherlands

France

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'Prittster' comes unstuck as her grip on power declines*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YV-H211-JCS0-D30F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 11, 2022 Friday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 4

**Length:** 805 words

**Byline:** SEAN O'GRADY

**Body**

If Priti Patel were a currency she'd be looking very much like the Russian rouble right now: unloved, badly devalued and with no early sign of a recovery in her political fortunes.

On a generous reading, the home secretary can't win. For years she has made the working assumption that all inward migration is bad and the Tories' target voters appear to hate it. So she's made things as difficult as she can. The grassroots applauded. She was popular.

Now, though, the British public seems moved, possibly temporarily, by the plight of the Ukrainian people, and there has been a great outpouring of compassion and calls for them to be given shelter. Compassion is not something that Patel "does" in the normal course of affairs, and she has been caught out. In a U-turn she has abandoned all pretence of accessible visa centres and the deliberately cumbersome bureaucracy designed to keep the refugees on the side of the Oder-Neisse line.

Instead, ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** can now do everything online and deal with the biometrics when they arrive in Britain. The downside for Patel is that some unhelpful people might wonder why this more humane procedure can't be made available to other refugees???

Patel has reportedly had a difficult time in cabinet, "squirming" while trying to justify the chaos and delay in the response to the invasion of Ukraine. She's been openly attacked by some of her own backbenchers. She has also found herself up against Yvette Cooper as shadow home secretary. When Cooper was chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee, Patel only had to deal with her occasionally. Now she is back on the front bench, Cooper can shred Patel every week. She does this even when Patel doesn't turn up in the Commons to plead her case.

Meanwhile, Patel is losing those to the right of her - they do exist - who cannot comprehend why refugees and economic migrants are continuing to cross the English Channel in dinghies. Led by Nigel Farage and some of the more difficult MPs, her failure to "control our borders" has been boiling their blood for many months. It doesn't matter to them that the movement of people is practically impossible to stop under international conventions on refugees, human rights and the law of the sea.

Post-Brexit, our former European partners are under no obligation to help the UK out, and Patel has to pay the French to try and prevent the little boats heading out to sea. As with Ukraine, but for the opposite reason, no one is satisfied with Patel's performance. She is the reverse Goldilocks of immigration - some think her policy is too hard, others think it too soft, and few think it just right.

Patel's flagship Nationality and Borders Bill was designed to deal with all these problems and more, and spark a few politically useful culture wars with the Labour Party on the way. So was the Borders Police, Crime, Sentencing and Crime bill, sponsored now by Dominic Raab. However, she has had great difficulty in getting the legislation through parliament and has come under intense pressure, particularly on the right, to asylum enshrined in international law, and the arbitrary removal of British citizenship.

In many ways, Patel has had enjoyed a charmed political life. Forced to resign as international development secretary under Theresa May for unofficial meetings with Israeli politicians, she supported the Leave side in the referendum, which unexpectedly won, and was then propelled into the Home Office by Boris Johnson. She was censured by the independent adviser on ministerial conduct after an inquiry into allegations of bullying, but survived when Johnson told his MPs to "form a protective square around 'The Prittster'".

Since then Patel has muddled through multiple migration crises, found herself on the wrong side of the "taking the knee" movement, was kept away from the Downing Street Covid-19 briefings, and was blindsided by Sadiq Khan over the sacking of Met commissioner Cressida Dick.

The clearest indication of her declining grip on power is how her department has been losing control over key policy areas to other parts of government - coordinating Channel migration to the royal navy, and ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to the Department for Levelling Up and Michael Gove. Politically, the most accurate gauge of her declaring popularity among the Tory grassroots is her standing in the ConservativeHome members' poll rating senior Tories. She's fallen from fourth place and a net approval score of +79.7 two years ago, to being fourth from the bottom and a score of +4.2 now. YouGov estimates that 57 per cent of British adults dislike her.

The next ministerial reshuffle isn't due for some months yet, and Patel will almost certainly get her bill on the statute book and will make it to the summer recess. But there doesn't seem to be much protecting "The Prittster" these days.

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Matt Hancock accused of housing Ukrainian refugees to 'rebuild reputation'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650T-FT01-DY4H-K3DH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 15, 2022 Tuesday 10:59 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 105 words

**Byline:** Oliver Browning

**Body**

[*Matt Hancock*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/matt-hancock) was asked if he only signed up to house [***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) ***refugees*** in order to "rebuild his reputation" after the revelations of his [*Covid*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/covid) rule-breaking affair last year.

The MP for West Suffolk yesterday announced that he will open his home to refugees fleeing from [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) 's invasion, joining the government-backed scheme.

But in an interview with Good Morning Britain on Tuesday, host [*Richard Madeley*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/richard-madeley) appeared to question the former health secretary's motives, referencing the "political fall" Mr Hancock had after his relationship with Gina Coladangelo was made public.

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters?itm_channel=native&itm_campaign=newsletters&itm_content=video-articles) to sign up to our newsletters.

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Voices: The significance of the refugee question Keir Starmer failed to ask*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YG-FMJ1-JBNF-W1R8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 9, 2022 Wednesday 3:32 PM GMT

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**Section:** VOICES,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:3

**Length:** 802 words

**Byline:** John Rentoul

**Highlight:** The Labour leader let Scottish nationalists, Liberal Democrats and One Nation Tories ask the obvious question in the Commons, writes John Rentoul

**Body**

Rarely has a question not asked by the leader of the opposition been so deafening. The evidence of the home secretary's heartlessness and incompetence seemed so overwhelming that it must have required a heroic effort of will for Keir Starmer to avoid asking a question about Britain's policy towards ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Yet Starmer summoned his reserves of resolution and asked about energy bills instead. This is an important question, and it was a sharp twist to ask Boris Johnson when he was going to force Rishi Sunak to make a U-turn on his "buy now, pay later" policy of lending people help with their gas bills.

Johnson waffled in reply, at one point theatrically pretending to think that Starmer was demanding that the government reverse its policy of helping people with their bills - "He must be out of his mind." The prime minister knows perfectly well that he and Sunak are indeed likely to pump yet more money into subsidising people's bills.

Starmer bolted for the safety of demanding a windfall tax on oil and gas companies, forcing Johnson into one of the least comfortable positions for a British politician in public: defending profit as a source of investment. A windfall tax would raise prices, he said, and make it harder for companies to diversify from Russian gas, which is what we want them to do.

Starmer ignored this point, knowing that he was on safe ground with public opinion, and demanded new nuclear power and more onshore wind. "New nuclear?" exclaimed the prime minister, launching into a pantomime routine that consisted of mocking Labour's equivocations about nuclear power and thanking Starmer for his support.

"Come off it," said Starmer, appearing to be genuinely irritated. "Labour is pro-nuclear; this prime minister can't get a single brick laid of a new nuclear plant."

The rest of their exchanges were the traditional futile Punch and Judy routine, as Johnson blamed the last Labour government for running down nuclear power capacity and Starmer said the Tories had had 12 years.

After that, Prime Minister's Questions proper could begin. Ian Blackford, the Westminster leader of the Scottish National Party, asked about refugees. It was a long question fuelled by righteous moral indignation about the government's claim to be leading the response to the crisis while issuing only a few hundred visas to people fleeing Ukraine.

Johnson said the Home Office had issued "almost a thousand" visas "as I speak". The number will rise "very sharply", he said; it is "uncapped", and he expects the numbers to be taken in by the UK to "rise into the region of hundreds of thousands".

He said the government has a "proud, proud record", and repeated the misleading claim that "we have done more than any other European government to resettle vulnerable people since 2015". This is a reference to Britain's small "settled status" scheme, which pales into insignificance against the huge numbers of refugees actually accepted by Poland and Germany.

To keep up to speed with all the latest opinions and comment sign up to our free weekly Voices Dispatches newsletter by [*clicking here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Fnewsletters%3Fitm_channel%3Dnative%26itm_campaign%3Dfooter%26itm_audience%3Dprospecting%26itm_content%3Dnewsletters&data=04%7C01%7CVictoria.Richards%40independent.co.uk%7C062b3d811f2541e4220808d98fb59a11%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637698832400255119%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=cljURBTtBLaWfVwBrZv8UPgOVVFGM0rPoexRmk0aRHA%3D&reserved=0)

But Johnson did have one response that carried emotional punch, when he said: "This is a government unlike any other" in which "the prime minister, deputy prime minister and home secretary are directly descended from refugees". In his case, this referred to Ali Kemal, his great-grandfather who fled the Ottoman empire in 1909.

"We understand how much refugees have to give to this country," he said. It had nothing to do with the bureaucratic obstacles put in the way of Ukrainians hoping to follow in Kemal's footsteps, but usefully, from Johnson's point of view, it pre-empted the next question pleading for a more humane policy towards refugees, which was asked by Julian Smith, the Northern Ireland secretary sacked by the prime minister two years ago.

Smith was followed up by Ed Davey, the Liberal Democrat leader, and Ronnie Cowan, another SNP MP, who also asked variations of the Big Question of the Day and got roughly the same answer about Britain being "out in front", "leading in every respect" in the response to the refugee crisis.

Johnson's claims were shameless, but the real significance of today's Prime Minister's Questions was the question not asked by Starmer. Read into it what you will, but the Labour leader clearly wanted to avoid identifying his party too closely with the demand for unrestricted access for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

He appears to believe that the wave of sympathy in British public opinion for the plight of refugees may not be sustained as the numbers fleeing the conflict rise. Leaving the question to be asked by Scottish nationalists, Liberal Democrats and One Nation Tories was a brutal exercise in unsentimental politics.

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Voices: My friend Zomi – the aid worker killed in Gaza – was a shining light in a dark world*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BPG-7YG1-DY4H-K1N7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 2, 2024 Tuesday 1:55 PM GMT

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**Section:** VOICES; Version:3

**Length:** 671 words

**Byline:** Nate Mook

**Highlight:** COMMENT: Zomi Frankcom, who was delivering aid when she died in an Israeli airstrike, enveloped everyone she helped with love, writes her former colleague Nate Mook

**Body**

I first met [*Zomi Frankcom*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/israel-gaza-attack-strike-world-central-kitchen-b2521784.html) in 2018 in Guatemala. She was visiting the country when the Fuego volcano erupted, killing hundreds and displacing thousands. She heard about [*World Central Kitchen’s relief operation*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world-central-kitchen-ap-gaza-gaza-strip-israeli-b2522006.html) in Antigua and just showed up to help and volunteer.

I still remember she had this huge smile, big laugh and effervescent personality. Zomi had a light that filled the room whenever she walked in. She jumped in making sandwiches, chopping vegetables, and delivering meals to families. Whatever was needed.

And so from volunteering while on vacation, Zomi became one of the earliest employees at World Central Kitchen and quickly became like family. We used to have this saying that “we lead with empathy” — that really was Zomi.

The news of [*her death in Gaza*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/conservative-gaza-british-israel-defence-forces-anthony-albanese-b2521959.html) – the killing of seven members of the World Central Kitchen team in an Israeli airstrike – is devastating for their families, friends and the world. I know several of them, although their identities have not yet been made public. It is unfathomable that they are not with us any more. They were all truly dedicated to their work, trying to do what they could in the most desperate and dangerous of situations.

Zomi, who has been named by the Australian prime minister, deeply cared for the people she was serving, not to just give them aid, but listened to them, was present with them and held their hands.

I remember after category 5 [*Hurricane Michael*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/hurricane-michael-landfall-florida-panhandle-rick-scott-storm-shelter-georgia-alabama-a8578206.html) in Florida in October 2018, we were delivering food to communities that were badly hit. There was a woman who barely survived. She was living in a mobile home park, and had escaped death by hiding under her bed.

Zomi brought the woman her first meal in a couple of days when we were able to get there. She didn’t just hand out the food, but she sat down with her, comforted her, and listened to this woman’s story. She just enveloped the people she was helping with love. Everyone adored her.

She was a dedicated and hard worker and would do anything to help. She was the first person to jump on a plane and go to the most difficult and trying disaster in the world at a moment’s notice.

From a volcano in Guatemala to hurricanes in the US, Zomi worked around the world to be there for those in need – from Japan to the Bahamas, from Tijuana to Haiti.

In 2020, she flew out to Australia to [*help during the wildfires*](https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/wildfire-ozone-hole-australia-black-summer-b2299459.html) and then immediately pivoted to support the most desperate during the Covid pandemic back in the US. She went to the [*Navajo Nation*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/ap-navajo-south-america-phoenix-natives-b2428596.html) – the reservation of Native American people in Arizona which, at the time, was suffering from one of the highest Covid death rates in the world. There, she built a 100 per cent Navajo-led team, and saved lives getting food to families who were completely cut off.

She led operations during the refugee and hunger crisis in Venezuela in 2019, supporting hospitals and schools. She braved the [*Covid Delta surge in India*](https://www.independent.co.uk/asia/india/covid-india-delta-plus-variant-b1871208.html) to deliver hundreds of thousands of meals to hospitals. She welcomed ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** leading WCK’s efforts in Poland in 2022.

Zomi could inspire and motivate hundreds of volunteers – from delivering food on the front lines, to building relationships with the affected community. It was incredible to see.

I last spoke to her a few weeks ago while she was in Jordan, coordinating air drops of aid over northern Gaza. She spoke about traveling to Cairo and beyond; we planned to catch up. I am not surprised that she went into Gaza to work on the unfolding famine. She was someone you could rely on to drop into any situation. She was deeply loved by all.

It is really hard to even comprehend that she is no longer with us, that the team of seven World Central Kitchen heroes were lost. They were there to do the most important work at the most difficult time.

Knowing Zomi was a gift, and those memories will forever remain. When others were facing the darkest of moments, Zomi was a shining light of comfort – and the world is a dimmer place without her.

Nate Mook is the former CEO of World Central Kitchen

**Load-Date:** April 2, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Pope to visit Hungary amid diverging views on war, migrants*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:683H-2PV1-JBNF-W2G4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 26, 2023 Wednesday 7:25 AM GMT

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**Length:** 1089 words

**Byline:** Justin Spike and Nicole Winfield

**Highlight:** Pope Francis’ spiritual priorities will be on display during a trip to Hungary this week

**Body**

The spiritual priorities of [*Pope Francis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/pope-francis) will be on display during a trip this week to Hungary, where the populist government will seek to downplay its diverging views on matters like immigration and minority rights while focusing instead on points where it aligns with the pontiff.

Francis will meet with children with disabilities, refugees and those living in poverty on the three-day trip that begins Friday. He will also have an audience with Hungary’s president and its nationalist prime minister, Viktor Orban.

The visit will be a political boon for Orban, whose contentious stances on migration, the war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) and LGBTQ+ rights stand in stark contrast with Francis’ views of inclusion and acceptance for the marginalized and support for Ukraine during Russia’s war.

Yet the cardinal of Hungary’s Roman Catholic Church, Peter Erdo, as well as other members of the Catholic community, expect the pope’s visit to be a celebration of Christian unity, and that differences of opinion will not play a central role.

“When there is a papal Mass to which bishops and priests from different countries come in large numbers, there is a feeling that the whole church is present there,” Erdo said in an interview with The Associated Press. “He’s making a pastoral visit to us specifically out of love and attention to the Hungarian Catholic community and the Hungarian people ... and I think this is a great joy.”

Speaking after an Easter Mass celebrated by Erdo in [*Budapest*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/budapest) , Erzsebet Markus, a believer from the capital, said Francis spending three full days in the country was “very significant” for Hungarian Christians and for Hungary at large.

“I think that he’s spending so much time here represents an appreciation for us and for the country,” she said.

Francis is also scheduled to visit with members of Hungary’s scientific and cultural sectors. On his final day, he plans to preside over a Sunday Mass on a square in central Budapest.

But the war in Ukraine will loom large as he meets with some of the 35,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have remained in Hungary after 2.5 million fled across the country’s eastern borders early in the Russian invasion.

His trip is bringing Francis the closest he has traveled to the conflict in Ukraine,. His itinerary includes a stop at a Greek Catholic church that has provided care for refugees. The Greek Catholic Church is one of the eastern rite Catholic churches that recognizes papal authority.

The stop is a nod to Kyiv, which has begged for a papal visit of solidarity ever since Russia invaded, and is watching from the side as Francis visits neighboring Hungary for the second time in as many years.

“We’ll be just a few hundred kilometers from the border with Ukraine,” Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni told reporters. “We can certainly expect words about his pain over this conflict and the search for peace.”

Francis has been supportive of Ukraine’s plight following Russia’s invasion — likening it to a 1930s genocide of Ukrainians blamed on Soviet leader Joseph Stalin. Orban, meanwhile, has been lukewarm in his support for Hungary’s eastern neighbor, refusing to supply Kyiv with weapons and threatening to veto European Union sanctions against Moscow.

Still, Orban has cast his view of the war as being in line with the Vatican’s, saying during a speech in February that his government and the papacy were the only powers in Europe advocating for peace in Ukraine.

Andras Mate-Toth, a theologian and scholar of religions at the University of Szeged in Hungary, said that while the views of the pope and the Hungarian government on refugees had seemed to be “diametrically opposed” in the past, there was not so much space between them on the war.

“On the issue of Russia’s war of occupation in Ukraine, there seems to be no such diametric difference because the pope urges peace and the Hungarian government urges peace,” Mate-Toth said.

Hungary’s ambassador to the Holy See, Eduard Habsburg, acknowledged that the country remained highly dependent on Russian energy 14 months into the war but said he believes Orban and Francis are of like minds when it comes to the conflict.

“Orban and the pope, both very clearly over the last month, several times, have asked for an immediate cease-fire and peace negotiations,” Habsburg said.

Francis has already expressed his appreciation for the welcome Hungary has shown to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. During a 2022 meeting with Orban at the Vatican, Francis gave the prime minister a medallion of St. Martin and said he chose it specifically to honor Hungary’s reception of people fleeing the war.

Such appreciation was not necessarily on display when Francis visited Budapest in 2021 for a seven-hour visit to close out a Eucharistic Congress. Francis didn’t stay on to actually visit Hungary, which some observers perceived as a snub meant to reflect his opposition to Orban’s tough line on migration.

In remarks delivered at his Sunday noon blessing from his studio overlooking St. Peter’s Square in the Vatican, Francis addressed his upcoming trip to Hungary, touching on both the war and migration as themes that would play an elevated role during his visit.

“It will be an opportunity to re-embrace a church and a people so dear to me. It will also be a journey to the center of Europe, over which icy winds of war continue to blow, while the movements of so many people place urgent humanitarian issues on the agenda,” Francis said.

“Let us not forget our Ukrainian brothers and sisters still afflicted by this war,” the pontiff said.

Yet despite the fraught backdrop of political friction and armed conflict, Francis will use his trip to make the kinds of visits with the downtrodden for which he is well known.

On Saturday, he will meet with patients at the Blessed Laszlo Batthyany-Strattmann Home for the Blind, an education and comprehensive care facility for children with visual and motor disabilities.

The director of the institute, Gyorgy Inotay, said the pope’s itinerary in Hungary is indicative of his commitment to the most vulnerable of society.

“He has obviously designated a program and path for himself that speaks to him feeling connected to the most desperate, the poorest and those struggling with some kind of illness and injury, and he has demonstrated this countless times over the last decade,” Inotay said.

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Winfield reported from Rome.

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**Load-Date:** April 26, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Slovakia plans to gradually ease most virus restrictions*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64T1-2FH1-JBNF-W33B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 16, 2022 Wednesday 3:28 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS; Version:1

**Length:** 309 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Slovakia is planning to gradually ease most coronavirus restrictions despite a current record surge of infections caused by the highly transmittable omicron variant

**Body**

Slovakia is planning to gradually ease most coronavirus restrictions as hospitals appear to be coping despite a current record surge of infections caused by the highly transmittable omicron variant.

Prime Minister Eduard Heger said on Wednesday that people will have access to stores, shopping malls, various public gatherings and services, including bars and restaurants, without any restrictions. They won't have to present any certificate that they have been vaccinated, recovered from COVID-19 or tested negative for the coronavirus.

Those restrictive measures should be lifted by the end of February.

As the next step, the government also plans to ease the limits on the number of people attending various public events and gatherings and most other remaining restrictions a month later, Heger said.

The government has still to announce the details of the plan.

Heger made the announcement as daily new infections in his country remain at record high levels around 20,000 cases, a level largely unchanged since the beginning of February. On Tuesday, Slovakia registered 19,955 new cases for a total of almost 1.3 million in the nation of 5.5 million.

"We have to learn how to live with COVID," Heger said. "We have an efficient tool to protect ourselves, and that's the vaccine."

Only over 2.5 million Slovaks, or 50.3% of the population, have been fully vaccinated, well below the [*European Union*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/european-union) average of 71%.

Despite the relatively low vaccination rate, hospitals are treating fewer patients for COVID-19 than during the earlier wave fueled by the delta variant.

Slovakia has registered 18,145 deaths linked to COVID-19.

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Follow AP's pandemic coverage at [*https://apnews.com/hub/coronavirus-pandemic*](https://apnews.com/hub/coronavirus-pandemic)

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[*Poland prepares to accept* ***Ukrainian******refugees*** *in case of war*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/poland-warsaw-european-union-viktor-orban-slovakia-b2014683.html)

[*Slalom winner Vlhova leaving Olympics early with ankle issue*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/mikaela-shiffrin-beijing-alpine-skiing-slovakia-italy-b2014028.html)

**Load-Date:** February 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Johnson's Saudi visit again reveals his lack of principles*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6514-SJM1-JCS0-D0X7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 17, 2022 Thursday

First Edition

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**Section:** VOICES; Pg. 36

**Length:** 766 words

**Body**

And there we have it. At the same time as three eastern European prime ministers make the dangerous rail trip to meet the Ukrainian president to show their support, where is Boris Johnson?

He is off to Saudi Arabia to beg the rulers of a country steeped in human rights abuses. They executed 81 people in one day last week. Why is he there? To beg for oil for the rest of the world, apparently. The oil that no one will be wanting in the next 30 years or so - or will they?

It just takes three weeks of an illegal war started by a power-mad dictator to show that we are light years away from the greener society that we crave.

However, I could not let my comments pass without making reference to words allegedly spoken by the prime minister in which he states that the £1bn Saudi investment in greener aviation fuel is something "we want to encourage" and goes on to say that "it does not mean we can't stick to our principles and raise those issues that we all care about".

Principles and Boris Johnson are not words that sit easily together. I give you the Brexit lies, the cash for honours, Partygate etc. Our current prime minister always reminds me of the late great Groucho Marx, not just because you can't take him seriously, but he certainly has taken his well-known catchphrases to heart and, in that respect, I quote: "Those are my principles, if you don't like them, I have others." So very true.

Scott Cassie Aberdeen

<strong>The public welcome refugees</strong>

The news coming out of Ukraine is heart-wrenching, and it has been gratifying to see just how many people in the UK and around the world have donated, both financially and with supplies.

Millions in financial aid have been collected but how is that money being spent? Is that money actually reaching the Ukrainian people? Are the supplies reaching the Ukrainian people?

More than 100,000 people in the UK have offered a place to stay for the ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, but they have to know the names of the people that they have to sponsor to come and stay. How can they access this list of names?

The government expects the Ukrainian people to go online to apply to come to the UK. What if the Ukrainian people don't have internet access?

J Hyatt Address supplied

Our government has sought to exclude refugees from Sudan, Syria, Afghanistan and lord knows how many other war-torn nations on the belief that accepting them would be against the national will (ie bad for votes).

Now that we have a war-torn, democratic nation on our doorstep, the government, in response to rising public anger, has sub-contracted its humanitarian responsibilities by inviting families to open the door themselves by inviting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** into their own homes... with overwhelming public support.

However, public generosity has been met with the Home Office's usual incompetence, bordering on prejudice, and a complete lack of planning by the government despite largely foreseeable events.

May those many, many households who have offered their homes and hearts to Ukrainians seeking refuge and safety be blessed by having their kindness acknowledged by the relaxation of visa restrictions and the speedy relief of these desperate displaced families.

If the government is too timid to face up to its humanitarian responsibilities, let's at least hope that they allow the British public to step up in their place and show the basic humanity that most of our citizens share.

John Driver Herefordshire

<strong>Horse racing cruelty</strong>

The death of Shallwehaveonemore in the opening race at Cheltenham is not only tragic but also tragically predictable.

Deaths at Cheltenham are practically par for the course, so much so that watching the races is like having a front-row seat at a bullfight. Horses are pushed to - and often past - breaking point in this greedy and ghastly spectacle, which is a stain on the British reputation as an animal-loving nation.

The Cheltenham Festival should be cancelled, and this death must serve as a heartbreaking reminder that there is no such thing as a harmless flutter. Betting supports an industry which kills.

Jennifer White Media and communications, Peta UK

<strong>Nazanin's freedom</strong>

After six years in prison and/or under house arrest, Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe will leave Iran today.

This will, of course, have nothing to do with coughing up the £400m for tanks that we never delivered after the fall of the Shah. Nor, of course, with the government's attempt to garner an alternative supply of that black, sticky stuff with which Iran is still well-endowed.

Realpolitik - don't you just love it?

Jeremy Redman London

**Load-Date:** March 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[*My friend who was killed in Gaza was a gift to the world*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BPM-C3V1-JCS0-D084-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 3, 2024 Wednesday

First Edition

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**Section:** VOICES; Pg. 19

**Length:** 666 words

**Byline:** NATE MOOK

**Body**

I first met Zomi Frankcom in 2018 in Guatemala. She was visiting the country when the Fuego volcano erupted, killing hundreds and displacing thousands. She heard about World Central Kitchen's relief operation in Antigua and just showed up to help and volunteer.

I still remember she had this huge smile, big laugh and effervescent personality. Zomi had a light that filled the room whenever she walked in. She jumped in making sandwiches, chopping vegetables, and delivering meals to families. Whatever was needed.

And so from volunteering while on vacation, Zomi became one of the earliest employees at World Central Kitchen and quickly became like family. We used to have this saying that "we lead with empathy" - that really was Zomi.

The news of her death in Gaza - the killing of seven members of the World Central Kitchen team in an apparent Israeli airstrike - is devastating for their families, friends and the world. I know several of them, although their identities have not yet been made public. It is unfathomable that they are not with us any more. They were all truly dedicated to their work, trying to do what they could in the most desperate and dangerous of situations.

Zomi, who has been named by the Australian prime minister, deeply cared for the people she was serving, not to just give them aid, but listened to them, was present with them and held their hands.

I remember after category 5 Hurricane Michael in Florida in October 2018, we were delivering food to communities that were badly hit. There was a woman who barely survived. She was living in a mobile home park, and had escaped death by hiding under her bed.

Zomi brought the woman her first meal in a couple of days when we were able to get there. She didn't just hand out the food, but she sat down with her, comforted her, and listened to this woman's story. She just enveloped the people she was helping with love. Everyone adored her.

She was a dedicated and hard worker and would do anything to help. She was the first person to jump on a plane and go to the most difficult and trying disaster in the world at a moment's notice. From a volcano in Guatemala to hurricanes in the US, Zomi worked around the world to be there for those in need - from Indonesia to the Bahamas, from Tijuana to Haiti.

In 2020, she flew out to Australia to help during the wildfires and then immediately pivoted to support the most desperate during the Covid pandemic back in the US. She went to the Navajo Nation - the reservation of Native American people in Arizona which, at the time, was suffering from one of the highest Covid death rates in the world. There, she built a 100 per cent Navajo-led team, and saved lives getting food to families who were completely cut off.

She led operations during the refugee and hunger crisis in Venezuela in 2019, supporting hospitals and schools. She braved the Covid Delta surge in India to deliver hundreds of thousands of meals to hospitals. She welcomed ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** leading WCK's efforts in Poland in 2022. Zomi could inspire and motivate hundreds of volunteers - from delivering food on the front lines, to building relationships with the affected community. It was incredible to see.

I last spoke to her a few weeks ago while she was in Jordan, coordinating air drops of aid over northern Gaza. She spoke about traveling to Cairo and beyond; we planned to catch up. I am not surprised that she went into Gaza to work on the unfolding famine. She was someone you could rely on to drop into any situation. She was deeply loved by all.

It is really hard to even comprehend that she is no longer with us, that the team of seven World Central Kitchen heroes were lost. They were there to do the most important work at the most difficult time. Knowing Zomi was a gift, and those memories will forever remain. When others were facing the darkest of moments, Zomi was a shining light of comfort - and the world is a dimmer place without her.

Nate Mook is the former CEO of World Central Kitchen

**Load-Date:** April 2, 2024

**End of Document**



[*UK-based nanny tells of desperate fight to get brother out of Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XV-1MJ1-JBNF-W3FW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 6, 2022 Sunday 12:59 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 734 words

**Byline:** Aine Fo

**Highlight:** Nataliia Kolodii said her homeland is 'a peaceful nation', adding: 'We never thought this war would start.'

**Body**

A Ukrainian nanny living in the UK has told of her desperate struggle to get her 15-year-old brother out of their war-torn homeland as she described her fears for her parents who have stayed behind.

Nataliia Kolodii flew to Warsaw on Friday and met her brother Viktor, who had embarked on an almost 24-hour journey from [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) via Lviv after his parents took the difficult decision for him to travel alone in the hope he could get to safety.

Ms Kolodii, who has lived in the UK for nine years and is based in [*Maidenhead*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/maidenhead) , Berkshire, told the PA news agency they now feel "stuck" in [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) after she learned her initial attempt at getting him a visa had not worked.

The 37-year-old described the visa process as "confusing" and said her friends in England were shocked to hear of her experience.

She said she called a number on the official Government website on Thursday and spoke to someone who assured her she would get confirmation about her brother's visa within two days.

But she said she was then shocked and upset to be told later this was not the case.

She said the process "should be more clear" and consideration given to the fact people applying for the scheme are likely to be under intense stress when doing so.

It's (my family) everything I have. And I just imagine, to lose them all, I don't know if I could take it

Nataliia Kolodii

She told PA: "I texted my friends and said we are stuck in Poland and everybody asks 'Why, England said you don't need anything, they are welcoming you'. I said 'No, it's not like that. I am stuck here'.

"It's (a scheme) for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, that means maybe not everybody is perfect in English. It should be something like okay, press this button, go to this website, fill out this form. I also watched YouTube videos, but I still couldn't (understand it). Maybe it's my tiredness."

Ms Kolodii described feeling "lost" and said the outbreak of war in her home country has been "heartbreaking" and "like the end of the world", reducing her sleep to two or three hours a night as she worries for her family.

While trying to get her brother to safety she has been overcome with concern for her parents and grandmother who are living in a suburb of Kyiv.

Her 86-year-old Russian grandmother is not fit to travel and Ms Kolodii said her mother has insisted she will not leave her behind.

"It's (my family) everything I have," Ms Kolodii said. "And I just imagine, to lose them all, I don't know if I could take it."

Her mother wrote a letter, signed by both of Viktor's parents, saying they "just want our child to escape from here" and for their daughter to be considered his legal guardian, recording a video saying the same.

Ms Kolodii said she has since applied for a visa online and will take a five-hour bus journey with her brother to the Polish city of Rzeszow on Sunday, where the UK has opened a new pop-up visa application centre in recent days.

But she said as she needs to get back to the UK for work and her son there, she hopes the process can be handled as quickly as possible, as she does not want to leave her teenage brother alone in Poland.

The UK's initial visa offer was restricted to immediate family but widened on Tuesday to include parents, grandparents and siblings, with applications opening on Friday as Home Secretary Priti Patel paid a visit to the Polish border with [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

The [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) said it has increased capacity to other countries including Hungary, Poland and Moldova, and that the combined total number of appointments in the region will increase to 6,000 from this coming week.

An emotional Ms Kolodii said Ukraine is "a peaceful nation", adding: "We never thought this war would start."

She rejected any suggestion Russian-speaking people - including her own family - had ever been pressured by Ukrainian officials to drop the language.

She said: "Putin tells (people) that Ukraine or the government pressure Russian-speaking people, or just bully. Never, ever happened to our family."

The Home Office has been contacted for comment.

Read More

[*Ukraine-Russia war news: Zelensky responds to nuclear plant attack*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-news-putin-war-b2028568.html)

[*Why has Russia invaded Ukraine? The conflict explained*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/why-russia-ukraine-invasion-putin-b2026550.html)

[*Sign The Independent's petition to help the people of Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-refugees-russia-petition-help-b2025628.html)

[*More than 80,000* ***Ukrainian******refugees*** *could arrive in Ireland, minister says*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/ireland-department-of-justice-department-of-justice-europe-dublin-b2029680.html)

[*Hampshire couple take Molly the motorhome to help people fleeing Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/ukraine-hampshire-andover-un-refugee-agency-gofundme-b2029669.html)

[*Former head of Orange Order must abide by Labour values - Sarwar*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/labour-orange-order-north-lanarkshire-scotland-islamophobia-b2029668.html)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'Humanitarian response trumps security checks on Ukrainians arriving in Ireland'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6509-ND71-DY4H-K4G8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 13, 2022 Sunday 11:42 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:4

**Length:** 783 words

**Byline:** Rebecca Black

**Highlight:** Taioseach Micheal Martin said Ireland has accepted 5,500 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to date.

**Body**

Ireland's humanitarian response trumps security checks on arriving Ukrainians, the Taoiseach has said.

Micheal Martin said the state has so far accepted 5,500 people fleeing the Russian invasion and may take in more than 100,000.

He said Ireland's priority is the humanitarian response to what he termed "the worst displacement of people since World War Two".

"Our primary impulse is to assist those fleeing war," he said.

"The [*Irish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/irish) people are very seized by a series of atrocities that are going on. What we're witnessing on our screens every evening is really shocking people and there is huge human empathy there to help the women and the children."

The Taoiseach led a St Patrick's Day parade from [*Piccadilly*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/piccadilly) to [*Trafalgar Square*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/trafalgar-square) on Sunday, the second day of his two-day visit to London.

He met Irish NHS workers as well as Ukrainians, as the Ukrainian flag was carried in a show of solidarity at the front of the parade.

Speaking to the media in London he said his family, like others, would reflect on taking ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** into their homes.

"We would all play our part in that, I think these are personal decisions that every family has to take and we will respond in relation to that as a family. We'll discuss that," he said.

"We're obviously reflecting on this, of course, like everybody else."

Earlier, speaking on the BBC's Sunday Morning programme, the Taoiseach said that, of the first wave of those arriving, around two-thirds have family connections in [*Ireland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ireland) , but as time goes on fewer have local connections.

He said Ireland could take in more than 100,000 Ukrainians, adding that, while it will be logistically "very challenging", there is money in Covid contingency funds that could be used.

"This is something Ireland has never experienced on this scale but we believe we need to do it because we believe this is a battle between democracy and authoritarianism fundamentally," he said.

"It would be very challenging on the accommodation front. On the financial front, again it would stretch, but we did have contingencies in place for Covid-19 in terms of our budgetary frameworks which I think now some of that would have to be used to deal with this situation.

"The sense from the European meeting on Thursday and Friday in Versailles was very much this was the long haul."

Asked about security checks for those arriving in Ireland, he said: "There is always a balancing of issues, we keep channels open with our UK counterparts - the Home Secretary (Priti Patel) and our Minister for Justice Helen McEntee have been in regular contact.

"I met with the Prime Minister (Boris Johnson) yesterday, he paid tribute to what Ireland is doing on the humanitarian front."

Really enjoyed the [*#stpatricksday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/stpatricksday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) parade in London today -we even got the Irish weather.[*#stpatsldn*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/stpatsldn?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*@IrelandEmbGB*](https://twitter.com/IrelandEmbGB?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/LkI2cLtRfF*](https://t.co/LkI2cLtRfF) - Michel Martin (@MichealMartinTD) [*March 13, 2022*](https://twitter.com/MichealMartinTD/status/1503036131948044288?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Mr Martin added: "The humanitarian response trumps anything as far as we're concerned."But our security people will keep on monitoring the situation in terms of what's on."We can all see the humanitarian crisis, we do know that that can be exploited by certain bad actors, but our security personnel will keep an eye on that in a more general way."He said the view within the EU is that all borders should be open to Ukrainians."The Prime Minister's only discussion with me was on the basis of praising the Irish humanitarian response and no more than that. We didn't get into the security issues as such."Pleased to meet Prime Minister [*@BorisJohnson*](https://twitter.com/BorisJohnson?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) before the Ireland v England game.We discussed brutal invasion of [*#Ukraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Ukraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) by Russia and the unfolding humanitarian crisis.Welcomed the close collaboration between the EU, U.K. and our partners to hold Russia to account. [*pic.twitter.com/hDmzTfeIkL*](https://t.co/hDmzTfeIkL) - Michel Martin (@MichealMartinTD) [*March 12, 2022*](https://twitter.com/MichealMartinTD/status/1502692872801468430?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Mr Martin also said that, in the longer term, Ireland will reflect on its position of military neutrality.

But he said the current time, in the middle of a crisis, is not the time to do that.

He also said his country is not politically or morally neutral.

"One cannot, in the middle of a crisis, change a long-held policy overnight," he said.

"The order has been turned upside down by (Russian) President (Vladimir) Putin.

"We have to reflect on that as a country. We have to reflect on the cybersecurity threat. It's not just conventional warfare, it's the cybersecurity hybrid warfare. It has implications for the European Union, it has implications for Ireland in terms of our vulnerability.

"I believe we should reflect on it without drawing down hard and fast conclusions right now.

"There will be a debate in Ireland but we don't have time for it right now."

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Starmer opts for politics over compassion at PMQs*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YM-HVV1-JCS0-D2BB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 10, 2022 Thursday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 8

**Length:** 772 words

**Byline:** JOHN RENTOUL CHIEF POLITICAL COMMENTATOR

**Body**

Rarely has a question not asked by the leader of the opposition been so deafening. The evidence of the home secretary's heartlessness and incompetence seemed so overwhelming that it must have required a heroic effort of will for Keir Starmer to avoid asking a question about Britain's policy towards ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Yet Starmer summoned his reserves of resolution and asked about energy bills instead. This is an important question, and it was a sharp twist to ask Boris Johnson when he was going to force Rishi Sunak to make a U-turn on his "buy now, pay later" policy of lending people help with their gas bills.

Johnson waffled in reply, at one point theatrically pretending to think that Starmer was demanding that the government reverse its policy of helping people with their bills- "He must be out of his mind." The prime minister knows perfectly well that he and Sunak are indeed likely to pump yet more money into subsidising people's bills.

Starmer bolted for the safety of demanding a windfall tax on oil and gas companies, forcing Johnson into one of the least comfortable positions for a British politician in public: defending profit as a source of investment. A windfall tax would raise prices, he said, and make it harder for companies to diversify from Russian gas, which is what we want them to do.

Starmer ignored this point, knowing that he was on safe ground with public opinion, and demanded new nuclear power and more onshore wind. "New nuclear?" exclaimed the prime minister, launching into a pantomime routine that consisted of mocking Labour's equivocations about nuclear power and thanking Starmer for his support.

"Come off it," said Starmer, appearing to be genuinely irritated. "Labour is pro-nuclear; this prime minister can't get a single brick laid of a new nuclear plant." The rest of their exchanges were the traditional futile Punch and Judy routine, as Johnson blamed the last Labour government for running down nuclear power capacity and Starmer said the Tories had had 12 years.

After that, Prime Minister's Questions proper could begin. Ian Blackford, the Westminster leader of the Scottish National Party, asked about refugees. It was a long question fuelled by righteous moral indignation about the government's claim to be leading the response to the crisis while issuing only a few hundred visas to people fleeing Ukraine.

Johnson said the Home Office had issued "almost a thousand" visas "as I speak". The number will rise "very sharply", he said; it is "uncapped", and he expects the numbers to be taken in by the UK to "rise into the region of hundreds of thousands".

He said the government has a "proud, proud record", and repeated the misleading claim that "we have done more than any other European government to resettle vulnerable people since 2015". This is a reference to Britain's small "settled status" scheme, which pales into insignificance against the huge numbers of refugees actually accepted by Poland and Germany.

But Johnson did have one response that carried emotional punch, when he said: "This is a government unlike any other" in which "the prime minister, deputy prime minister and home secretary are directly descended from refugees". In his case, this referred to Ali Kemal, his great-grandfather who fled the Ottoman empire in 1909.

"We understand how much refugees have to give to this country," he said. It had nothing to do with the bureaucratic obstacles put in the way of Ukrainians hoping to follow in Kemal's footsteps, but usefully, from Johnson's point of view, it pre-empted the next question pleading for a more humane policy towards refugees, which was asked by Julian Smith, the Northern Ireland secretary sacked by the prime minister two years ago.

Smith was followed up by Ed Davey, the Liberal Democrat leader, and Ronnie Cowan, another SNP MP, who also asked variations of the Big Question of the Day and got roughly the same answer about Britain being "out in front", "leading in every respect" in the response to the refugee crisis.

Johnson's claims were shameless, but the real significance of today's Prime Minister's Questions was the question not asked by Starmer. Read into it what you will, but the Labour leader clearly wanted to avoid identifying his party too closely with the demand for unrestricted access for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

He appears to believe that the wave of sympathy in British public opinion for the plight of refugees may not be sustained as the numbers fleeing the conflict rise. Leaving the question to be asked by Scottish nationalists, Liberal Democrats and One Nation Tories was a brutal exercise in unsentimental politics.

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Johnson's war-leader act is ridiculed in EU capitals*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YM-HVV1-JCS0-D295-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 10, 2022 Thursday

First Edition

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**Section:** VOICES; Pg. 30

**Length:** 777 words

**Byline:** ANDREW GRICE

**Body**

Boris Johnson is presenting himself as leader of Europe's fight against Russia. He sensed an opening, given Angela Merkel's departure and Emmanuel Macron's weakened authority after his naivety during his talks with Vladimir Putin before the invasion of Ukraine.

This week, Johnson has hosted two London summits with fellow leaders in the anti-Putin coalition - the first with Canada and the Netherlands, the second with Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. His campaign was boosted when Volodymyr Zelensky, Ukraine's remarkable president, told him "we are very grateful to you, Boris", in his moving speech to the Commons.

Good pictures, and yet Johnson's pitch to be leading Europe is ridiculed in EU capitals. Diplomats note that UK ministers talk up the role of Nato and the G7 - but barely mention the EU's. "The UK wants to give the impression it is leading in Europe but it is not," one said. "The truth is that we miss the UK's strategic thinking on security. It could have been a key voice in the EU debate. But it is now irrelevant to it".

French officials tell me that if the UK were still an EU member, Paris would now be reaching agreement with London first before putting a proposal to Berlin because it trusts the UK's instincts and experience on security more than Germany's, despite Olaf Scholz's surprise and historic conversion to supplying arms to Ukraine. When we look back at Europe's biggest crisis since the Second World War, the German chancellor, rather than Johnson, might emerge as the continent's real leader.

A better relationship with France before the war could still have given Johnson real influence, but needless post-Brexit tensions and silly point-scoring between Johnson and Macron left a cloud. So, there isn't close coordination between Britain and France over Ukraine. True, Johnson can grab a few headlines and praise for his statesmanship from Tory MPs (though he will welcome the good reviews he is now getting from them given his weak position at the start of the war). But to the EU, it's "just spin", as one official put it.

I'm not talking about rejoining the EU. I'm an ex-Remainer but not a Remoaner. We are staying out. But that doesn't mean we can't forge a constructive relationship with those Johnson calls "our EU friends and partners". He should end his phobia about dealing with EU institutions which makes him rely on bilateral contacts with member states.

Talk of a new "EU plus one" alliance with the UK is premature. Liz Truss's invitation to attend a meeting of EU foreign ministers was not supported by all the EU's key players. Josep Borrell, the EU's high representative for foreign affairs, took the decision, despite the doubts of Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commission president and Charles Michel, president of the European Council.

While EU figures welcome Truss's positive approach, they remain wary of Johnson. "No one trusts him one bit," one diplomat told me. Johnson damaged "Global Britain's" image around the world by ripping up an international agreement he signed, the Northern Ireland protocol, and by cutting the overseas aid budget by £4bn. Ironically, the EU is now filling the aid gap in Africa, spreading its influence at the UK's expense: another triumph for the PM.

Johnson's aspirations on the world stage have also been set back by the Home Office's chaotic, slow and grudging response to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

It's time for Johnson to move on and into the new world in which the UK is rightly fighting a real war, rather than a juvenile war of words with its natural ally and biggest trading partner. If not now, when?

It shames the country and is another terrible advert for Global Britain. The underlying cause is the same Brexit mentality preventing proper relations with EU institutions. "We have a big heart in this country," Grant Shapps, the transport secretary, argued on BBC Radio 4 this morning. Yet the obsession with having "control" of our borders trumps the government's compassion. For once, the Brexiteers are out of tune with the public on immigration; six out of 10 people want to waive visa requirements for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and only 15 per cent oppose the idea, according to Savanta ComRes.

Even the Tories' Brexit cheerleaders at The Daily Telegraph, the Daily Mail and The Sun are appalled. Priti Patel's cabinet colleagues and many Tory backbenchers are worried she is trying to tweak the UK's bureaucratic system rather than acknowledge the obvious need to create a new one for this emergency. Johnson's lack of confidence in Patel is reflected in his decision to appoint a minister for refugees, Richard Harrington, outside the Home Office.

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Kate and William make first 2022 Wimbledon appearance in Royal Box*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65VM-V5B1-JBNF-W04Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 5, 2022 Tuesday 3:23 PM GMT

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**Section:** LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 321 words

**Byline:** Joanna Whitehead

**Highlight:** Fashion, Olympic and football royalty make appearances

**Body**

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge have made their first appearance at this year’s Wimbledon today.

They are two of several famous faces sitting in the Royal Box on Tuesday, 5 July, as spectators watch matches including defending champion Novak Djokovic and Britain’s Cameron Norrie.

The Royal Box, located on [*Centre Court*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/centre-court) at the legendary SW19 sports venue, has 74 seats reserved for the royal family and invited guests of the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club (AELTC).

Wimbledon organisers also handed out [*hundreds of free tickets*](https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/tennis/wimbledon-tickets-free-ukraine-refugees-b2107957.html) to ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) in a bid to welcome them to their new homes last week.

In a couple of weeks, the special ticket holders will be able to spend the day at No.1 Court, an opportunity to see some “amazing tennis”, according to Wimbledon Foundation head Paige Murphy.

She said: “It’s an incredibly proud moment for us – it’s really part of our mission… to give people a really special experience after a really traumatic few months.

“To be able to provide a unique day when they can hopefully have a bit of respite and really get some enjoyment out of it is incredibly inspiring for us.”

Who is in the Royal Box today?

Kate Middleton and Prince William were pictured sitting in the Royal Box today, with Kate re-wearing a blue polka dot dress from Alessandra Rich for the occasion.

Kate’s parents, Carole and Michael Middleton, joined their daughter for the occasion.

The royals were joined by HRH the Duchess of Gloucester and Dr Tristram Hunt, director at the Victoria & Albert Museum.

Additionally, the comedian and writer David Walliams was pictured in the Royal Box alongside broadcaster David Dimbleby.

The English lyricist Tim Rice, who is best known for his collaborations with Andrew Lloyd Webber, was also present in the royal box on Tuesday.

Previously, famous faces in the box this year have included Anna Wintour, Edward Enninful, and Tom Daley.

**Load-Date:** July 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Watch live as Holocaust survivors and Ukrainian refugees march at Auschwitz*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65B4-9XS1-DY4H-K253-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 28, 2022 Thursday 12:37 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 95 words

**Byline:** Oliver Browning

**Body**

[*Holocaust*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/holocaust) survivors and their relatives are walking alongside ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) in the annual March of the Living through the grounds of the former Auschwitz death camp.

The event returns after a three-year hiatus due to the coronavirus pandemic and this year takes place against the backdrop of war in eastern [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe).

It's expected that more than 2,500 participants from 25 countries -including [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) -will come together to march.

Eight Holocaust survivors, who have participated for many years, are expected to lead the group.

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters?itm_channel=native&itm_campaign=newsletters&itm_content=video-articles) to sign up for our newsletters.

**Load-Date:** April 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Who is in the royal box at Wimbledon today?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65TC-24T1-DY4H-K0FX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 29, 2022 Wednesday 2:57 PM GMT

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**Section:** LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 309 words

**Byline:** Joanna Whitehead and Laura Hampson

**Highlight:** Strictly star Rose Ayling-Ellis is among the guests sitting in the Royal Box on Wednesday

**Body**

Rose Ayling-Ellis, the mayor of Wandsworth, and a past president of Tennis Australia are among those sitting in the Royal Box on the third day of the 2022 Wimbledon tournament.

The Royal Box, which is located on Centre Court at the legendary SW19 sports venue, has 74 seats reserved for the royal family and invited guests of the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club (AELTC).

Wimbledon organisers handed out [*hundreds of free tickets to* ***Ukrainian******refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/tennis/wimbledon-tickets-free-ukraine-refugees-b2107957.html) in a bid to welcome them to their new homes last week.

In a couple of weeks, the special ticket holders will be able to spend the day at No.1 Court, an opportunity to see some “amazing tennis”, according to Wimbledon Foundation head Paige Murphy.

She said: “It’s an incredibly proud moment for us – it’s really part of our mission… to give people a really special experience after a really traumatic few months.

“To be able to provide a unique day when they can hopefully have a bit of respite and really get some enjoyment out of it is incredibly inspiring for us.”

Who is in the Royal Box?

Along with Strictly star Rose and her mother, Donna Ayling, attendees include figures from the worlds of sports, business and the local community.

These include Jeremy Ambache, mayor of Wandsworth; Minette Batters, president of the National Famer’s Union; Heba Bevan, founder of smart sensor technology company Utterberry; singer Pauline Black; and Untapped co-founder Ezechi Britton.

Steve Healy, past president of Tennis Australia, is also in the Royal Box today, as is Sir Nicholas Young, the former CEO of the British Red Cross, and Sir James Dyson, founder of Dyson Ltd.

Other guests inside Wednesday’s Royal Box include editor of the Daily Mail, Ted Verity; DeliverAid co-founder, Charlotte Butter; A&E doctor, Dr Jack Manley; and Activity Alliance CEO Barry Home.

**Load-Date:** June 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Charity hand in petition to Downing Street aiming for more Ukrainian refugees in UK*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6529-7NW1-DY4H-K2DN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 22, 2022 Tuesday 10:58 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 116 words

**Byline:** Mared Parry

**Body**

A British charity has just handed in a petition to [*10 Downing Street*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/10-downing-street) , in a bid to let more [***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) ***refugees*** into the UK.

Sonya Sceats from the charity said: "The outpouring of public compassion for the ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** has been breathtaking -but it doesn't surprise us because polls over many years have shown people want a compassionate, fair, and effective refugee protection system."

To sign our [*Refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) Welcome petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) and if you're able to donate please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) .

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters?itm_channel=native&itm_campaign=newsletters&itm_content=video-articles) to sign up to our newsletters.

**Load-Date:** March 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Who is in the Royal Box at Wimbledon today?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65TK-C9H1-JBNF-W01F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 30, 2022 Thursday 4:58 PM GMT

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**Section:** LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 339 words

**Byline:** Joanna Whitehead

**Highlight:** Dame Mary Berry was just one of the famous faces in Thursday’s Royal Box

**Body**

[*Dame Mary Berry*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mary-berry) , [*Dame Darcey Bussell*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/darcey-bussell) and [*Ciara*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ciara) are among those sitting in the Royal Box on the fourth day of the [*2022 Wimbledon tournament*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/wimbledon-2022).

The Royal Box, which is located on Centre Court at the legendary SW19 sports venue, has 74 seats reserved for the royal family and invited guests of the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club (AELTC).

Wimbledon organisers handed out [*hundreds of free tickets*](https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/tennis/wimbledon-tickets-free-ukraine-refugees-b2107957.html) to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in a bid to welcome them to their new homes last week.

In a couple of weeks, the special ticket holders will be able to spend the day at No.1 Court, an opportunity to see some “amazing tennis”, according to Wimbledon Foundation head Paige Murphy.

She said: “It’s an incredibly proud moment for us – it’s really part of our mission… to give people a really special experience after a really traumatic few months.

“To be able to provide a unique day when they can hopefully have a bit of respite and really get some enjoyment out of it is incredibly inspiring for us.”

Who is in the Royal Box?

Mursal Hedayat, CEO of Chatterbox -a social enterprise that works with refugees and other marginalised communities -also joined the stars of stage and screen, along with [*Shalini Khemka*](https://www.independent.co.uk/business/business-mentor-made-cbe-for-supporting-23-000-entrepreneurs-b1985125.html) , the founder and CEO of E2E, which has connected and supported over 23,000 entrepreneurs.

David Peppiatt, the director of humanitarian assistance at the British Red Cross, was joined by Amy Pickerell, the creative director of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge’s [*Earthshot Prize initiative*](https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/sustainable-living/earthshot-prize-emma-watson-dress-b1940162.html).

Elsewhere, Professor Dame Helen Stokes-Lampard, chair of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, and meteorologist and climate scientist, Dame Julia Slingo, represented the field of science.

From the sporting community, men’s doubles champion Fred Stolle, Roger Taylor, former Wimbledon singles semi-finalist, Marshall Thomas, the International Tennis Federation’s (ITF) wheelchair tennis journalist and researcher, and Craig Tiley, the CEO and tournament director of the Australian Open, were also in the box.

**Load-Date:** June 30, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ministers urged to remove 'needless bureaucracy' from Ukraine schemes as refugees at 'risk of destitution'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6550-P2B1-DY4H-K0G5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 4, 2022 Monday 9:50 AM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:4

**Length:** 1305 words

**Byline:** May Bulman

**Highlight:** Exclusive: Mounting calls to allow refugees to apply to Homes for Ukraine scheme in-country

**Body**

Ministers are being urged to remove "needless bureaucracy" from refugee schemes for Ukrainians as it emerged those who have fled war are now facing destitution in Britain.

Calls are mounting for the government to allow [*refugees*](https://indy-web-prod.brightsites.co.uk/topic/refugees) to apply to the Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://indy-web-prod.brightsites.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme from within the UK, and to provide local authorities with funding for those arriving under the family scheme, for which there is currently no support.

It has emerged that many of those who have arrived in recent weeks, both under the Home Office's family scheme and those without visas - who have usually travelled through Ireland to reach the UK - are struggling to access housing, as well as having difficulties opening bank accounts, claiming benefits and getting their children into schools.

Some have inadvertently ended up in the UK asylum system, meaning they are denied the right to work and given little or no support money. Others had intended to stay with family but found that their relatives do not have space to house them, and had to register as homeless.

Despite the fact that 200,000 people in Britain have offered to host refugees under the Homes for Ukraine scheme - which enables Ukrainians to be housed by UK sponsors - a rule preventing people from applying to it once they are in Britain means they cannot benefit from these offers. [*Councils*](https://indy-web-prod.brightsites.co.uk/topic/councils) and charities are instead "scrambling" to house and support them.

Only 5,200 people have so far been granted visas under the Homes for Ukraine scheme out of 32,000 who have applied, of which 500 have actually reached the UK, according to figures from last Friday.

It comes as The Independent revealed that the Home Office has shut down parts of its ordinary immigration and visa system - reallocating resources to deal with its bureaucratic Ukraine scheme.

Travellers report that priority and super-priority visas are not currently available and ministers have apologised for "any inconvenience caused". Standard visas from elsewhere are also subject to delays.

The Independent's [*Refugees Welcome campaign*](https://www.gofundme.com/f/refugeeswelcome) is calling for the government to go further and faster to help Ukrainians fleeing the war, with more than 183,000 people signing [*our petition*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) asking ministers to provide more supplies of food, clothing and shelter for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and to do more to make the UK a safe haven for them.

Shadow levelling up secretary [*Lisa Nandy*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/lisa-nandy) accused ministers of "wasting the amazing generosity" of people who have offered to open their homes to refugees, and called the inability to move between the schemes "needlessly bureaucratic".

"If people are already here and need a home, they should be eligible to match up with someone who has offered their home under the sponsorship scheme, especially given how many offers of sponsorship are currently going to waste," she told The Independent.

"Councils, charities and ordinary people have stepped up in Ukraine's hour of need. They urgently need more information and support."

Tim Naor Hilton, chief executive of Refugee Action, said the fact that Ukrainians arriving under the family visa scheme were falling into homelessness and destitution "completely undermines the protection this government says it is offering to those fleeing Russian bombs".

He said the "simple solution" was to urgently allow Ukrainians already in the UK to apply for the Homes for Ukraine scheme, which would "immediately open up funding to local authorities to support ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** that need it".

Leyla Williams, deputy director of West London Welcome, said the small charity had been approached by around 10 Ukrainian families in the last fortnight who were struggling to access housing or other basic support.

She described the case of a family who had arrived on the family visa scheme but whose relative was a disabled woman with very little money, meaning they weren't able to live with her. The charity has placed them with a host informally.

"We've got a number of families in that situation appealing to us for help. Not all families are going to have the means to support their relatives. Communities are scrambling to help these people. This work isn't formally funded by anyone. The government isn't helping," she said.

"We are happy as a charity to support people, but it shouldn't be the role of a small charity to support traumatised and bewildered Ukrainians families and their hosts. They are being supported in a totally different way to those coming through the Homes for Ukraine scheme."

Ms Williams said the "only way" to prevent Ukrainians from becoming homeless and falling into "real destitution" was to allow them to apply to the sponsorship scheme from within the UK.

"They need that state support to ensure that people can meet their essential needs as soon as they get here. Everybody is escaping the same war," she added.

Figures released by the [*Local Government Association*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/local-government-association) (LGA) this week revealed that at least 144 newly arrived Ukrainian households have presented as homeless in the UK since the start of the war.

Oleksandr Polishchuk, a volunteer at Support Ukraine, a charity in London, said it was helping dozens of refugees who were struggling to access basic services on arrival to Britain.

"In many cases they don't have cash, they don't speak English. It's complicated. Sometimes they need housing, they need clothing. In most cases they've come with a bag, but not much," he said.

"Some need medication and they don't know where to get it from. People are struggling to get their kids into schools. They don't know how to apply for benefits. The language barrier is huge.

"The government isn't offering support with this. It introduced a policy and left it to local authorities to implement it."

He called on the government to enable people already in the UK to switch to the sponsorship scheme: "There are tons of people who will take them. This is a nation which gave the Kindertransport. We're in that situation. There are so many people who want to help.

"Ukrainians don't want to be a burden. They didn't come here to be on benefits. They want to work, they want to earn their keep. A lot of people would apply to the sponsorship scheme if they could."

Local authorities are given £10,500 in central government funding for each refugee under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, but receive no money for those arriving under the family scheme, which allows ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to join UK-based relatives.

A spokesperson for the LGA said: "We are calling for councils to receive funding to support new arrivals coming under the family visa scheme, who will still need access to local services, so they can support them when they are here in both the short and long term," the spokesperson said.

A government spokesperson said: "Everyone coming to the UK under the Homes for Ukraine and Ukraine family scheme will have access to healthcare, education, benefits and job support on the same footing as UK nationals.

"These schemes are designed to ensure people who are coming to the UK fleeing the Russian invasion are provided with accommodation by their family or sponsor, and are only open to those applying from outside of the UK."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** April 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Russian airstrikes kill 2 and wound 3 in southern Ukraine as war enters 20th month*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:697R-N4G1-DY4H-K3MX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

September 24, 2023 Sunday 1:38 PM GMT

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**Length:** 558 words

**Byline:** Samya Kullab

**Highlight:** The governor of southern Ukraine's Kherson region says Russian airstrikes have killed two people and wounded three others

**Body**

Russian airstrikes on Sunday killed two people and wounded three others in southern Ukraine's [*Kherson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kherson) province, the region's governor reported Sunday as the war in Ukraine entered a 20th month.

According to Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin, Russian forces struck the city of Beryslav, destroying an unspecified number of private houses. A woman was killed and three people were wounded, including a police officer, he said.

Another airstrike also killed a 67-year-old man in the village of Lvove, Prokudin said without specifying the type of weapons used in the attack.

The communities hit both are located in the Ukrainian-controlled part of the Kherson region, where the Dnieper River that bisects the province has marked a battle line since Russian troops withdrew across it in November 2022, a retreat that boosted the invaded country's morale.

The Russians regrouped on the river's eastern bank and regularly shell cities and villages across the river, including the city of Kherson, the regional capital that was occupied early on in the war but retaken by Ukrainian forces more than 10 months ago.

In Russia, a Ukrainian drone hit an administrative building in the city of Kursk and “insignificantly damaged” the roof, regional Gov. Roman Starovoit reported. He didn’t report any casualties or say what the building housed.

Unconfirmed media reports both in Russia and Ukraine said it was the offices of the Kursk branch of Russia’s main security agency, the Federal Security Service, also known as the FSB.

The Kursk region of Russia borders Ukraine and also is a frequent target of attacks. The drone strike on Sunday took place as residents commemorated the anniversary of the regional capital's founding.

There was no immediate comment from the Ukrainian authorities, who usually don't acknowledge responsibility for attacks on Russian territory.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was traveling home from North America, where he addressed the U.N. General Assembly and paid his first wartime visit to Canada. In a social media statement Saturday, Zelenskyy said he stopped in [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) on his way back to Ukraine to give state awards to two Polish volunteers.

Zelenskyy apparently didn't meet with any Polish officials, but in a post on X, previously known as Twitter, he thanked Poland for “its invaluable support and solidarity that helps defend freedom of our entire Europe.”

Poland has taken in large numbers of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and been a fierce supporter of neighboring Ukraine since Russian President Vladimir Putin sent troops into the country on Feb. 24, 2022. However, a trade dispute has recently tested the relationship between [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) and Warsaw.

The Ukrainian government this month filed a complaint with the World Trade Organization against Poland, Hungary and Slovakia for banning imports of Ukrainian farm products, which are important for the war-weary country’s battered economy.

The three European Union member nations bristled at the move. Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki responded by saying his country was " no longer transferring any weapons to Ukraine because we are now arming ourselves with the most modern weapons.”

His remarks left many wondering if the Western resolve to support Ukraine in the war with Russia is waning.

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For more coverage of the war in Ukraine, visit: [*https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine*](https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine)

**Load-Date:** September 24, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Fundraiser, 102, leads minute's silence alongside Ukrainian refugees in garden*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657T-9971-JBNF-W54Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 17, 2022 Sunday 4:35 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 99 words

**Byline:** Oliver Browning

**Body**

A 102-year-old man who raised thousands of pounds for [*Covid*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/covid) -19 relief during the pandemic has held a minute's silence at his home alongside [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) from Ukraine.

[*Dabirul Islam Choudhury*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dabirul-islam-choudhury) , who was made an OBE for raising £420,000 after Captain Sir Tom Moore inspired him to walk laps of his garden in east London while fasting for Ramadan, welcomed those who have fled war to his home on Saturday.

Mr Choudhury led 102 seconds of silence in his garden to support [***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) ***refugees*** and raise money for the charitable initiative Ramadan Family Commitment.

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**Load-Date:** April 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[*A bestselling novelist was duped by pro-Putin prank callers. He now faces jail*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B8J-2BK1-JBNF-W022-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 6, 2024 Tuesday 3:01 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:4

**Length:** 643 words

**Byline:** Tom Watling

**Highlight:** Russian-Georgian novelist Boris Akunin becomes the latest victim of a widespread Kremlin crackdown on those opposing Vladimir Putin’s war in Ukraine

**Body**

A [*Moscow*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/moscow) court has ordered the arrest of a bestselling novelist living in [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) on charges of “justifying terrorism” – the latest incident in a Kremlin [*crackdown on Russians opposing the war*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/vladimir-kara-murza-russia-putin-prison-b2487232.html%22%20title=%22Putin%20trying%20to%20break%20my%20husband%20in%20harsher%20prison,%20says%20wife%20of%20jailed%20British-Russian%20opposition%20figure) in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Grigory Chkhartishvili, known under the pen name Boris Akunin, was [*charged in absentia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/boris-akunin-foreign-agent-russia-ukraine-b2478254.html%22%20title=%22Russian%20author%20Boris%20Akunin%20designated%20a%20‘foreign%20agent’) by Moscow’s Basmanny District Court on Tuesday. He is now under an arrest warrant and will be detained if he returns to [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia).

In December last year, after Mr Akunin expressed support for Ukraine on a call with two Russian pranksters, known as Vovan and Lexus – who were posing as Ukrainian officials – the Kremlin escalated its crackdown on the novelist.

Russian authorities added the writer to Russia’s register of “extremists and terrorists” over the call. At that time, the novelist wrote: “A seemingly minor event, the banning of books, the declaration of some writer as a terrorist, is actually an important milestone.

“Books have not been banned in Russia since Soviet times. Writers have not been accused of terrorism since the Great Terror. This is not a bad dream, this is happening to Russia in reality.”

A criminal case was subsequently opened against Mr Akunin, who has sold millions of detective, historical and fantasy novels internationally, for “discrediting the army”. Specifically for “justifying terrorism” and spreading “fake news” about the Russian military.

Russian publishers had already pulled his books from the country’s largest bookstore chain, while all Russian theatres staging plays based on Mr Akunin’s works removed his name from posters.

Mr Akunin, a dual Russian-Georgian national, [*has been an outspoken critic*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/grigory-chkhartishvili-russia-ukraine-arrest-b2491407.html%22%20title=%22A%20bestselling%20novelist%20was%20pranked%20by%20pro-Putin%20activists.%20He%20now%20faces%20jail) of [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) for years. In 2014, the year that Mr Putin annexed the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea before sending his forces into eastern Ukraine, Mr Akunin moved to London, where he has remained ever since.

A year before, he accused Mr Putin of destroying the country’s hopes of progress.

“Putin has become a real obstacle to the development of the country,” he said. “It is impossible to survive with this level of corruption.”

On the day Putin launched Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February, 2022, Mr Akunin branded the Kremlin leader a “mentally abnormal dictator” and described the war as “absurd”.

He [*wrote*](https://www.facebook.com/borisakunin/posts/2150213085128693) : “I could not believe that Putin would start this absurd war – and I was wrong. I always believed that reason would win in the end – and I was wrong. The insanity has won.

“People are dying, blood is shed. Russia is ruled by a mentally abnormal dictator, and, most terrible of all, she submissively follows his paranoia. I know that Putinland and Russia are not the same thing, but now there is no difference for the whole world.”

He later co-founded the True Russia platform, which helps ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and exiled anti-war Russians.

It comes as Russian prison authorities moved jailed opposition figure [*Alexei Navalny*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/alexei-navalny) , 47, into a one-man punishment cell in the [*remote Arctic penal colony*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/alexei-navalny-russia-putin-arctic-jail-b2476130.html%22%20title=%22Alexei%20Navalny%20seen%20on%20video%20in%20first%20court%20appearance%20since%20transfer%20to%20brutal%20Arctic%20prison) where he is serving a 19-year sentence, his team announced.

His press secretary Kira Yarmysh did not specify the reason, but said Mr Navalny had already spent months in solitary confinement since he was jailed in 2021, facing the punishment over two dozen times over minor infractions such as failing to properly button his prison uniform.

Vladimir Kara-Murza, another Russian opposition figure being held in a Siberian penal colony, was transferred to a one-man punishment cell last month. He is serving a 25-year sentence for spreading “fake news” about what the Kremlin calls its “special military operation” in Ukraine.

Mr Kara-Murza’s wife, Evgenia, told The Independent that he had been moved after being labelled a “consistent violator of the rules”, just like Mr Navalny.

“In Russia, they use this accusation against political prisoners very often for absolutely ridiculous reasons,” she said.

**Load-Date:** February 6, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Russian journalist auctions Nobel Peace Prize to raise money for Ukrainian refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65RN-NB31-DY4H-K2M8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 21, 2022 Tuesday 4:45 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 107 words

**Byline:** Francesca Casonato

**Body**

[*Nobel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nobel) Peace laureate Dmitry Muratov has auctioned off his Nobel medal to raise money to help [***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees).

Muratov, who accepted the [*Nobel Peace Prize*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nobel-peace-prize) in 2021, sold the medal at an auction in [*New York*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/new-york) for $103.5 million.

All the auction proceedings have already been transferred to [*Unicef*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/unicef) to support their humanitarian appeal for Ukraine’s displaced children.

"I was hoping that there was going to be an enormous amount of solidarity, but I was not expecting this to be such a huge amount," the 60-year-old Russian journalist said.

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**Load-Date:** June 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[*UK government may legalise using Russian oligarchs homes for Ukrainian refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650J-4KS1-DY4H-K0NS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 14, 2022 Monday 1:47 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 99 words

**Byline:** Andrew Woodcock

**Body**

The government is "looking at" the possibility of legislating to allow the UK homes of sanctioned Russian [*oligarchs*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/oligarchs) to be used to house ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) , Downing Street has said.

The confirmation from Boris Johnson's official spokesperson came after communities secretary Michael Gove said he wanted to explore the possible use of the luxury properties for humanitarian purposes.

But the spokesperson indicated that Mr Johnson would not himself be taking in a Ukrainian refugee -as cabinet colleague Grant Shapps has offered to -because of the security complications of housing someone at No 10.

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Kay Burley clashes with James Cleverly over number of Ukrainian refugees taken by UK*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y1-GX41-JBNF-W4NC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 7, 2022 Monday 9:30 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 93 words

**Byline:** Ross Martin-Pavitt

**Body**

[*Sky News*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sky-news) ' [*Kay Burley*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kay-burley) clashed with [*James Cleverly*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/james-cleverly) over the number of [***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) ***refugees*** taken by UK as the foreign minister said the process of accepting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** "has only just started".

It was revealed today that only "around 50" visas had been granted under the Ukraine Family Scheme as of 10am on Sunday.

Mr Cleverly told Sky News: "We have made it absolutely clear we want to support Ukrainians who are seeking refuge, both those who have family connections here in the UK and, indeed, those who don't."

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**Load-Date:** March 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[*King praises Romania’s culture, heritage and history as he begins private visit*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68CF-N4D1-DY4H-K3CB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 2, 2023 Friday 4:35 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 451 words

**Byline:** Tony Jones

**Highlight:** Charles has travelled alone, leaving Queen Camilla in the UK.

**Body**

The King has spoken of his “love” for Romania as he began a private visit to the country, his first overseas trip since the coronation.

[*Charles*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/charles) is taking a break from official engagements in the UK but began his trip with a formal bilateral meeting with Romania’s President [*Klaus Iohannis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/klaus-iohannis) in the capital [*Bucharest*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/bucharest) , followed by a reception.

In a speech, he told the president and guests how, during the 25 years since he first visited the country, he had come to love “your culture and art, your heritage and history, your sweeping landscapes and priceless biodiversity”.

It is not known how long Charles will spend in Romania, but he is expected to visit the Transylvania region where he has a number of properties.

Mr Iohannis hosted a reception in the King’s honour in the Palace of the Parliament’s Union Hall to mark the 25th anniversary since his first visit to the country.

Charles told the guests: “As I have said before, I have come to love Romania – your culture and art, your heritage and history, your sweeping landscapes and priceless biodiversity, this ‘tara de gloria, tara de dor’ (country of glory, country of longing), if I may paraphrase your national poet, Mihai Eminescu.

“Romania has retained, in its ancient forests, pristine countryside, and through some remarkable examples of sustainable farming, an incomparable richness of nature.

“But most of all, I cherish my Romanian friends here. I am enormously grateful to many people in this audience for their kind help on so many occasions, and for their support for projects which are doing so much good in communities throughout the country.”

Charles has travelled alone, leaving Queen [*Camilla*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/camilla) in the UK, as he has done for previous visits to the eastern European country.

The King has developed a close relationship with Romania, a country he first visited in 1988, and last year he travelled to Bucharest to tour a donation centre for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and chatted to people who had fled the Russian invasion of their homeland.

In 2015 he established the [*Prince*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prince) of Wales’s Foundation Romania, which offers heritage preservation training courses to local people and international apprentices.

He owns a number of properties in Transylvania, including a holiday let – which helps fund the foundation – and a 17th century peasant’s house, which acts as the foundation’s headquarters, both in the village of Viscri.

The King is thought to be related to a well-known figure from Romanian history, Vlad the Impaler, said to be the inspiration behind Bram Stoker’s Dracula.

The links are through his great-grandmother Queen Mary, the consort of George V, who was descended from the German Wurttembergs and thereby linked to the bloodthirsty Vlad.

**Load-Date:** June 2, 2023

**End of Document**



[*'Decimation' of UK resettlement system could see Ukrainians put in hotels, charity warns*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YX-WHJ1-JBNF-W0T8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 11, 2022 Friday 6:14 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:3

**Length:** 1365 words

**Byline:** Andrew Woodcock,Adam Forrest and Ashley Cowburn

**Highlight:** Communities must not be left to 'pick up the pieces' from lack of official generosity

**Body**

Refugee workers have warned that Ukrainians seeking sanctuary from war may end up in hotel accommodation because of the "decimation" of official resettlement programmes.

They warned that sponsorship schemes of the kind that is set to be launched by [*Michael Gove*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/michael-gove) on Monday should supplement, not replace, large-scale state programmes, amid fears that generous communities were being expected to "pick up the pieces" in the absence of official help.

Meanwhile, Labour accused the government of "dragging its feet" over the scheme, which was first announced by Boris Johnson a fortnight ago but was reportedly delayed by wrangling over the benefits to be granted to the new arrivals.

Shadow communities secretary Lisa Nandy said it would be "unconscionable" if it was as cumbersome as a similar programme set up in 2016 during the Syrian war, which has taken up to two years to place [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) and has so far helped only around 660.

The [*new humanitarian sponsorship scheme*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugees-uk-homes-war-b2033557.html) will allow individuals, charities, businesses and communities to open a route for Ukrainians without family links to enter the UK, by offering them accommodation and support, potentially for six months.

There will be no cap on numbers, and government sources believe tens of thousands could take up the offer.

A hotline and website will be set up for volunteers, and each offer of accommodation will be vetted for safety. They will then be matched with Ukrainians who have been through Home Office checks after applying for help.

The plan was first announced by the prime minister on 1 March amid criticism over the UK's failure to follow EU allies and simply waive visas for Ukrainians fleeing [*Vladmir Putin's war*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-news-russia-war-putin-b2033928.html).

But its launch is understood to have been held up by a departmental spat over whether arrivals should be given full refugee status, entitling them to receive assistance including housing benefit and child benefit, or a temporary status offering more restricted support.

It is understood that they will be allowed to work and access public services for an initial period of 12 months. It is not thought that hosts will receive payment for welcoming them in.

The proposal has already prompted a generous response from the British public, with 1,500 offers of help received by the Sanctuary Foundation, and 500 in the past week alone by Reset, an organisation helping churches and charities sponsor refugees.

Refugees at Home, a charity helping individuals provide accommodation, said applications had soared from 20 a fortnight to around 1,000 in the two weeks since the outbreak of war.

But Refugee Council chief executive Enver Solomon said that the plans had so far been "vague at best", with no detail about how the scheme would work or what funding would be provided by the government.

"This is all the more frustrating given the clear desire from people up and down the country to support ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in their communities, who would jump at the chance to do so through sponsorship," said Mr Solomon.

"For any scheme to be a success, we must see the government working quickly and effectively to have a clear plan in place, and funding allocated to enable councils, health services, schools and communities to best prepare for welcoming ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** through a comprehensive programme of support."

Charities have expressed doubt that the new sponsorship scheme can be scaled up quickly, since it will require a lot of time, training and paperwork to organise. Groups are expected to provide refugees with support accessing benefits and services, as well as a home.

Kate Brown, co-director at Reset, said: "The existing Community Sponsorship scheme has shown how friends and neighbours can welcome refugees, and we believe there are many lessons that can be learnt from this amazing work.

"However, the existing scheme takes time to prepare and get ready for, and it would not be suitable for responding to emergency situations [like] this."

Tim Naor Hilton, chief executive of Refugee Action, told The Independent that the failure to maintain previous resettlement programmes had left the UK unprepared for an influx of refugees, with the result that thousands fleeing Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover last summer are still in "temporary" hotel accommodation.

Official data shows that the number of people who come to Britain under refugee resettlement schemes has plummeted by 75 per cent in the last four years, from 6,212 in 2017 to 1,578 in 2021.

"Ministers have decimated our once-successful refugee resettlement programmes to the point where they have been left unable to respond effectively to the conflict in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) ," said Mr Hilton.

"By scrapping the UK's long-term resettlement commitments, the government has left local authorities unable to invest in services and keep a stock of housing for refugees.

"That is why 12,000 Afghan refugees are still stuck in hotels seven months on from the Afghanistan evacuation, and why we are deeply concerned that the government is considering similar forms of "temporary" accommodation for Ukrainians."

There are already 37,000 asylum seekers and Afghan refugees living in hotels awaiting more permanent homes, costing taxpayers almost £5m per day.

Mr Hilton said that sponsorship schemes were "a wonderful way for communities to support refugees".

But he warned: "These schemes were only ever envisaged to be additional to large-scale government resettlement programmes that are the only way to manage much greater numbers at pace. And it's being able to welcome high numbers of refugees at speed that is exactly what is needed in a crisis.

"We are left with the impression that the government is leaving it to communities to pick up the pieces of a UK refugee protection system that has been run into the ground. This is simply not good enough."

He called on MPs to back House of Lords amendments to the government's Refugees Bill, currently going through parliament, to create a commitment to resettle 10,000 people every year.

Ms Nandy said: "Weeks after the invasion of Ukraine, the British people stand ready and willing to help while their government drags its feet.

"Excessive bureaucracy and a lack of planning cannot be allowed to get in the way of sanctuary for people fleeing Putin. The government is behaving as if these were ordinary times. This is an extraordinary challenge and it calls for extraordinary measures."

Home Office minister Baroness Williams said 1,305 visas for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** with family links in the UK had been issued by Thursday.

Mr Johnson has said that the family route could eventually assist as many as 200,000 people, but with more than 2.5 million Ukrainians fleeing their homeland, the numbers so far taken by Britain are dwarfed by those accepted by neighbouring Poland, Hungary and Slovakia and the 250,000-plus who have fled elsewhere in the EU.

The former head of the diplomatic service, Peter Ricketts, told the House of Lords on Friday that Britain must improve its "inadequate" cooperation with the EU to prevent scenes like those in Calais, when hundreds of Ukrainians were turned away as they tried to reach their families in the UK.

"Given the number of traumatised Ukrainian citizens who are now leaving the country, this flow of refugees is bound to continue for months, conceivably years," said Lord Ricketts.

"We really do need to be working well with our EU partners if we're going to avoid damaging the climate of confidence, which is so important for good law enforcement and judicial cooperation."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian refugees forced into overcrowded homes*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65C4-T5N1-JCS0-D0VW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

May 3, 2022 Tuesday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 1

**Length:** 104 words

**Byline:** MAY BULMAN SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

Thousands of Ukrainians seeking refuge in the UK have been forced to live in overcrowded accommodation, with whole families sharing single rooms, charities have warned. Many of the refugees who have come to Britain to join relatives after fleeing the war are affected, organisations working to help them say, with hundreds having registered as homeless due to poor living conditions. It comes amid claims the Home Office's Ukraine Family scheme is "half-baked", with Clive Betts, senior Labour MP and chair of the Levelling Up committee, describing the situation as "ridiculous", adding that it was a "dysfunctional disaster".

**Load-Date:** May 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian mother and six sons given keys to their new home*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GV-BDM1-JBNF-W1MS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 20, 2022 Friday 3:37 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 789 words

**Byline:** Bronwen Weatherby

**Highlight:** The family was greeted in Chepstow by the local community, Archbishop of Cardiff George Stack and Monmouthshire MP David Davies.

**Body**

A Ukrainian mother and her six children who fled Russian bombing have been handed the keys to their new home in Wales.

Lilia Onopa, 43, and her children received an official welcome in Chepstow, South Wales, on Friday by members of the local community, [*Archbishop*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/archbishop) of [*Cardiff*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/cardiff) George Stack and [*Monmouthshire*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/monmouthshire) Conservative MP David Davies.

Having fled their home in a remote village north of Dnipro in central Ukraine, where military strikes began in early March, Ms Onopa and her boys travelled to [*Bucharest*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/bucharest) , Romania, by taxi after attacks on the port city of Odesa made alternative methods of travel impossible.

They landed in the Welsh town a week ago after waiting five weeks for the [*British*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british) Embassy to approve their online application.

At the ceremony Ms Onopa was given the keys to a bungalow, the former caretaker's property which has been refurbished by volunteers from St Mary's RC Primary School and Church with donations from across the parish.

Pupils, governors and PTA members along with church parishioners gathered with the archbishop and Mr Davies at the school to give her the keys.

Speaking of the horrors she and her children had encountered after the war began, Ms Onopa thanked everyone who had helped them get to a place of safety, including the British Government who she said came to her aid when there were issues with their applications.

As she recalled their experience escaping the fighting many in the room became tearful, including her interpreter.

Ms Onopa said: "The horrible situation happening to our country is because one person, one regime decided my country should not exist, that my nation should not exist.

"Imagine living next to a neighbour.

"He might have completely different opinions but you do live together.

"And one day your neighbour decides to invade your house, destroy your house, kill your kids, just because they think you're going to invade them.

"I'm sure every mother can understand, I was not so much scared for my own life but for the lives of my children," she added.

"We saw our cities being destroyed, rockets falling on our houses and people dying, and the worst thing was we could do nothing to stop it.

"All we could think about is what are we going to do next."

Ms Onopa said she posted an appeal for help on social media and a group in the UK said they would help her.

She said travelling to the border she had seen thousands of displaced families, desperate for a route out of the war-torn areas.

In tears, she told the PA news agency: "I was terrified I would lose my children so I wrote the addresses and contact details of my family in their rucksacks and clothes in the hope that should I die someone would know where to take them to safety."

Since arriving in the UK Ms Onopa has said she has felt "overwhelmed" with support.

"When I first saw the home where we were going to live, visited the school where my children will go and went to Sunday service I was overwhelmed with all the support.

"I don't have enough words to describe how grateful I am to everyone who helped.

"I'm overwhelmed with the feeling that my kids can finally feel safe."

Ms Onopa said she is keen to learn English and has already enrolled in classes.

Having been a keen cook and baker in Ukraine, she said she would like to start her own pastry business, and she wants to volunteer to help other ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** settle.

She said her sons Dimitro, five, Sergiy, eight, Nikolay, 10, Illia, 11, Rusean, 13 and Oleg, 15, are looking forward to beginning school.

But the devastation continuing in her own country where many of her family members and friends are still remains a source of fear and turmoil, she said.

"As a nation we haven't stopped fighting but its very difficult.

"Just a couple of days ago I saw a 23-year-old boy from my village had been buried after being killed by the invaders."

Presenting Ms Onopa with the keys, Mr Stack said: "This is an opportunity to say to our new family croesi i Gymru, welcome to Wales.

"The land of sanctuary.

"And we hope and pray that you will be happy and fulfilled and content as you begin to understand what wonderful people live and work in Wales."

Chair of governors, Phil Cotterell said: "Lilia and her family will not be alone, there is an incredible network of support here in Chepstow, and as a governor at St Mary's, I am thrilled that we are welcoming children from ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** into our school family.

"We know from the generosity of the community supporting our appeal that all families fleeing Ukraine will be made most welcome in South Wales."

The appeal was supported by a number of local businesses including Alcumus and Barratt and David Wilson Homes South Wales, and community groups such as the Chepstow and Caldicot Lions and Chepstow Roundtable.

**Load-Date:** May 20, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Akshata Murty puts scandals behind her as she joins PM at G7 in Japan*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6887-XMM1-JBNF-W303-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 18, 2023 Thursday 4:15 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 411 words

**Byline:** Archie Mitchell

**Highlight:** Mr Sunak’s wife, the multimillionaire daughter of one of India’s richest businessmen, stood out as she stepped off an RAF plane alongside the prime minister

**Body**

[*Rishi Sunak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rishi-sunak) ’s wife [*Akshata Murty*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/akshata-murty) has stepped out of the shadows following a series of high-profile scandals to join him on her first international trip as the prime minister’s spouse.

The multimillionaire daughter of one of [*India*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/india) ’s richest businessmen stood out as she stepped off an RAF plane dressed in bright green ME+EM trousers with a pink Chinti & Parker knit jumper. The [*prime minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prime-minister) kept it simple with a dark suit, white shirt and red tie.

Ms Murty, 43, has been embroiled in controversy since The Independent revealed last year that she had been avoiding tax by claiming non-dom status. She has since agreed to pay UK tax on her overseas income.

She and her husband also came under fire over her stake in Koru Kids after Mr Sunak failed to declare her involvement in the childcare agency that benefited from the Budget. He is now under investigation by parliament’s sleaze watchdog over the non-disclosure.

Ms Murty also has a stake in the education tech company Study Hall, which was given £349,976 of public funds through Innovate UK.

The controversy engulfing the prime minister’s wife is not just linked to her investments. Her choice of fashion has raised eyebrows in the past, including when she wore a pair of Gucci shoes costing £645 on the campaign trail in the run-up to the local elections.

And Ms Murty and Mr Sunak were in March “reminded of the rules” by the Metropolitan Police about keeping dogs on a lead when in major parks. A video appeared to show the prime minister and his family allowing their dog, Nova, to roam freely in a Royal Park.

Mr Sunak and Ms Murty were greeted off the plane in Tokyo on Thursday ahead of the [*G7*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/g7) summit in Hiroshima this weekend. They were met by the British ambassador to [*Japan*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/japan) Julia Longbottom.

Ms Murty is expected to follow a programme of activities with other world leaders’ partners, who could include US first lady Jill Biden and Brigitte Macron, French president Emmanuel Macron’s wife.

It is the latest in a series of recent high-profile public appearances by Ms Murty, following a coronation lunch in Downing Street for volunteers, youth groups and ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in the UK.

Ms Murty also met Ms Biden ahead of the coronation of King Charles III, spending an afternoon exploring veterans’ affairs and education.

And in February she joined the prime minister visiting a “family hub” in Cornwall to promote the government programme.

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Aid group official warns the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine risks becoming "normalized"*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:693R-6H41-DY4H-K4K8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

September 5, 2023 Tuesday 6:36 PM GMT

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**Length:** 501 words

**Byline:** Samya Kullab

**Highlight:** The head of the aid group International Rescue Committee in Ukraine says he is bracing for fewer donations this year because not enough international attention is being placed on Ukraine as Russia's war risks becoming a protracted conflict

**Body**

A major aid group is concerned that there is not enough international attention given to Ukraine and is bracing for fewer donations used to finance operations in the battle-scarred country, its president warned on Tuesday.

The head of the [*International Rescue Committee*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/international-rescue-committee) , [*David Miliband*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/david-miliband) said, his central concern is that the 19-month war and the resulting humanitarian crisis caused by Russia’s invasion and continued attacks on civilian infrastructure are becoming “normalized” by the international community while the needs brought about by the war show no signs of diminishing, he said.

“We know that the 2022 figures for humanitarian aid in Ukraine are not going to be repeated," he told the Associated Press. Miliband said they don't expect the donations received from [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) and North America last year to be matched.

The IRC received $40 million in funding for Ukraine operations in 2022. In 2023, the aid group received almost less than half of that sum, with $27 million. Yet the needs have remained consistent, he said.

There are currently 18 million Ukrainians in humanitarian need, five million people internally displaced and six million refugees residing in other countries, Miliband said, adding that civilian deaths and the levels of internal displacement continue to be “high” and “record-breaking” respectively.

The coping mechanisms of Ukrainian citizens have been depleting after months of war. Many families, especially those living close to frontline areas with no means of support, are running out of savings to buy food and supplies. Mine contamination such as IEDs and unexploded ordinance is ruining the livelihoods of farmers and livestock owners. Constant shelling has terrorized civilians and continues to destroy countless homes.

“These are all the symptoms of a protracted crisis," he said, adding that a drawn-out war in Ukraine is an imminent danger.

Miliband said they expect the coming winter to be especially cold and fear a renewed Russian campaign to target civilian and energy infrastructure which last year kept many Ukrainians without power during the coldest months of the year.

Ukraine has since improved its air defense capabilities.

Miliband said donors — including countries in Europe, North America, and the oil-rich Gulf states—still express “very strong commitment to Ukraine” and “ there is no retreat from the commitments” made, but there are needs that have to be met across the globe.

He added that particularly in Europe, international aid funds are being used to support ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have fled the country and resettled there. “That’s a double whammy on some of the poorest people in the world who are beyond Ukraine but are affected by the crisis.”

IRC is active in Somalia, Nigeria, Syria and Afghanistan, countries where civil wars and hostilities have been raging for years if not decades. Miliband said the aid group has witnessed how lengthy conflicts can easily “lose attention, lose interest and the abnormal becomes normalized,” he said.

**Load-Date:** September 5, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Sunak says immigration is ‘too high’ but won’t commit to reduction by election*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:688D-2S31-JBNF-W2MC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 19, 2023 Friday 5:00 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 411 words

**Byline:** Sam Blewett

**Highlight:** Prime Minister insists ‘stopping the boats’ is one of his priorities.

**Body**

[*Rishi Sunak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rishi-sunak) has conceded he believes immigration into the UK is “too high” but was unable to commit to bringing levels down by the next election.

The [*Prime Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prime-minister) would not spell out what he believes is an acceptable level as he faces pressure after dodging a Tory manifesto commitment to bring net migration down to the scale seen in 2019.

Home Secretary [*Suella Braverman*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/suella-braverman) has been publicly pushing for lower immigration, saying more [*Britons*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/britons) should be trained to be lorry drivers and fruit pickers to plug demand.

But Mr Sunak has been taking a more pragmatic approach over economic needs and has made clear to farmers that more seasonal fruit pickers will be allowed into the UK if they are needed.

During a round of interviews at Hiroshima’s Seifukan tea house before attending the G7 summit, Mr Sunak said he is “crystal clear” he wants to reduce net migration.

But he said to BBC News: “I’m not going to put a precise figure on it but I do want to bring them down.

“The numbers are too high and we want to bring them down. Now, the numbers last year were impacted by the fact that we welcomed ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to the UK. Again, that’s something I think we are proud of.”

The 2019 Conservative manifesto promised that “overall numbers will come down” as the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) ends freedom of movement in the wake of Brexit.

Migration levels were at 226,000 then, they exceeded 500,000 in the year to June 2022 and it could be as high as one million in new figures due to be published in the coming weeks.

But Mr Sunak avoided giving a specific commitment when pressed by Sky News whether he can bring down net migration to below 500,000 by the next election,

Instead, he said: “I’m committed to bringing down the levels of migration that I inherited, and I’m relentlessly focused on stopping the boats, that’s one of my five priorities, and we’re doing absolutely everything we can to do that.”

Mr Sunak raised migration with allies at a Council of Europe meeting in Iceland on Tuesday.

The Prime Minister believes he had made “another big step forward” with EU chief Ursula von der Leyen to discuss the UK working with the bloc’s border force, Frontex.

And he also held talks with the president of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), Siofra O’Leary, over a review of the working of Rule 39.

The order was used to block the inaugural forced removal flight of refugees to Rwanda last year.

Mr Sunak sees the stalled policy as key to reducing unauthorised entries to the UK.

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Some Ukrainians never made it out of besieged cities due to wait for UK visas, says Ukrainian MP*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GM-CDJ1-DY4H-K4VT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 19, 2022 Thursday 4:29 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 794 words

**Byline:** May Bulman

**Highlight:** Britain accused of putting refugees at greater risk by failing to give accurate visa timeframes

**Body**

Some Ukrainians who applied for [*visas*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/visas) to flee to the UK got trapped in besieged cities because they were waiting for a decision on whether they could come, a prominent [*Ukrainian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) MP has said.

Speaking at an event on Thursday alongside the UK [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) minister and the Ukrainian ambassador, Lesia Vasylenko, the people's deputy of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , warned of the devastating impact of the delays faced by applicants to the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

She suggested that UK ministers had misled refugees on the timeframe they could be expected to wait, and subsequently placed them at greater risk.

"In March, when I was in the UK I was in a meeting with Priti Patel at the Home Office, she was sitting across the table from me and she said it would take maximum three days. But no, actually the average is two to three weeks," said Ms Vasylenko.

"That's not okay on many levels [...] Some people are in temporary accommodation, some remain in cities that have been in cities under attack and just managed to get out, and some never actually made it in the end to the UK because they got trapped in cities like Kherson or Mariupol."

Ms Vasylenko added: "It's better to give people a proper timeframe. Two weeks is two weeks, three weeks is three weeks. At least they know where they stand and people can make their decisions accordingly."

Government data published on Thursday shows that 33,000 people have arrived under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, which enables ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to come to the UK to live with people offering to host them. This accounts for 40 per cent of the 84,400 who have applied.

Also speaking at the event, Vadym Prystaiko, the Ukrainian ambassador to the UK, reiterated his calls for the UK to waive visa restrictions.

"I believe that at this moment, as has happened in all European nations, we should allow Ukrainians to come here and then to deal with the security checks, because sometimes they're fleeing cities under bombardments, there's no time to wait 60-80 days," he said.

The UK's refugees minister Lord Richard Harrington acknowledged that there has been "a lot of pressure" on Ukrainian people who have applied to the "complex" visa scheme, admiting many were "waiting in the ether for far too long".

"I said this from the first day and I take responsibility for it. This is not a politician ducking out of it," he added.

"I promised to get to a level where we process between 15,000 and 20,000 within 48 hours. The form is now much simpler than it was. Most cases should get an email with permission to travel within 48 hours. I'm hoping that will be the norm."

During the event in London on Thursday, hosted by think tank UK Onward, concerns were also raised about what is happening to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** once they arrive in Britain, particularly families falling homeless because hosting placements have broken down.

Ms Vasylenko said she had spoken to Ukrainian voluntary groups in the UK who report Ukainians coming to them saying they are homeless because they've been "kicked out by their hosts".

"Okay, circumstances change, something goes wrong with the relationship -but there must be some kind of back-up plan from the UK government. Where do these people go?" she asked.

"The hosts have no legal duty to keep the Ukrianinan family, but at the end of the day we have Ukrainian families out on the streets. What happens to them? [...] The UK government is doing a lot, but it could do more."

The ambassador criticised the UK government for failing to share information about Ukrainian refugee arrivals with the embassy, which he said put embassy staff in a "very difficult position" as they are unable to provide support people.

"Unfortunately as an embassy we cannot help people if we do not have access to the information. I know we have to protect the personal information of people coming to the UK, but the circumstances are very different now," he said.

"We're talking about tens of thousands of people coming here and my consular office has to have their information - but we don't.

"We can't address and inform our people, we can't reach out to them with information [...] I would like the government to allow us to have access to the database of our own citizens who are coming here."

Lord Harrington conceded that the scheme was "not perfect" but was "improving day-by-day", adding that his "vision" is for the Homes for Ukraine model to be made available from refugees fleeing other parts of the world.

"[It would mean that] when refugee crises happen - and unfortunately they do - we have the machinery [...] We've got a lot of goodwill, we've got this machinery of government in place now, and I hope it will become a permanent part of how this country deals with refugees, because when that doesnt happen, we find problems," he said.

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Wizz Air defies forecasts despite Covid and Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6579-9X21-JCS0-D2HN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 15, 2022 Friday

First Edition

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**Section:** BUSINESS; Pg. 46

**Length:** 343 words

**Byline:** ALASTAIR JAMIESON

**Body**

Ultra low-cost airline Wizz Air said it has done better than previously expected so far this year and expects demand to improve significantly this summer, despite the war in Ukraine affecting its key eastern Europe network.

The Hungarian carrier, which is listed in London, said it expects an operating loss of around £158m to £175m in the final quarter of its financial year - slightly above earlier forecasts. It has been forced to suspend flights to and from Ukraine, Russia and Moldova since Vladimir Putin's invasion of its neighbouring state, but now expects to fly more than in 2019 before the pandemic struck.

There was controversy earlier this month when it promised 100,000 free seats to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** escaping through Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania, but charged them for checked luggage. Wizz Air has also fiercely resisted attempts by workers to unionise, rejecting calls from unions in Italy to agree a labour contract. One of Denmark's biggest pension funds sold its shares in the airline over what it said were human and labour rights abuses.

Between April and June, Wizz expects to fly 30 per cent more available seat kilometres than it did in 2019, and 40 per cent more between July and September. Jozsef Varadi, the airline's chief executive, said the Covid-19 Omicron variant "proved to be of benign nature, which helped to relax government travel restrictions across a majority of our network".

"Distressingly, the war in Ukraine dented demand for air travel and destabilised commodity prices across the globe," he added. "Despite these developments, we are starting to see recovery take shape." The airline has also reduced its exposure to volatility in oil prices by hedging for a coverage of 36 per cent of planned fuel volume usage from April to August this year.

The carrier has opened a fourth UK base at Cardiff and is still expanding at its London Luton hub where it recently acquired another two additional daily slot pairs. It will operate 75 routes from Luton this summer, and remains the airport's largest carrier by seats.

**Load-Date:** April 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Proportion of Ukrainians in UK employment tops 40%*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:667W-DJ71-F072-435B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

August 27, 2022 Saturday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 19

**Length:** 370 words

**Byline:** SAMUEL LOVETT SENIOR NEWS CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

The proportion of Ukrainian nationals employed in the UK has increased significantly since the government launched its resettlement scheme for refugees of the war against Russia, official figures show.

Some 42 per cent of Ukrainians living in Britain had secured work as of 4 August, up from 9 per cent in April, according to the Humanitarian Response Insight Survey (UKHRIS) conducted by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

The majority of those employed (63 per cent) said they had permanent jobs, with a quarter having temporary jobs. The most common sectors of work were accommodation or the food service (29 per cent), manufacturing (8 per cent), and wholesale and retail trade (8 per cent), with 28 per cent reporting "other".

Some 37 per cent of respondents said they had enough money to support themselves for the next three months, up from 26 per cent in April.

Last month, the government announced that 100,000 people from Ukraine had arrived in the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme and the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, both of which were launched in March after Russia's invasion.

These schemes allow Ukrainian nationals and their family members to apply to live and work in the UK for up to three years. Since April, the ONS has been surveying ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to understand and track their experiences in Britain.

The first UKHRIS in April sampled 3,412 individuals, with the majority entering the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme. Most respondents had arrived between one and four weeks before completing the survey.

The latest UKHRIS followed up on 1,132 people who agreed to be contacted after the first survey. Data was collected from 20 July to 4 August 2022.

The survey found that 93 per cent of Ukrainian nationals who had arrived in the UK and taken part in the April survey had remained in the UK, with 7 per cent having since left.

Almost half (47 per cent) of respondents had experienced some barriers to being able to take up work in the UK; the most common was English language skills not meeting the job requirements (58 per cent).

Of those with qualifications gained outside the UK, 43 per cent indicated that UK employers had generally not recognised their qualifications when applying for jobs.

**Load-Date:** August 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Pope to visit Hungary in April, migration and war on agenda*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67N5-K261-JBNF-W4JX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 27, 2023 Monday 12:03 PM GMT

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**Length:** 418 words

**Byline:** Nicole Winfield and Justin Spike

**Highlight:** Pope Francis will visit Hungary at the end of April

**Body**

[*Pope Francis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/pope-francis) will visit [*Hungary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hungary) at the end of April, the Vatican said Monday, in a trip expected to focus on migration to [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) and Russia’s war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

The April 28-30 trip to Budapest represents a proper state visit after Francis made a brief, hours-long stopover in 2021 to close out a church conference. That visit was visibly awkward, given that Prime Minister Viktor Orban’s hard-line views on migration and Francis' call for countries to welcome those fleeing war, hardship and poverty.

Since then, Hungary has accepted hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians fleeing Russia’s invasion. Francis, who has repeatedly expressed solidarity with Ukraine, met at the Vatican with Orban last April and thanked him for taking them in.

Upon arrival, Francis will meet with Orban, a contentious leader who has centered his political brand around a staunch rejection of immigration and a focus on preventing Hungary from becoming “mixed race.”

While Hungary accepted ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, it has refused to provide weapons to Kyiv or allow their transfer across its borders, and has lobbied against European Union sanctions on Moscow and held up some financial aid packages to Ukraine.

Francis has been supportive of Ukraine’s plight following Russia’s invasion --likening it to a 1930s genocide of Ukrainians blamed on Soviet leader Joseph Stalin --while Orban has been lukewarm in his support for Hungary’s eastern neighbor.

Still, Orban has cast his view of the war as being in line with the Vatican’s, saying during a speech Feb. 18 that his government and the papacy were the only powers in Europe advocating for peace in Ukraine.

Francis has also tried to maintain relations with Moscow and the Russian Orthodox Church. Hungary was key in blocking the EU from sanctioning the head of the Russian church, Patriarch Kirill, over his support for the war.

Francis will meet with refugees during his visit, as well as children. On his final day, he will deliver a speech to the Hungarian academic and cultural world, in which he is likely to issue a message to Europe at large.

Francis, who just returned from Congo and South Sudan, has other trips confirmed or in the works this year. The 86-year-old pope, who marks his 10th anniversary as pontiff next month, is due to participate in World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal in August. He has said the Vatican is studying a possible trip to Mongolia at the end of September, after a brief stop in Marseille, France.

\_\_\_

Justin Spike reported from Budapest, Hungary.

**Load-Date:** February 27, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Teacher shortages grow worrisome in Poland and Hungary*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:669D-35S1-DY4H-K3N8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

September 3, 2022 Saturday 8:53 AM GMT

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**Length:** 941 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Public schools in Poland and Hungary are facing a shortage of teachers at a time when both countries are taking in many Ukrainian refugee children

**Body**

Ewa Jaworska has been a teacher since 2008 and loves working with young people. But the low pay is leaving her demoralized. She even has to buy her own teaching materials sometimes, and is disheartened by the government using schools to promote conservative ideas which she sees as backward.

Like many other Polish teachers she is considering a career change.

“I keep hoping that the situation might still change,” said the 44-year-old, who teachers in a Warsaw high school. “But unfortunately it is changing for the worse, so only time will tell if this year will be my last.”

Problems are mounting in schools in Poland, with a teacher shortage growing worse and many educators and parents fearing that the educational system is being used to indoctrinate young people into the ruling party’s conservative and nationalistic vision.

It's very much the same in Hungary. Black-clad teachers in [*Budapest*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/budapest) carried black umbrellas to protest stagnant wages and heavy workloads on the first day of school Thursday. [*Teachers*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/teachers) ' union PSZ said young teachers earn a “humiliating" monthly after-tax salary of just 500 euros (dollars) that has prompted many to walk away.

Thousands of people marched in solidarity with teachers on Friday in Budapest, voicing the view that the teachers' low compensation is linked to the authoritarian direction of Prime Minister Viktor Orban's government.

“Free country, free education!” they shouted,

[*Teacher shortages*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/teacher-shortages) could hardly come at a worse time, with both countries trying to integrate ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. It's particularly challenging for Poland, where hundreds of thousands of school-aged ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** now live.

Nearly 200,000 Ukrainian students, most of whom do not speak Polish, already entered Polish schools after the war began on Feb. 24. The education minister has said the overall number of Ukrainian students could triple this coming school year, depending on how the war unfolds.

Andrzej Wyrozembski, the principal of the high school in Warsaw’s Zoliborz district where Jaworska works, has set up two classes for 50 Ukrainians in his school. He said his Ukrainian students who arrived in the spring are quickly learning Polish, a related Slavic language. The real difficulty is finding teachers, particularly for physics, chemistry, computer science, and even for Polish.

Across central Europe, government wages haven't kept pace with the private sector, leaving teachers, nurses and others with far less purchasing power.

The situation is expected to grow worse as many teachers near retirement and ever fewer young people choose the poorly paid profession, especially when inflation has exploded to 16% in Poland and nearly 14% in Hungary.

According to the Polish teachers’ union, schools in the country are short 20,000 teachers. Hungary, with a much smaller population, has a 16,000-teacher shortage.

“We don't have young teachers,” said Slawomir Broniarz, the president of the Polish Teachers’ Trade Union, or ZNP, citing the starting salary of 3,400 zlotys ($720) pre-tax as the key reason.

Polish Education Minister Przemyslaw Czarnek has disputed the figures, saying teacher vacancies were closer to 13,000, adding it isn't a huge number in proportion to the 700,000 teachers nationwide. He accuses the union and political opposition of exaggerating the problem.

Many educators strongly oppose the conservative ideology of the nationalist government and Czarnek himself, viewing him as a Catholic fundamentalist. His appointment in 2020 sparked protests because he had said LGBTQ people aren’t equal to “normal people” and that a woman's main role is to have children.

Criticism has recently focused on a new school textbook on contemporary history. It has a section on ideologies that presents liberalism and feminism alongside Nazism. A section interpreted as denouncing in-vitro fertilization was so controversial that it was removed.

In Hungary, Erzsebet Nagy, a committee member of the Democratic Union of Hungarian Teachers, said teachers have been leaving the profession “in droves."

“Young people aren’t coming into the profession, and very few of those who earn a teaching certificate from high school or university go on to teach," said Nagy. “Even if they do, most of them leave within two years.”

Hungarian unions have also complained about the centralization of the country's education system. Curriculums, textbooks and all decision-making are controlled by a central body formed in 2012 by Hungary’s nationalist government.

“Our professional autonomy is continually being eliminated," said Nagy. "We have no freedom to choose textbooks. There are only two to choose from in each subject and both are of terrible quality. They’ve blocked the possibility for a free intellectual life.”

Worried about their children's futures, families are rejecting the public schools. New private schools are opening but they still can't meet the demand.

Polish architect Piotr Polatynski was ready to take a second job just to pay private school tuition for his fourth-grade daughter. But as a new school year began this week, a lack of places in private schools forced him and his wife to send her back to a public neighborhood school, which they feel isn’t providing the kind of education his daughter deserves.

He still hopes a spot might still open up somewhere as he fumes over the state of the education system.

"We don’t believe that the current government is capable of making changes that would encourage young people to enter the teaching profession and bring any kind of meaningful energy to this whole system,” he said.

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Spike reported from Budapest. Bela Szandelszky contributed from Budapest.

**Load-Date:** September 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Q&A: Direct Relief CEO Thomas Tighe on how to help Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65BB-MFK1-DY4H-K528-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 29, 2022 Friday 2:00 PM GMT

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**Length:** 853 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Helping Ukrainians can generally be done by using existing aid strategies

**Body**

Thomas Tighe says helping Ukrainians can generally be done by using existing aid strategies. It's just a matter of scale and adapting to circumstances on the ground.

Since [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) invaded [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) in February, Tighe and the nonprofit humanitarian medical organization Direct Relief, where he has been president and CEO since 2000, have provided more than 50 million doses of medication and 254 tons of medical aid to people in Ukraine and neighboring countries.

Earlier this month, it launched [*Health*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/health) 4 Ukraine, a payment and distribution program that will cover 100% of prescription co-pays and 85% of non-prescription drug costs for about 400,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in Poland. The system was developed and launched with help from Pelion S.A., Poland's largest healthcare company.

However, there are still some wartime requests that have - as of now - stymied Tighe and his teams.

"We have not been able to fulfill the request for hundreds of ambulances with armor in them," said Tighe, adding that they are needed to help evacuate Ukrainians with medical issues from the country. "OK, we're good at a lot of things, but this is not in our typical range."

The [*Associated Press*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/associated-press) recently spoke with Tighe about Ukrainian aid, a topic he will also address Monday at "Crisis in Ukraine and Beyond: How You Can Help Now and Over the Long Run," a free virtual program co-sponsored by The Associated Press, the Chronicle of Philanthropy and The Conversation. The interview was edited for clarity and length.

\_\_\_

Q. You were recently in Poland working on aid for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. How was the experience?

A. It was rewarding, ultimately, to be able to do something. We actually put $10 million behind a program with a private company that wanted to step up and do it and had this capability to create a charitable pharmacy program. The Ukrainians who had to flee and were in Poland were covered by the national health insurance, but could still not obtain medication they needed because the national health insurance has a co-pay requirement. Now they can. I felt like anything you do, it's not enough. We've got to do more. But it's nice to see.

Q. Direct Relief provides aid for natural disasters, or for health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the logistics and the supplies for those helping out on the front lines. Does any of that operational knowledge transfer to a wartime situation like we have in Ukraine? Or do you have to come up with a brand new game plan?

A. Some does, but at the abstract level. A wildfire, earthquake, hurricane - the disruptive event simultaneously spikes demand for health services, because people get hurt or injured, and decreases the capacity to deliver the service, because hospitals are damaged or roads are out. We're used to that at the abstract level. The difference here is that if there's an earthquake, people immediately pull together to try to open up the distribution channel. Here, the capacity is getting worse because hospitals keep getting bombed. There's targeting of the infrastructure. So when people are trying to open up the supply lines to rebuild the capacity, they keep getting destroyed. That's the adjustment. You have to reallocate things because it's a dynamic situation.

Q. Logistics in those situations are hard enough. Layering wartime safety precautions on top of that must make it exponentially harder.

A. It feels like this is an event that should be in black and white in a high school history book or something. Instead, I'm seeing it on TV every night. But what you're also seeing is this kind of uncommon courage in Ukraine. What the Polish people are doing, it's embodying righteousness. What the Russians are doing is embodying cruelty. It certainly makes anything we're doing seem very small. But it's good motivation to keep doing it.

Q. How would you suggest individual donors who want to help take action?

A. Figure out what you care about. For personal philanthropy, it's really important to find something you believe in, so that your act of generosity is going to actually translate into something you really feel good about. And that's such a personal choice. Then, do your homework. It's just general consumer advice, but look up and see if the group is explaining what they're doing with the money. I think the downside of these high profile emotionally charged events is it can lend itself to exploitation from a fundraising perspective. The Ukrainian people's tragedy is not an excuse for fundraising. And there's an obligation if you receive money for Ukraine, it's not for you. It's for you to help the people of Ukraine.

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To hear Tighe speak at "Crisis in Ukraine and Beyond," a free virtual event co-sponsored by Associated Press, the Chronicle of Philanthropy and The Conversation, register at [*https://bit.ly/ukrainecrisiswebinar*](https://bit.ly/ukrainecrisiswebinar).

Associated Press coverage of philanthropy and nonprofits receives support through the AP's collaboration with The Conversation US, with funding from Lilly Endowment Inc. The [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) is solely responsible for this content. For all of AP's philanthropy coverage, visit [*https://apnews.com/hub/philanthropy*](https://apnews.com/hub/philanthropy).

**Load-Date:** April 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Refugee toddler excited to receive same doll she left in Ukraine from charity*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6563-6F91-DY4H-K01K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 9, 2022 Saturday 1:58 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 297 words

**Byline:** Lottie Kilraine

**Highlight:** Veronika and her mother Tatyana, who are staying with a sponsor family in Surrey, were delighted to receive the doll from Stripey Stork.

**Body**

A young refugee was delighted to receive a doll exactly the same as the one she had to leave in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) after she arrived in the UK.

Veronika and her mother Tatyana arrived in the UK on Thursday to stay with a sponsor family in [*Epsom*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/epsom) and [*Ewell*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ewell) , [*Surrey*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/surrey) , via the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine scheme.

They arrived with just one case and a pushchair, so the sponsor family contacted baby bank charity Stripey Stork to try to get help sourcing some practical items.

A little guest at the Stripey Stork warehouse this morning. It was a privilege to meet Veronika and her mum who arrived from Ukraine yesterday and are being hosted by a local family. [*pic.twitter.com/Kl5mzy2iqu*](https://t.co/Kl5mzy2iqu) - Stripey Stork (@StripeyStork) [*April 8, 2022*](https://twitter.com/StripeyStork/status/1512448759829233664?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

They travelled to the charity's warehouse on Friday to pick up the supplies which had been prepared for them, including clothes, shoes, toys, a high chair, bed guard, potty training kit, nappies and toiletries.

But Veronika and her mother "got very excited", the charity said in a tweet, when they spotted the doll which was "just the same as one she'd had to leave behind".

Nicola Dawes, founder and chief executive of Stripey Stork, said: "It was particularly special to discover this doll was just the same as one that Veronika had not been able to bring from home.

"A moment of joy and connection, and it made our day when Veronika blew us a kiss as she left."

Stripey Stork has been helping families across Surrey since it was formed in 2013.

It uses a model similar to a food bank to help provide essentials to families with young children, and is now helping out ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** arriving in the region.

In a tweet, the charity said: "We know that over 700 families have been matched in Surrey and we are scaling up to support any requests we receive."

**Load-Date:** April 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*What the papers say - April 17*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657R-60N1-JBNF-W0WJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 17, 2022 Sunday 3:05 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 366 words

**Byline:** PA Reporter

**Highlight:** The front pages on Easter Sunday focus on Ukraine and the Government's plans to send migrants to Africa.

**Body**

The ongoing debate about the [*Rwanda*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rwanda) scheme and punishments for environmental activists are among the topics splashed across the national papers.

The Sunday Telegraph, the Sunday Mirror and The Observer all splash responses to the Home Secretary's refugee plans.

The front page of tomorrow's Sunday Telegraph:'Rwandan plan is ungodly, says Welby'[*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Sign up for the Front Page newsletter[*https://t.co/x8AV4Oomry*](https://t.co/x8AV4Oomry) [*pic.twitter.com/2uOe39P6kc*](https://t.co/2uOe39P6kc) - The Telegraph (@Telegraph) [*April 16, 2022*](https://twitter.com/Telegraph/status/1515433796065234947?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Tomorrow's front page: Priti heartless [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*https://t.co/bIfB68hWSZ*](https://t.co/bIfB68hWSZ) [*pic.twitter.com/AyExZoRVL1*](https://t.co/AyExZoRVL1) - The Mirror (@DailyMirror) [*April 16, 2022*](https://twitter.com/DailyMirror/status/1515440794408308742?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Tomorrow's front page [*pic.twitter.com/GxAGXqP1k3*](https://t.co/GxAGXqP1k3) - The Observer (@ObserverUK) [*April 16, 2022*](https://twitter.com/ObserverUK/status/1515444579830480904?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The Independent leads on the success of the paper's petition in support of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, which has collected over 250,000 signatures.Tomorrow's [*@independent*](https://twitter.com/Independent?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) front page [*#tomorrowspaperstoday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) To subscribe to the Daily Edition [*https://t.co/koJc3LN1ax*](https://t.co/koJc3LN1ax) [*pic.twitter.com/wEdwY9PREp*](https://t.co/wEdwY9PREp) - Thair Shaikh (@ThairShaikh) [*April 16, 2022*](https://twitter.com/ThairShaikh/status/1515411354756292618?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The Mail on Sunday says it has delivered 500,000 food boxes to Ukrainians.MAIL On Sunday: "YOUR 500,000 Food Boxes For Ukraine" [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/TmecBMioeD*](https://t.co/TmecBMioeD) - Allie Hodgkins-Brown (@AllieHBNews) [*April 16, 2022*](https://twitter.com/AllieHBNews/status/1515449276427649029?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) A dangerous drug that "damaged 20,000 babies" is still being prescribed to pregnant women, according to The Sunday Times.Sunday TIMES: "Drug scandal that damaged 20,000 babies" [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/LN6mtgW3Or*](https://t.co/LN6mtgW3Or) - Allie Hodgkins-Brown (@AllieHBNews) [*April 16, 2022*](https://twitter.com/AllieHBNews/status/1515439386866950152?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The Sunday Express reports a poll for the paper has found 53% support its call to "punish" the "eco mob".Sunday EXPRESS: "Punish Eco Mob Now!" [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/WS683vjOv0*](https://t.co/WS683vjOv0) - Allie Hodgkins-Brown (@AllieHBNews) [*April 16, 2022*](https://twitter.com/AllieHBNews/status/1515436404708421633?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) And the Daily Star Sunday says Hi-de-Hi! actor Jeffrey Holland is treated like Elvis in Hungary.Tomorrow's front page: Hi-de-Hi Jeff: I'm Elvis of Hungary [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*https://t.co/kUG9PYM3Wd*](https://t.co/kUG9PYM3Wd) [*pic.twitter.com/TWhlLx0LC7*](https://t.co/TWhlLx0LC7) - Daily Star (@dailystar) [*April 16, 2022*](https://twitter.com/dailystar/status/1515437946626736129?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

**Load-Date:** April 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Germany offers aid to businesses hit by war in Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655W-7J51-JBNF-W3KS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 8, 2022 Friday 1:51 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 308 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** The German government has unveiled a package of loans and other financial assistance to companies hit hard by the war in Ukraine and sanctions on Russia

**Body**

The German government on Friday unveiled a package of loans and other financial assistance to help companies hit hard by the war in Ukraine and sanctions on [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia).

The package includes loans of as much as 100 billion ($109 billion) to cover the credit risks taken by [*Germany*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/germany) 's energy industry as the country scrambles to replace imports of Russian oil, gas and coal.

Affected companies will also be able to apply for limited grants to cover increased energy costs.

Additional loans will also be made available to companies grappling with a liquidity squeeze.

Economy Minister Robert Habeck said the package was necessary because "there are companies and sectors that won't survive this period if we don't help them."

But he acknowledged that the measures won't undo all of the damage done by measures including sanctions European nations have imposed on Russia for its invasion of Ukraine.

"The truth is that there are no sanctions that don't have economic consequences in this country," he said.

Separately, the government agreed late Thursday to provide states with 2 billion euros ($2.2 billion) to pay for housing, health care, schooling and other assistance for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Germany has so far taken in 320,000 Ukrainians since the start of the war on Feb. 24.

Many have flocked to the big cities, with at least 50,000 Ukrainians settling in [*Berlin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/berlin) alone.

A leading Left party lawmaker, Dietmar Bartsch, urged for greater efforts to seize the wealth of Russian oligarchs in Germany in order to to help pay for the cost of the refugee influx.

"Those who profit from and support Putin's system should be drawn on financially to pay for hosting refugees in Germany," he told daily Rheinischen Post in an interview published Friday.

Bartsch said other European countries seized far greater amounts from sanctioned Russian oligarchs than Germany has.

**Load-Date:** April 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'Unacceptable that Ukrainians cannot switch between visa schemes after arrival'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65CD-B4B1-DY4H-K1RV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 4, 2022 Wednesday 12:37 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 846 words

**Byline:** Jemma Crew

**Highlight:** Refugees arriving in the UK under the family visa scheme with nowhere to live should not have to register as homeless, the Government has been told.

**Body**

***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** arriving in the UK under the family visa scheme with nowhere to live should not have to register as homeless when residents nearby are offering accommodation, the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) has been told.

They should also not be required to find a sponsor before "escaping a war zone" if their family member cannot give them a room, [*Labour*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/labour) MP Clive Betts said in a letter to refugees minister Lord Harrington.

[*Refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) with family connections in the UK are currently unable to transfer on to the Homes For Ukraine sponsorship scheme if their relatives cannot provide accommodation.

This means councils are having to provide them with emergency accommodation, such as hotels.

It should not be incumbent on refugees escaping a war zone to find a sponsor before leaving that war zone simply because their family in the UK does not have suitable accommodation.

Clive Betts, Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee

In a letter to Mr Betts, who is chairman of the Levelling Up,â¯[*Housing*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/housing) and Communitiesâ¯Committee, Lord Harrington had said it is not possible to switch schemes after arrival.

Ukrainians with relatives who cannot accommodate them are "welcome to apply" under the sponsorship scheme, but must do so before they arrive in the UK, he said.

Mr Betts said the committee had found this "unacceptable", and that he "strongly" urges the Government to rethink the policy.

Responding to Lord Harrington on Wednesday, he wrote: "It should not be incumbent on refugees escaping a war zone to find a sponsor before leaving that war zone simply because their family in the UK does not have suitable accommodation.

"Nor should a refugee arriving on the family scheme have to register with their council as homeless when residents in the area are willing to offer accommodation."

In early April, Local Government Association chairman James Jamieson warned that councils were already seeing a "concerning increase" in homelessness presentations from Ukraine arrivals.

A survey by the LGA as the schemes were being rolled out revealed that 57 councils had been approached by a total of 144 Ukrainian households who had become homeless after arriving under both schemes.

This was due to family members being unable or unwilling to accommodate them, as well as matches under the sponsorship scheme breaking down.

It is not clear how many ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** are currently being supported in emergency accommodation.

The Government is collecting figures on how many Ukrainians have presented to councils as homeless, but declined to share these numbers when asked by the PA news agency.

There are local authorities with an existing Ukrainian community which will in all likelihood receive a large number of refugees through the Ukraine Family Scheme. The local authorities will see increased demand for their services, but are being told there is no funding available to cover this

Clive Betts, Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee

In his correspondence, Mr Betts also asked if officials have examined the impact of providing councils with funding for arrivals under the sponsorship scheme, but not for those with family ties.

Councils receive £10,500 for each person who comes to the UK under the Homes For Ukraine scheme to cover the cost of helping them settle and rebuild their lives.

Hosts will receive a £350 "thank you" payment each month, while refugees are entitled to a £200 interim payment to help with subsistence costs on arrival.

Lord Harrington had said the family scheme is similar to existing family visa routes, and refugees can access public services "in the usual way", with full entitlement to work and benefits.

Mr Betts said this is "unacceptable" because those arriving under the family route will have similar needs to those who are being hosted by sponsors, such as school places, community integration, and trauma support.

He wrote: "There are local authorities with an existing Ukrainian community which will in all likelihood receive a large number of refugees through the Ukraine Family Scheme.

"The local authorities will see increased demand for their services, but are being told there is no funding available to cover this."

Mr Betts also asked if Lord Harrington could confirm whether councils are being told how many Ukrainians are arriving in their local area via the family route, saying this is "vital" so they can provide services and allocate resources.

A Government spokeswoman said: "These schemes are designed to ensure that people who are coming to the UK fleeing the Russian invasion of Ukraine are provided with accommodation by their family or sponsor."

She added that councils have a duty to support refugees arriving via the family scheme, including homelessness assistance.

The [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) is said to be working with local leaders and other Government departments to better understand the costs councils will incur supporting refugees with family connections.

It is understood that the Government is working with councils to enable a way to rematch people whose placements under the Homes for Ukraine scheme break down or are not suitable.

**Load-Date:** May 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Poland's prime minister visits Ukraine in latest show of foreign support for the war against Russia*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B59-NBV1-DY4H-K0J4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

January 22, 2024 Monday 10:21 AM GMT

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**Length:** 663 words

**Byline:** Illia Novikov

**Highlight:** Poland’s Prime Minister Donald Tusk has arrived in Ukraine for talks with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on how Poland can keep supporting the country’s almost two-year war with Russia

**Body**

Polish Prime Minister [*Donald Tusk*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/donald-tusk) arrived in Ukraine's capital Monday for talks with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on how [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) can keep supporting the country's almost two-year war with [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) and resolve a dispute between the neighboring nations over grain shipments and trucking.

Tusk, who returned to power in Poland last month and is keen to show that a change in government won't bring a change in Ukraine policy, was also due to meet with Ukrainian Defense Minister Denys Shmyhal.

“There are some conflicts of interest, we know it well and we will talk about them, but not only in the spirit of friendship, which is obvious, but with the attitude to solve these problems as soon as possible, not to maintain or multiply them,” Tusk said, according to comments posted on X, formerly Twitter, by his office.

“For me, it is very important to build the feeling that Poland is the most reliable, most stable ally of Ukraine in this deadly clash with evil,” Tusk said.

His visit took place the day after Moscow-installed officials in eastern Ukraine reported that Ukrainian shelling killed at least 27 people on the outskirts of a Russian-occupied city. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov called the shelling outside Donetsk a “monstrous terrorist act,” and the Russia-backed local authorities declared a day of mourning.

The Ukrainian military, however, denied it had anything to do with the attack.

It was not immediately possible to verify either side's claims.

Ukraine’s allies have in recent weeks sought to reassure the country that they are committed to its long-term defense against the Kremlin’s forces amid concerns that Western support could be sagging. British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and France’s new foreign minister also traveled to Kyiv recently.

Located on NATO’s eastern flank, Poland has been one of Ukraine's strongest allies in its fight to defeat Russia. The government in Warsaw has provided weapons and humanitarian aid, and opened its borders to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** since Moscow's troops invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022.

But relations soured last year as economic competition from Ukrainian food producers and truckers angered Poles who said their livelihoods were under threat.

Polish farmers and truckers blockaded border crossings, causing backups and threatening the flow of some aid going into Ukraine.

Polish farmers complained that imports of Ukrainian foods had caused prices to fall, hurting their incomes, while truckers said they were being undercut by their Ukrainian counterparts. The issue surfaced during the war as Ukrainian ports were blocked and food producers turned to road routes through Europe to get their products to market.

At one point, Poland and some other European nations banned Ukrainian grain imports because of the trade dispute.

Poland's farmers and trucks have ended their protests for now, but Tusk is seeking ways of addressing their concerns. He has said that his country wants to help Ukraine economically but not at the expense of Polish businesses. He has suggested that Ukraine needs to better regulate its trucking industry.

Tusk was also scheduled to honor Ukrainian fighters and attend observances of the Day of Ukraine’s Unity, which marks Ukraine’s long struggle to be independent from both its eastern and western neighbors.

In other war-related developments, Ukraine’s air force said it intercepted all eight Shahed drones that Russia launch overnight over southern and central regions of Ukraine.

Debris from three drones shot down over the central Dnipropetrovsk region started a fire at an unnamed business but no human casualties were reported.

Meanwhile, major Ukrainian digital banking platform Monobank said it came under a massive denial-of-service (DoS) attack by unidentified hackers.

The attack was successfully repelled, the bank said, with no major consequences.

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Monika Scislowska contributed from Warsaw, Poland.

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Follow AP’s coverage of the war in Ukraine at [*https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine*](https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine)

**Load-Date:** January 22, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian refugees can apply for UK visas in Lille, says Liz Truss*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y8-N6C1-JBNF-W1VR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 8, 2022 Tuesday 4:30 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 91 words

**Byline:** Ross Martin-Pavitt

**Body**

[***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) will be able to apply for UK visas after another site was set up in [*Lille*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/lille) , according to the Foreign Secretary.

[*Liz Truss*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/liz-truss) told MPs about the "pop-up" site in the city in northern France after the Government's resettlement policy for fleeing war-torn Ukraine was branded "cruel and chaotic".

To sign our Refugees Welcome campaign petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) and if you are able to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome)

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters) to sign up to our free newsletters.

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Biden vows to 'defend every inch' of Nato against Russia; Not just Ukraine at stake but the 'freedom of democracies throughout the world', says US president on visit to Poland*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67M8-B6B1-F072-43FB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

February 23, 2023 Thursday

First Edition

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**Section:** WORLD; Pg. 17

**Length:** 420 words

**Byline:** ALASTAIR JAMIESON

**Body**

Joe Biden promised eastern European leaders he would "defend literally every inch of Nato" and said Vladimir Putin had made a "big mistake" by suspending Russia's participation in the last remaining nuclear arms treaty.

The US president was in Poland yesterday to reassure allies as Moscow's invasion of Ukraine drags on towards a second year.

It came as Putin held a huge patriotic rally at a stadium in central Moscow to urge the public to get behind their armed forces fighting in Ukraine.

The Russian president has already announced he is suspending the 2010 New Start Treaty that limits the number of Russian and US strategic nuclear warheads. His deputy foreign minister Sergei Ryabkov went further yesterday, threatening "further countermeasures, if necessary".

However, Mr Biden said that escalation was "a big mistake".

He gave assurance to the Bucharest Nine - a collection of eastern Nato nations that came together in response to Putin's 2014 annexation of Crimea.

"You're the frontlines of our collective defence," Biden told them. "And you know, better than anyone, what's at stake in this conflict. Not just for Ukraine, but for the freedom of democracies throughout Europe and around the world."

He pledged that Nato's Article 5 mutual-defence rule is "sacred" and that "we will defend literally every inch of Nato".

Nato secretary general Jens Stoltenberg said: "We don't know when the war will end, but when it does, we need to ensure that history does not repeat itself."

Pointing to past Russian actions in Georgia and Ukraine, he added: "We cannot allow Russia to continue to chip away at European security. We must break the cycle of Russian aggression."

Biden has given particular attention to the support from Poland for Ukraine. Warsaw is hosting about 1.5 million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and has committed $3.8bn (£3.15bn) in military and economic assistance to Kyiv.

"The truth of the matter is: the United States needs Poland and Nato as much as Nato needs the United States," Biden said during talks with president Andrzej Duda.

In a joint statement after the meeting, the Bucharest Nine said they were committed to increasing Nato's military presence on their territories to deter Moscow. "Russia is the most significant and direct threat to allied security," they said.

The declaration was also signed by Hungary, whose prime minister Viktor Orban has often pushed back on EU sanctions on Russia and along with Turkey is the only Nato member still to ratify the accession applications of Sweden and Finland.

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Three in 10 Ukrainians granted visas have arrived in UK - Government figures*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:658M-CHP1-JBNF-W0GD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 21, 2022 Thursday 11:34 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:3

**Length:** 802 words

**Byline:** Jemma Crew

**Highlight:** As of Monday, some 21,600 Ukrainians had arrived in the UK under the Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme.

**Body**

Fewer than a third of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have been issued with visas have arrived in the UK, [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) figures show.

A total of 71,800 visas had been issued as of Wednesday under the Ukraine Family Scheme and the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, the Government said.

But, as of Monday, just 21,600 Ukrainians had arrived in the UK, according to figures from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office).

Some 32,500 visas have been granted under the Family Scheme, with around 15,000 people arriving in the UK (46% of those with visas).

And 39,300 visas have been issued under the Sponsorship Scheme, with 6,600 arrivals (17% of those with visas).

Government officials believe some people applied for visas so they have the option of coming to the UK but are staying in countries bordering Ukraine so they can return home sooner.

Others may have applied but then changed their minds, deciding to stay where they are or travel elsewhere.

And some will be waiting for everyone in their family to receive permission to travel letters or visas before they depart for the UK.

Brits wishing to host people under the Sponsorship Scheme hit out at delays, accusing the Home Office of "the dog ate your visa" style excuses.

Overall, around 107,200 visa applications had been received as of Wednesday, including 41,200 applications under the Family Scheme and 65,900 applications under the Sponsorship Scheme.

Six in 10 visa applications made under the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme have been granted, the figures show.

Last week, fewer than than half (45%) of the applications via this route had led to visas issued.

There has been widespread concern about the length of time it has taken for visas to be issued to refugees under the scheme.

In an email sent to those registered for the Homes for Ukraine scheme last Thursday, the Government acknowledged that some ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have been waiting almost three weeks for their visa applications to be progressed or for a decision, calling this "unacceptable".

It said: "We are speeding up the processing of visas and, having prioritised family visas in the first instance, we are now working to accelerate the award of visas under Homes for Ukraine."

A group of would-be sponsors in the UK said they are hearing stories of "lost visas", frustrations at a lack of information, and [*MPs*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mps) lobbying "fruitlessly" on behalf of their constituents.

They said they are particularly concerned about a growing number of cases where some family members have received visas while others are still waiting, despite applying at the same time.

One potential sponsor said: "We're tired of the 'the dog ate your visa' type excuses the Home Office is using.

"This time-lag will cost lives. I've promised my home to a family and every night I worry that I will wake up to the news they will never be coming."

The group will hold a vigil outside the Home Office on Saturday, which will mark five weeks and one day since the Homes for Ukraine scheme started accepting visa applications.

Baroness Finlay of Llandaff said delays with the scheme have been "demoralising" for refugees and changes must be made to it so families are processed together.

The crossbench peer is offering her Cardiff home to a fleeing Ukrainian family but has waited over a month for all of their visas to be cleared.

She said it is understandable that refugees with visas may not yet want to make the journey to the UK, but they may also be facing travel issues and be put off by the UK's "unfriendly" approach to immigration, including the Government's new policy of sending some asylum seekers 4,000 miles to Rwanda.

"These are completely separate schemes, I know they are, but the overall message is not good," she said.

The [*British Red Cross*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british-red-cross) repeated its calls for the Government to lift visa requirements so more people can reach the UK quickly.

Alex Fraser, director of refugee support and restoring family links, said the process is taking "far too long" and has "delayed or deterred many people from seeking safety in the UK".

He said: "In our view, the quickest way to help people right now is for the UK Government to stop the need for visas for those fleeing Ukraine, this would also bring the UK in line with a great many other countries who have been doing this since the start of the crisis.

"Security checks would still happen on arrival, but this would free up the capacity of the authorities to help people as they arrive, instead of wading through visa applications."

A Government spokeswoman said: "The changes the Home Office has made to streamline the visa system, including simplifying the forms and boosting staff numbers, are working and we are now processing visas as quickly as they come in - enabling thousands more Ukrainians to come through our uncapped routes."

**Load-Date:** April 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Voices: As a Holocaust survivor, Britain gave me a home - would today's government?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657S-MV21-JBNF-W1D9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 17, 2022 Sunday 11:57 AM GMT

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**Section:** VOICES; Version:2

**Length:** 816 words

**Byline:** Steven Frank

**Highlight:** Refugees Welcome: When I see the crowds of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, laden with what few possessions they can carry, I remember clinging to my mother as we waited to be deported, not knowing where we were going or what awaited us

**Body**

I will never forget the day I arrived in this country as a hungry, frightened nine-year-old. A British RAF pilot had spirited my family to Britain in the back of his fighter plane from Theresienstadt concentration camp, after it was liberated by Allied forces in May 1945.

As we were waiting to be processed at an RAF reception centre, a kind old bobby took pity on my two brothers and me, teaching us our first words of English and slipping us each a sixpence and a smile. I remember it as the first time that a policeman in uniform had ever shown us anything but cruelty.

This small act of kindness was just a taste of the wonderful welcome I would receive from the people of this country in the years to come. Since then, I have become a proud Brit, and raised wonderful children and grandchildren. But the generosity and values that I most admired are today being trampled on.

If the government's new immigration proposals go ahead unchanged, a future version of me - from Ukraine, or fleeing repression elsewhere - is likely to be treated very differently. They will be denied protection, criminalised, and may even be sent to a detention centre in impoverished Rwanda.

As a small boy, I witnessed the march of Nazi jackboots through the cobbled streets of my native Amsterdam. My father joined the Dutch resistance, and, as a respected Jewish lawyer, became involved with hiding Jews and providing false documents to allow them to escape Holland. One morning in 1942, he kissed us all goodbye and headed off to work. I never saw him again.

My family and I were sent to a Nazi transit camp before being crammed into a cattle truck and sent on to Theresienstadt. I still remember the stench of faeces, urine, sweat and fear in that sweltering carriage, and the relief when the doors were thrown open, only to find ourselves in a place worse than we could have imagined. In the camp, we experienced the gnawing pain of hunger and witnessed human suffering on an indescribable scale.

With the scenes on the television news in recent weeks, I cannot help but recall those terrible years. When I see the crowds of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, laden with what few possessions they can carry, I remember clinging to my mother as we waited to be deported, not knowing where we were going or what awaited us. When I hear about the barbarity of Russian soldiers towards civilians in Ukrainian towns and villages, I remember the unspeakable cruelty that seized Europe when I was a child in the 1940s.

My heart is warmed by the kindness and compassion shown by people across the UK, where tens of thousands have offered their homes to Ukrainian families. This public generosity has not been matched by the UK government, with the clumsy bureaucratic obstacles that it puts in the way. But that is not the worst thing.

In its current form, the [*Nationality and Borders Bill*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nationality-and-borders-bill) means that refugees like me, who are forced to take irregular routes to safety in the UK, will in future face up to four years in prison. The bill, as both the UN and senior British judges have repeatedly pointed out, is in flagrant breach of the Refugee Convention, which Britain helped to shape.

To keep up to speed with all the latest opinions and comment, sign up to our free weekly Voices Dispatches newsletter by [*clicking here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Fnewsletters%3Fitm_channel%3Dnative%26itm_campaign%3Dfooter%26itm_audience%3Dprospecting%26itm_content%3Dnewsletters&data=04%7C01%7CVictoria.Richards%40independent.co.uk%7C062b3d811f2541e4220808d98fb59a11%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637698832400255119%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=cljURBTtBLaWfVwBrZv8UPgOVVFGM0rPoexRmk0aRHA%3D&reserved=0)

The 1951 Refugee Convention was adopted in the wake of the [*Holocaust*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/holocaust) to ensure that never again would those fleeing war, torture or persecution be denied protection for lacking the correct documents. A former Supreme Court justice has rightly dubbed the Nationality and Borders Bill a "grotesque" piece of legislation. The Lords have voted key provisions down, but Boris Johnson seems determined to pay no heed to their concerns.

This government can and must do better, when the Lords amendments come back to the House of Commons on Wednesday. This bill is an affront to the long tradition of providing sanctuary to people in need that has made our country great.

I know from my own experience that those who are given a chance will show only gratitude, as so many did when escaping from the Nazis. The generosity of spirit at that time showed that Britain was great. Tearing up our international commitments does the very opposite.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our [*Refugees Welcome*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome) campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Ftopic%2Frefugees-welcome-0&data=04%7C01%7CHarriet.Williamson%40independent.co.uk%7C44b46804ea604841cd8a08d9fc33883c%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637818120540878043%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=fxFRbHYzF8K9%2F9swnZLj2eNWpWFo2siaK1gVBLG9e24%3D&reserved=0) .

Steven Frank is a British survivor of the Holocaust

**Load-Date:** April 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[*War pushing Britain's aid budget to 'breaking point'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6520-GFK1-F072-43DC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 21, 2022 Monday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 5

**Length:** 548 words

**Byline:** ANDREW WOODCOCK

**Body**

Anti-poverty campaigners have warned that war in Ukraine is stretching the UK's overseas aid budget "to breaking point". Researchers from the ONE Campaignsaid the Russian invasion has destroyed the government's rationale for cutting aid spending from the level of 0.7 per cent to 0.5 per cent of gross national income in 2020.

The non-profit group has called on chancellor Rishi Sunak to bring forward the planned restoration of the 0.7 per cent figure, warning that failure to do so will mean life-saving programmes will be withdrawn from some of the world's poorest nations. The Ukraine war means that the UK will no longer be able to meet its strategic priorities and international obligations within the reduced budget, it added.

Some £220m of UK aid money has been diverted so far to meet immediate humanitarian needs in Ukraine. Meanwhile, the disruption to Ukrainian wheat exports, which make up 10 per cent of global supply, has sent food prices soaring around the world, including in developing countries. ONE UK director Romilly Greenhill said it was "absolutely the case" that refugees fleeing Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine need to be supported as much as people facing famine in east Africa do.

But she said "by keeping our aid budget unnecessarily reduced, the UK is not in a position to do both; it's forcing itself into a situation where it has to choose between people in crisis," adding that "we're seeing a convergence of crises that mean you can't just pick and choose which problem to deal with in a vacuum".

The aid cut - equivalent to £4.5bn a year - was described as a "temporary" measure. Mr Sunak has said he hopes to restore spending to its previous level in 2024-25, but Ms Greenhill said this timetable needs to be accelerated.

A report by ONE found that a series of humanitarian disasters, including the ***Ukraine*** ***refugee crisis*** and the controversial decision to include Covid vaccines in the aid budget, had made the argument for the cut increasingly "out of date". The group's report comes days before Mr Sunak's mini-budget statement on Wednesday and ahead of the expected publication of the Foreign Office's international development strategy.

"We're in a different place to when the aid budget was first cut," said Ms Greenhill. "Since the chancellor announced the cut in 2020, circumstances have changed, and the justification that was used then no longer holds. The government cannot deliver on its own agenda at the current budget, and with more and more spend being added, UK aid is being stretched to breaking point. It's pushing existing anti-poverty work out."

ONE's analysis, carried out before the invasion of Ukraine, found that the decision to cut UK aid meant 4 million fewer girls will have access to a decent education and that 1 million women and children under five will be at risk of malnutrition.

It also found that aid to low-income countries like Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen had been slashed, while some middle-income countries like China and Brazil saw a rise in funds received. UK overseas development aid to Ethiopia fell by 55 per cent from £240.5m in 2020-21 to £107.5m in 2021-22, while China's funding rose from £2.2m to £13.7m in the same period, the report found.

The Independent has approached the Foreign Office for comment.

**Load-Date:** March 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Fears for lone Ukrainian children arriving in UK to live with unrelated adults*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6567-G1W1-F072-42FG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 10, 2022 Sunday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 6

**Length:** 840 words

**Byline:** MAY BULMAN SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

Lone children fleeing Ukraine are being housed with adults under the UK's refugee schemes scheme without proper checks taking place, The Independent can reveal.

More than 200,000 Britons have signed up to the government programme which allows UK sponsors to "match" with Ukrainians fleeing the war. In total 1,200 refugees have arrived under the scheme so far, while a further 10,800 have come under the family scheme, which allows ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to join relatives in Britain.

But while the government claims unaccompanied children are not eligible for either scheme, The Independent is aware of cases in which minors have been granted visas and arrived in the UK without a legal guardian.

Authorities warn that gaps in the vetting process mean cases are "falling through the net", prompting concerns about exploitation and trafficking, with more than 4.5 million Ukrainian children displaced in recent weeks, some of whom have been separated from parents and family.

The Local Government Association (LGA), which represents councils, said local authorities had seen children arriving without adults who had any responsibility for them.

Lisa Nandy, Labour's shadow levelling up secretary, said local authorities and charities were getting "far too little information and support" on how to respond.

Describing the situation as "disgraceful", she added: "This was always a risk with this DIY refugee scheme. The government should have taken charge of matching sponsors to refugees from day one.

"Before Michael Gove launched Homes for Ukraine he didn't even pick up the phone to councils and charities - the people who would be responsible for looking after vulnerable children."

The LGA said it was "unclear" if councils were expected to take unaccompanied children into care. In one case, an unaccompanied child recently arrived in Redbridge council after being matched with an unrelated adult under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

The council said it did not have safeguarding concerns about the case, but that it would follow up with the Home Office to better understand what safeguarding checks were done when agreeing to the match.

When an application is made to the Homes for Ukraine scheme - which can only happen once the applicant has found a sponsor who can host them in the UK - the "match" appears on a portal that local councils can access so that they can begin carrying out safeguarding checks.

But the LGA has said that in some cases councils are only being told who is arriving in their local area once matches have been made and visa granted, with many reporting "significant issues" with the data.

The organisation also called for councils to be given advance notice of new arrivals under the family scheme, in particular if there are individuals or families with vulnerabilities, to enable local services to meet their needs.

Kevin Bonavia, of Lewisham Council, said some locals had tried to match with unaccompanied minors, adding: "Fortunately none have been approved as yet, but we're worried that they will be and we will need to scramble to intervene. We've heard of this happening in another council. We can't allow vulnerable children to fall through the net."

Sian Summers-Rees, of charity City of Sanctuary UK, described one case of a couple that applied to sponsor two 17-year-olds they met via social media, and were reportedly told when they contacted Home Office that the children were eligible under the sponsorship scheme.

"The ones coming to our attention are people who are well-intentioned, but obviously there's a massive concern that there are people who are signing up to it for sinister reasons. There are serious exploitation and trafficking concerns," she said. "We also know of cases where minors have arrived with people who are not their parents or carers."

Steve Crocker, of the Association of Directors of Children's Services, said the Ukraine schemes were "not designed with unaccompanied children in mind".

He said: "We continue to raise the need for any current and future arrangements for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to be child-focused and for local authorities to get necessary information, including about the age of arrivals, as soon as possible so that we can plan accordingly, and so children's needs can be met in the short and long term."

A government spokesperson said councils should use normal safeguarding processes if a Ukrainian child arrives. Claire O'Meara, of Unicef, said: "Whilst the scheme offers a valuable route for those fleeing the war, it has not been designed to support unaccompanied childrenwho require additional care and support.

"There is a fine balance between getting children to safety as quickly as possible whilst doing so in a way that does not cause further harm or trauma.Unaccompanied children must therefore only be brought to the UK where it is in their best interests to do so, and their safety can be ensured."

A government spokesperson said safeguarding checks were in place and would ensure visa applications from unaccompanied minors were not approved by the Home Office.

**Load-Date:** April 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Live Updates | Russia-Ukraine War*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657B-6FW1-JBNF-W4DR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 15, 2022 Friday 8:47 AM GMT

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**Length:** 848 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Russia's Defense Ministry on Friday promised to ramp up "the scale of missile attacks" on Kyiv in response to Ukraine's "diversions on the Russian territory."

**Body**

MOSCOW - Russia's Defense Ministry on Friday promised to ramp up "the scale of missile attacks" on [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) in response to Ukraine's "diversions on the [*Russian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) territory."

The statement comes a day after Russian authorities accused Ukrainian forces of launching airstrikes on residential buildings in one of the country's regions on the border with [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , in which seven people sustained injuries.

According to Russian officials, some 100 residential buildings were damaged in Thursday's attack on the Klimovo village in the Bryansk region. The Defense Ministry said that the Russian forces in Ukraine's Chernihiv region shut down a Ukrainian Mi-8 helicopter that was allegedly involved in the attack on the Bryansk region.

Authorities in another border region, Belgorod, also reported Ukrainian shelling on Thursday.

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KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR:

- Russian military's damaged [*Black Sea*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/black-sea) flagship sinks

- As Russia loses key ship, Zelenskyy praises nation's resolve

- Russian legislator and 2 aides criminally charged in US

- UN says Ukraine war threatens to devastate many poor nations

- The [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) Interview: UN food chief says Mariupol is starving

- Go to [*https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine*](https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine) for more coverage

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OTHER DEVELOPMENTS:

LONDON - Britain's defense ministry says the loss of Russia's naval flagship will likely force Moscow to change the way its naval forces operate in the Black Sea.

The Moskva sank after being damaged in disputed circumstances. Ukraine says it struck the vessel with missiles, while Moscow acknowledged a fire on board but not any attack.

In an update posted Friday on social media, the U.K. Ministry of Defense said the Soviet-era ship, which returned to operational service last year after a major refit, "served a key role as both a command vessel and air defence node."

It said the sinking "means Russia has now suffered damage to two key naval assets since invading Ukraine, the first being Russia's Alligator-class landing ship Saratov on 24 March. Both events will likely lead Russia to review its maritime posture in the Black Sea."

\_\_\_

KYIV, Ukraine - President Volodymyr Zelenskyy told Ukrainians on Thursday they should be proud of having survived 50 days under Russian attack when the Russians "gave us a maximum of five."

In his late-night video address, Zelenskyy called it "an achievement of millions of Ukrainians, of everyone who on Feb. 24 made the most important decision of their life - to fight."

Zelenskyy gave an extensive and almost poetic listing of the many ways in which Ukrainians have helped to fend off the Russian troops, including "those who showed that Russian warships can sail away, even if it's to the bottom" of the sea. It was his only reference to the Russian missile cruiser Moskva, which sank while being towed to port.

Zelenskyy said he remembered the first day of the invasion when many world leaders, unsure whether Ukraine could survive, advised him to leave the country.

"But they didn't know how brave Ukrainians are, how much we value freedom and the possibility to live the way we want," Zelenskyy said.

\_\_\_

OTTAWA, Ontario - Canada is sending soldiers to Poland to help with the care, co-ordination and resettlement of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in Poland, including some who will come to Canada.

More than 2.6 million Ukrainians have fled into Poland since the first Russian troops crossed into Ukraine on Feb. 24 and over 2 million more have fled into other surrounding countries.

Defense Minister Anita Anand announced the deployment of up to 150 troops Thursday, saying the majority of the deployed troops will head to reception centers across Poland to help care for and register ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Another group is being sent to help coordinate international aid efforts.

Canada has deployed hundreds of additional troops to eastern Europe since Russia's invasion as the NATO military alliance seeks to both support Ukraine and prevent the conflict from expanding into a broader war.

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KYIV, Ukraine - The head of the U.N. World Food Program said people are being "starved to death" in the besieged Ukrainian city of Mariupol and he predicted the country's humanitarian crisis is likely to worsen as Russia intensifies its assault in the coming weeks.

WFP executive director David Beasley also warned in an interview Thursday with The Associated Press in Kyiv that Russia's invasion of grain-exporting Ukraine risks destabilizing nations far from its shores and could trigger waves of migrants seeking better lives elsewhere.

The war that began Feb. 24 was "devastating the people in Ukraine," Beasley said, lamenting the lack of access faced by the WFP and other aid organizations in trying to reach those in need amid the conflict.

The fluid nature of the conflict, which has seen fighting shift away from areas around the capital and toward eastern Ukraine, has made it especially difficult to reach hungry Ukrainians.

The WFP is trying to put food supplies now in areas that could be caught up in the fighting, but Beasley acknowledged that there are "a lot of complexities" as the situation rapidly evolves.

**Load-Date:** April 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Joe Biden vows to ‘defend every inch’ of Nato from Russian threat*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67M4-SWV1-JBNF-W4MG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 22, 2023 Wednesday 6:11 PM GMT

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**Section:** WORLD,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:2

**Length:** 421 words

**Byline:** Alastair Jamieson

**Highlight:** Not just Ukraine at stake, but ‘freedom of democracies throughout the world’, says US president

**Body**

Joe Biden promised eastern European leaders he would “defend literally every inch of Nato” and said Vladimir Putin had made a “big mistake” by suspending Russia’s participation in the last remaining nuclear arms treaty.

The US president was in Poland on Wednesday to reassure allies as Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine drags on towards a second year.

It came as Putin held a huge patriotic rally at a stadium in central Moscow to urge the public to get behind their armed forces fighting in Ukraine.

The Russian president has already announced he is suspending the 2010 New Start treaty that limits the number of Russian and US strategic nuclear warheads. His deputy foreign minister Sergei Ryabkov went further on Wednesday, threatening “further countermeasures, if necessary”.

However, Mr Biden said that escalation was “a big mistake”.

He gave assurance to the Bucharest Nine – a collection of eastern Nato nations that came together in response to Putin’s 2014 annexation of Crimea.

“You’re the frontlines of our collective defence,” Biden told them. “And you know, better than anyone, what’s at stake in this conflict. Not just for Ukraine, but for the freedom of democracies throughout Europe and around the world.”

He pledged that Nato’s Article 5 mutual-defence rule is “sacred” and that “we will defend literally every inch of Nato”.

Nato secretary general Jens Stoltenberg said: “We don’t know when the war will end, but when it does, we need to ensure that history does not repeat itself.”

Pointing to past Russian actions in Georgia and Ukraine, he added: “We cannot allow Russia to continue to chip away at European security. We must break the cycle of Russian aggression.”

Biden has given particular attention to the support from Poland for Ukraine. Warsaw is hosting about 1.5 million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and has committed $3.8bn (£3.15bn) in military and economic assistance to Kyiv.

“The truth of the matter is: the United States needs Poland and Nato as much as Nato needs the United States,” Biden said during talks with president Andrzej Duda.

In a joint statement after the meeting, the Bucharest Nine said they were committed to increasing Nato’s military presence on their territories to deter Moscow. “Russia is the most significant and direct threat to allied security,” they said.

The declaration was also signed by Hungary, whose prime minister Viktor Orban has often pushed back on EU sanctions on Russia and along with Turkey is the only Nato member still to ratify the accession applications of Sweden and Finland.

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Russia bringing more forces on rotation and may attempt further advances, Ukraine says*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6539-7V11-JBNF-W11T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 27, 2022 Sunday 7:09 AM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:4

**Length:** 324 words

**Byline:** Stuti Mishra

**Highlight:** Russia has started destroying Ukrainian fuel and food storage depots

**Body**

[*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) is bringing more forces on rotation and may attempt further advances, Ukrainian Interior Ministry adviser Vadym Denysenko said on Sunday.

In a televised address, Mr Denysenko said Russia has started destroying Ukrainian fuel and food storage depots, meaning the government will have to disperse the stocks of both in the near future.

Russia calls its actions in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) a "special operation" while another missile attack left the western city of Lviv covered in plumes of smoke on Saturday, while President Joe Biden visited neighbouring Poland, serving as a reminder that Moscow is willing to strike anywhere in Ukraine despite its claim to be focusing its offensive on the country's east.

Four missiles hit the outskirts of Lviv, just 60km from the Polish border, local officials said, damaging the infrastructure and leaving five injured, but no deaths were reported.

As Ukraine continues to fight Russia for over a month now since the invasion began on 24 February, a visibly irritated Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky again demanded Western nations send military hardware and asked whether they were intimidated by Moscow.

"We've already been waiting 31 days. Who is in charge of the Euro-Atlantic community? Is it really still Moscow, because of intimidation?"

Meanwhile, during the final leg of his four-day trip to Europe, Mr Biden said Vladimir Putin "cannot remain in power" and called him a "butcher".

"Ukraine cannot shoot down Russian missiles using shotguns, machine guns, which are too much in supplies," he added.

On a trip to Poland to meet ministers and ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, the US president said the world "will have a brighter future" without Mr Putin in the Kremlin. The White House denied he was calling for regime change.

The US president was also at the presidential palace in Warsaw for talks with Polish counterpart Andrzej Duda, in which he affirmed Washington DC's "unwavering commitment" to Poland and Ukraine.

**Load-Date:** March 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*What the papers say - March 19*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651J-29X1-JBNF-W4M6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 19, 2022 Saturday 2:19 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 334 words

**Byline:** PA Reporter

**Highlight:** The nation's papers continue to focus on the shock sacking of 800 P&O workers.

**Body**

The P&O scandal, the royals and [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) are among the topics on Saturday's front pages.

The Daily Mirror, the FT Weekend and The Guardian all lead on the ferries firm's saga - which the latter reports could result in an "unlimited" fine.

Tomorrow's front page: P&LOW PAYRead more: [*https://t.co/TOJqsyYBYI*](https://t.co/TOJqsyYBYI) [*pic.twitter.com/NGel04kgm9*](https://t.co/NGel04kgm9) - The Mirror (@DailyMirror) [*March 18, 2022*](https://twitter.com/DailyMirror/status/1504947009081466886?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Just published: front page of FT Weekend, UK edition, Saturday 19 March [*https://t.co/Jqg5jLhT7R*](https://t.co/Jqg5jLhT7R) [*pic.twitter.com/PNfEdSq7NS*](https://t.co/PNfEdSq7NS) - Financial Times (@FinancialTimes) [*March 18, 2022*](https://twitter.com/FinancialTimes/status/1504925380221841408?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Guardian front page, Saturday 19 March 2022: Threat of unlimited fine as anger over P&O grows [*pic.twitter.com/uGXqwjkOUw*](https://t.co/uGXqwjkOUw) - The Guardian (@guardian) [*March 18, 2022*](https://twitter.com/guardian/status/1504940825461022724?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The royal family are investigating ways to give ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** "practical support", according to the Daily Express.Tomorrow's front page -Royals: We'll help refugees[*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/RTS3erWFUQ*](https://t.co/RTS3erWFUQ) - Daily Express (@Daily\_Express) [*March 18, 2022*](https://twitter.com/Daily_Express/status/1504950370338066432?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The Daily Telegraph splashes a warning from US President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) to China not to militarily aid Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The front page of tomorrow's Daily Telegraph:'Biden warns China not to arm Putin in Ukraine'[*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Sign up for the Front Page newsletter[*https://t.co/x8AV4Oomry*](https://t.co/x8AV4Oomry) [*pic.twitter.com/PkpWdhqLT2*](https://t.co/PkpWdhqLT2) - The Telegraph (@Telegraph) [*March 18, 2022*](https://twitter.com/Telegraph/status/1504937774318825474?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The Queen will spend more time at a royal cottage in the [*Scottish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scottish) highlands, according to The Sun.On tomorrow's front page: Queen has 'wheelchair-friendly' lift fitted to favourite Scottish cottage after quitting Buckingham Palace for good[*https://t.co/xAgnjT4m5y*](https://t.co/xAgnjT4m5y) [*pic.twitter.com/HSKPtzauQa*](https://t.co/HSKPtzauQa) - The Sun (@TheSun) [*March 18, 2022*](https://twitter.com/TheSun/status/1504945825742532613?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) And the Daily Star tells Brits to prepare for ten days of spring-like heat.Tomorrow's front page: Brits set for sizzler as spring arrives early [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Read here: [*https://t.co/aoKTCVW1C2*](https://t.co/aoKTCVW1C2) [*pic.twitter.com/wEtBFTtreP*](https://t.co/wEtBFTtreP) - Daily Star (@dailystar) [*March 18, 2022*](https://twitter.com/dailystar/status/1504952694787784708?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

**Load-Date:** March 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Benjamin Hall: Injured Fox News correspondent out of Ukraine and in 'good spirits'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6510-DM01-JBNF-W145-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 16, 2022 Wednesday 4:01 PM GMT

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**Section:** AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 306 words

**Byline:** Justin Vallejo

**Highlight:** Camera operator Pierre Zakrzewsi and producer Oleksandra 'Sasha' Kuvshynova were killed in the attack

**Body**

Injured [*Fox News*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/fox-news) reporter Benjamin Hall has been evacuated from [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) and is recovering "in good spirits".

Mr Hall's Fox News colleague, [*Bill Hemmer*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/bill-hemmer) , reported the update on Wednesday morning, saying the injured correspondent is "now safe and out of Ukraine".

"Ben is alert and said to be in good spirits. He is being treated with the best possible care in the world," Mr Hemmmer said.

"We remind you, please continue to keep him in your prayers as well, as well as Sasha and Pierre, the news from yesterday."

Camera operator Pierre Zakrzewsi and producer Oleksandra "Sasha" Kuvshynova, 24, were killed in the attack that wounded Hall on Monday.

Fox News CEO Suzanne Scott added in a statement that Mr Hall is receiving "the best possible care in the world" and that the network was in close contact with his wife and family.

His evacuation came after State Department spokesman Ned Price said they were working at "multiple levels" to ensure the safety of Mr Hall, a British-American journalist who has previously written for The Independent.

While details of the attack that killed two and injured another are scarce, the Ukraine government said the vehicle the three were travelling in was struck by Russian fire near the city of Kyiv.

The vehicle the three journalists were travelling in outside of Kyiv was struck by incoming fire from the Russians, according to Ukraine's government. Mr Hall lost part of his leg in the attack, Ukraine's Ministry of Defence said.

It came a day after American journalist Brett Renaud was shot and killed by Russian forces while on assignment for Time magazine.

Mr Renaud was in a car on route to report on ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** trying to evacuate when the vehicle was ambushed by Vladimir Putin's troops, according to Ukrainian officials. A second American journalist was also wounded and taken to hospital.

**Load-Date:** March 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainians stranded in Hawaii get help from canoe paddlers*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6540-1KS1-JBNF-W0JM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 30, 2022 Wednesday 5:37 PM GMT

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**Length:** 802 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** A Ukrainian family who came to Hawaii for a long-awaited vacation before Russia invaded their country watched from the islands in shock as bombs started dropping on their nation

**Body**

A Ukrainian family who came to Hawaii for a long-awaited vacation ended up watching from the islands in shock as bombs started dropping on their country. Now, more than a month later, they remain stranded on [*Oahu*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/oahu) without access to their house, money, family or friends.

They've found support through the local canoe paddling community, which set them up with a place to stay and raised money online to help get them settled. They do not know if they will ever be able return to their home.

Vasyl and Marina Prishchak and their three daughters, ages 5, 10 and 16, arrived in Hawaii in the middle of February and had an idyllic, three-week beach vacation planned before [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) invaded Ukraine.

"This vacation changed our life," said Vasyl Prishchak, who along with his wife owns a cosmetics company with stores in Ukraine, Russia, [*Belarus*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/belarus) and Kazakhstan. "We don't know how we return to Ukraine and what we will do, we will begin from zero, from scratch."

They are unsure if their house near a military base in Kyiv is still standing and say they are financially imperiled because their family business has been forced to close.

The family had been to Hawaii several times before to visit with longtime friends Borys and Beata Markin. Vasyl and Borys have been friends for about 30 years and are both avid ocean paddlers.

The community has helped the family with everything from schooling and immigration questions to financial help and a place to stay.

Until last week they were staying at a loaned home in Kailua, a beach town on the windward side of Oahu, but family friend Beata Markin said they've now secured a small cottage in Kaneohe where the owner is allowing them to stay free of charge for as long as they need.

"They have nowhere to go," said Markin, who was born in Hungary and has lived with her Ukrainian husband in Hawaii for eight years. "I think it's our responsibility to make sure they are OK here."

An online fundraiser organized by canoe club members has so far raised more than $32,000 for the family.

"Sadly, we can't help all the Ukrainians, but we can help this family," wrote Charlotte Johnson, an Oahu resident who helped set up the fundraiser. "The banking system in Ukraine is a shambles, and they cannot access any of their accounts. None of us can even imagine going on a vacation only to find the life left no longer exists."

Globally, tens of thousands of Ukrainians were overseas when Russia invaded. In addition, the United Nations says more than 3.8 million people have fled Ukraine since the war began, the biggest movement of people in Europe since World War II.

While U.S. officials could not immediately say exactly how many Ukrainians were in the U.S. on tourism or business visas when the war began, the Department of Homeland Security expects an estimated 75,000 Ukrainians to be eligible to apply for Temporary Protected Status, which will allow them to stay in the country for 18 months.

Though the Prishchak family hopes to eventually return home, they are applying to stay under the program, which was created in 1990 to allow people to remain in the U.S. because of civil strife or natural disasters in their home countries. Permission is extended until Homeland Security deems conditions are stable enough for people to return.

The U.S. is also expanding efforts to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** elsewhere. While in Brussels to meet with European allies last week, President Joe Biden said the U.S. would admit up to 100,000 more ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and provide $1 billion in humanitarian assistance to countries affected by Russia's invasion.

Prishchak's oldest daughter, 16-year-old Mariia, said her excitement about vacationing in Hawaii was quickly replaced by fear for loved ones.

In the first week, they took a lot of photos, she said, but "one day we disappeared from all social media because it is no time to post these photos when people suffer."

Mariia said she had always dreamed about going to school in the U.S., but not under such terrible circumstances. She checks in with friends and family every morning and night to make sure they are safe.

"Every day, I hope that next day everything will be finished," she said. "And it's awful. I'm confused and I can't do anything else except for thinking about the situation."

Her father said it's difficult being in the safety of a tropical paradise while other men his age are back home fighting and not allowed to leave the country.

"It's a really terrible feeling that eats away at you from inside when you understand that all your close relatives are now in a very complicated situation," the elder Prishchak said in Russian. "And there's no way you can help them stop this absolute insanity. It's a feeling that simply eats you up inside, you could say. A horrible sensation, an inner guilt that I'm here and not there."

**Load-Date:** March 30, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Baftas 2022: Rebel Wilson draws cheers and applause for joke about Putin*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650G-TC31-DY4H-K0HK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 14, 2022 Monday 6:10 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,FILM,CULTURE; Version:1

**Length:** 341 words

**Byline:** Ellie Harrison

**Highlight:** The Russian invasion of Ukraine was mentioned in many speeches across the night

**Body**

[*Baftas 2022*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/baftas-2022) host [*Rebel Wilson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rebel-wilson) drew cheers and applause from the audience on Sunday night (13 March) for a joke she made about Russian president [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin).

Introducing [*Emilia Jones*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/emilia-jones) - the star of CODA, a film about a child of deaf adults - she explained that there were two interpreters on stage: one for American sign language and another for British.

She then put up her middle finger and said: "Luckily, though, in all sign languages, this is the gesture for Putin."

The joke went down very well with the crowd, many of whom made statements of solidarity with [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) amid the Russian invasion of the country as they spoke to press and accepted awards.

Benedict Cumberbatch [*said on the red carpet*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/benedict-cumberbatch-ukraine-refugees-b2034904.html%22%20title=%22Benedict%20Cumberbatch%20says%20he%20hopes%20to%20take%20Ukrainian%20refugees%20into%20his%20home) that he hopes to take part in a government scheme to offer ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** a place to live.

"Everyone needs to do as much as they can," he said. "There's been a record number of people volunteering to take people into their homes, I hope to be part of that myself."

At this year's Baftas - which took place at the Royal Albert Hall in London - Denis Villeneuve's sci-fi epic Dune [*led the pack with 11 nominations*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/2022-bafta-nominations-full-list-b2006786.html%22%20title=%222022%20Bafta%20nominations:%20Full%20list%20as%20Dune%20and%20Power%20of%20the%20Dog%20lead%20way) , closely followed by Jane Campion's western The Power of the Dog, which amassed a total of eight.

See the full winners list [*here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/bafta-winners-list-2022-baftas-b2034760.html%22%20title=%22Bafta%20Film%20Awards%202022:%20Winners%20list%20in%20full).

You can follow along with updates on the Russia-Ukraine crisis at The Independent's live-blog [*here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-putin-latest-news-war-zelensky-b2034897.html).

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Russian air strike appeared to target civilian building in Mariupol - Cleverly*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6515-PRM1-DY4H-K4YP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 17, 2022 Thursday 12:01 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 883 words

**Byline:** Patrick Daly

**Highlight:** The Foreign Office minister said the Russian attack in the besieged Ukrainian city appeared to have breached international conflict rules.

**Body**

A Russian air strike on Ukrainians sheltering in a theatre "looks to be specific targeting" of a civilian building and a "self-evident breach of international law", a [*Foreign Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/foreign-office) minister said.

Ukrainian authorities are still attempting to determine the fate of hundreds of civilians who had bunkered down in the theatre in Mariupol after images showed that an entire section of the three-storey building had collapsed after the strike on Wednesday evening.

Several hundred people had taken refuge in the building to seek safety from Moscow's three-week siege of the port city, with the pavements outside the venue marked with huge white letters spelling out "children" in Russian, according to images released by the Maxar space technology company.

This looks to be specific targeting of civilian infrastructure

Foreign Office minister James Cleverly

[*James Cleverly*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/james-cleverly) said the attack appeared to be a "breach" of internationally-agreed armed conflict rules and called for evidence to be documented of the assault to put together a war crime case.

The minister for Europe in the Foreign Office was asked on ITV's Good Morning Britain whether he thought the bombing of the shelter "looked like a war crime".

He said: "The targeting of civilian infrastructure is against international humanitarian law and the law of armed conflict.

"Ultimately it is for international courts and tribunals to make the formal decision but self-evidently, this is civilian infrastructure which we've seen had the word 'Kids' painted in Russian outside of this building.

"This looks to be specific targeting of civilian infrastructure and, as I say, that is a self-evident breach of international law and the law of armed conflict."

The Russian defence ministry has denied bombing the theatre in Mariupol.

Mr Cleverly said it was "incredibly important" that evidence of potential war crimes was collated so that "those people who are responsible for these, whether they are battlefield commanders, right up to the top of the organisation, can be held accountable once this war is concluded".

Britain is one of six nations calling for a United Nations Security Council meeting on Ukraine on Thursday, ahead of an expected Friday vote on a resolution demanding protection for Ukrainian civilians "in vulnerable situations".

"Russia is committing war crimes and targeting civilians," the UK's UN mission tweeted, announcing its joint plea alongside the US, France and others.

It comes amid suggestions that peace talks are beginning to show signs of progress.

[*#BREAKING*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/BREAKING?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The UK and have called for a Security Council meeting on [*#Ukraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Ukraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw). Russia is committing war crimes and targeting civilians.Russia's illegal war on Ukraine is a threat to us all. [*pic.twitter.com/SRi76OAszm*](https://t.co/SRi76OAszm) - UK at the UN (@UKUN\_NewYork) [*March 16, 2022*](https://twitter.com/UKUN_NewYork/status/1504204076921274373?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Russian foreign minister [*Sergei Lavrov*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sergei-lavrov) said after a meeting on Tuesday that a neutral military status for Ukraine was being "seriously discussed" by the two sides, while Ukrainian President [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) said Russia's demands for ending the war were becoming "more realistic".But Mr Cleverly said any peace deal with Russia must be "one the Ukrainians genuinely believe in"."The Ukrainians shouldn't be forced into concessions. You don't negotiate with a gun to your head," he told BBC Breakfast, as he pledged for the UK to continue supporting Ukraine by both humanitarian and military means.As part of the resolution discussions, Russia has demanded that Nato pledge never to admit Ukraine to the alliance or station forces there.In its stipulations, Ukraine has pushed for a ceasefire, the withdrawal of Russian troops and security guarantees for Ukraine from several countries.According to the Associated Press, an official in Mr Zelensky's office said the main subject under discussion between the warring countries was whether Russian troops would remain in separatist regions in eastern Ukraine after the conflict and where the borders would be.Ukraine wants one or more Western nuclear powers involved in the negotiations, with the outcome set out in a legally binding document.Kyiv would be ready to discuss a neutral status if those terms are met, according to AP.I've written to Liz Truss and Priti Patel to call for an immediate, emergency airlift operation to resettle ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** currently arriving in Poland who want to come to the UK.The British people are ready to welcome refugees with kindness and compassion.- Ed Davey MP (@EdwardJDavey) [*March 17, 2022*](https://twitter.com/EdwardJDavey/status/1504397218358468611?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Domestically, ministers are under pressure to do more to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** gathering at the Polish border to reach the UK.

Liberal Democrat leader Sir [*Ed Davey*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ed-davey) , in a letter to the Foreign Secretary and Home Secretary following a visit to Poland this week, called for the UK Government to provide free flights to those wanting to come to Britain, with coaches to the nearest Polish airports from key border crossing points.

In his letter, Sir Ed said he was "appalled" at the "absence of UK Government personnel on the ground at the border" and pressed ministers to "urgently step up" their response.

Downing Street on Wednesday confirmed that expressions of interest in taking in a Ukrainian refugee who does not have family ties to Britain, via the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme, had reached the 138,000 mark.

**Load-Date:** March 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Boris Johnson's Saudi visit reveals his lack of principles - yet again*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650Y-XC71-JBNF-W3FF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 16, 2022 Wednesday 1:37 PM GMT

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**Section:** LETTERS,VOICES; Version:2

**Length:** 885 words

**Highlight:** Letters to the editor: our readers share their views. Please send your letters to [*letters@independent.co.uk*](mailto:letters@independent.co.uk)

**Body**

And there we have it. At the same time as three eastern European prime ministers make the dangerous rail trip to meet the Ukrainian president to show their support, where is [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) ?

He is off to [*Saudi Arabia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/saudi-arabia) to beg the rulers of a country steeped in human rights abuses. They [*executed 81 people*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/saudi-arabia-mass-execution-b2034519.html%22%20title=%22%20Saudi%20Arabia%20executes%2081%20people%20in%20single%20day%20in%20largest%20mass%20killing%20for%20decades) in one day last week. Why is he there? To beg for oil for the rest of the world, apparently. The oil that no one will be wanting in the next 30 years or so - or will they?

It just takes three weeks of an illegal war started by a power-mad dictator to show that we are light years away from the greener society that we crave.

However, I could not let my comments pass without making reference to words allegedly spoken by the prime minister in which he states that the £1bn Saudi investment in greener aviation fuel is something "we want to encourage" and goes on to say that "it does not mean we can't stick to our principles and raise those issues that we all care about".

Principles and Boris Johnson are not words that sit easily together. I give you the Brexit lies, the cash for honours, Partygate etc. Our current prime minister always reminds me of the late great Groucho Marx, not just because you can't take him seriously, but he certainly has taken his well-known catchphrases to heart and, in that respect, I quote: "Those are my principles, if you don't like them, I have others." So very true.

Scott Cassie

Aberdeen

Questions remain

The news coming out of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) is heart-wrenching, and it has been gratifying to see just how many people in the UK and around the world have donated, both financially and with supplies.

Millions in financial aid has been collected but how is that money being spent? Is that money actually reaching the Ukrainian people? Are the supplies reaching the Ukrainian people?

Over a 100,000 people in the UK have offered a place to stay for the ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, but they have to know the names of the people that they have to sponsor to come and stay. How can they access this list of names?

The government expects the Ukrainian people to go online to apply to come to the UK. What if the Ukrainian people don't have internet access?

J Hyatt

Address supplied

Horse racing cruelty

The death of Shallwehaveonemore in the opening race at Cheltenham is not only tragic but also tragically predictable.

Deaths at Cheltenham are practically par for the course - so much so that watching the races is like having a front-row seat at a bullfight. Horses are pushed to - and often past - breaking point in this greedy and ghastly spectacle, which is a stain on the British reputation as an animal-loving nation.

The Cheltenham Festival should be cancelled, and this death must serve as a heartbreaking reminder that there is no such thing as a harmless flutter. Betting supports an industry which kills.

Jennifer White

Media and communications, PETA UK

Refugees, race and incompetence

Our government has sought to exclude refugees from Sudan, Syria, Afghanistan and lord knows how many other war-torn nations on the belief that accepting them would be against the national will (i.e. bad for votes).

Now that we have a war-torn, democratic nation on our doorstep, the government, in response to rising public anger, has sub-contracted its humanitarian responsibilities by inviting families to open the door for themselves by inviting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** into their own homes... with overwhelming public support.

However, public generosity has been met with the Home Office's usual incompetence, bordering on prejudice, and a complete lack of planning by the government despite largely foreseeable events.

To keep up to speed with all the latest opinions and comment, sign up to our free weekly Voices Dispatches newsletter by [*clicking here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Fnewsletters%3Fitm_channel%3Dnative%26itm_campaign%3Dfooter%26itm_audience%3Dprospecting%26itm_content%3Dnewsletters&data=04%7C01%7CVictoria.Richards%40independent.co.uk%7C062b3d811f2541e4220808d98fb59a11%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637698832400255119%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=cljURBTtBLaWfVwBrZv8UPgOVVFGM0rPoexRmk0aRHA%3D&reserved=0)

May those many, many households who have offered their homes and hearts to Ukrainians seeking refuge and safety be blessed by having their kindness acknowledged by the relaxation of visa restrictions and the speedy relief of these desperate displaced families.

If the government is too timid to face up to its humanitarian responsibilities, let's at least hope that they allow the British public to step up in their place and show the basic humanity that most of our citizens share.

John Driver

Herefordshire

Nazanin's freedom

After six years in prison and/or under house arrest, [*Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe will leave Iran today*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/nazanin-zaghari-ratcliffe-released-free-b2037008.html).

This will, of course, have nothing to do with coughing up the £400m for tanks that we never delivered after the fall of the Shah. Nor, of course, with the government's attempt to garner an alternative supply of that black, sticky stuff with which Iran is still well-endowed.

Realpolitik - don't you just love it?

Jeremy Redman

London

**Load-Date:** March 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Baftas 2022: Rebel Wilson draws cheers and applause for joke about Putin*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650C-5031-DY4H-K192-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 13, 2022 Sunday 8:39 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,FILM,CULTURE; Version:1

**Length:** 341 words

**Byline:** Ellie Harrison

**Highlight:** The Russian invasion of Ukraine was mentioned in many speeches across the night

**Body**

[*Baftas 2022*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/baftas-2022) host [*Rebel Wilson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rebel-wilson) drew cheers and applause from the audience on Sunday night (13 March) for a joke she made about Russian president [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin).

Introducing [*Emilia Jones*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/emilia-jones) - the star of CODA, a film about a child of deaf adults - she explained that there were two interpreters on stage: one for American sign language and another for British.

She then put up her middle finger and said: "Luckily, though, in all sign languages, this is the gesture for Putin."

The joke went down very well with the crowd, many of whom made statements of solidarity with [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) amid the Russian invasion of the country as they spoke to press and accepted awards.

Benedict Cumberbatch [*said on the red carpet*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/benedict-cumberbatch-ukraine-refugees-b2034904.html%22%20title=%22Benedict%20Cumberbatch%20says%20he%20hopes%20to%20take%20Ukrainian%20refugees%20into%20his%20home) that he hopes to take part in a government scheme to offer ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** a place to live.

"Everyone needs to do as much as they can," he said. "There's been a record number of people volunteering to take people into their homes, I hope to be part of that myself."

At this year's Baftas - which took place at the Royal Albert Hall in London - Denis Villeneuve's sci-fi epic Dune [*led the pack with 11 nominations*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/2022-bafta-nominations-full-list-b2006786.html%22%20title=%222022%20Bafta%20nominations:%20Full%20list%20as%20Dune%20and%20Power%20of%20the%20Dog%20lead%20way) , closely followed by Jane Campion's western The Power of the Dog, which amassed a total of eight.

See the full winners list [*here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/bafta-winners-list-2022-baftas-b2034760.html%22%20title=%22Bafta%20Film%20Awards%202022:%20Winners%20list%20in%20full).

You can follow along with updates on the Russia-Ukraine crisis at The Independent's live-blog [*here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-putin-latest-news-war-zelensky-b2034897.html).

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Hermès, Chanel and Gucci among luxury fashion brands to close Russian stores*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XM-75F1-JBNF-W4JW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 5, 2022 Saturday 1:41 PM GMT

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**Section:** FASHION,LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 326 words

**Byline:** Laura Hampson

**Highlight:** The UK, the US and the EU have imposed sanctions on Russia

**Body**

Luxury [*fashion brands*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/fashion-brands) such as [*Hermès*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hermes) , Chanel and Gucci will temporarily cease trading in [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) following the country's invasion of Ukraine.

Hermès, maker of the [*Birkin bag*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/birkin-bag) , and Richemont, which owns Cartier, were among the first parent companies of fashion brands to announce store closures, followed by LVMH, Kering and Chanel.

LVMH owns brands like Kenzo, Givenchy and Christian Dior, while Kering is the parent company to fashion houses like Bottega Veneta, Gucci and Saint Laurent.

Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on Thursday 24 February. Since then, the UK, the US and the EU have imposed sanctions on Russia.

In a LinkedIn post, Chanel wrote: "Given our increasing concerns about the current situation, the growing uncertainty and the complexity to operate, Chanel decided to temporarily pause its business in Russia."

LMVH confirmed to [*Reuters*](https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/hermes-says-it-is-temporarily-closing-russia-stores-linkedin-post-2022-03-04/) that all of its 124 stores in Russia will close, but it will continue to pay its 3,500 employees in the country.

Kering, LMVH and L'Oreal, one of the world's leading beauty companies, have all pledged financial support to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

It's estimated that over 1 million Ukrainians have fled the country since Russia invaded a little over a week ago.

[*Ikea has also announced that it has suspended activities*](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ikea-suspends-activities-russia-belarus-ukraine-b2027770.html) in Russia and Belarus due to the war.

In a statement posted to its website, it said that the Ikea Foundation has donated 20 million (£17 million) for humanitarian assistance to those who have been forcibly displaced as a result of the conflict in Ukraine.

Other fashion brands like Asos, Nike and Boohoo have also ceased trading in Russia.

Asos said in a statement earlier this week that it's priority is the "safety of its colleagues and partners in Ukraine and Russia".

"Against the backdrop of the continuing war, Asos has decided that it is neither practical nor right to continue to trade in Russia, and has therefore today suspended our sales there," the statement read.

**Load-Date:** March 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Minister refuses to rule out that Ukrainian refugees could be deported to Rwanda*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65DX-M2X1-JBNF-W2BP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 11, 2022 Wednesday 3:54 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 85 words

**Byline:** Sophie Peachey

**Body**

Immigration minister Tom Pursglove has refused to rule out that [***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) could be deported to [*Rwanda*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rwanda) under Priti Patel's new asylum policy.

The Home Office minister said that decisions on who to deport would be considered on a "case by case basis", and did not deny that refugees from Ukraine could be among them.

Mr Pursglove said Ukrainians should take "safe and legal routes" and "should not be getting in a small boat and paying a smuggler to get to the UK."

Click [*here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/independent-premium#newsletters) to sign up to our newsletters.

**Load-Date:** May 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Baftas 2022: Wet-look hair is this year's biggest red carpet trend*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650C-G9Y1-DY4H-K01F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 13, 2022 Sunday 10:46 PM GMT

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**Section:** FASHION,LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 321 words

**Byline:** Laura Hampson

**Highlight:** We're looking at you, Florence Pugh

**Body**

The [*Baftas*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/baftas) [*red carpet*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/red-carpet) was back with a vengeance for 2022, with the [*awards*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/awards) returning to full-capacity for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic.

And while the Baftas offer us the chance to celebrate the best films and performances of the past year, it also allows us to get a glimpse of[*celebrity's red carpet style*](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/fashion/baftas-2022-best-dressed-red-carpet-b2034837.html).

If this year's red carpet is anything to go by, then we can safely assume that the wet-look hair trend is here to stay - particularly when paired with a pixie cut.

Florence Pugh, who recently debuted her pixie cut, wore her brunette hair slicked back allowing full focus to go on her Maria Tash jewellery - including her new septum piercing - and her black mini dress with a dramatic pink train.

Pugh presented an award alongside Stranger Things actor, Millie Bobby Brown who also styled her short hair in a wet-look.

Brown wore her fringe in a middle parting and slicked her short hair back into a small, low bun.

Other celebrities to sport wet-look hair included Belfast actor and Bafta nominee, Caitriona Balfe, fashion influencer Andreea Cristea, model Adwoa Aboah, and actor Daisy Ridley.

Hair stylist Alysa Pace said earlier this year that wet-look hair is set to be this season's "biggest trend".

"There is something so chic and sexy about this look. With Kim Kardashian and Gigi Hadid rocking wet hair, it has become this season's biggest trend," Pace told [*Byrdie*](https://www.byrdie.com/wet-hairstyles).

Attendees at this year's Baftas were asked to dress respectfully amid the ongoing war in Ukraine.

This saw a slew of stars, including Ridley, Pugh and Brown dress in black outfits.

Other stars like Laura Whitmore, Ariana DeBose and Wunmi Mosaku dressed in yellow, the national colour of Ukraine.

Best Leading Actor nominee Benedict Cumberbatch [*sported a yellow and blue badge on his suit*](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/fashion/benedict-cumberbatch-ukraine-baftas-award-b2034887.html) , the colours of Ukraine's flag.

The actor also said he hopes to take part in the government's new humanitarian scheme to host ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ryan Reynolds: Football breaks my heart on a pretty regular basis*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YF-SWC1-JBNF-W2M0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 9, 2022 Wednesday 11:06 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 302 words

**Byline:** Kerri-Ann Roper

**Highlight:** The Hollywood star co-owns Welsh club Wrexham AFC with fellow actor Rob McElhenney.

**Body**

Canadian actor Ryan Reynolds has said football is "a unique brand of gorgeous torture".

The 45-year-old [*Hollywood*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hollywood) star and It's Always Sunny In Philadelphia creator [*Rob McElhenney*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rob-mcelhenney) took 100% ownership of Wrexham AFC in February 2021, taking over from the Wrexham Supporters' [*Trust*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/trust) , and also making a £2 million investment under the terms of the deal.

The duo have been pictured visiting the club and watching games, marking a visit last October with gin shots in the local pub.

Deadpool star Reynolds told ITV's [*Lorraine Kelly*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/lorraine-kelly) , who said the pair have "brought glamour and excitement to football", that the club has its "own unique brand of glamour and excitement before I got there".

He said: "Both me and Rob McElhenney, we love it. It's such a passion project.

"Football in general has really been both the best and the worst thing that's ever happened to me.

"I get it now, I understand the beautiful game as much as I can understand it at this stage in life, and it's a unique brand of gorgeous torture that I've never experienced before.

The actor, who is currently promoting [*Netflix*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/netflix) film The Adam Project, added: "I love it with all of my heart and it also breaks my heart on a pretty regular basis."

Reynolds and his wife, Gossip Girl actress Blake Lively, recently pledged to match donations up to 1,000,000 US dollars (£750,000) to support the growing number of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

He told Kelly: "I'm really amazed at how much people have stepped up. Our contribution was matched almost within 24 hours. Both my wife and I realise how lucky we are to be able to do that."

The Adam Project, available on Netflix from March 11, sees Reynolds playing a pilot who time-travels and teams up with his younger self.

- Lorraine airs on ITV on weekdays from 9am on ITV and ITV Hub.

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Everton fan who helped Ukrainian refugees scores penalty in pre-season friendly*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:661W-NJN1-JBNF-W37K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 29, 2022 Friday 11:49 PM GMT

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**Section:** FOOTBALL,SPORT; Version:2

**Length:** 140 words

**Byline:** Pa Sport Staff

**Highlight:** The Toffees brought on Paul Stratton towards the end of the ‘match for peace’ against Ukrainian side Dynamo Kiev

**Body**

An [*Everton*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/everton) fan who has been working to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** was brought on to take a penalty during their pre-season friendly against Dynamo Kyiv at Goodison Park.

Paul Stratton, who used his time off from working for Liverpool Council to travel to Poland and hand out supplies to people fleeing the war, came on towards the end of the ‘match for peace’.

He was given instructions on the touchline by manager [*Frank Lampard*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/frank-lampard) before striding on to the pitch in full Toffees kit to take the penalty.

Stratton tucked away his spot-kick in front of the Gwladys Street End and celebrated in front of the fans before being congratulated by Everton’s players.

Everton led 3-0 at the time, with [*Dwight McNeil*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dwight-mcneil) having climbed off the bench to score twice on his first Toffees appearance after [*Dominic Calvert-Lewin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dominic-calvert-lewin) opened the scoring inside four minutes.

**Load-Date:** July 30, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Seven in 10 Homes for Ukraine hosts find support hindered by cost of living*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6649-46G1-JBNF-W4M0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 10, 2022 Wednesday 11:07 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:3

**Length:** 895 words

**Byline:** Jemma Crew

**Highlight:** Almost all current or previous sponsors said they have provided extra support to their guests and have incurred extra costs due to hosting.

**Body**

Seven in 10 previous or current UK sponsors of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** say their ability to provide support has been hindered by the cost-of-living crisis, figures have suggested.

Some 21% of people who have or are currently hosting Ukrainians in their homes said the rising cost of living has affected their ability to provide support “quite a lot”, the [*Office for National Statistics*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/office-for-national-statistics) (ONS) said.

A further 9% said it has affected their ability to help “very much”, while 41% said it has been affected “a little”.

Some 26% said it has not affected their ability to help at all, while 3% replied “don’t know”.

It is the first time the ONS has published data on sponsors under the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme and it warned that the figures are experimental.

The Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme allows Ukrainian nationals and their relatives to come to the UK if they have a sponsor who can provide accommodation for at least six months.

The ONS surveyed all UK adults registered with the scheme as of July 7 in collaboration with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

Some 17,702 people responded, with almost three-quarters (74%) currently hosting, 4% having previously hosted, 18% with their first guests due to move in, and 3% planning to host in future.

One-third (33%) of those with current or previous guests reported meeting them through social media, while 23% used a matching service.

More than half (56%) of registered sponsors were female and the most common age range was between 50 to 69 years.

Some 43% of registered sponsors were working full-time, while 21% were retired.

Almost all (99%) current or previous sponsors said they have regularly provided extra support to their guests, such as food, childcare, taking them to appointments, and financial help.

The same proportion said they have incurred extra costs due to hosting.

We’ve published a release on the experiences of Homes for Ukraine scheme sponsors providing accommodation to people fleeing the conflict in Ukraine, exploring hosting arrangements support provided‍‍‍ sponsor characteristics, intentions & challenges[*https://t.co/fRsvfad2oy*](https://t.co/fRsvfad2oy) [*pic.twitter.com/s7CjbIer3Z*](https://t.co/s7CjbIer3Z) — Office for National Statistics (ONS) (@ONS) [*August 10, 2022*](https://twitter.com/ONS/status/1557283444815691778?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

These include higher water, gas and electricity costs (91%), additional food spending (73%), costs of purchasing bedding and toiletries for their guests (71%) and extra transport costs (66%).

Some 10% of the hosts said their guests have contributed financially, with 9% saying this was towards food or groceries.

The survey identified variation around how long current sponsors want to continue hosting – 6% said they wanted the arrangement to last less than six months, almost a fifth (19%) expected it to last six months, while 23% intended to provide a home for longer than a year.

Of current sponsors who wanted the arrangement to last six months or less, 23% said they did not plan to continue hosting because of the rising cost of living or because they could not afford it.

More than half (58%) said they had only intended to provide short-term accommodation.

Of those who planned to provide accommodation for between six and 12 months, 70% said continued £350 “thank you” payments each month would encourage them to host for longer.

Asked what originally encouraged them to apply for the scheme, most (94%) said they wanted to help people fleeing a war zone.

A minority (10%) said they were motivated by the monthly £350 thank you payments.

Refugees minister Lord (Richard) Harrington said: “These latest ONS stats show the vast majority of sponsors say they want to provide support for longer than six months, which is testament to the goodwill the British public has shown the people of Ukraine since tanks first rolled across the border.

“They will, of course, continue to receive monthly ‘thank you’ payments for up to 12 months to help with the associated costs of opening up your home.

“We initially asked sponsors to host for a minimum of six months and we are working closely with councils to ensure Ukrainians have a safe place to live if they decide to move on. We are contacting sponsors directly to outline next steps and the support available to them and the Ukrainians they are sponsoring.”

Councils, sponsors and Ukrainian guests all need to know what the options are at the end of the six-month initial placement period so they can start planning now

James Jamieson, Local Government Association

The Local [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) Association (LGA) called for the Government to consider increasing the monthly thank you payments for those who continue hosting for longer than six months.

Councils are concerned about the number of hosts who have indicated they do not want to continue.

LGA chairman James Jamieson said: “Councils, sponsors and Ukrainian guests all need to know what the options are at the end of the six-month initial placement period so they can start planning now.

“We hope a number of Homes for Ukraine sponsors continue to house ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** with them and we are talking to Government about how we might encourage that; for instance, increasing the thank you payment to a higher amount so the sponsors can be sure it’s not costing them.

“There is a significant risk that – even if rematching is available – many Ukrainian families may need to present as homeless because of a lack of sponsors or other options.”

**Load-Date:** August 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Covid booster jabs will be offered to over-75s from Monday*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XV-6BK1-JBNF-W19W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 6, 2022 Sunday 1:46 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 329 words

**Byline:** Neil Pooran

**Highlight:** Care home residents and immunocompromised people will also receive invitations.

**Body**

Booster jabs for the coronavirus vaccine will be offered to over-75s and those most at risk from the virus from Monday.

The [*Scottish Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scottish-government) says a spring booster dose will be offered to those who received their last jab at least 24 weeks ago.

It follows a decision by the Joint Committee on [*Vaccination*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vaccination) and Immunisation (JCVI) on February 21.

As well as over-75s, those being offered boosters will include care home residents and people who are immunocompromised.

Immunity derived from the vaccine declines over time and many in this category received their last dose in September or October 2021.

Letters are also being sent to parents of children aged between five and 11 inviting them to their first vaccination appointment.

[*Children*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/children) with certain medical conditions in this age group have already been invited.

Health Secretary [*Humza Yousaf*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/humza-yousaf) said: "We know that those in high-priority groups are at higher risk of serious illness from Covid-19, and I therefore welcome the start of the rollout which will offer a further dose to these people.

"Vaccination has been our most effective tool against coronavirus.

"However, the degree of protection offered wanes over time, which is why booster vaccination is needed to maintain the best protection against Covid-19 for those at highest risk of severe effects of the virus.

"The additional booster dose will improve your level of protection significantly and is the best way to protect your health and those around you.

"I continue to encourage everyone to receive the doses they are eligible for as and when they become available."

Read More

[*Ukraine-Russia war news: Zelensky responds to nuclear plant attack*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-news-putin-war-b2028568.html)

[*Why has Russia invaded Ukraine? The conflict explained*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/why-russia-ukraine-invasion-putin-b2026550.html)

[*Sign The Independent's petition to help the people of Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-refugees-russia-petition-help-b2025628.html)

[*More than 80,000* ***Ukrainian******refugees*** *could arrive in Ireland, minister says*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/ireland-department-of-justice-department-of-justice-europe-dublin-b2029680.html)

[*Hampshire couple take Molly the motorhome to help people fleeing Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/ukraine-hampshire-andover-un-refugee-agency-gofundme-b2029669.html)

[*Former head of Orange Order must abide by Labour values - Sarwar*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/labour-orange-order-north-lanarkshire-scotland-islamophobia-b2029668.html)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Patel is blind to her cruelty towards fleeing Ukrainians*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YM-HVV1-JCS0-D2BC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 10, 2022 Thursday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 7

**Length:** 812 words

**Byline:** TOM PECK POLITICAL SKETCH WRITER

**Body**

As we stare down the barrel of yet another horrific global catastrophe, it feels as if we are in that now-familiar phase in which there is a knee-jerk reaction of outrage should anyone dare to criticise the government. As if to do so would be somehow unpatriotic.

Trouble is, we've been here before. It is not yet two years since vitriol was heaped upon anyone who dared to whisper that Boris Johnson didn't have a clue what he was doing. That he should have locked down faster. That, dare one even think it, those giant Nightingale hospitals were a crass PR stunt. A multi-storey car park full of beds, but no one to staff them.

And if you dare to suggest, again, that Johnson is floundering in the dark, making it up as he goes along, you can expect more of the same. Even though what Johnson does is exactly the same. If in doubt - and he is always in doubt - just claim that you're "leading the world". Heardthat one before? At Prime Minister's Questions, he was, unsurprisingly, expected to account for the fact that the UK is once again making a fool of itself on the subject of immigration, and in this case, refugee status for Ukrainians fleeing war.

Every other comparable country has opened its arms and flung open its borders. According to a reporter at a Romanian airport yesterday morning, every flight out was full of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***; be it to Frankfurt or even to Dublin. Except for the flight to London Luton, for the sole reason that this was the only destination that required visas to have been processed prior to take off.

So what was Johnson's answer? "We have done more to resettle vulnerable people than any other European country since 2015," he said.

This is such preposterous garbage it is incredibly offensive. It hardly needs to be repeated that in 2016, Germany granted asylum to a million Syrian refugees, while Johnson's Brexit pals exploited their appalling deaths in the Mediterranean to win their referendum.

The prime minister has also yet to provide any kind of reasonable explanation for why independent reports have concluded that he personally intervened to assist in the evacuation of dogs from Afghanistan, ahead of actual human beings who had assisted British armed forces (one of whom drowned when his dinghy capsized in the Channel a few weeks later.)

While he spoke, news reporters in Ukraine and in the towns over its borders were reduced to sitting on telephone helplines to assist desperate families who didn't speak English, only to be told, in the end, that they couldn't be helped.

After Prime Minister's Questions, the PM's spokesperson was on hand to explain exactly what was happening with regard to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** trying to get to Britain, as the details that had come to light were so preposterous and so egregious that could hardly be believed. But the reality was worse. There will still be no visa processing centre in Calais, because to have one there would apparently incentivise people to go there.

There is to be a "pop-up" centre in Lille, 75 miles away, but it will be by appointment only. Appointments will be virtually impossible to secure, and the location of this centre will remain secret. Naturally, this is all the work of Priti Patel. And sadly, we must return, once again to the now home secretary's appearance on BBC Question Time more than 10 years ago. Back then, she was arguing in favour of the death penalty, because she is simply that cruel; and when it was pointed out to her, by Private Eye editor Ian Hislop, that wherever the death penalty still exists, innocent people are executed, she didn't appear to appreciate the points being put to her.

It is always worth rewatching, because it is frankly the best way to understand why the Home Office functions in the way it does. Because it is run by someone who is not merely cruel by nature, but who doesn't seem to recognise how cruel she is. And it is also worth recalling that she has been sacked once for endangering national security, and when the adviser on ministerial standards found her to have broken the ministerial code, he resigned because she wasn't sacked again.

All this is preventable, of course it is. Things could very easily be better. On Tuesday evening, Johnson led two separate standing ovations in the House of Commons to the Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky. Last week, he also rose to applaud the Ukrainian ambassador, who was in the public gallery at Prime Minister's Questions. A week later, the same man, Vadym Prystaiko, was giving evidence to a parliamentary committee about how even he, the actual ambassador, had struggled to acquire a UK visa for his wife.

And while all this goes on, Ukrainian people trek halfway across France and back, trying to find a pop-up visa centre that's been deliberately hidden from them. It really is world-beating stuff, though not quite in the way the prime minister imagines.

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Immigration firebombing suspect ‘posted anti-Muslim rants on Facebook’*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66S1-W2P1-DY4H-K231-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

November 1, 2022 Tuesday 5:24 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:3

**Length:** 359 words

**Byline:** Katie Boyden

**Highlight:** Andrew Leak, 66 and from High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire, has been named as the suspect in the firebombing of an immigration centre in Dover.

**Body**

The suspect in a firebombing attack at an immigration processing centre appears to have posted anti-Muslim rants on [*Facebook*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/facebook).

He was named by police on Tuesday as Andrew Leak, aged 66 from [*High Wycombe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/high-wycombe) in Buckinghamshire.

Leak is thought to have thrown two or three incendiary devices at the Western Jet Foil site in Dover, Kent, at about 11.20am on Sunday before killing himself in his car in the car park of a nearby garage.

He was described by North Thanet MP Sir [*Roger Gale*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/roger-gale) on Monday as having “severe mental health difficulties”.

You can clearly not look for work if you cannot read English or speak English, they are breaking the law, time to stand up

Andrew Leak, writing on Facebook

Facebook posts on an account under the name of an Andy Leak from High Wycombe contain anti-Muslim sentiments and complaints about people claiming benefits if they do not speak [*English*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/english).

One, shared on August 9, said: “The next time the job centre sanctions your money for not looking for enough work ask them about the thousands of people getting benefits cannot speak English and can not write English, how are they looking for work?

“Unemployment benefits clearly state you cannot claim benefits if not looking for work, all of these people should be excluded from benefits.

“You can clearly not look for work if you cannot read English or speak English, they are breaking the law, time to stand up.”

Another post, on July 24, said: “All [*Muslims*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/muslims) are guilty of grooming, they never spoke out because it wasn’t their daughters, f\*\*\*\*\*\* animals wake up up.

“They only rape non-Muslims that’s a religious hate crime are you f\*\*\*\*\*\* stupid.”

Leak also shared an anti-royal family post on March 20, saying: “Prince Charles says he’s going to house ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in one of his properties that belong to the British people, what about soldiers and members of the public sleeping in doorways? Disgrace.

“End the royal family now.”

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, which provides mental health services for Buckinghamshire, declined to comment when asked by the PA news agency whether Mr Leak was a patient or was known to the organisation, adding that it was a “police matter”.

**Load-Date:** November 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Tory MP says every Russian living in Britain should be 'sent home'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WJ-PX31-JBNF-W39M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 28, 2022 Monday 3:37 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 306 words

**Byline:** Jon Stone

**Highlight:** Roger Gale accepted there would be 'collateral damage' from the move

**Body**

Every Russian citizen living in the UK should be expelled and "sent home" a Conservative MP has said.

[*Roger Gale*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/roger-gale) , the MP for North Thanet in Kent, argued that visas should be rescinded for "everybody" with Russian nationality on account of the invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Sir Roger accepted that this would mean kicking out "good and honest" people - but argued that "collateral damage" was necessary to send a message to Vladimir Putin.

It comes amid debate about what sanctions should be imposed on [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) in the wake of Mr Putin's invasion of Ukraine, and how best to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Speaking during an interview on talkRADIO Sir Roger said: "Well, I'm sorry, my view is that we should send a very clear message and rescind all the visas for Russian citizens currently extant in the United Kingdom and send everybody home."

Asked by the show's presenter whether he meant "every Russian", the North Thanet MP replied: "Well there's going to be some collateral damage because there are good and honest and decent Russians in this country, working in all sorts of spheres."

Sir Roger added that the UK could and should not "pick and choose", telling the broadcaster: "What we've got to do, I'm afraid, is send a very harsh message through the Russian people to Putin."

"The only way this message is going to get through - and it may seem facile to say we're not going to play you at football there -but for the ordinary Russian these things do actually matter."

His comments come after Conservative MP and foreign affairs select committee chair Tom Tugendhat last week suggested that Britain could "expel Russian citizens, all of them".

The government has not said it has plans to impose blanket sanctions on Russian passport holders. Instead sanctions have targeted Russian elites, companies, financial institutions with restrictive measures.

**Load-Date:** February 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Squatters occupy London mansion owned by Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska in protest over Ukraine war*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650H-FV01-DY4H-K1B2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 14, 2022 Monday 10:39 AM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:15

**Length:** 864 words

**Byline:** Lamiat Sabin and Zoe Tidman

**Highlight:** Anarchist group says it 'will go further' to see more oligarchs' properties occupied

**Body**

Squatters have occupied a [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) mansion owned by a Russian oligarch in protest over Vladimir Putin's invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Several activists from the group known as the London Makhnovists took over the luxury townhouse in Belgrave Square on Monday, claiming that it now "belongs to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***".

They hung a Ukrainian flag from an upstairs window and unfurled a banner that reads "this property has been liberated".

Another banner reads: "Putin go f\*\*\* yourself."

The property is owned by Oleg Deripaska, a Russian billionaire industrialist with close links with the British political establishment, who was targeted by government sanctions last week.

He was described as "a prominent Russian businessman and pro-Kremlin oligarch", who is "closely associated" with both the Russian government and Putin.

The house at 5 Belgrave Square was worth £25 million back in 2002, and is one of the many UK properties in Deripaska's property portfolio - having been owned via an offshore British Virgin Islands company.

When The Independent asked the activists how long they plan to be at the property, one of the squatters shouted from the balcony: "Until Putin stops the war."

The group is named after the 1917 Ukrainian anarchist movement known as the Makhnovists, that was led by Nestor Ivanovich Makhno.

In response to the The Independent asking how they entered the house, the activist joked that the "ghost of Nestor Makhno manifested itself and opened the door."

The activists described their group as a "property liberation front", and are demanding that properties of oligarchs are seized to house refugees.

One of the activists vowed to "go further" to occupy properties - adding "no more oligarchs' mansions!"

They also said: "Do we want to live in a society that protects mansions of oligarchs, or that houses refugees?"

A passer-by was overheard saying: "Good for them. F\*\*\* Putin."

Later, the Met Police said they searched the mansion and are "satisfied" that no protesters are inside - adding that four men are still sitting on the edge of a balcony.

In a statement, police said: "We continue to engage with those on the balcony as we balance the need for enforcement with the safety of all involved."

An activist accused police of "restricting the protest" and claimed that "the only thing standing in the way of refugees being housed is the police".

Officers had cordoned off part of the street in the area where embassies of many countries are located.

Officers at the scene declined to answer reporters' questions.

Six police vans were outside the property, including those of the Metropolitan Police's Territorial Support Group.

In a statement, the Met Police said officers were called to the property at 1am on Monday, and found that "a number of people had gained entry and hung banners from upstairs windows".

The anarchists said, in a statement, that they had taken over the mansion "in protest against Putin and his world" and wanted to show solidary with Ukrainians whose lives are devastated by the invasion.

In Ukraine, about 600 civilians have been killed - according to the United Nations, more than 2.5 million people have been forced to flee, and Russian troops' bombardments have destroyed infrastructure and homes across the country in the invasion launched on 24 February.

"This mansion belongs to a Russian oligarch, complicit in Putin's invasion of Ukraine," the squatters said in a statement.

They said the residence would "serve as a centre for refugee support, for Ukrainians and people of all nations and ethnicities".

While the activists occupied the house, Mayor of London Sadiq Khan repeated his call for some oligarch-owned London properties - that he called "gold bricks used to launder money" - to be used for housing displaced Ukrainians.

"I think the government should be seizing them, and before selling them - because they'll take some time - they should be using them to house those Ukrainians who are fleeing Ukraine, who we'll be offering a safe haven in London," he told Times Radio.

"It's a form of poetic justice, but also it's a good use of these many, many empty properties sitting across London simply with dust being gathered inside rather than them being used to house people who need homes."

Over the weekend, housing secretary Michael Gove [*said the government wants to "explore" the option*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/russian-oligarchs-mansions-ukraine-refugees-b2034756.html) of using sanctioned oligarchs' properties to house ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015.

Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered.

To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*UK refugee scheme 'taking so long' say couple opening up their home*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6527-JR81-JBNF-W3WN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 22, 2022 Tuesday 12:07 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 829 words

**Byline:** Gemma Bradley

**Highlight:** Volunteers are also increasingly concerned about the threat of human trafficking as women are left stranded in Europe with young children.

**Body**

The UK's Ukrainian refugee visa scheme is "taking so long" while families wait in conditions where an hour "feels like a week", a couple offering up their home said.

Chris Tattersall, 63, and his wife [*Anne*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/anne) , 62, said they have been communicating with a family stuck in [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) for two weeks but no progress has been made in getting them to the UK.

The couple, from Torrington, Devon, registered to take part in the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine scheme and posted an online advert offering two spare bedrooms vacated by their sons.

Two weeks ago, they were connected with Alana, a mother stuck in Poland after fleeing Ukraine with her nine-year-old child, grandparents and a pet cat.

"Every hour somebody is sat there with a child and with a bag is like a week, a day is like a year and almost a month is like a lifetime," Mr Tattersall told the PA news agency.

"Everything is taking so long when you've got people with nothing.

"I said that we will pick them up from wherever. If we've got to drive to Poland, then we will drive to Poland, it doesn't matter.

"We can offer shelter and love... I'm sure the majority of people like myself, they'll do anything just to make it work."

The United Kingdom stands with the people of Ukraine People across the country want to support those defending Ukraine and those fleeing their homes because of the invasion. Here's how you can help Please share [*https://t.co/jwQz6nqsi4*](https://t.co/jwQz6nqsi4) - UK Prime Minister (@10DowningStreet) [*March 4, 2022*](https://twitter.com/10DowningStreet/status/1499687919459749888?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Mrs Tattersall, who is originally from Ireland and has lived in Devon for 37 years, said there was "no help at all" for Alana and her family when they were trying to cross the Ukrainian-Polish border.

"I mean, it's a war, why can't they just let them in? And then we can process them the same way in which Ireland did," she said.

"Every other country has pulled out all the stops, but not the UK."

There are two UK schemes for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***: the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme, for which anybody with space to house a refugee can apply; and the Ukraine family scheme, for those who already have relatives in the UK.

Some 10,200 visas had been issued under the Ukraine family scheme as of 4pm on Sunday, and a total of 31,500 applications had been submitted, according to provisional data published on the Home Office's website.

Data for the Homes for Ukraine scheme has not yet been released, but Health Secretary Sajid Javid said 150,000 people had expressed an interest in hosting refugees through the programme.

UK-born volunteers who have travelled to [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) to assist in the refugee crisis have also criticised the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) for leaving women at risk of trafficking because of delays with their visa applications.

Ruth McMenamin, who normally works in marketing but is currently volunteering at Poland's Warsaw train station, said thousands of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** are arriving every day for basic health care, toiletries and hot food.

The 34-year-old, from Bristol, has been volunteering at the station for the past week after arriving in Poland on March 11.

She told the PA news agency: "When I rang the Home Office the other day, they said... once they've received a match, it would take one week to get the piece of paper that they need to then book a flight.

"That causes quite a lot of problems because they've got someone that needs to stay for a week in temporary accommodation and they've just travelled for three, four days.

"It's usually a woman by themselves with a couple of young kids and they're just exhausted.

"Then there's obviously all the other dangers around that; there are safeguarding issues.

"There's been reports of trafficking, sexual assaults. Making someone wait a week after they've escaped a war-torn country isn't good enough."

Ms McMenamin said the process needs to be more "dignified" and the UK Government needs to "throw more resources at this" to process people quicker or allow them into the country, give them a safe place to stay and then allocate them to a household post-arrival.

A Department of Housing, Levelling Up and Community spokesman said: "We are moving as quickly as possible to ensure that those fleeing horrific persecution in Ukraine can find safety in the UK, and our Homes for Ukraine scheme now allows those without family connections to come to the UK.

"We have streamlined the visa application process so valid passport holders no longer have to attend in-person appointments before arriving, allowing us to welcome people faster while still maintaining vital security checks, which ensure those who could pose a threat to our safety are prevented from getting here."

A Home Office spokesman added: "The Government is committed to tackling the heinous crime of human trafficking.

"We will continue to clamp down on those who continue to exploit vulnerable people, while providing tailored support for victims to help their recovery.

"We are keeping the situation in Ukraine under review and remain in close contact with the Ukrainian government."

**Load-Date:** March 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[*UK slammed for 'dreadful' treatment of war's refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YD-JPY1-JCS0-D132-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 9, 2022 Wednesday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 9

**Length:** 870 words

**Byline:** MAY BULMAN SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

Frustration and confusion around the UK's response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis continued yesterday as Priti Patel was accused of misleading parliament over arrangements for thosetrying to reach the UK viaCalais.

No 10 announced that hundreds of refugees who had travelled to the French town in the hope of reaching loved ones in Britain would have to make a 70-mile journey to Lille to apply for visas, despite previous suggestions that there would be a visa centre closer to the port. The Home Office has said that ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** can take free tickets offered by Eurostar to make the journey from Calais to Lille - but there are no journeys available on the Eurostar website between these two locations.

Concern meanwhile mounted around the bureaucratic process refugees are confronted with when trying to apply under the UK's family migration route, as it emerged some are having to wait weeks to get a visa appointment, while others turned up to visa centres to discover that they were closed.

A lack of available appointment slots at visa centres in EU countries has meant some refugees are not currently able to apply for the new refugee scheme, under which Ms Patel has said tens of thousands of close relatives of British nationals and people settled in the UK will be eligible to come to Britain after it opened on Friday. MPs said there were no appointments in Paris until 15 March and none in Poland until the "end of the month". The Independent has been in touch with Ukrainians who have said they have been unable to book an appointment. The Home Office has insisted that there are free appointments.

***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in Poland, including elderly people and children, were forced to queue for several hours in freezing conditions outside a visa centre in Rzeszow after it stopped accepting walk-in appointments - a situation described by Labour's Clive Efford described as "complete chaos". Andrei Toloshko, 37, who fled from Kyiv with his wife, Eugenia and five-year-old son Ilya, said he had not yet managed to submit an application to join his brother in the UK due to no appointments being available.

The Ukraine resident said he attended the UK visa centre in Chisinau, Moldova - the only centre in the country - on Monday and were turned away because there were too many people. They returned yesterday to find that the centre was shut for a public holiday. "I'm shocked. The Home Office said they would try to make it faster, but it's no different to normal. They are obviously completely unprepared for this situation," he told The Independent. He has now managed to book an appointment for Saturday.

The Independent understands that the Home Office has placed 35 additional Home Office staff in visa centres across Europe, which is expected to go up to 50 in the coming days. There are 57 UK visa centres across the continent. On Monday evening the Home Office revealed that 300visashad been granted to Ukrainiansafter the department received thousands of applications.

It emerged yesterday that the Home Office was warned in November by the immigration watchdog that the "geographical spread" of its visa centres was causing "particular challenges" for vulnerable applicants and leading to difficult and dangerous journeys - yet no action was taken despite warnings of the imminent invasion in Ukraine. Shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper told the House of Commons that most people trying to apply to come to Britain were being "held up by Home Office bureaucracy or being turned away in their time of need".

"It is truly dreadful the way that desperate people are being treated. Families are being expected to travel hundreds of miles to visa centres that only open part time, or to wait a week for the next appointment," she said. During the same sitting, Ms Patel was accused by a senior Conservative MP of misleading parliament over arrangements for Ukrainianrefugeestrying to reach the UK viaCalais, after she twice claimed that a centre had been set up on the way to the French port - only for it to later emerge that no such centre had been set up.

Sir Roger Gale told the Commons that "in any normal administration", her behaviour would have been a resignation matter. Instead of admitting that she had given inaccurate information, the home secretary wrongly told Ms Cooper that she had already "made quite clear" that the centre had not yet been set up and accused the Labour frontbencher of mishearing her earlier comments.

It came as Downing Street announced that the former Tory minister Richard Harrington had been appointed as the new minister for refugees. Mr Harrington, who stood down as an MP at the 2019 general election, will be made a life peer so he can sit in the Lords. Meanwhile, The Independent revealed that Ukrainians who worked at the British embassy in Kyiv have been told they will not get refuge in the UK as they seek to flee the war unless they can fulfil strict entry qualifications.

Unlike other European countries, the UK is demanding that Ukrainians seeking sanctuary apply for visas, which are granted only to those with family links in Britain. A second scheme, not yet in operation, will allow entry to individuals sponsored by councils, charities or businesses.

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*UK blamed for 'dreadful' treatment of war refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YD-JPY1-JCS0-D13Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 9, 2022 Wednesday

Second Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 10

**Length:** 870 words

**Byline:** MAY BULMAN SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

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**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Czechs rally to demand resignation of pro-Western government*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66R5-MT01-DY4H-K2RC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

October 28, 2022 Friday 4:23 PM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 369 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Tens of thousands Czechs have used a national holiday to rally in the capital against the pro-Western government and its support for Ukraine’s fight against the Russian invasion

**Body**

Tens of thousands of Czechs used a national holiday Friday to rally in the capital against the pro-Western government and its support for Ukraine’s fight against the Russian invasion.

The rally follows two others at Prague’s central [*Wenceslas Square*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/wenceslas-square) and was smaller than the 70,000 who gathered for the same reasons on Sept. 3, according to police estimates.

Held under the slogan “The Czech Republic first,” a reference to former U.S. President Donald Trump’s nationalist platform, the protest united the far right with the far left and various fringe groups. Its organizers are known for pro-Russian views and opposition to COVID-19 vaccines.

With soaring energy, food and housing prices hitting the country, the protesters were demanding the resignation of the coalition government led by conservative Prime Minister Petr Fiala.

“Resign!” they chanted while waving the national flags.

The protesters have repeatedly condemned the government for its support of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) and the European Union sanctions against Russia, opposed Czech membership in the EU, NATO and other international organizations such as the United Nations and the World Health Organization, .

“Russia’s not our enemy, the government of warmongers is the enemy,” one speaker said.

A smaller rally was held in the country's second-largest city of Brno.

The government has dismissed those demands.

“We know who’s our friend and who’s bleeding for our freedom,” Interior Minister Vit Rakusan tweeted. “And we also know who’s our enemy.”

Czechia has been a staunch supporter of Ukraine, donated heavy weapons to the Ukrainian army and given about 450,000 visas to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** that give them access to health care, financial help, work permits and other benefits.

Fiala and several ministers were planning to travel to Kyiv on Monday for a joint meeting of the Czech and Ukrainian governments.

“We intensively support the justified fight of the Ukrainian people against the Russian aggression,” Fiala said Saturday.

Although the country's populist opposition made some gains in the municipal election last month, the five ruling coalition parties won big in the vote earlier this month for one-third of the seats in Parliament’s upper house, the Senate.

**Load-Date:** October 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Voices: Boris Johnson presents himself as the leader of Europe's fight against Russia - but is he really?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YF-YBJ1-JBNF-W35T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 9, 2022 Wednesday 12:53 PM GMT

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**Section:** VOICES; Version:2

**Length:** 808 words

**Byline:** Andrew Grice

**Highlight:** A better relationship with France before the war could have given Johnson real influence, but needless post-Brexit tensions and silly point-scoring have left a cloud

**Body**

Boris Johnson is presenting himself as leader of [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) 's fight against [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia). He sensed an opening, given Angela Merkel's departure and Emmanuel Macron's weakened authority after his naivety during his talks with Vladimir Putin before the invasion of Ukraine.

This week, Johnson has hosted two London summits with fellow leaders in the anti-Putin coalition - the first with Canada and the Netherlands, the second with Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. His campaign was boosted when [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) , Ukraine's remarkable president, told him "we are very grateful to you, Boris", in his moving speech to the Commons.

Good pictures, and yet Johnson's pitch to be leading Europe is ridiculed in EU capitals. Diplomats note that UK ministers talk up the role of Nato and the G7 - but barely mention the EU's. "The UK wants to give the impression it is leading in Europe but it is not," one said. "The truth is that we miss the UK's strategic thinking on security. It could have been a key voice in the EU debate. But it is now irrelevant to it".

French officials tell me that if the UK were still an EU member, Paris would now be reaching agreement with London first before putting a proposal to Berlin because it trusts the UK's instincts and experience on security more than Germany's, despite Olaf Scholz's surprise and historic conversion to supplying arms to Ukraine. When we look back at Europe's biggest crisis since the Second World War, the German chancellor, rather than Johnson, might emerge as the continent's real leader.

A better relationship with France before the war could still have given Johnson real influence, but needless post-Brexit tensions and silly point-scoring between Johnson and Macron left a cloud. So, there isn't close coordination between Britain and France over Ukraine. True, Johnson can grab a few headlines and praise for his statesmanship from Tory MPs (though he will welcome the good reviews he is now getting from them given his weak position at the start of the war). But to the EU, it's "just spin", as one official put it.

I'm not talking about rejoining the EU. I'm an ex-Remainer but not a Remoaner. We are staying out. But that doesn't mean we can't forge a constructive relationship with those Johnson calls "our EU friends and partners". He should end his phobia about dealing with EU institutions which makes him rely on bilateral contacts with member states.

Talk of a new "EU plus one" alliance with the UK is premature. Liz Truss's invitation to attend a meeting of EU foreign ministers was not supported by all the EU's key players. Josep Borrell, the EU's high representative for foreign affairs, took the decision, despite the doubts of Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commission president and Charles Michel, president of the European Council.

To keep up to speed with all the latest opinions and comment sign up to our free weekly Voices Dispatches newsletter by [*clicking here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Fnewsletters%3Fitm_channel%3Dnative%26itm_campaign%3Dfooter%26itm_audience%3Dprospecting%26itm_content%3Dnewsletters&data=04%7C01%7CVictoria.Richards%40independent.co.uk%7C062b3d811f2541e4220808d98fb59a11%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637698832400255119%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=cljURBTtBLaWfVwBrZv8UPgOVVFGM0rPoexRmk0aRHA%3D&reserved=0)

While EU figures welcome Truss's positive approach, they remain wary of Johnson. "No one trusts him one bit," one diplomat told me. Johnson damaged "Global Britain's" image around the world by ripping up an international agreement he signed, the Northern Ireland protocol, and by cutting the overseas aid budget by £4bn. Ironically, the EU is now filling the aid gap in Africa, spreading its influence at the UK's expense: another triumph for the PM.

Johnson's aspirations on the world stage have also been set back by the [*Home Office's chaotic, slow and grudging response*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukrainian-refugees-home-office-visa-uk-b2031392.html) to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

It's time for Johnson to move on and into the new world in which the UK is rightly fighting a real war, rather than a juvenile war of words with its natural ally and biggest trading partner. If not now, when?

It shames the country and is another terrible advert for Global Britain. The underlying cause is the same Brexit mentality preventing proper relations with EU institutions. "We have a big heart in this country," Grant Shapps, the transport secretary, argued on BBC Radio 4 this morning. Yet the obsession with having "control" of our borders trumps the government's compassion. For once, the Brexiteers are out of tune with the public on immigration; six out of 10 people want to waive visa requirements for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and only 15 per cent oppose the idea, [*according to Savanta ComRes*](https://leftfootforward.org/2022/03/exclusive-majority-of-voters-support-waiving-visa-requirements-for-ukrainian-refugees-poll-finds/).

Even the Tories' Brexit cheerleaders at The Daily Telegraph, the Daily Mail and The Sun are appalled. Priti Patel's cabinet colleagues and many Tory backbenchers are worried she is trying to tweak the UK's bureaucratic system rather than acknowledge the obvious need to create a new one for this emergency. Johnson's lack of confidence in Patel is reflected in his decision to appoint a minister for refugees, Richard Harrington, outside the Home Office.

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Priti Patel's declining power within government leaves her exposed*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YR-K8V1-DY4H-K3G7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 10, 2022 Thursday 10:30 PM GMT

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**Section:** POLITICS EXPLAINED,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:1

**Length:** 808 words

**Byline:** Sean O'Grady

**Highlight:** The next ministerial reshuffle isn't due for some months yet - but there doesn't seem to be much protecting the home secretary, writes Sean O'Grady

**Body**

If [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) were a currency she'd be looking very much like the Russian rouble right now: unloved, badly devalued and with no early sign of a recovery in her political fortunes.

On a generous reading, the home secretary can't win. For years she has made the working assumption that all inward migration is bad and the Tories' target voters appear to hate it. So she's made things as difficult as she can. The grassroots applauded. She was popular.

Now, though, the British public seems moved, possibly temporarily, by the plight of the Ukrainian people, and there has been a great outpouring of compassion and calls for them to be given shelter. Compassion is not something that Patel "does" in the normal course of affairs, and she has been caught out. In a U-turn she has abandoned all pretence of accessible visa centres and the deliberately cumbersome bureaucracy designed to keep the refugees on the side of the Oder-Neisse line.

Instead, ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** can now do everything online and deal with the biometrics when they arrive in Britain. The downside for Patel is that some unhelpful people might wonder why this more humane procedure can't be made available to other refugees...

Patel has reportedly had a difficult time in cabinet, "squirming" while trying to justify the chaos and delay in the response to the invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine). She's been openly attacked by some of her own backbenchers. She has also found herself up against Yvette Cooper as shadow home secretary. When Cooper was chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee, Patel only had to deal with her occasionally. Now she is back on the front bench, Cooper can shred Patel every week. She does this even when Patel doesn't turn up in the Commons to plead her case.

Meanwhile, Patel is losing those to the right of her - they do exist - who cannot comprehend why refugees and economic migrants are continuing to cross the English Channel in dinghies. Led by Nigel Farage and some of the more difficult MPs, her failure to "control our borders" has been boiling their blood for many months. It doesn't matter to them that the movement of people is practically impossible to stop under international conventions on refugees, human rights and the law of the sea.

Post-Brexit, our former European partners are under no obligation to help the UK out, and Patel has to pay the French to try and prevent the little boats heading out to sea. As with Ukraine, but for the opposite reason, no one is satisfied with Patel's performance. She is the reverse Goldilocks of immigration - some think her policy is too hard, others think it too soft, and few think it just right.

Patel's flagship Nationality and Borders Bill was designed to deal with all these problems and more, and spark a few politically useful culture wars with the Labour Party on the way. So was the Borders Police, Crime, Sentencing and Crime bill, sponsored now by Dominic Raab. However, she has had great difficulty in getting the legislation through parliament, and has come under intense pressure particularly on the right to asylum enshrined in international law, and the arbitrary removal of British citizenship.

In many ways, Patel has had enjoyed a charmed political life. Forced to resign as international development secretary under Theresa May for unofficial meetings with Israeli politicians, she supported the Leave side in the referendum, which unexpectedly won, and was then propelled into the Home Office by Boris Johnson. She was censured by the independent adviser on ministerial conduct after an inquiry into allegations of bullying, but survived when Johnson told his MPs to "form a protective square around 'The Prittster'".

Since then Patel has muddled through multiple migration crisis, found herself on the wrong side of the "taking the knee" movement, was kept away from the Downing Street Covid-19 briefings, and was blindsided by Sadiq Khan over the sacking of Met commissioner Cressida Dick.

The clearest indication of her declining grip on power is how her department has been losing control over key policy areas to other parts of government - coordinating Channel migration to the royal navy, and ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to the Department for Levelling Up and Michael Gove. Politically, the most accurate gauge of her declaring popularity among the Tory grassroots is her standing in the ConservativeHome members' poll rating senior Tories. She's fallen from fourth place and a net approval approval score of +79.7 two years ago, to being fourth from the bottom and a score of +4.2 now. YouGov estimates that 57 per cent of British adults dislike her.

The next ministerial reshuffle isn't due for some months yet, and Patel will almost certainly to get her bill on the statute book and will make it to the summer recess. But there doesn't seem to be much protecting "The Prittster" these days.

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Patel is blind to her cruelty towards fleeing Ukrainians*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YM-HVV1-JCS0-D2C1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 10, 2022 Thursday

Second Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 7

**Length:** 812 words

**Byline:** TOM PECK

**Body**

As we stare down the barrel of yet another horrific global catastrophe, it feels as if we are in that now-familiar phase in which there is a knee-jerk reaction of outrage should anyone dare to criticise the government. As if to do so would be somehow unpatriotic.

Trouble is, we've been here before. It is not yet two years since vitriol was heaped upon anyone who dared to whisper that Boris Johnson didn't have a clue what he was doing. That he should have locked down faster. That, dare one even think it, those giant Nightingale hospitals were a crass PR stunt. A multi-storey car park full of beds, but no one to staff them.

And if you dare to suggest, again, that Johnson is floundering in the dark, making it up as he goes along, you can expect more of the same. Even though what Johnson does is exactly the same. If in doubt - and he is always in doubt - just claim that you're "leading the world". Heardthat one before? At Prime Minister's Questions, he was, unsurprisingly, expected to account for the fact that the UK is once again making a fool of itself on the subject of immigration, and in this case, refugee status for Ukrainians fleeing war.

Every other comparable country has opened its arms and flung open its borders. According to a reporter at a Romanian airport yesterday morning, every flight out was full of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***; be it to Frankfurt or even to Dublin. Except for the flight to London Luton, for the sole reason that this was the only destination that required visas to have been processed prior to take off.

So what was Johnson's answer? "We have done more to resettle vulnerable people than any other European country since 2015," he said.

This is such preposterous garbage it is incredibly offensive. It hardly needs to be repeated that in 2016, Germany granted asylum to a million Syrian refugees, while Johnson's Brexit pals exploited their appalling deaths in the Mediterranean to win their referendum.

The prime minister has also yet to provide any kind of reasonable explanation for why independent reports have concluded that he personally intervened to assist in the evacuation of dogs from Afghanistan, ahead of actual human beings who had assisted British armed forces (one of whom drowned when his dinghy capsized in the Channel a few weeks later.)

While he spoke, news reporters in Ukraine and in the towns over its borders were reduced to sitting on telephone helplines to assist desperate families who didn't speak English, only to be told, in the end, that they couldn't be helped.

After Prime Minister's Questions, the PM's spokesperson was on hand to explain exactly what was happening with regard to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** trying to get to Britain, as the details that had come to light were so preposterous and so egregious that could hardly be believed. But the reality was worse. There will still be no visa processing centre in Calais, because to have one there would apparently incentivise people to go there.

There is to be a "pop-up" centre in Lille, 75 miles away, but it will be by appointment only. Appointments will be virtually impossible to secure, and the location of this centre will remain secret. Naturally, this is all the work of Priti Patel. And sadly, we must return, once again to the now home secretary's appearance on BBC Question Time more than 10 years ago. Back then, she was arguing in favour of the death penalty, because she is simply that cruel; and when it was pointed out to her, by Private Eye editor Ian Hislop, that wherever the death penalty still exists, innocent people are executed, she didn't appear to appreciate the points being put to her.

It is always worth rewatching, because it is frankly the best way to understand why the Home Office functions in the way it does. Because it is run by someone who is not merely cruel by nature, but who doesn't seem to recognise how cruel she is. And it is also worth recalling that she has been sacked once for endangering national security, and when the adviser on ministerial standards found her to have broken the ministerial code, he resigned because she wasn't sacked again.

All this is preventable, of course it is. Things could very easily be better. On Tuesday evening, Johnson led two separate standing ovations in the House of Commons to the Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky. Last week, he also rose to applaud the Ukrainian ambassador, who was in the public gallery at Prime Minister's Questions. A week later, the same man, Vadym Prystaiko, was giving evidence to a parliamentary committee about how even he, the actual ambassador, had struggled to acquire a UK visa for his wife.

And while all this goes on, Ukrainian people trek halfway across France and back, trying to find a pop-up visa centre that's been deliberately hidden from them. It really is world-beating stuff, though not quite in the way the prime minister imagines.

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine crisis: Poland prepares for potential influx of refugees if Russia invades*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64SH-0DN1-JBNF-W31G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 14, 2022 Monday 2:00 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,WORLD,EUROPE; Version:5

**Length:** 336 words

**Byline:** Joanna Plucinska and Alicja Ptak

**Highlight:** Up to two million Ukrainians already live in Poland

**Body**

Poland preparing for potential influx of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** -Interior Minister

Poland is preparing for 'various scenarios' for a possible influx of refugees if Russia were to attack Ukraine, Interior Minister Mariusz Kaminski has said.

Washington has said Russia, which has more than 100,000 troops massed near Ukraine, could invade at any moment. Moscow denies having any such plans.

"In connection with the situation in Ukraine we are preparing for various scenarios. One of them is regional preparations related to a possible influx of refugees from Ukraine," Kaminski tweeted on Sunday.

The mayor of the eastern Polish town of Ciechanow said on Saturday that he was asked by his regional government to prepare accommodation for possible refugees.

"We were asked to indicate the list of accommodation facilities for refugees, the number of people it would be possible to accommodate, the costs involved and the time for adaptation of buildings with a recommendation of up to 48 hours," Krzysztof Kosinski tweeted.

Poland is home to between one and two million Ukrainians, many of whom came to the country to work.

To oczywiste, że w zwizku z sytuacj na Ukrainie przygotowujemy si na różne scenariusze. Jednym z nich s dziaania wojewodów zwizane z ewentualnym napywem uchodźców z Ukrainy, którzy z powodu możliwego konfliktu, mog szuka w naszym kraju bezpiecznego schronienia.- Mariusz Kamiński (@Kaminski\_M\_) [*February 13, 2022*](https://twitter.com/Kaminski_M_/status/1492809311034163200?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

A spokesperson for the Interior Ministry declined to provide more details about the preparations taking place, referring to Kaminski's tweet. Ciechanow's town hall did not respond to Reuters request for comment.

In late January, Poland's Deputy Interior Minister Maciej Wasik said Poland was bracing for up to one million Ukrainian migrants.

Reuters

Read More

[*Tripwire for real war? Cyber's fuzzy rules of engagement*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/nato-joe-biden-united-states-ukraine-cyber-b2014448.html)

[*Do not play into expansionist Nato narrative, minister warns*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/nato-russia-vladimir-putin-ukraine-prime-minister-b2014446.html)

[*Asian stocks fall, oil prices rise on Ukraine invasion fears*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/ukraine-asian-beijing-shanghai-wall-street-b2014440.html)

**Load-Date:** February 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Headteacher says MBE is ‘recognition for the whole of the Ukrainian community’*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:69G4-YGD1-DY4H-K3W8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

October 24, 2023 Tuesday 2:28 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 536 words

**Byline:** Jamel Smith

**Highlight:** Inna Hryhorovych helped mould St Mary’s Ukrainian School into a place providing education and a caring environment to displaced Ukrainian children.

**Body**

The headteacher of a school which aided young ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** escaping from war has said her [*MBE*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mbe) is “recognition for the whole of the Ukrainian community”.

Inna Hryhorovych, headteacher of St Mary’s Ukrainian School in [*Holland Park*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/holland-park) , west [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) , was honoured by the [*Princess Royal*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/princess-royal) at Windsor Castle as her husband Serhiy Kadyshchuk and two children Alex and Tina watched on.

The Ukrainian headteacher, who was named in this year’s King’s Birthday Honours list, helped mould St Mary’s as a school that could provide education and a caring environment to displaced Ukrainian children.

Ms Hryhorovych, who arrived in the UK from Ukraine 13 years ago, told the PA news agency: “What a journey; to be recognised with an MBE and receive it from the Princess Royal and especially for a person who was not born here being able to share values, and prove no matter where you are that you can be useful for the community.

“This (award) is recognition for the whole of the Ukrainian community and St Mary’s school I’m representing.

“Every child has shown such resilience and thanks to the kindness and support of the British and non-British people, everyone in the UK, who helped us scale up and do the work for Ukrainian children.”

The mother of three said she found it “hard” to manage her concerns for her family members back in Ukraine while also ensuring that her school provided support to Ukrainian children after the Russian invasion of the country in 2022.

“It was hard and still is hard for every member of staff to deal with worries of our own and still be strong and hope for the children we have… we had to find the strength and resilience to be there for them,” she said.

“The challenge we faced in the first weeks (when the war started) was the flow of children, they were just coming – one day we had 75 families turning up.

“We decided, straightaway, we are taking everyone in and we’ll find a way to scale the premises up and the provision.

“[*Children*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/children) who were fleeing the war came to us shattered, reserved, like rabbits in a hole, and it took a while to develop trust and get them to do the normal things that children would usually do at their age.”

Ms Hryhorovych initially felt guilty for not being in Ukraine during the start of the war, she added, but now understands that being in the UK was necessary.

She said: “(My children) almost didn’t see their mum for six months after the war started, we had to be strong as a family and my husband became my rock.”

Apart from supporting children, Ms Hryhorovych also provided support to their families.

She explained: “We quickly had to develop a holistic approach and support system for families and help mums integrate, help them find their feet on the ground.

“Today I can say proudly that 85% of staff at St Mary’s are displaced Ukrainians.

“We gave them those first steps, took them as staff members and provided them with essential lessons and now some of them are starting their work in mainstream education.”

The school has experienced a significant increase in the number of enrolled pupils, rising from 226 to around 1,200 since 2022.

The resident of Amersham, Buckinghamshire, will return to celebrate her MBE with her students at St Mary’s later on Tuesday.

**Load-Date:** October 24, 2023

**End of Document**



[*As Slovakia's trust in democracy fades, its election frontrunner campaigns against aid to Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:696D-H521-JBNF-W1TJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

September 18, 2023 Monday 5:14 AM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 1333 words

**Byline:** Karel Janicek

**Highlight:** A populist former prime minister whose party is favored to win Slovakia’s early parliamentary election plans to reverse the country’s military and political support for neighboring Ukraine if he returns to power

**Body**

A populist former prime minister whose party is favored to win Slovakia’s early parliamentary election plans to reverse the country’s military and political support for neighboring [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , in a direct challenge to the [*European Union*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/european-union) and NATO, if he returns to power.

[*Robert Fico*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/robert-fico) , who led Slovakia from 2006 to 2010 and again from 2012 to 2018, is the frontrunner in the the Sept. 30 election. He and his left-wing Direction, or Smer, party have campaigned on a clear pro-Russian and anti-American message.

His candidacy is part of a wider trend across Europe. Only Hungary has an openly pro-Russian government, but in Germany, France, Spain and elsewhere, populist parties skeptical of intervention in Ukraine command significant support. Many have national or regional elections coming up that could tip popular opinion away from Kyiv and towards Moscow.

“If Smer is part of the government, we won’t send any arms or ammunition to Ukraine anymore,” Fico, who currently holds a seat in Slovakia's parliament, said in an interview with The Associated Press before a recent campaign rally.

Fico, 59, also opposes EU sanctions on Russia, questions whether Ukraine can force out the invading Russian troops and wants to block Ukraine from joining NATO. His return to power could lead Slovakia to abandon its democratic course in other ways, following the path of Hungary under Prime Minister Viktor Orban and to a lesser extent, Poland under the Law and Justice party.

The small Central European nation created in 1993 following the breakup of Czechoslovakia has been a staunch supporter of Ukraine since Russia invaded more than 18 months ago. Slovakia was the second NATO member to give its fleet of Soviet-era MiG-29 fighter jets to Kyiv and also donated an S-300 air defense system.

But it also has seen public trust in liberal democracy and Western organizations decline to a greater extent than other parts of the region that shook off decades of Soviet domination.

According to a March survey by Slovakia's Globsec think tank, 51% of Slovak respondents believe the West or Ukraine are responsible for the war. Half saw the United States as posing a security threat for their country, up from 39% in 2022. Of the eight nations surveyed, Slovaks were by far the most distrustful of the U.S.; Bulgaria was a distant second with 33% and Hungary third with 25%.

“We have a big problem,” said Katarina Klingova, a senior research fellow at Globsec’s Center for Democracy and Resilience.

The survey conducted in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia had 1,000 respondents from each country and a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Only 48% of Slovaks consider liberal democracy good for their country, the second-lowest result after Lithuania (47%).

In February 2022, Slovakia opened its borders to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, as well as sending arms to Kyiv. Nonetheless, many Slovaks have a soft spot for their Russian Slavonic brethren and are grateful to the Red Army for liberating their country at the end of WWII.

The Globsec survey reflects frustration following the chaotic tenure of a center-right coalition government that collapsed in December and a pro-Russian disinformation campaign that intensified after the Ukraine invasion, Klingova said.

“A number of local politicians have adopted the narratives and terminology of the Russian propaganda,” and amplified its impact, she said. Fico, whose party also campaigns against immigration and LGBTQ+ rights, is among them.

In the [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) interview, Fico insisted no amount of Western weapons going to Ukraine would change the war's course. The European Union and the United States should use their influence to force Russia and Ukraine to strike a compromise peace deal, he said.

“It’s naive to think that Russia would leave Crimea,’’ Fico said of the peninsula Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014. “It’s naive to think that Russia would ever abandon the territory it controls.”

Fico spoke in Michalovce, near Slovakia’s border with Ukraine, where in the spring of 2022, thousands of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** entered Slovakia, while humanitarian aid — and sometimes foreign fighters — flowed the other way.

More recently, Ukrainian grain shipments have crossed the border, to the unhappiness of local farmers. When an EU deal to keep Ukrainian grain out of local markets lapsed this month, Slovakia said it would extend its own ban on imports until the end of the year.

But even as the war in Ukraine drove down grain prices in Europe, it pushed up energy costs. Until the invasion of Ukraine triggered EU sanctions, Russia supplied most of Slovakia’s oil and gas.

Last year, inflation rose to 12.13% percent, driven by soaring energy prices. In September 2022, thousands joined a protest organized by Fico’s party where he blamed Slovakia’s support for Ukraine.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, backed by Western supporters, has ruled out negotiating with Moscow until Russian troops withdraw. He has also pressed for a clear path to NATO membership.

At their summit in July, NATO leaders pledged to keep supplying arms but offered Ukraine no protection under the alliance’s security umbrella. Fico told the AP he opposes putting Ukraine on a membership path; “That would result in the Third World War.”

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This story, supported by the Pulitzer Center for Crisis Reporting, is the first part of an Associated Press series covering threats to democracy in Europe.

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In 2015, after Russia annexed Crimea, Fico was one of the few European leaders to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow, despite EU sanctions.

However, he also took care to cultivate ties with the U.S. In 2018, he began negotiations on a defense treaty with Washington. The agreement was ratified last year, but not before Fico told a protest it was “treason,” and would compromise Slovakia’s sovereignty and provoke Russia — claims rejected by the Slovak and U.S. governments.

Now, Fico repeats Putin’s unsupported claim the Ukrainian government runs a Nazi state from which ethnic Russians in the country’s east needed protection.

“The war in Ukraine didn’t start yesterday or last year. It began in 2014, when the Ukrainian Nazis and fascists started to murder the Russian citizens in Donbas and Luhansk,” Fico told cheering supporters last month.

Fico used to be more pragmatic. During his first term as prime minister, Slovakia was accepted into the EU’s visa-free Schengen Area in 2007 and adopted the euro as its currency in 2009. Following the fall of the government that replaced his, Fico returned to office in 2012.

He unsuccessfully ran for president in 2014 and reclaimed the premiership in 2016, but was forced to resign two years later after the slaying of investigative journalist Jan Kuciak and his fiancée.

Before his death, Kuciak had written about alleged ties between the Italian mafia and people close to Fico and corruption linked to Fico’s party. The killings prompted street protests and led to the collapse of Fico’s coalition government.

The scandal-tainted Smer, campaigning on an anti-migrant ticket, lost the 2020 election. The four-party coalition government that took over made fighting corruption a key focus.

Dozens of senior officials, police officers, judges, prosecutors, politicians and business people linked to Smer have been convicted of corruption and other crimes.

Fico himself faced criminal charges last year for creating a criminal group and misuse of power, but Slovakia’s pro-Russian prosecutor general threw out the indictment.

Almost all polls predict a first-place result for Smer in the parliamentary election, with about 20% of the vote. Fico would then need other parties' support to form a government.

“His strong motivation is to avoid criminal investigation,” said Grigorij Meseznikov, president of the Institute for Public Affairs, a pro-democracy non-governmental organization. “His return to power will be a problem for Slovakia in every aspect.”

**Load-Date:** September 18, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Regional winners of the best place to live 2023*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67VF-W1H1-JBNF-W111-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 24, 2023 Friday 6:00 AM GMT

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**Section:** MONEY; Version:1

**Length:** 487 words

**Byline:** Gwyn Wright

**Highlight:** The Sunday Times selected a winner for Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and each English region for its list this year.

**Body**

Wadhurst in East Sussex has beaten 71 other locations to be crowned the UK’s best place to live 2023 by The Sunday Times.

Judges said the small market town offers “pretty much everything needed for modern life in miniature”.

A winner was also selected for each English region as well as [*Scotland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scotland) , [*Wales*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/wales) and [*Northern Ireland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/northern-ireland).

The comprehensive guide is released online on Friday and an edited version will be available in the paper on Sunday.

The Sunday Times’s expert judges assessed a wide range of factors from schools, transport and broadband to culture, green spaces and the health of the high street.

These winners were

Scotland – Dunkeld, PerthshireThe small town was praised by judges for combining “stunning” Highland scenery with “Scandi sophistication”.

Wales – [*Ruthin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ruthin) , DenbighshireJudges said it offered the “very best of small town living” with food and craft markets, pop-up restaurants, cafes and independent shops.

Northern Ireland – Donaghadee, Co DownThe town, which is where BBC daytime TV drama Hope Street is filmed, was praised for its clean seas, beautiful views and “lively community.”

East of England – Saffron Walden, EssexJudges said “youthful vigour” was being injected into the market town as young families move in and new bars, shops and restaurants open.

London-[*Crouch End*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/crouch-end) , HaringeyThe area’s grand Victorian houses are home to celebrities and the “lively North London suburb” has a market town feel, judges said.

Midlands – Leamington Spa, WarwickshireThe tech hub has well-tended parks, good schools, excellent transport links and will get even more of a revamp when a Creative Quarter is launched.

North and North East England – Whitley Bay, Tyne and WearThe town was said to be “catching up fast” with its affluent neighbour Tynemouth after “years in the doldrums” – with cheaper houses and connections to Newcastle which are just as good.

North West England – LiverpoolJudges said there are “lots of reasons to be optimistic” about the city from Eurovision to its reputation for science and technology and grand projects such as the new Everton stadium and film studios. Waterloo was singled out for seaside while Toxteth was praised for its “cultural and community vibe.”

South East England – Chichester, West SussexWhile Wadhurst was crowned best place to live in the UK, Chichester – which has more ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** per head than any other UK city – was praised for its good schools and transport links and was still deemed worthy of inclusion separately.

South West England – Cirencester, GloucestershireThe heated outdoor swimming pool was marked out as a particular highlight of the capital of the Cotswolds.

– The full list can be found online at thetimes.co.uk/bestplacestolive.

**Load-Date:** March 24, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Tens of thousands sign petition supporting Tube driver suspended over Palestine chant*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:69G5-SS91-DY4H-K2M5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

October 24, 2023 Tuesday 7:23 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 610 words

**Byline:** Barney Davis

**Highlight:** TfL is accused of being ‘hypocritical’ after support for Ukraine was encouraged on London’s travel network

**Body**

Tens of thousands of people have signed a [*petition*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/petition) supporting a suspended Tube driver who led a chant of “free, free [*Palestine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/palestine) ” on a [*London Underground*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london-underground) train.

After around [*100,000 protesters took part in a pro-Palestinian demonstration in central London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/palestine-israel-protest-march-london-b2433674.html) , footage posted online and then deleted by Open Democracy journalist Ruby Lott-Lavigna[*appeared to show the chant being led over the train’s speaker system.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/palestine-march-tube-driver-israel-b2434603.html)

After the uproar, the driver was quickly identified and suspended whilst TfL vowed to “fully investigate the incident in line with our policies and procedures”.

[*A petition started by passengers on the tube carriage called for TfL to reverse the suspension and uphold free speech has now hit nearly 70,000 signatures in just over 24 hours.*](https://the.organise.network/campaigns/network-support-the-london-tube-driver-s-right-to-express-solidarity-with-palestine-7db9535cbb7659d8)

@rose.frettchen ️#freepalestine#gazaunderattack#propalestineprotest#ceasefire#londonprotest original sound -D

A statement on the petition said: “[The driver’s] actions were an expression of his personal feelings about the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and a plea for peace.

“Unfortunately, this act of empathy and solidarity has put his job at risk, as it has allegedly violated company guidelines or policies.

“It is vital to uphold the principles of freedom of expression, compassion, and empathy for people enduring conflict, irrespective of personal beliefs or affiliations.”

One supporter wrote: “This is morally wrong I thought Britain was freedom of speech. The gentleman who was at work was doing an excellent job by interacting with his passengers and making them feel welcome on the tube.”

After leading a chorus of ‘No Justice, No Peace’ the driver instructed his cramped Central line passengers to chant: “Louder, please, louder”.

Before letting people off the carriage to join the protest, he finished: “Hope you all have a blessed day today and look after yourselves.”

One serving Tube driver, speaking anonymously, told The Independent that his colleagues were divided on the issue.

He said: “A Central line colleague says the driver is an English guy, and a non-Muslim.

“Some drivers are now taking political sides saying it is a double standard from TfL.

“They are penalising this guy for saying ‘free, free Palestine’ even though he didn’t say the word Palestine.

“London Underground are seen as hypocrites because people were allowed to stand up for Ukraine.

“I hope he doesn’t get the sack but if the London Underground do sack him they are screwed both ways.

“If they sack him the Muslim drivers can say they are being Islamaphobic. If he doesn’t get the sack then the other side will say they are being antisemitic. I’m not sure what will happen but I hope he doesn’t lose his job.”

Hackney MP Diane Abbott asked her X followers: “Would [the susppension] have happened if he was chanting “Free Ukraine?”

TfL offered ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** free travel across their network for 72 hours if they showed staff their passports with noticeboards across stations adorned with Ukranian flags.

[*The driver’s union ASLEF called police involvement in investigating the video a “ridiculous overreaction”.*](https://the.organise.network/campaigns/network-support-the-london-tube-driver-s-right-to-express-solidarity-with-palestine-7db9535cbb7659d8)

Finn Brennan, ASLEF’s full-time organiser on London Underground, said: “We are aware that a Tube train driver has been suspended while an investigation takes place.

“The involvement of the police in this matter is a ridiculous overreaction to something that should clearly be dealt with internally by Transport for London in line with normal procedures.”

The chant was criticised by minister for London Paul Scully who said Tube staff should “focus on the day job” and warned against stoking tension in the capital.

TfL has been approached for further comment.

**Load-Date:** October 24, 2023

**End of Document**



[*King hails ‘special bond’ between UK and Germany in address to Bundestag*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67WS-HFP1-JBNF-W1S8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 30, 2023 Thursday 11:29 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 445 words

**Byline:** Pa Reporters

**Highlight:** He also thanked the country for its kindness following the death of his mother, the late Queen.

**Body**

[*The King*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/the-king) has celebrated the “special bond” between the UK and [*Germany*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/germany) as he became the first British monarch to address the [*Bundestag*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/bundestag) during his historic state visit to the country.

Speaking in both German and English, [*Charles*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/charles) said he could “hardly begin to express the pride” he felt in the relationship between the two countries and spoke fondly of his “cherished” family ties to Germany.

He also thanked the country for its kindness following the death of his mother, the late Queen.

He said: “Today, it gives me particular pride to be with you … and to renew the special bond between our two countries.

“This friendship meant so much to my beloved mother, the late Queen, who often spoke of the 15 official visits she made to Germany, including her five state visits.

“The first of those, in 1965, came when our continent was still deeply scarred by war, and the trauma of conflict. Hers was the wartime generation, and like my father, the Queen had served in uniform.

“That my parents’ 11-day tour of Germany should prove to be a pivotal moment in the reconciliation between our nations was, therefore, a matter of great personal significance to them both.

“My mother understood the immense achievement that reconciliation represented, and in returning to Germany time and again, she was determined to play her own part. It is, perhaps, for this reason that Her late Majesty won a particular place in the affection of the German people.”

With a quip about the Lionesses’ victory over Germany at Euro 2022, the monarch hailed it as “just one example of how our countries, together, can offer a compelling example to the world”.

“Faced with so many shared challenges, the United Kingdom and Germany are together providing leadership to secure our shared future,” he added.

The King also touched on climate change leadership before concluding: “In the long and remarkable story of our two countries, there are many chapters yet unwritten. Let us fill these with the restless pursuit of a better tomorrow. The legacy of our past, and the great promise of our future, demand nothing less.”

Later, the King will attend a meeting with Chancellor Olaf Scholz in the Federal Chancellery building.

Charles and Camilla will also visit Wittenbergplaztz Food Market and meet a range of local business owners who will discuss the history of the market.

Germany has welcomed more than a million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** seeking sanctuary after [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) invaded their homeland and Charles will tour the Tegel Refugee Centre to meet some of the group.

Separately the Queen Consort will visit the Refugio House community centre, a meeting place for locals and new Berlin residents, including refugees.

**Load-Date:** March 30, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Call for more Homes for Ukraine sponsors for winter*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66NT-STJ1-JCS0-D0XP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

October 22, 2022 Saturday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1458 words

**Byline:** HOLLY BANCROFT

**Body**

More sponsors are desperately needed for the Homes for Ukraine scheme as the continuing war and the prospect of harsh winter weather fuels increasing demand from refugees, frontline charities have warned.

Some 100,000 Ukrainians have arrived in the UK through the government's flagship Homes for Ukraine scheme, data up to the middle of October shows. But the initial six-month requirement for placements is now starting to run out for refugees who came to the UK at the start of the programme in March.

The Ukrainian Sponsorship Pathway (USPUK), a charity set up after Russia's invasion of Ukraine to help support the scheme, is now on a drive to find new hosts as the war rages on.

"We are currently in touch with 4,000 Ukrainians [who are looking for sponsors in the UK] and expect this number to rise over the winter months," trustee Heather Savory said. "The UK has done a lot in its support for Ukraine, now is not the time to turn away. We are now on a drive to find new hosts, as the war sadly looks set to continue and the humanitarian situation set to worsen."

The number of sponsors signing up for the scheme is decreasing, said Anastasiia Spivak, a Ukrainian USPUK employee who fled the war. "The local council doesn't have a magic pool of sponsors and it is always good to have more sponsors who can help, who would be open to this situation."

"As soon as winter comes, as soon as freezing and cold weather comes, the situation in Ukraine is going to get worse and at some point desperate. We are really just trying to find more people who are able to help," she added.

Wycombe homeless prevention, a charity in Buckinghamshire, has started to see Ukrainians on the Homes for Ukraine scheme seek urgent help as their placements break down. James Boultbee, chief executive officer, said: "We've ended up involved in a few cases where host families have said we need out our people out really quick; whether something's gone wrong or it's coming up to the deadline.

"Sponsors say they've done their bit now. I'm hearing lots and lots of people saying that they won't carry on. I just wonder what will happen if the council suddenly has to have hundreds of refugees put up into temporary accommodation. That will put a lot of pressure onto the system this winter."

Simone Schehtman, the lead pairer of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and hosts in Birmingham, urged the government to increase payments to hosts. "We need a framework of support of what happens after 12 months. Host payments should increase immediately, in good part due to the cost of living crisis but also because hosts are doing so much more than offering just roof or shelter," she said. A government spokesperson said that they were giving hosts £350 thank-you payments to cover additional costs and "all arrivals have access to benefits and employment from day one".

"Councils have a duty to ensure families are not left without a roof over their heads and we're giving them £10,500 to provide this support," they said. The Independent's Refugees Welcome campaign has called for the UK to lead the way in supporting those forced to flee the war in Ukraine.

'I realised I had nowhere to return'

Myroslava Ulianina was visiting a friend in Turkey when, on 24 February, Russia invaded Ukraine. With only a small holiday bag, packed for a three-day trip, she realised she could not go home. She managed to find refuge with a family in Portugal for three months and during that time she received news that her house in Kyiv had been destroyed.

"I realised I had nowhere to return," she told The Independent. On hearing about the UK's Homes for Ukraine scheme, she thought she would move to London and use her near-fluent English to help her resettle. I have big ambitions and I like being in a big city. I came to London on the 26 June and I am totally in love with the country, with people, with the culture," she said.

"I feel like a fish in water because of the language, because of the diversity of people, and because London is a multinational city."

Ms Ulianina is a nutritionist and is doing some private consultations online. She is also looking for work, having previously worked in Ukraine helping big corporate companies improve the health and wellbeing of their employees.

"We have a really big desire to be a functional part of society," she said, referring to all ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. "I really just want to help the UK and to be part of a society. Now I live with this family but I don't know what next. I have to be able to rent a house in the future, and the prices are very high for rent."

She has loved her host placement and is woken each morning by her sponsor's two children, who are five and seven, running into her room to give her a hug. However, her parents are still in Ukraine and she worries for them.

Referring to Russia's recent airstrikes across Ukraine, she said: "This Monday we understood that there is no safe place in Ukraine now. All Ukrainians here live in two different worlds; one world is here but one part of our brain is all the time connected back home and thinking about the people we know who are still there."

Back in Ukraine, Ms Ulianina was well-known as a host on the TV game show The Biggest Loser, which puts contestants through a weight loss regime. "I'm a person who used to plan everything but now it's so complicated to plan for the future. Everything can be changed in an hour."

'We have become like our grandmothers, who say everything is better than war'

Oleksandra and her husband realised in May that the war in Ukraine was not getting any better. They decided that Oleksandra would take their three-year-old daughter and go to London, where both parents had studied and worked in the past and where, fortunately, a colleague from her husband's work was willing to take them in.

Living in London as a single parent has not been easy, she said. "I try to think positively and I really appreciate the support we have had. At the same time it can still be frustrating, having no support network in a different country trying to navigate the bureaucratic procedures."

It was a battle to get her daughter into a nursery and there were times when she felt like a second class citizen, Oleksandra said. "If you want ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to not be on universal credit and to be in the workforce, and they have kids, then they need to figure out where to put their kids so they can do their jobs," she added.

Oleksandra now has a position in British telecoms. It is several grades lower than her previous roles at the Ukrainian airline and at other start-ups, but she is grateful to not be jobless.

"We are real people just as you are. We are not here to be pitied but we are here to be understood and we really want to contribute. We want to be a functioning part of the society and we want to be helpful," she said in fluent English.

She has been incredibly grateful for the support of her host family. "I don't know if I could ever give back enough of the support that they provided for me and my daughter," she said. She is uncertain what the future will hold for her family and ultimately wants to return to Ukraine when she is able.

"We are becoming like our grandmothers who were always saying that everything is better than war," she continued. "Whatever difficulties we might go through, they are still not war. I hope that the world can contain the evil and we do everything we can to make sure that this never happens again."

'My sponsors are my angels'

Angelina only arrived to the UK three weeks ago and is now settled in Guildford on the Homes for Ukraine scheme. "My lovely sponsors are my angels," she said. She has already started volunteering at the local school and has found a position as an after-school club assistant. "In Ukraine, I used to teach kids English and Music. I want to be helpful here and I can especially help the new Ukrainian kids," she told The Independent.

Her family are in the Kherson region of Ukraine, under Russian occupation, and she can only contact them intermittently because the Russians can block the internet connection. "I can't even imagine my tiny town under this pressure, that disgusting things can happen here, it is hard emotionally to accept it," she said. "Here we see people smiling and having fun and that's life. And then you call your parents and you hear what is going on in my hometown and it is completely surreal. Thanks to the UK we have an opportunity to be in a safe place, without bombs and air raid signals."

Speaking about her family, she added: "I hope to see them one day in good health, without injuries, it would be the best thing that would happen in my life. In the past, I dreamt about things like holidays and travel. Now I only have one dream; to see my parents live and hug them."

**Load-Date:** October 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Urgent plea for more Homes for Ukraine sponsors as war rages on and winter approaches*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66NP-1CB1-DY4H-K089-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

October 21, 2022 Friday 4:40 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:3

**Length:** 1502 words

**Byline:** Holly Bancroft

**Highlight:** Refugees Welcome: Ukrainians who have found homes in the UK tell Holly Bancroft about their joys and worries as thousands more look for sponsors in the UK

**Body**

More sponsors are desperately needed for the Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme as the continuing war and the prospect of harsh winter weather fuels increasing demand from [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) , frontline charities have warned.

Some 100,000 Ukrainians have arrived in the [*UK*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/uk) through the government’s flagship Homes for Ukraine scheme, data up to the middle of October shows.

But the initial six-month requirement for placements is now starting to run out for refugees who came to the UK at the start of the programme in March.

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Speaking about her family, she added: “I hope to see them one day in good health, without injuries, it would be the best thing that would happen in my life. In the past, I dreamt about things like holidays and travel.

“Now I only have one dream; to see my parents live and hug them.”

These three women have all been supported by the Ukrainian Sponsorship Pathway.

**Load-Date:** October 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Afghan pilot pleads for his family to be granted asylum*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C15-6JD1-JCS0-D00V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

May 13, 2024 Monday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 8

**Length:** 800 words

**Byline:** HOLLY BANCROFT SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

An Afghan pilot who helped Britain in its war against the Taliban is begging for his wife to be allowed to join him in the UK. As he makes his appeal, charities are calling for the Home Office's "broken" family reunion system to be fixed.

The air force lieutenant, who was granted asylum in the UK after a five-month-long campaign by The Independent, is waiting for his young family, including his wife, who are currently in Iran. He is worried that they will be forced to return to Afghanistan as their visas have run out in Iran.

His story is one of thousands, it has emerged, with figures from summer 2023 showing that more than 11,000 people were then waiting to be reunited with family members in the UK. The Home Office has repeatedly refused to provide an updated figure for the visa backlog through freedom of information laws.

Charities Refugee Council and Safe Passage have called on the government to "fix and expand the UK's broken family reunion system" in a new report, which draws on the many cases of separated refugee families that they are supporting.

The Afghan pilot said of his wife and daughter: "They have been waiting for a visa for five months in Iran, but so far there is no news from the embassy and there is no guarantee it will be issued. My family are facing a lot of problems. They don't have a proper place to live, and don't have access to a doctor, because they are living illegally. Their Iranian visas have expired and they need to extend them, but it is impossible.

"My wife is suffering mentally and emotionally, and she is completely [without hope]."

Under current rules, separated refugee children in the UK do not have the right to bring their parents into the country. Afghans evacuated from Kabul during Operation Pitting in August 2021 are also not allowed to bring their close family to the UK, and ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in the UK are not able to sponsor family members to join them either.

Even those who have been granted the right to resettle in the UK can often find themselves waiting years to be relocated. And many thousands who apply for a family reunification visa are forced to wait months for a decision, despite the Home Office promising to process applications within 12 weeks.

One young unaccompanied Afghan child supported by Safe Passage, Ahmad, tried to join his older brother in the UK. His father had been killed by the Taliban and his mother was also dead but the Home Office did not accept that there were any "serious and compelling" circumstances that would necessitate a relocation to the UK. His family reunion case was only successful after a UK judge ordered the Home Office to help.

Afghans who were evacuated to the UK during Operation Pitting are also struggling to be reunited with family members. Despite ministers promising in October 2023 that a new route would allow them to bring close family to safety, the pathway has not yet been set up.

Farhad, a teenager who was airlifted from Kabul without his parents, told The Independent: "They promised in 2021 that they're going to bring the families, but it's still been almost three years. My mum and my siblings are in Pakistan because they needed a doctor and medication. But my father couldn't get the visa to go with them. I am doing my GCSEs this month and I can't really focus on my studies knowing that my family is struggling."

MPs and Lords wrote to the Home Office last week, calling on the government to act faster to reunite Afghan families.

Dr Wanda Wyporska, CEO at Safe Passage International, said: "Nearly three years on, it's a national shame that Afghans, who risked so much to support UK military operations, are still waiting for a way to bring their family to safety here with them. Their family members are living in fear every day of the Taliban."

Enver Solomon, CEO of the Refugee Council, said: "The UK has clearly failed the Afghan refugees that it promised to protect, by keeping families separated for so long with no information on how they may be reunited. After risking everything for the UK, Afghans and their families should not be forced to make dangerous boat journeys to get here, nor should they face hostile, inhumane policies like the Rwanda plan when they do make it to the UK."

A Home Office spokesperson said: "We made one of the largest commitments of any country to support people from Afghanistan, and so far we have brought around 27,900 individuals to safety in the UK, including thousands under our Afghan resettlement schemes.

"In October we committed to establish a route for those evacuated from Afghanistan under Pathway 1 of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme without their immediate family members, to reunite them in the UK. We remain on track to meet that commitment and open the route for referrals in the first half of this year."

**Load-Date:** May 12, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Afghan pilot given asylum in UK begs for wife to join him as report says Home Office keeping thousands apart*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C14-KMN1-JBNF-W01N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 12, 2024 Sunday 11:25 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 801 words

**Byline:** Holly Bancroft

**Highlight:** It is a matter of ‘national shame’ that Afghans in UK are still waiting for a way to bring their family to safety, campaigners say

**Body**

A heroic Afghan pilot who helped Britain in its war against the Taliban is begging for his wife to be allowed to join him in the UK. As he makes his appeal, charities are calling for the Home Office’s “broken” family reunion system to be fixed.

The air force lieutenant, who was [*granted asylum*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/afghan-pilot-hotel-eviction-homeless-b2421146.html) in the UK after a [*five-month-long campaign*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/afghan-pilot-deportation-rwanda-rishi-sunak-b2310953.html) by The Independent, is waiting for his young family, including his wife, who are currently in Iran.

He is worried that they will be forced to return to Afghanistan as their visas have run out in Iran.

His story is one of thousands, it has emerged, with figures [*from summer 2023*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/refugee-family-reunion-safe-route-backlog-b2369985.html) showing that more than 11,000 people were then waiting to be reunited with family members in the UK.

The Home Office has repeatedly refused to provide an updated figure for the visa backlog through freedom of information laws.

Charities Refugee Council and Safe Passage have called on the government to “fix and expand [*the UK’s broken family reunion system”*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/home-office-visa-fingerprints-gaza-israel-b2525253.html) in a new report, which draws on the many cases of separated refugee families that they are supporting.

The Afghan pilot said of his family: “They have been waiting for a visa for five months in Iran, but so far there is no news from the embassy and there is no guarantee it will be issued. My family are facing a lot of problems. They don’t have a proper place to live, and don’t have access to a doctor, because they are living illegally. Their Iranian visas have expired and they need to extend them, but it is impossible.

“My wife is suffering mentally and emotionally, and she is completely [without hope].”

Under current rules, separated refugee children in the UK do not have the right to bring their parents into the country. Afghans evacuated from Kabul during Operation Pitting in August 2021 are also not allowed to bring their close family to the UK, and ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in the UK are not able to sponsor family members to join them either.

Even those who have been granted the right to resettle in the UK [*can often find themselves waiting years to be relocated*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/syrian-refugees-home-office-uk-resettlement-b2478675.html). And many thousands who apply for a family reunification visa are forced to wait months for a decision, despite the Home Office promising to process applications within 12 weeks.

One young unaccompanied Afghan child supported by Safe Passage, Ahmad, tried to join his older brother in the UK. His father had been killed by the Taliban and his mother was also dead but the Home Office did not accept that there were any “serious and compelling” circumstances that would necessitate a relocation to the UK.

His family reunion case was only successful after a UK judge ordered the Home Office to help.

Afghans who were evacuated to the UK during Operation Pitting are also struggling to be reunited with family members. Despite ministers promising in October 2023 that a new route would allow them to bring close family to safety, the pathway has not yet been set up.

Farhad, a teenager who was airlifted from Kabul without his parents, told The Independent: “They promised in 2021 that they’re going to bring the families, but it’s still been almost three years.

“My mum and my siblings are in Pakistan because they needed a doctor and medication. But my father couldn’t get the visa to go with them. I am doing my GCSEs this month and I can’t really focus on my studies knowing that my family is struggling.”

[*MPs and Lords wrote to the Home Office last week,*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/afghan-resettlement-scheme-home-office-rwanda-pakistan-b2537830.html) calling on the government to act faster to reunite Afghan families.

Dr Wanda Wyporska, CEO at Safe Passage International, said: “Nearly three years on, it’s a national shame that Afghans, who risked so much to support UK military operations, are still waiting for a way to bring their family to safety here with them. Their family members are living in fear every day of the Taliban.”

Enver Solomon, CEO of the Refugee Council, said: “The UK has clearly failed the Afghan refugees that it promised to protect, by keeping families separated for so long with no information on how they may be reunited.

“After risking everything for the UK, Afghans and their families should not be forced to make dangerous boat journeys to get here, nor should they face hostile, inhumane policies like the Rwanda plan when they do make it to the UK.”

A Home Office spokesperson said: “We made one of the largest commitments of any country to support people from Afghanistan, and so far we have brought around 27,900 individuals to safety in the UK, including thousands under our Afghan resettlement schemes.

“In October we committed to establish a route for those evacuated from Afghanistan under Pathway 1 of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme without their immediate family members, to reunite them in the UK. We remain on track to meet that commitment and open the route for referrals in the first half of this year.”

**Load-Date:** May 12, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Biden signs $40bn Ukraine aid bill after it was flown to him in South Korea*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65H2-H4R1-DY4H-K40V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 21, 2022 Saturday 5:08 PM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 337 words

**Byline:** Graeme Massie

**Highlight:** Hard copy of bill flown by official on commercial flight to Asia

**Body**

[*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) has signed the $40bn [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) aid package after the bill was physically flown to [*South Korea*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/south-korea) , the [*White House*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/white-house) confirmed.

The Senate passed the bill following the president's departure from Washington to [*Seoul*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/seoul) , but he signed it on Saturday before his state dinner with South Korea's president Yoon Suk Yeol.

The Biden administration says that an official brought a hard copy father bill on a commercial flight to Asia for the president's signature. Mr Biden also signed a bill to improve access to baby formula during the current nationwide shortage.

The Ukraine bill includes money for military and humanitarian aid for the war-torn country as it continues to try and repel Russia's forces.

The funding will assist Ukraine's military and national security forces, as well as funding support for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have been displaced by Vladimir Putin's unprovoked aggression.

"The President does intend to sign the bill while he's on the road so that he can sign it expeditiously. The modalities of that are being worked right now so that he can get it and sign it. There won't be a gap for that very reason," National security adviser Jake Sullivan told reporters traveling with the President to Seoul.

The funding is intended to support Ukraine with Russia until September, and is significantly larger than a previous emergency measure that provided the embattled country with $13.6bn.

The bill will give Ukraine $20bn in military assistance to pay for the new weaponry it needs to fight Russia in the fourth month of the war.

There will also be $8bn in general economic support, $5bn to address global food shortages that could be caused by the impact on the country's agricultural economy and more than $1bn to help refugees.

Ukraine has fought determinedly during the conflict, which began on 24 February, and defended its capital Kyiv against advancing forces. But after withdrawing from the area, Russia is expected to focus its attack on eastern areas of Ukraine in what could become a prolonged conflict.

**Load-Date:** May 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Everton to offer free tickets for Dynamo Kyiv game to Ukrainian refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6609-BGC1-JBNF-W4W8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 22, 2022 Friday 8:27 PM GMT

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**Section:** FOOTBALL,SPORT; Version:1

**Length:** 184 words

**Byline:** Carl Markham

**Highlight:** Entry to the ‘Match for Peace’ at Goodison Park will be free for families and their hosts living on Merseyside.

**Body**

[*Everton*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/everton) will offer ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) free tickets to their pre-season ‘Match for Peace’ against [*Dynamo Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dynamo-kyiv) at Goodison Park.

The club is liaising with six councils – Wirral, St Helens, Sefton, Knowsley, Halton and Liverpool – to ensure families who have been housed across the region as part of the Government’s ‘Home For [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) ’ scheme have the opportunity to attend next Friday.

“We are delighted to work with councils across the city region to extend this invitation to the Ukrainian refugee families and their hosts living here on Merseyside,” said a club statement.

“We are committed to doing all we can to help those people impacted by the shocking war in Ukraine.

“This game provides a spotlight on that fundraising activity and by raising funds together, we can help those affected by the ongoing conflict.”

Proceeds from the game, including supporter donations, will go directly to humanitarian charities supporting the people of Ukraine.

The club contributed £250,000 to the Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal in March and that was matched by Everton’s owner [*Farhad Moshiri*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/farhad-moshiri) and chairman Bill Kenwright.

**Load-Date:** July 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Bus full of Ukrainian refugees overturns in Italy; 1 dead*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6509-NCN1-DY4H-K37B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 13, 2022 Sunday 10:57 AM GMT

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**Length:** 185 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** A bus carrying about 50 refugees from Ukraine has overturned on a major highway in northern Italy, killing one passenger and injuring several others, none of them seriously

**Body**

A bus carrying about 50 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** overturned on a major highway in northern Italy at dawn on Sunday, killing one person, [*Italian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/italian) firefighters said.

Italian state radio said there were several injured in the accident on the [*A14*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/a14) autostrada near Forli', a town in the Emilia-Romagna region in northeastern Italy. It said the rest of those aboard were safely evacuated.

The bus landed on its side on a grassy slope just beyond a highway guardrail and near a farm field. Firefighters used two cranes in an operation to set the bus upright and remove it.

Italy's [*Interior Ministry*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/interior-ministry) said the bus had set out from Ukraine and was heading south to [*Pescara*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/pescara) , an Adriatic port city, when it overturned. The passengers were taken to a nearby police barracks for initial assistance, and would later resume their journey, the ministry said.

Some 35,000 Ukrainians refugees who fled war in their homeland have entered Italy, most of them through its northeastern border with [*Slovenia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/slovenia).

Forli' is in the region of Emilia-Romagna, which borders the Adriatic Sea.

What caused the bus to overturn was under investigation.

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Proportion of Ukrainians in UK employment rises to 42%*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:667R-0DM1-DY4H-K3JS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 26, 2022 Friday 12:46 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 371 words

**Byline:** Samuel Lovett

**Highlight:** 100,000 people from Ukraine have moved to the UK since the beginning of the war

**Body**

The proportion of Ukrainian nationals employed in the [*UK*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/uk) has increased significantly since the government launched its resettlement scheme for refugees of the war against [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) , official figures show.

Some 42 per cent of Ukrainians living in Britain had secured work as of 4 August, up from 9 per cent in April, according to the Humanitarian Response Insight Survey (UKHRIS) conducted by the [*Office for National Statistics*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/office-for-national-statistics) (ONS).

The majority of those employed (63 per cent) said they had permanent jobs, with a quarter having temporary jobs. The most common sectors of work were accommodation or the food service (29 per cent), manufacturing (8 per cent), and wholesale and retail trade (8 per cent), with 28 per cent reporting “other”.

Some 37 per cent of respondents said they had enough money to support themselves for the next three months, up from 26 per cent in April.

Last month, the government announced that 100,000 people from Ukraine had arrived in the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme and the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, both of which were launched in March after Russia’s invasion.

These schemes allow Ukrainian nationals and their family members to apply to live and work in the UK for up to three years.

Since April, the ONS has been surveying ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to understand and track their experiences in Britain.

The first UKHRIS in April sampled 3,412 individuals, with the majority entering the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme. Most respondents had arrived between one and four weeks before completing the survey.

The latest UKHRIS followed up on 1,132 people who agreed to be contacted after the first survey. Data was collected from 20 July to 4 August 2022.

The survey showed that 93 per cent of Ukrainian nationals who had arrived in the UK and taken part in the April survey had remained in the UK, with 7 per cent having since left.

Almost half (47 per cent) of respondents had experienced some barriers to being able to take up work in the UK; the most common was English language skills not meeting the job requirements (58 per cent).

Of those with qualifications gained outside the UK, 43 per cent indicated that UK employers had generally not recognised their qualifications when applying for jobs.

**Load-Date:** August 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Pelosi thanks Poland for Ukraine support, meets president*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65C0-6C51-JBNF-W0F1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 2, 2022 Monday 12:09 PM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 331 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** A top-level U.S. congressional delegation led by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has visited Warsaw to express gratitude to Poles for their humanitarian and other support for Ukraine

**Body**

A top-level U.S. congressional delegation led by House Speaker [*Nancy Pelosi*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nancy-pelosi) was in [*Warsaw*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/warsaw) on Monday to express gratitude to Poland for their humanitarian and other support for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Pelosi and a half dozen U.S. lawmakers met with President Andrzej Duda and Polish lawmakers in Warsaw. The visit followed a weekend visit to Kyiv where they met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, pledging to support his country until it defeats Russia.

In a statement after the meeting with Duda, Pelosi called him "a valued partner in supporting the people of Ukraine in the face of Putin's brutal and unprovoked war."

She said that during their meeting the members of her delegation "expressed America's deep gratitude to the Polish government and Polish people for opening their hearts and homes to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, and we reaffirmed our nation's pledge to continue supporting Poland's humanitarian efforts."

Russians invasion of Ukraine has sparked a refugee crisis, with more than 5.5 million people fleeing the country. The largest group by far - more than 3 million people - have arrived in Poland, and many of them have remained.

Regular Polish people have taken Ukrainians into their homes, while the government and volunteers have mobilized to help in countless ways.

The trip came two days after U.S. President Joe Biden asked Congress for $33 billion to bolster Ukraine's fight against Russia, more than twice the size of the initial $13.6 billion aid measure that now is almost drained. The measure is designed to signal to Russian President Vladimir Putin that U.S. weaponry and other forms of assistance aren't going away.

During a news conference on Sunday in Rzeszow, Poland, the members of the congressional delegation were unanimous in praising Ukraine's defenses, in painting the battle of one as good against evil and in assuring continued long-term U.S. military, humanitarian and economic support.

\_\_\_

More [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) coverage of the war at [*https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine*](https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine)

**Load-Date:** May 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Oxford University to fund graduate scholarships from Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65CS-55C1-JBNF-W502-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 6, 2022 Friday 12:01 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 369 words

**Byline:** Catherine Lough

**Highlight:** Some 20 students will benefit from free taught Master's programmes.

**Body**

[*Oxford University*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/oxford-university) has announced a new fully-funded graduate scholarship scheme for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

The Graduate Scholarship Scheme for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) Refugees will begin in the 2022-23 academic year, seeking to support highly-qualified graduates from Ukraine whose lives have been seriously disrupted by the ongoing conflict.

Up to 20 scholarships will be awarded for taught Master's courses for graduates who are usually resident in Ukraine, with students receiving financial and welfare assistance from both the university and their college during their time in [*Oxford*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/oxford).

Co-funded by the university and participating colleges, course fees and graduate application fees will be waived, with all recipients given free accommodation and meals as well as a £7,500 grant to support their living and study costs.

Professor [*Louise Richardson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/louise-richardson) , vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford, said the university had "been horrified by the suffering and destruction caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine".

"Our community is united in our desire to do something to help. These scholarships represent our effort to provide an opportunity to students and academics whose scholarship has been disrupted by the war. We look forward to welcoming colleagues from Ukraine into the University of Oxford."

Baroness Jan Royall, principal of Somerville College and chair of Oxford University's Conference of Colleges, said: "The war in Ukraine continues to cause immense suffering and long-term repercussions for those affected.

"It has been inspiring to see the speed and unanimity with which the colleges have rallied to support this important new programme. In time, there will be more for us to do in order to lessen the impact of this terrible war - but this scheme will give Ukrainian students a chance to rebuild their lives now, which is invaluable."

The scholars will be recruited through a university campaign during May 2022, with large-scale advertising among Ukrainian universities, via social media and through informal networks, such as the communications channels of the university's Ukrainian Society.

Students could also come to Oxford through the family reunification route or the UK Government's [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine scheme.

**Load-Date:** May 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Charles dedicates Easter message to fleeing refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657R-88P1-F072-42Y9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 17, 2022 Sunday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 5

**Length:** 366 words

**Byline:** KATE NG

**Body**

The Prince of Wales dedicated his Easter message to the millions of refugees who are "wounded by the past, fearful of the future".

Prince Charles' words came as thousands of Ukrainians continue to seek sanctuary from fighting in their homeland, following in the footsteps of millions of refugees who have already fled the Russian invasion.

He said meeting the "innocent victims of conflict" over the years, he had found it "profoundly moving" to see the numbers of people ready to invite those in need into their homes.

He was speaking after more than 200,000 people in the UK had registered an interest in opening their homes to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** under the government's Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme.

Charles also said it was an "enormous privilege" to perform the ancient ceremony of distributing Maundy money to community stalwarts at Thursday's Royal Maundy service, on behalf of the Queen who was unable to attend.

The prince remembered the role that his late father, the Duke of Edinburgh, played during the many Maundy services he attended, when he would "read the Gospel, which tells how on the night of the Last Supper, Jesus knelt before his disciples and washed their travel-weary feet".

Charles said in his message: "Today, millions of people find themselves displaced, wearied by their journey from troubled places, wounded by the past, fearful of the future - and in need of a welcome, of rest and of kindness.

"Over the past years, I have found myself heartbroken at the sufferings of the innocent victims of conflict, or persecution, some of whom I have met and who have told me stories of unutterable tragedy as they have been forced to flee their country and seek shelter far from home.

"But amidst all this sadness and inhumanity, it has been profoundly moving to see how so many people are ready to open their homes to those in need, and how they have offered their time and their resources to help those facing such soul-destroying sorrow and hardship."

Last month, Charles and wife Camilla showed their solidarity with Ukraine by lighting a candle for the nation and sympathising with its London community, during a visit to the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral in central London.

**Load-Date:** April 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*UN relief chief criticises UK’s reduced overseas aid spending*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:670D-TV01-JBNF-W4R8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

December 1, 2022 Thursday 4:47 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 415 words

**Byline:** Sophie Wingate

**Highlight:** Martin Griffiths said Britain should offer more money to help the world’s poorest.

**Body**

The UK has not given enough in foreign aid, the UN relief chief said as he appealed for more funding to help the world’s most vulnerable.

Martin Griffiths said “we would like to have seen more” in overseas aid spending from Britain, stressing that “money counts”.

[*Rishi Sunak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rishi-sunak) was criticised for slashing the foreign aid budget from 0.7% to 0.5% of national income when he was chancellor in the wake of the hit to the economy from the [*Covid*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/covid) pandemic.

It was meant to be a temporary reduction, but Chancellor [*Jeremy Hunt*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jeremy-hunt) in his autumn statement ruled out a return to the higher spending target for several more years.

Mr Sunak has also overseen a redirection of overseas aid to programmes within the UK, with more now spent on housing refugees at home than on humanitarian assistance for poor developing countries.

Asked if the UK was offering enough globally and paying what it had promised, Mr Griffiths told BBC Radio 4’s World At One programme: “Well, we were promised 0.7% of course.

“That was brought down very quickly to 0.5%. And now it’s less than 0.5% if you think about it as an overseas aid budget.

The humanitarian response system is being tested to its limits.But I retain hope. Because the higher the pressure, the more determined humanitarians are to step up to the challenge.My remarks today: [*https://t.co/KXm6OqDXdn*](https://t.co/KXm6OqDXdn) [*pic.twitter.com/NYvEVJgMa3*](https://t.co/NYvEVJgMa3) — Martin Griffiths (@UNReliefChief) [*December 1, 2022*](https://twitter.com/UNReliefChief/status/1598276998513688576?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

“So to that extent, no, we would liked to have seen more according to those earlier promises.”

The UN’s under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief co-ordinator praised Britain for providing analysis of humanitarian needs and policy issues in poor nations.

“That’s continuing and that’s terrific,” he said.

“But of course, money counts. If we can’t put money on the table for places like Somalia, [*Afghanistan*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/afghanistan) , the [*Central African Republic*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/central-african-republic) and so forth, well, all the analysis in the world won’t make a difference.

“So we need money.”

On the funding of hosting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** from the existing UK aid budget, Mr Griffiths said: “It’s true that the needs of refugees in Britain are significant, are humanitarian, should be met.

“But we would obviously prefer that that’s not taken out of the 0.5% aid budget which is already reduced from where it was before.”

The UN has launched an appeal for a record £42 billion in aid funding for next year, as climate disasters and the Ukraine war have caused humanitarian needs to soar around the world.

**Load-Date:** December 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Sadiq Khan announces funding to deliver affordable housing for refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67MG-NYV1-JBNF-W0TD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 24, 2023 Friday 6:00 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 453 words

**Byline:** John Besley

**Highlight:** Mr Khan said he has allocated £126 million to the scheme from the Government’s £500 million Local Authority Housing Fund.

**Body**

[*Sadiq Khan*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sadiq-khan) has announced funding for up to 600 new homes in [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) for Ukrainian and Afghan refugees on the anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The [*Mayor*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mayor) of London said the accommodation provided by the Refugee Housing Programme (RHP) would support Ukrainians and Afghans who have fled conflict and are homeless, at risk of homelessness or living in unsuitable temporary accommodation.

According to the mayor’s office, there are 16,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** living in London under the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine scheme and hundreds of Afghans accommodated in Home Office bridging accommodation sites in the capital.

The new programme is aimed at easing the expected pressure on local accommodation schemes as bridging accommodation sites and the initial six-month Homes for Ukraine commitment comes to an end.

Mr Khan said he has allocated £126 million to the RHP from the Government’s £500 million Local Authority Housing Fund.

The money will be used to fund new home acquisitions, including refurbishing existing or newly acquired homes, purchasing new-build properties or developing new homes.

The scheme is set to run until March 31 next year.

In the long term, the homes delivered through the RHP will be returned to councils and housing associations to become social or affordable rented homes available for Londoners on the housing waiting list or who require temporary accommodation.

Mr Khan said: “I’m committed to supporting refugees who have come here to rebuild their lives and do everything I can to help them thrive in their local community.

We need the Government to urgently step up and provide the right funding to local authorities, the voluntary sector and immigration advice services so that every refugee in need has the home and support they need

Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan

“That’s why I’ve announced a new programme which will see City Hall deliver up to 600 affordable homes for Ukrainians and Afghans fleeing conflict, giving those who have been through such harrowing upheaval the stability they deserve.

“I’m doing all I can to build a better and fairer London for everyone by helping councils house refugees through my existing Right to Buy-back fund, and I’m helping migrants and refugees navigate the complex immigration system by funding advice services to provide new arrivals with key information about their rights.”

He also called on the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) to dedicate more services to assisting refugees.

“There are still too many refugees living in unsuitable accommodation,” he said.

“We need the Government to urgently step up and provide the right funding to local authorities, the voluntary sector and immigration advice services so that every refugee in need has the home and support they need.”

**Load-Date:** February 24, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Proportion of Ukrainians in UK employment rises by 42%*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:667R-N281-JBNF-W0PD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 26, 2022 Friday 4:49 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK NEWS,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:1

**Length:** 372 words

**Byline:** Samuel Lovett

**Highlight:** 100,000 people from Ukraine have moved to the UK since the beginning of the war

**Body**

The proportion of Ukrainians nationals employed in the [*UK*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/uk) has increased significantly since the government launched its resettlement scheme for refugees of the war against [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) , official figures show.

Some 42 per cent of Ukrainians living in Britain had secured work as of 4 August, up from 9 per cent in April, according to the Humanitarian Response Insight Survey (UKHRIS) conducted by the [*Office for National Statistics*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/office-for-national-statistics) (ONS).

The majority of those employed (63 per cent) said they had a permanent job, with one-quarter having a temporary job. The most common sectors of work were accommodation or food service (29 per cent), manufacturing (8 per cent), and wholesale and retail trade (8 per cent), with 28 per cent reporting “other”.

Some 37 per cent of respondents said they had enough money to support themselves for the next three months, up from 26 per cent in April.

Last month, the government announced that 100,000 people from Ukraine had arrived in the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine Scheme — both of which were launched in March following Russia’s invasion.

These schemes allow Ukrainian nationals and their family members to apply to live and work in the UK for up to three years.

Since April, the ONS has been surveying ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to understand and track their experiences in Britain.

The first UKHRIS in April sampled 3,412 individuals, with the majority entering the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme. Most respondents had arrived between one and four weeks before completing the survey.

The latest UKHRIS follows up on 1,132 individuals who agreed to be contacted after the first survey. Data was collected from 20 July to 4 August 2022.

The survey shows that 93 per cent of Ukrainian nationals who had arrived in the UK and taken part in our April survey had remained in the UK, with 7 per cent having since left.

Almost half (47 per cent) of respondents had experienced some barriers to being able to take up work in the UK; the most common was English language skills not meeting the job requirements (58 per cent).

Of those with a qualification gained outside of the UK, 43 per cent indicated that UK employers had generally not recognised their qualifications when applying for jobs.

**Load-Date:** August 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Nearly 1 million asylum requests in the EU in 2022*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67M3-7WD1-JBNF-W4YH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 22, 2023 Wednesday 9:02 AM GMT

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**Length:** 481 words

**Byline:** Renata Brito

**Highlight:** Nearly one million people applied for international protection in the European Union in 2022, the most since the refugee crisis of 2015-2016

**Body**

Nearly 1 million people applied for international protection in the European Union in 2022, according to data published Wednesday, bringing the number of asylum requests to a level not seen since the refugee crisis of 2015-2016.

The EU agency for asylum said 966,000 asylum applications were made in the 27 EU countries as well as in Norway and Switzerland last year, up 50% from 2021. That doesn't include more than 4 million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who were granted temporary protection in the EU, a special mechanism activated to avoid collapsing already backlogged asylum systems.

The European agency linked the increase to continuing easing of COVID-19 travel restrictions, increasing food insecurity and conflicts in many parts of the world. Though most asylum-seekers enter the EU legally, mainly by plane with travel visas, some also crossed the EU's land and sea borders without permission, mainly through the Western Balkans and the Mediterranean.

After more than a decade of war and economic collapse in their country, [*Syrians*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/syrians) continued to be the top nationality of asylum-seekers in Europe with more than 130,000 applications. They were followed closely by Afghans fleeing the spiraling security, humanitarian and financial troubles that followed the Taliban takeover in August 2021, with 129,000 requests.

Coming in third were applicants from [*Turkey*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/turkey) who doubled in numbers with 55,000 requests. Soaring inflation and “democratic backsliding” were among the factors believed to have caused the increase, the agency said.

In many places, reception centers are overwhelmed, leaving asylum-seekers in the streets.

The recent earthquake that killed nearly 46,000 people and left hundreds of thousands homeless in Turkey and Syria has raised fears of a potential surge in irregular border crossings into Greece. [*Germany*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/germany) offered earlier this month to temporarily ease visa restrictions to some quake survivors while Spain promised to resettle a small group of 100 vulnerable Syrian refugees from Turkey, which is home to 4 million refugees.

Venezuelans, Colombians, Bangladeshis and Georgians applied for asylum in record numbers last year, as did Moroccans, Tunisians and Egyptians. Some 4% of asylum-seekers in 2022 claimed to be unaccompanied minors.

The European agency didn't say which EU countries received the most applications last year. But an internal EU migration report seen by the Associated Press lists Germany, France, Spain, Austria and Italy as the top five.

Asylum authorities issued decisions on more than 600,000 applications last year but they received even more new cases, adding to the existing backlog. Of the applications analyzed, 40% were granted refugee status or subsidiary protection, mostly for Syrian, Belarusian, Eritrean, Yemeni, and Malian applicants, as well as for most of the Ukrainians who chose to apply for asylum instead of temporary protection.

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**Load-Date:** February 22, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Wizz Air to beat expectations despite Omicron and Ukraine war*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6575-7BR1-DY4H-K2F4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 14, 2022 Thursday 3:22 PM GMT

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**Section:** BUSINESS NEWS,BUSINESS; Version:2

**Length:** 357 words

**Byline:** Alastair Jamieson

**Highlight:** 'Distressingly, the war in Ukraine dented demand for air travel' says chief executive

**Body**

Ultra low-cost airline Wizz Air said it has done better than previously expected so far this year and expects demand to improve significantly this summer, despite the war in Ukraine affecting its key eastern Europe network.

The Hungarian carrier, which is listed in London, said it expects an operating loss of around £158m to £175m in the final quarter of its financial year - slightly above earlier forecasts.

It has been forced to suspend flights to and from Ukraine, Russia and Moldova since Vladimir Putin's invasion of its neighbouring state, but now expects to fly more than in 2019 before the pandemic struck.

There was controversy earlier this month when it promised 100,000 free seats to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** escaping through Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania, [*but charged them for checked luggage*](https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/wizz-air-charging-ukraine-refugees-hold-baggage/).

Wizz Air has also fiercely resisted attempts by workers to unionise, rejecting calls from unions in Italy to agree a labour contract. One of Denmark's biggest pension funds [*sold its shares in the airline*](https://www.independent.co.uk/business/danish-pension-giant-dumps-shares-in-wizz-air-over-alleged-labour-abuses-b2009259.html) over what it said were human and labour rights abuses.

Between April and June, Wizz expects to fly 30 per cent more available seat kilometres than it did in 2019, and 40 per cent more between July and September.

Jozsef Varadi, the airline's chief executive, said the Covid-19 Omicron variant "proved to be of benign nature, which helped to relax government travel restrictions across a majority of our network".

"Distressingly, the war in Ukraine dented demand for air travel and destabilised commodity prices across the globe," he added. "Despite these developments, we are starting to see recovery take shape."

The airline has also reduced its exposure to volatility in oil prices by hedging for a coverage of 36 per cent of planned fuel volume usage from April to August this year.

The carrier has opened a fourth UK base at Cardiff and is still expanding at its London Luton hub where it recently acquired another two additional daily slot pairs. It will operate 75 routes from Luton this summer, and remains the airport's largest carrier by seats.

Reuters and PA contributed to this report

**Load-Date:** April 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Village offer of homes for refugees hit by visa red tape*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6567-G1W1-F072-42DC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 10, 2022 Sunday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 8

**Length:** 872 words

**Byline:** COLIN DRURY NORTH OF ENGLAND CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

A tiny rural village that's home to just 2,100 people has at least 43 households willing to host ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. So far, however, not a single person escaping Russia's devastating war has actually arrived in Rothbury, Northumberland - because of continuing delays with government visas.

Would-be hosts have spent the last three weeks helping families from Kyiv, Lviv and Mariupol apply for the necessary documents to move here - but not one is understood to have yet received a full reply from the Home Office. Now, a local councillor says the area's thwarted efforts to offer sanctuary mean it is fast becoming a symbol of the government's failure to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

"This is a whole community, not just ready and willing but actually desperate to help people who are living with missiles raining down near their homes, and yet the government's lack of urgency is preventing that happening," says Steven Bridgett. "People here are in disbelief that it is taking so long.

"I don't know if the government's going slow on purpose - you could certainly believe that - or if it's just sheer incompetence, but it is outrageous that the delay is leaving lives needlessly at risk. It is unbelievable. It is a situation that Sir Humphrey [ Appleby, from sitcom Yes Minister] would be proud of."

He adds that the first visa applications were made 20 days ago, and that Northumberland County Council - of which he is an independent member - has already visited and approved most of the homes for hosting. "All that's missing are the visas," he says.

For Tom and Lesley Etterley, the delay has caused particular frustration. The couple are among those who have readied their homes to accept a family. The elder of their two sons - currently at university - will see his en suite room turned into a mini-apartment for Natalia Nahirniak, a 46-year-old English teacher from Lviv, and her 10-year-old daughter Khrystyna.

"We are in touch with them every day, and there's this idea that Lviv is safer - which it is, compared to the east - but they are still having to live with sirens constantly going off and the threat of missiles," says Lesley, 52, who is a nurse. "They don't have a basement in their apartment block, so they are having to hide in a stairwell.

"They are living in terror, and it's absolutely heartbreaking because here we are with this safe space, ready with open arms to welcome them. It makes me ashsamed of our government. I'll tell you, I'd drive over there and pick them up myself if I could."

Rothbury may be unique in that many of the 43 families that are opening up their homes are doing so for Ukrainians who already know each other. So Romanna Holub, a teaching friend of Natalia, along with her two children, will be staying just five minutes away with Ian and Claire Forster, friends of the Etterley family. The elderly mother of a neighbour in her Lviv block is also due to be housed in the village.

"The idea was that there would be familiar faces in the village as they settled in," says Lesley.

The revelation of Rothbury's struggles comes just days after one of the ministers in charge of rolling out the Homes for Ukraine scheme suggested he was embarrassed by it. Lord Harrington, the former Conservative MP whom Boris Johnson brought in to help implement the initiative, told an LBC radio phone-in that it had been "slow and bureaucratic", while declining to disagree with a caller who labelled it a "disgrace".

He said that 32,000 Homes for Ukraine visa applications had been received by the government, but only 9,000 had been issued so far. However, even that 9,000 figure dwarfs the number of refugees who have actually arrived in the UK - which currently stands at just 500.

Sonya Sceats, chief executive at the Freedom from Torture charity, which has an office in the northeast, said the situation in Rothbury showed people's "extraordinary kindness ... is being hampered by government bureaucracy". She added: "This is being sadly replicated across the UK.

"While caring people have signed up in droves to welcome those fleeing the conflict, this government has refused to follow Europe's example by scrapping onerous visa requirements and allowing refugees to reach Britain ??? It is time to cut the red tape, scrap their cruel anti-refugee bill, and build an asylum system which treats people with fairness, dignity and compassion."

A government spokesperson admitted the scheme's progress had "not been good enough". They said: "The Home Office has made changes to visa processing - the application form has been streamlined, Ukrainian passport holders can now apply online and do their biometrics checks once in the UK, and greater resource has gone into the system."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, click here. To sign the petition click here. If you would like to donate then please click here for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** April 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Tiny UK village offers homes to dozens of Ukraine refugees - but visa red tape prevents anyone coming*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6562-J581-DY4H-K4S0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 9, 2022 Saturday 9:51 AM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:3

**Length:** 894 words

**Byline:** Colin Drury

**Highlight:** Rothbury - population 2,100 - has seen at least 43 households apply to host those escaping the war. But red tape means not a single Ukrainian has yet made it here

**Body**

A tiny rural village that's home to just 2,100 people has at least 43 households willing to host [***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) ***refugees***.

So far, however, not a single person escaping Russia's devastating war has actually arrived in Rothbury, [*Northumberland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/northumberland) - because of continuing delays with government visas.

Would-be hosts have spent the last three weeks helping families from [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) , [*Lviv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/lviv) and Mariupol apply for the necessary documents to move here - but not one is understood to have yet received a full reply from the [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office).

Now, a local councillor says the area's thwarted efforts to offer sanctuary mean it is fast becoming a symbol of the government's failure to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

"This is a whole community, not just ready and willing but actually desperate to help people who are living with missiles raining down near their homes, and yet the government's lack of urgency is preventing that happening," says Steven Bridgett. "People here are in disbelief that it is taking so long.

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Lord Harrington, the former [*Conservative*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/conservative-party) MP whom [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) brought in to help implement the initiative, told an LBC radio phone-in that it had been "slow and bureaucratic", while declining to disagree with a caller who labelled it a "disgrace".

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**Load-Date:** April 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Charles and Camilla to unveil staging for Eurovision and tour arena in Liverpool*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:683G-8SR1-JBNF-W36P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 26, 2023 Wednesday 1:45 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 471 words

**Byline:** Ellie Ng

**Highlight:** They will meet Mae Muller, the UK’s contestant, as well as celebrity presenters and creative teams, ahead of the contest next month.

**Body**

The King and the Queen Consort will unveil the staging for the Eurovision Song Contest and tour the arena in [*Liverpool*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/liverpool) on Wednesday.

[*Charles*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/charles) and [*Camilla*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/camilla) will be shown around the M&S Bank Arena and meet [*Mae Muller*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mae-muller) , the UK’s contestant, as well as celebrity presenters and creative teams, ahead of the contest next month.

The grand final of the competition is due to take place on May 13, a week after the coronation ceremony.

Hey ho, let's go! [*#Eurovision2023*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Eurovision2023?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*https://t.co/wpWZBMfwen*](https://t.co/wpWZBMfwen) — BBC Eurovision (@bbceurovision) [*April 24, 2023*](https://twitter.com/bbceurovision/status/1650512106062528515?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Eurovision 2023 will take place in Liverpool after the UK was chosen to host the competition on behalf of war-torn Ukraine.

It will be the first time the competition has been held in the UK for 25 years.

On Wednesday, Charles and Camilla will be met at the arena by [*BBC*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/bbc) director general Tim Davie, BBC director of content Charlotte Moore and managing director for BBC Eurovision 2023 Martin Green.

In the foyer, they will meet representatives from the BBC Board, BBC Studios and managing director of the arena Faye Dyer.

They will be given a tour backstage to meet production staff before being invited to light and animate the arena, revealing the competition staging for the first time.

The couple will also be introduced to Eurovision hosts Julia Sanina, Hannah Waddingham, Scott Mills and Rylan Clark, before meeting with this year’s UK entrant, Mae Muller, alongside Blue Peter presenters.

Charles and Camilla’s visit to the arena is one of several royal engagements in Liverpool, recognising the cultural partnership of the UK and Ukraine and celebrating Eurovision.

They will also visit Liverpool Central Library to officially mark its twinning with Ukraine’s first public library, the Regional Scientific Library in Odesa.

They will meet key partners involved in both a two-week cultural festival running alongside the contest, and Eurolearn, a Eurovision-inspired education programme for primary and secondary pupils.

Chief executive of Liverpool City Council, Theresa Grant, and director of Culture Liverpool and Major Events, Claire McColgan will guide the royal pair around the external exhibits.

A recital of Poem For Eurovision by poet Levi Tafari, written with the help of secondary pupils from several of Liverpool’s Schools of Sanctuary, will take place in the library’s atrium.

Touring the library space, Charles will meet ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and their host families who have been supported by The Prince’s Trust while Camilla meets young people as part of a story telling session.

The pair will then together meet members of the Ukrainian Community in Liverpool and their host families.

Charles will later reveal a plaque to mark the twinning of the libraries, during a live link with the site in Odesa, and the visit will end with a performance by English National Opera.

**Load-Date:** April 25, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Yousaf sides with council in Home Office row over housing asylum seekers on ship*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68HX-PG81-DY4H-K430-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 23, 2023 Friday 2:52 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 522 words

**Byline:** Rebecca McCurdy

**Highlight:** Edinburgh City Council is contesting plans for the MS Victoria, docked in Leith.

**Body**

First Minister [*Humza Yousaf*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/humza-yousaf) has backed a council’s condemnation of proposals to house asylum seekers on a ship.

[*Edinburgh*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/edinburgh) City Council leader Cammy Day has written to the [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) to voice his concerns that the ship could become a “floating prison”.

The MS [*Victoria*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/victoria) is currently docked at Leith and it has housed more than 1,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, with the final cohort set to leave by July 11.

Labour councillor Mr Day said the council was contacted by the UK [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) over its intention to commission the ship to house asylum seekers.

He said that decision is “all the more surprising” given previous advice from the UK Government that it would be impossible for the ship to remain.

The Home Office said the decision was taken due to the “incredible strain” on the asylum system.

Mr Day said council leaders were not consulted on the plan, and the local authority has urged UK ministers to provide further details.

He said: “The potential consequences for the council in terms of the pressures on our services – and the city as a whole – are severe and barring robust partnership discussions involving NHS, police and other colleagues we will continue to oppose these plans in the strongest terms.

“Many of these people have risked their lives to make it to Europe and what they need is recognition and rights, not an unknown future without the support they desperately need.

“While the MS Victoria has been a place of refuge for many Ukrainian families arriving in Edinburgh, until we have adequate assurances from the UK Government regarding the welfare and ongoing engagement and support, we cannot allow it to become a floating prison for asylum seekers.”

Speaking at the Royal Highland Show in Edinburgh on Friday, Mr Yousaf said: “I have to say I side very strongly with Edinburgh City Council, who have articulated very strong opposition to that plan.

“I can understand why. There is quite a difference between the rights asylum seekers have and refugees have.

“The asylum-seeking population does not have the right to work, don’t have recourse to public funds – very different to the refugee population – so I can understand where the concerns are from Edinburgh City Council.

“Ultimately, it’s a discussion between the Home Office and Edinburgh City Council but I have to say I side very strongly with Edinburgh City Council on this matter.”

A Home Office spokesperson said: “The Home Office has a statutory obligation to provide accommodation for asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute while we consider their claim.

“The significant increase in illegal, unnecessary and dangerous Channel crossings has put our asylum system under incredible strain and made it necessary to continue to use hotels to accommodate some asylum seekers.

“We are committed to making every effort to reduce hotel use and continue to engage with local authorities as early as possible whenever sites are used for asylum accommodation.”

The British Red Cross have also expressed concern, saying a “docked ship with windowless cabins is not an appropriate place to house people who have been forced to flee their homes and experienced trauma”.

**Load-Date:** June 23, 2023

**End of Document**



[*P&O sackings scuppers charitable Briton's plan to deliver Ukraine refugee aid*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651K-N0H1-JBNF-W0DV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 19, 2022 Saturday 12:23 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 360 words

**Byline:** Zaina Alibhai

**Highlight:** All services have been cancelled "for the next few days", the company said

**Body**

A man who was planning to drive across Europe to [*deliver aid to* ***Ukrainian******refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/ukraine-ap-unhcr-refugees-russia-b2037894.html%22%20title=%22As%20crisis%20in%20Ukraine%20grows,%20aid%20agencies%20rush%20in%20supplies) has been forced to postpone his journey after the P&O Ferries mass sacking.

Stuart Davison, 52, from North Yorkshire, was headed to Poland with a friend to take supplies including food, sanitary products and medicine to those in need.

However, the ferry company's[*decision to sack 800 staff*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/p-o-ferries-staff-fired-b2039499.html%22%20title=%22'Humiliated'%20P&O%20staff%20'treated%20like%20criminals%20and%20given%20bin%20bags%20for%20belongings'%20after%20800%20workers%20sacked) on Thursday has seen the suspension of all its services and passengers stranded.

Mr Davison, who was to make the trip to SzydÅowiec County with his friend, is looking for alternative travel arrangements to ensure the necessities reach Poland.

"We set a budget of £1,200 each for the journey but that has gone out of the window now," he said.

"We are going to need to find another £800 to get to the Eurotunnel and then through to France."

P&O said on Friday it would not be able to operate services "for the next few days" from Dover, Hull, Liverpool or Cairnryan, Scotland -though added it was organising travel via alternative operators "where possible".

It advised passengers already at Dover or Calais to head to a check-in booth for Danish first DFDS, but those in other ports were left without instruction.

"Space is very limited so we suggest if your journey is not essential, please do not travel today," the company added.

Following backlash over its mass sackings, P&O Ferries' acknowledged they came without "warning of prior consultation" and "caused distress for [workers] and their families.

In a statement released on Friday, it said: "We took this difficult decision as a last resort and only after full consideration of all other options, but ultimately, we concluded that the business wouldn't survive without fundamentally changed crew arrangements, which in turn would inevitably result in redundancies.

"We also took the view, in good faith, that reaching agreement on the way forward would be impossible and against this background, that the process itself would be highly disruptive, not just for the business but for UK trade and tourism."

It said the changes would bring the company in line with standard industry practice, and would reintroduce services in the coming days.

**Load-Date:** March 19, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Sole DC lightning strike survivor was saved by her Doc Martens*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6644-54S1-JBNF-W00W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 9, 2022 Tuesday 4:50 PM GMT

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**Section:** AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 389 words

**Byline:** Gino Spocchia

**Highlight:** Californian student was collecting donations for Ukrainian refiugees

**Body**

The only [*survivor*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/survivor) of a deadly [*lightning*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/lightning) stike outside the [*White House*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/white-house) last week survived thanks to her Dr Martens shoes, her family has said.

Amber Escudero-Kontostathis was wearing her Dr Martens when she was [*struck by lightning*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/white-house-lightning-survivor-b2140933.html) on Thursday last week outside the White House during a storm, her motherJulie Escuderoo [*told the Ventura County Star*](https://www.vcstar.com/story/news/2022/08/06/white-house-lightning-strike-newbury-park-amber-escudero-kontostathis/10259154002/).

Although [*three other people died*](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/white-house-washington-lighting-strike-b2139437.html%22%20title=%22White%20House:%20Three%20people%20killed%20in%20Washington%20DC%20lightning%20strike) of their injuries, the 28-year-old John Hopkins University student survived and remains in [*hospital*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hospital) , where she is receiving round-the-clock care.

Ms Escudero told the local news outlet she believes the boots worn by her daughter helped save her life because of the thick rubber soles which were able to absorb some of the lightning.

“The trauma doctor came up yesterday and said she’s an ‘absolute miracle,’” Ms Escudero added in an interview. “I’m pretty confident that my daughter is going to be walking out of this hospital.”

The Metropolitan Police Department said Secret Service agents and the US Park Police witnessed[*the lightning strike*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/white-house-lightning-survivor-b2140933.html%22%20title=%22Survivor%20of%20DC%20lightning%20strike%20that%20killed%20three%20was%20collecting%20donations%20for%20refugees) take place outside the White House on Thursday evening and rushed over to administer first aid, including use of a defibrillator.

“The Secret Service men saved her,” said Ms Escudero of her daughter. “I’ve been trying to find out their names so I can personally thank them. They revived her.”

She added in a series of Facebook updates that her daughter had been [*collecting money for* ***Ukrainian******refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/white-house-lightning-survivor-b2140933.html%22%20title=%22Survivor%20of%20DC%20lightning%20strike%20that%20killed%20three%20was%20collecting%20donations%20for%20refugees) as part of her work for the International Rescue Committee, a humanitarian organisation, when she was struck by lightning. It was also her birthday.

“She feels bad that she has caused others to be concerned, that is Amber,” her mother said in a update over the weekend. “She has really been upset that she can’t work and help raise money for the refugees”.

A GoFundMe has so far raised over $43,000 to help pay for medical treatment as well as other costs associated with her injuries. Ms Escudero added that her daughter had been due to start her masters course at John Hopkins in a matter of weeks.

The three people killed in the same lightning strike have since been identified as James Mueller, 76, and Donna Mueller, 75, who were visiting Washington DC for their wedding anniversary from Janesville, Wisconsin. The third person killed was named as Brooks A. Lambertson, 29, of Los Angeles, California.

**Load-Date:** August 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Riot police sent to deal with oligarch mansion squatters*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650P-PG01-JCS0-D082-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 15, 2022 Tuesday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 8

**Length:** 397 words

**Byline:** JOE MIDDLETON

**Body**

The Metropolitan Police have been criticised after sending eight vans to deal with five squatters holed up in a mansion reported to belong to Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska. The protesters had been occupying the property in Belgrave Square since early yesterday morning, and had hung signs on the balcony saying "This property has been liberated" and "Putin go fuck yourself".

One man at the scene told reporters the group had broken into the property at around 1am yesterday morning and were intending to "use it to house ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and refugees from all nations".

Met Police cordoned off the building and it was surrounded by a heavy police presence, with dozens of officers and eight police vans. The scale of the police response prompted derision on social media. One user said: "I hope you will deploy the same level of resources to domestic burglaries from now on?"

And another said on Twitter: "Interesting use of police resources on display today in #BelgraveSquare, London - eight vans outside #Deripaska's mansion to evict five (5!) squatters."

When asked by The Independent about the extent of police resources employed to evict the squatters, a spokesperson for the Met said the "response would be proportionate to the circumstances and I believe this has changed throughout the day".

Mr Deripaska, an industrialist who has had close links with the British political establishment, was targeted with sanctions by the government last week. He was described as "a prominent Russian businessman and pro-Kremlin oligarch", who is "closely associated" with both the Russian government and president Vladimir Putin.

His wealth is estimated to stand at £2.3bn and he has a multimillion-pound property portfolio in the UK, which, according to a 2007 High Court judgment, includes the house at 5 Belgrave Square. Records indicate it has not changed hands since and is owned by an offshore British Virgin Islands company.

The squatters call themselves the London Makhnovists, after Nestor Makhno, who led an anarchist force that attempted to form a stateless society in Ukraine during the Russian Revolution.

Scotland Yard said in a statement: "Officers have completed a search of the property in Belgrave Square and are satisfied there are no protesters inside. We continue to engage with those on the balcony as we balance the need for enforcement with the safety of all involved."

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian refugees greeted by cheers as they arrive for first day at Italian school*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650J-MN31-DY4H-K214-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 14, 2022 Monday 5:58 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 97 words

**Byline:** Oliver Browning

**Body**

An entire school greeted two ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) with cheers as they arrived for their first day in the Italian city of [*Naples*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/naples).

Siblings Dmitri, 10, and Victoria, eight, walked through the front doors as hundreds of children around them clapped and cheered while waving Ukrainian flags.

The heartwarming moment unfolded at a school in the district of Pomigliano d'Arco.

More than 2.2 million people have fled from war-torn [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) since the beginning of [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's invasion.

To sign our Refugees Welcome campaign petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) and if you are able to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/f/refugeeswelcome)

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*BLURRED LINES; Some media narratives have become more dominant than others, writes May Bulman. What impact does this have on both the public and policymakers' decisions and attitudes?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65K4-09Y1-F072-44ND-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

May 31, 2022 Tuesday

First Edition

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**Section:** SECTION 2; Pg. 37

**Length:** 1758 words

**Byline:** MAY BULMAN

**Body**

In Britain, we have become accustomed to seeing images of Black and brown people packed into dinghies crossing the English Channel. Rarely does a week go by without versions of this image from boats arriving on the Kent coast. The focus is on a collective of migrants crossing the border without permission - rarely on the passengers as people with complex stories.

This centring of border crossings in reporting on migration is not unique to the British media. In EU countries we see similar trends. During what became known as the "migrant crisis" in 2015 the situation was framed by some as an unwelcome influx of anonymous foreigners pouring across the seas from Africa and the Middle East, or "swarming" in overland from Turkey. The very term "crisis" reflects a sense of panic. This has continued to the present day, with much of the media in Europe portraying the continuing arrival of asylum seekers from these regions as an emergency, with the attention focused on the border.

But there is, of course, far more to the migration story than the act of crossing a border, and the narrative that is often pushed in some quarters is not necessarily the full picture. Why have these people left their homes? What has their journey been up until now? What happens to them next?

The war in Ukraine has brought this into sharp perspective. Unlike in a significant proportion of reporting of people arriving from African, Middle Eastern and Central Asian countries, the portrayal of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** has been centred on the human suffering, with a focus on individual stories. In a very short space of time, millions of people have crossed the border into Poland, Romania and Moldova and many have continued onto other European nations, and the narrative has been one of keen willingness to help these families forced to flee their homes.

In light of this disparity, a group of European academics have come together to investigate how migration narratives form in the European media and the consequences of this, particularly in a context of increasing politicisation and polarisation across the continent. The EU-funded research project, called Bridges, is exploring why some migration narratives become dominant over others, and what impact they have on both the public and policymakers' decisions and attitudes.

"The border is staged, but not all the time," said Blanca Garcés Mascareñas, scientific coordinator and senior researcher for the Bridges project during a workshop at the Barcelona Centre for International Affairs on 20 May 2022. "Borders often remain in the darkness, but all of a sudden the lights turn on and the spectacle begins, perpetuating a sense of 'us and them' ... This staging of the border depends on journalists. These lights cannot turn on without journalists."

Indeed, without this, there would be no border spectacle. Very few people would see migrants crossing borders and, given the relatively small numbers when compared to the resident population, the majority of the public would never know these individuals had arrived.

It is interesting to note that in the UK, images of asylum seekers arriving were less ubiquitous in years past. Migrants were still reaching Britain via unofficial routes, but usually by stowing away in lorries, trains or ferries - a far less visible mode of transport - meaning there wasn't much of a spectacle to see. The overall number of asylum seekers arriving in 2018 and 2019 was not very different to previous years, yet suddenly images of boat arrivals were dominating the news agenda.

By publicising the border spectacle, do journalists become part of it? Is there a way that they can avoid this?

Giacomo Zandonini, an Italian freelance journalist with a focus on migration and human trafficking, says it is impossible for migration reporters to avoid becoming part of the border spectacle, as the very act of writing about the fact that people are crossing borders contributes to it. But he argues that reporters can make an effort to "deconstruct" it.

"We can put it into context and avoid contributing to any dehumanising narrative that can then be manipulated by those in power," he told the Bridges workshop in Barcelona. "Avoid using too many collective words, portraying people as 'migrants' or 'refugees' and using adjectives like 'poor' and 'desperate' people.

"Rather, we can describe people as citizens of specific countries: a farmer from Dafur in Sudan, a medical worker from Yemen. This helps to avoid falling into the 'us and them' narrative."

Zandonini also suggested putting these border crossings in a global context to create connections between migrants' decisions to flee to other countries and what is happening in their own - a famine, a war, difficulties accessing resources, a political crisis - to contextualise the narrative.

Highlighting the importance of reporting on the government-constructed border policies, he said: "This is the reason people are showing up in this way rather than obtaining a visa. Vast amounts of public money are being spent to build a wall that is putting people's lives in danger - and it is not stopping them from making the journey.

"We need to show that the people we are meeting trying to cross borders are not the unique protagonists of the story. There's someone who sits in a comfortable office somewhere and is deciding on their life."

This more human-focused, critical approach to reporting on migration is more important than ever, according to Hungarian freelance journalist and video-journalist András Földes, who has been covering his country's increasingly hardline stance towards asylum seekers over recent years.

"In Hungary the government criminalises migration," Földes told the Bridges event. "From this point of view, our task as journalists is not to think about how not to dramatise this situation, but simply to show our readers that these are people and not criminals."

Földes described a "two-faced mentality" towards refugees in Hungary, adding: "While we've had harsh anti-migrant propaganda - this government won four elections on this - now we are receiving Ukrainians. But the old anti-migrant laws are still in place.

"We receive a few thousand Ukrainians every day, and on the same day people caught on the southern borders of Hungary - Afghans, Yemenis and others - are pushed back to Serbia. We as journalists try to shed light on this really awkward situation. These are the same people."

Across Europe - including to a large extent the UK - we have seen increasing politicisation of migration in recent years. Those in power, or those vying for power, have used it as a political weapon, pledging to tackle the issue more effectively than their opponents as a tool for attracting voters. Panic around the arrival of migrants has increasingly become part of the political discourse - must it in turn be given more prominence in media reporting?

Saskia Smellie, a research fellow at the University of Edinburgh, who is focusing on British media coverage as part of the Bridges project, noted the "huge voice" politicians have on the coverage of migration in the UK.

"David Cameron's famous 'swarm of people' comment in that interview in July 2015 was instantly on the front page of the Daily Mail the next morning," she told The Independent. "It was picked up across centre, left and right newspapers. My impression is that whilst it was critically engaged with, it was incredibly prominent.

"This wasn't a migration event, it was a political statement. Yet that got more coverage than the issue itself. Politicians seem to be almost the dominant characters in narratives around migration, rather than the immigrants themselves."

Ferruccio Pastore, director of FIERI, an Italian research institute on migration, and scientific co-coordinator of Bridges, echoed her concerns, saying that one of the "striking" findings from the project has been that migration narratives are "crafted by non-migrants, based on information provided by non-migrants, and for non-migrants."

"It's a conversation in which certain categories - primarily politicians - play a central role, using migration as a tool, or often as an emotional weapon," he explained. "It is like coverage football without ever talking to players or even coaches - only to the public or the owners of the clubs.

"Migration is sometimes used as a weapon of mass distraction, to distract from other more pressing issues. People are often lured into a fear of migration, when in fact there are other trends to be feared more."

This rings true in the UK today, with the home secretary, Priti Patel, after announcing hardline policies proclaiming to tackle migration. From drafting the Navy in to tackle Channel crossings to shipping asylum seekers thousands of miles away for processing, her dramatic statements have received far more attention than the direct experiences of people seeking refuge.

And in making such statements, and having them amplified by sections of the media, politicians fuel the sense that there is a problem that urgently needs to be tackled, which can have the effect of whipping up anti-migrant sentiment - even if the issue is being overstated. Is it a journalist's job to prevent this from happening?

"We need to challenge the frame to change the narrative," says Cristina Mas, a journalist at the Spanish newspaper Diari Ara. "The frame is that Europe is threatened and is being invaded and we need to stop it to protect ourselves from this invasion, that there are millions wanting to come and we can't have all of them here, that we deserve our privileges because we were here before them.

"What can be done? We must confront and fact check the statements to hold accountable the authorities and focus on the results of the policies. Are they working to deter immigration? The answer is no."

But achieving sweeping change in the way migration is covered would be no easy feat. The act of covering news can mean snapshots of broader stories to make events digestible, but broader questions should always be kept in mind.

Pastore believes there is hope that the narrative can change, particularly in light of the ***Ukraine*** ***refugee crisis***, which he said shows that welcoming very large and totally unexpected migration flows is possible.

"It can be done. It's within the scope of human possibility. Especially for rich and advanced societies like ours," the researcher said. "We are capable of producing different narratives. Before, with say Syria, there were no migrant voices, this time there are. It is now time to rebalance the agenda."

**Load-Date:** May 30, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Build on goodwill and extend refugee scheme to Afghans, ministers told*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:653N-TVN1-JCS0-D1GF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 29, 2022 Tuesday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 6

**Length:** 898 words

**Byline:** MAY BULMAN SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

Britain's Homes for Ukraine scheme should be extended to Afghans, ministers have been told, with Conservative MPs describing it as an "enormous opportunity" to shift the country's approach to refugees.

The government should "build on the extraordinary wave of goodwill" shown by the British public following the launch of the sponsorship programme, which allows Ukrainians to be hosted by UK residents, to speed up the resettlement of thousands of Afghans evacuated from Kabul last summer, Conservative MPs and civic society groups have said.

Around 14,000 Afghan nationals were evacuated from the country last August following the Taliban takeover and brought to the UK under a scheme dubbed Operation Warm Welcome. Some 12,000 are still in hotels waiting to be placed in permanent accommodation at a cost to the taxpayer of £1.2m per day.

The Homes for Ukraine scheme, launched on 18 March, has seen more than 150,000 members of the British public come forward and offer to accommodate ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have been forced to flee their homes due to Vladimir Putin's invasion.

Refugees minister Richard Harrington confirmed on Monday that around 20,000 applications had so far been received under the scheme.

In an open letter to minister for levelling up Michael Gove, more than 60 politicians, think tanks and charities say the numbers offering to host will likely surpass the number of Ukrainians who seek refuge in the UK, and that the "welcoming spirit" should therefore be extended to Afghans.

The letter, whose signatories include Tory MPs Robert Buckland, Damian Green and Johnny Mercer, proposes a "Homes for Afghans" plan, which it says will "shift Britain's approach to refugees and build solid and sustained foundations for a new era of welcoming refugees in Britain".

It comes as The Independent's Refugees Welcome campaign, which calls on ministers to offer sanctuary to as many people as possible, has attracted more than 221,000 signatures from members of the public.

A Homes for Afghans action plan, drawn up by think tanks More in Common and British Future, states "The level of generosity and previously untapped commitment towards refugees represents an enormous opportunity - not just in terms of how we play our part in helping Ukraine, but also in reshaping our approach to welcoming refugees in the future."

It proposes that a new taskforce is set up to develop workable solutions that can be "rapidly deployed" to house Afghans, and that it would have a mandate to hold officials to account in ensuring that those currently stuck in hotel accommodation are properly housed within 100 days.

The plan also proposes a "long-term UK commitment to resettlement", which would welcome at least 10,000 people a year alongside a community sponsorship programme.

"This would enable better planning nationally and locally of how to make welcoming work for those who come to Britain and the communities they join, as part of a sustained new era of welcoming in Britain," the letter to Mr Gove states.

Damian Green MP, Conservative MP and former first secretary of state, said:"This is the time to use the generosity of spirit being shown by so many to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to set up a long-term scheme to allow for planned resettlement of refugees.

"This will be more humane, more efficient and cheaper for the taxpayer in the long run."

Johnny Mercer MP, Conservative MP and former defence minister, said he welcomed the "important initiative", adding: "In my first tour in Afghanistan in 2006, I commanded a company of 32 Afghans. I persuaded them to fight. We went there as part of a UK mission, serving British interests and the British government.

"I cannot stress this enough: we owe a duty of care to provide clear routes for refugees and a warm welcome when Afghans get here [???] More urgency is needed from the British government. I have no doubt that the British public will back this."

Sunder Katwala, director of British Future, said that while there were "different challenges in finding homes for the two groups", the plans set out to Mr Gove would link up the schemes to "harness support from business, civic society and local government to speed up homes for Afghans too".

"The surge of public empathy for Ukraine is not limited to one group of refugees. We owe a debt of honour to the Afghans evacuated from Kabul last summer too," he added.

A government spokesperson said: "We have seen the immense generosity of the British public through the incredible response to our Homes for Ukraine scheme. Though not everyone who expressed an interest will ultimately be able to house someone, we are grateful to everyone who has expressed an interest in providing support those fleeing persecution.

"We're proud to have provided homes for more than 4,000 Afghan evacuees so far and continue to explore options to find them more permanent accommodation."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, click here. To sign the petition click here. If you would like to donate then please click here for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Biden to announce new Russia sanctions while in Brussels*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6528-R4G1-JBNF-W10X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 22, 2022 Tuesday 7:43 PM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 329 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan says President Joe Biden plans to announce new sanctions against Russia on Thursday while in Brussels

**Body**

President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) plans to announce new sanctions against [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) on Thursday while in [*Brussels*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/brussels) for meetings with NATO and European allies, according to a top national security aide.

Biden, who will take part in a special meeting of NATO and address the European Council summit, is also expected to underscore efforts to enforce the avalanche of existing sanctions already announced by the U.S. and allies.

"He will join our partners in imposing further sanctions on Russia and tightening the existing sanctions to crack down on evasion and to ensure robust enforcement," said White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan, who declined to further preview new sanctions the president will announce.

Biden is traveling to Brussels and Poland - which has received more than 2 million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have fled since the Feb. 24 invasion - looking to press for continued unity among Western allies as Russia presses on with its brutal invasion of Ukraine.

In Poland, Biden will meet with Polish President [*Andrzej Duda*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/andrzej-duda) , who has requested further U.S. aid and a stepped up military presence on NATO's eastern flank as the war grinds on. The U.S. has already added several thousand U.S. troops to it regular presence. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania have also called for a greater NATO or U.S. military presence in recent weeks.

"We feel that it is the right place for him to go to be able to see troops, to be able to see humanitarian experts and to be able to meet with a frontline and very vulnerable ally," Sullivan said of Biden's visit to Poland.

Biden and NATO have said repeatedly that while the U.S. and NATO will provide weapons and other defensive support to non-NATO member Ukraine, they are determined to avoid any escalation on behalf of Kyiv that risks a broader war with Russia.

Polish leaders have called for a Western peacekeeping mission to intervene in Ukraine, a step that the U.S. and other allies worry could lead to a broadening of the war.

**Load-Date:** March 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Biden says Ukraine should be able to attend G20 meetings if US efforts to expel Russia are unsuccessful*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:652R-66D1-DY4H-K4PS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 24, 2022 Thursday 10:59 PM GMT

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**Section:** AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 308 words

**Byline:** Bevan Hurley

**Highlight:** 'The single most important thing is for us to stay unified and the world to continue to focus on what a brute this guy is'

**Body**

President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) has called for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) to be welcomed at future G20 summits should US attempts to expel [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) be unsuccessful.

After meeting with European allies on Thursday in [*Brussels*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/brussels) , Mr Biden told a press conference it was time to step up efforts to isolate Russia from the international community.

He said if G20 member countries blocked his request to remove Russia, then Ukraine should be invited to attend the meetings.

"The single most important thing is for us to stay unified and the world to continue to focus on what a brute this guy (Russian President [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) ) is and all the innocent people's lives that will be lost and ruined and what's going on," Mr Biden told reporters.

He said he didn't expect the sanctions to have an impact in the short term, but he expected in the months to come the sustained pressure would take a toll on Mr Putin's ability to wage war.

"If you're Putin and you think that Europe is going to crack in a month or six weeks or two months, why not. They can take anything for another month. But the reason I asked for the meeting, we have to stay fully, totally united," Mr Biden said.

The president's comments came after he met with the leaders of the 30 Nato countries and G7 partners in back-to-back meetings.

The countries presented a united front against Russia, issuing further sanctions against 300 members of its Parliament and discussing how they would counter the threat of a potential chemical or biological weapon attack.

The US also announced it would take in 100,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and donate $1bn in aid to help Europe deal with the surge of nearly 3 million refugees.

The G20 or Group of Twenty is a forum of the world's 19 largest economies and the European Union, and has met at least once a year since 2008 to address issues including the financial stability and climate change.

**Load-Date:** March 24, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Wales plans to welcome refugees as Drakeford pledges £4m in aid to Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WT-W4T1-JBNF-W16K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 1, 2022 Tuesday 11:00 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 331 words

**Byline:** Bronwen Weatherby

**Highlight:** First Minister Mark Drakeford said he would be speaking about the Russia-Ukraine conflict on his visit to Brussels.

**Body**

[*Mark Drakeford*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mark-drakeford) has said he is ready to welcome ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to [*Wales*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/wales) as he pledged £4 million in financial and humanitarian aid to the country.

Wales's First Minister said he is "gravely concerned about the horrific and appalling situation in the Ukraine" and plans to discuss Russia's brutal invasion on his visit to [*Brussels*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/brussels) this week.

Mr Drakeford is in the Belgian capital for a series of meetings with diplomats and parliamentarians initially set up to celebrate St David's Day and to reaffirm the country's relationships with key European nations and regions, the Welsh Government said on Tuesday.

He has made it clear that given ongoing events, the conflict which has broken out in Europe will be at the centre of discussions.

Wales, as a Nation of Sanctuary, stands ready to welcome people fleeing Ukraine

First Minister Mark Drakeford

"We stand in support of the Ukrainian people who are bravely resisting this unprovoked and brutal act of war," Mr Drakeford said earlier on Tuesday.

"Wales, as a Nation of Sanctuary, stands ready to welcome people fleeing [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine). Tomorrow we will be holding urgent discussions with local authority leaders to ensure preparations are in place to accept refugees.

"I have also written to the Prime Minister urging the UK Government to strengthen current arrangements to enable Ukrainian citizens to come to the UK quickly and safely. It is vital people can seek safe sanctuary here without bureaucracy delaying that process."

Speaking about his visit across the Channel, he said: "Wales's European identity matters now perhaps more than ever. I want to emphasise our Welsh identity as a European nation sharing the values of freedom, free speech and a peaceful European way of life."

The Welsh Government has said work is being carried out to measure the exposure of local government pension funds in Wales to [*Russian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) investments and financial products.

It urged anyone who can help to donate to the British Red Cross, Unicef UK or to the UNHCR UK.

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Mila Kunis and Ashton Kutcher 'overwhelmed' after Ukraine donations pass £22.5m*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651B-HDH1-JBNF-W3DJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 18, 2022 Friday 5:12 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 351 words

**Byline:** Mike Bedigan

**Highlight:** The Hollywood power couple previously said they would match up to 30 million dollars in donations to help supply humanitarian aide to refugees.

**Body**

[*Mila Kunis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mila-kunis) and [*Ashton Kutcher*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ashton-kutcher) say they are "overwhelmed with gratitude" after thousands of people helped them raise 30 million dollars (£22,500,000) for refugees in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

The [*Hollywood*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hollywood) power couple previously said they would match up to 3 million (£2,250,000) dollars in donations to help supply humanitarian aide to those caught up in the conflict.

They said the donations would provide a "softer landing" for those displaced by violence as they "forge ahead into their future of uncertainty."

We are overwhelmed with gratitude for your support. 2 weeks ago, we asked you to join us and more than 65,000 of you stepped up and donated what you could. Now, with your help we have reached our $30 million goal. (1/5) [*pic.twitter.com/zKoxyXqNVC*](https://t.co/zKoxyXqNVC) - Mila Kunis (@MilaKunisv) [*March 17, 2022*](https://twitter.com/MilaKunisv/status/1504512784821891083?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Writing on Twitter, Kunis, who was born in Chernivtsi, Ukraine, said: "We are overwhelmed with gratitude for your support."2 weeks ago, we asked you to join us and more than 65,000 of you stepped up and donated what you could."Now, with your help we have reached our 30-million-dollar goal."While this is far from a solution for the problem, our collective effort will provide a softer landing for so many people as they forge ahead into their future of uncertainty."The couple said that despite the generous donations their work was "not done" and announced they would be raising their donation goal to 40 million dollars (£30,400,000).(5) [*https://t.co/Mj1e5e1Dsa*](https://t.co/Mj1e5e1Dsa) - Mila Kunis (@MilaKunisv) [*March 17, 2022*](https://twitter.com/MilaKunisv/status/1504513317754310669?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

They added that they would do "everything we can" to ensure that the money "finds maximum impact with those in need."

"As funding continues to come in we will treat every dollar as if it were being donated from our pocket, with respect and honor for the work that went into earning it, the intent of love through which it was given, and the desire for it to be maximized for positive outcomes," they said.

Fellow celebrity couple [*Ryan Reynolds*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ryan-reynolds) and Blake Lively also previously pledged to match donations up to 1 million dollars (£750,000) to support the growing number of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

**Load-Date:** March 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'Enormous opportunity': Extend Homes for Ukraine scheme to include Afghan refugees, Tory MPs tell Gove*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:653N-8V11-JBNF-W1MS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 29, 2022 Tuesday 12:05 AM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 932 words

**Byline:** May Bulman

**Highlight:** Ministers urged 'build on the extraordinary wave of goodwill' shown by British public following launch of Ukraine sponsorship scheme

**Body**

Britain's Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme should be extended to [*Afghans*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/afghans) , ministers have been told, with Conservative MPs describing it as an "enormous opportunity" to shift the country's approach to [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees).

The government should "build on the extraordinary wave of goodwill" shown by the British public following the launch of the sponsorship programme, which allows Ukrainians to be hosted by UK residents, to speed up the resettlement of thousands of Afghans evacuated from Kabul last summer, Conservative MPs and civic society groups have said.

Around 14,000 Afghan nationals were evacuated from the country last August following the Taliban takeover and brought to the UK under a scheme dubbed Operation Warm Welcome. Some 12,000 are still in hotels waiting to be placed in permanent accommodation at a [*cost to the*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/asylum-seeker-hotels-refugees-afghanistan-b2005910.html) taxpayer of £1.2m per day.

The Homes for Ukraine scheme, launched on 18 March, has seen more than 150,000 members of the British public come forward and offer to accommodate [***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) ***refugees*** who have been forced to flee their homes due to Vladimir Putin's invasion.

Refugees minister [*Richard Harrington*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/richard-harrington) [*confirmed on Monday*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugee-scheme-homes-application-b2045738.html) that around 20,000 applications had so far been received under the scheme.

In an open letter to minister for levelling up [*Michael Gove*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/michael-gove) , more than 60 politicians, think tanks and charities say the numbers offering to host will likely surpass the number of Ukrainians who seek refuge in the UK, and that the "welcoming spirit" should therefore be extended to Afghans.

The letter, whose signatories include Tory MPs Robert Buckland, Damian Green and Johnny Mercer, proposes a "Homes for Afghans" plan, which it says will "shift Britain's approach to refugees and build solid and sustained foundations for a new era of welcoming refugees in Britain".

It comes as [*The Independent's Refugees Welcome campaign*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) , which calls on ministers to offer sanctuary to as many people as possible, has attracted more than 221,000 signatures from members of the public.

A Homes for Afghans action plan, drawn up by think tanks More in Common and British Future, states "The level of generosity and previously untapped commitment towards refugees represents an enormous opportunity - not just in terms of how we play our part in helping Ukraine, but also in reshaping our approach to welcoming refugees in the future."

It proposes that a new taskforce is set up to develop workable solutions that can be "rapidly deployed" to house Afghans, and that it would have a mandate to hold officials to account in ensuring that those currently stuck in hotel accommodation are properly housed within 100 days.

The plan also proposes a "long-term UK commitment to resettlement", which would welcome at least 10,000 people a year alongside an expanded community sponsorship programme.

"This would enable better planning nationally and locally of how to make welcoming work for those who come to Britain and the communities they join, as part of a sustained new era of welcoming in Britain," the letter to Mr Gove states.

Damian Green MP, Conservative MP and former first secretary of state, said: "This is the time to use the generosity of spirit being shown by so many people to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to set up a long-term scheme to allow for planned resettlement of refugees.

"This will be more humane, more efficient and cheaper for the taxpayer in the long run."

Johnny Mercer MP, Conservative MP and former defence minister, said he welcomed the "important initiative", adding: "In my first tour in Afghanistan in 2006, I commanded a company of 32 Afghans. I persuaded them to fight. We went there as part of a UK mission, serving British interests and the British government.

"I cannot stress this enough: we owe a duty of care to provide clear routes for refugees and a warm welcome when Afghans get here [...] More urgency is needed from the British government. I have no doubt that the British public will back this."

Sunder Katwala, director of British Future, said that while there were "different challenges in finding homes for the two groups", the plans set out to Mr Gove would link up the schemes to "harness support from business, civic society and local government to speed up homes for Afghans too".

"The surge of public empathy for Ukraine is not limited to one group of refugees. We owe a debt of honour to the Afghans evacuated from Kabul last summer too," he added.

A government spokesperson said: "We have seen the immense generosity of the British public through the incredible response to our Homes for Ukraine scheme. Though not everyone who expressed an interest will ultimately be able to house someone, we are grateful to everyone who has expressed an interest in providing support those fleeing persecution.

"We're proud to have provided homes for more than 4,000 Afghan evacuees so far and continue to explore options to find them more permanent accommodation."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Blinken visits Poland as Russia's war in Ukraine intensifies*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XM-75F1-JBNF-W4JJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 5, 2022 Saturday 1:13 PM GMT

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**Length:** 348 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken is visiting eastern Poland near the border with Ukraine as Russia intensifies its war against the former Soviet republic

**Body**

U.S. Secretary of State [*Antony Blinken*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/antony-blinken) is visiting eastern Poland near the border with [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) as [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) intensifies its war against the former Soviet republic.

Blinken was in the city of Rzeszow on Saturday for talks with top Polish officials and was to go to a frontier post to meet ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** later in the day.

Blinken met Polish Prime Minister [*Mateusz Morawiecki*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mateusz-morawiecki) and Foreign Minister Zbigniew Rau a day after attending a NATO foreign ministers' meeting in Brussels at which the alliance pledged to step up support for eastern flank members like Poland to counter Russia's invasion of Ukraine

Although NATO has ruled out establishing a no-fly zone over non-member Ukraine, it has significantly boosted both military and humanitarian assistance. Rzeszow is about 80 kilometers (50 miles) from the Ukraine border and its airport has become a hub for flights carrying such aid.

Blinken said his visit to Poland was coming at "one of the most urgent moments in the long history between our two countries" and said recent deployments of U.S. soldiers to the country would continue.

Rau said Poland had already taken in more than 700,000 refugees from Ukraine and that he expected hundreds of thousands more in the coming weeks unless Russia backs down.

"Poland will never recognize territorial changes brought about by unprovoked, unlawful aggression," he said, adding that his country will demand that alleged Russian war crimes committed in Ukraine will be prosecuted.

Following his meeting with Blinken, Morawiecki said they had agreed on the need to further strengthen NATO's eastern flank and strengthen Europe's security architecture. Poland is seeking more U.S. forces on its territory, where there are currently more than 10,000 American troops.

The two men also discussed stepping up sanctions and freezes of assets on Russia, which Morawiecki said should be "crushing" for Russia's economy. No Russian banks should be exempted from the exclusions from the SWIFT system, he said. Currently, all but the largest Russian banks have been kicked off the financial messaging service.

**Load-Date:** March 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Spirit Awards: Kristen Stewart, Megan Mullally and Nick Offerman tell Putin to 'f\*\*\* off'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y1-BC81-DY4H-K140-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 7, 2022 Monday 8:18 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,FILM,CULTURE; Version:2

**Length:** 390 words

**Byline:** Peony Hirwani

**Highlight:** 'We hope Putin f\*\*\*s off and goes home,' hosts said

**Body**

[*Kristen Stewart*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kristen-stewart) joined Spirit Award hosts [*Megan Mullally*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/megan-mullally) and [*Nick Offerman*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nick-offerman) in condemning Russian President [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin).

During Sunday's (6 March) award ceremony, Mullally and Offerman - who have been married for 19 years - conveyed a message for Putin, who last month declared an invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

"'I think we speak for everyone here when we say we are hoping for a quick and peaceful resolution [in Ukraine]," Mullally said. "Specifically, f\*\*\* off and go home, Putin."

Offerman added: "That is the quick and peaceful resolution we're talking about. We hope Putin f\*\*\*s off and goes home. Let's all join together with a Spirit Awards salute to Putin."

Soon after that, both hosts flashed their middle fingers in the air, with Stewart joining them in the display.

During the award ceremony, Mullally and Offerman also encouraged the audience to make donations to help people who have been affected by the war.

"There are a lot of great organisations raising money for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, so please give what you can to help the victims of this senseless act of aggression," Mullally said.

Putin began the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February.

Within a couple of days, he had placed [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's nuclear deterrence forces on high alert, citing aggressive statements by Nato leaders and economic sanctions against Moscow.

On Sunday, Ukraine's president Volodymyr Zelensky issued a fresh warning to Russia, saying his country will "punish everyone who committed atrocities in this war".

It came hours after eight Ukrainian civilians were killed as they attempted to flee a suburb of Ukraine's capital, Kyiv.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered.

To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Davey stands by call for Johnson to go as he says public need PM they can trust*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YX-WHJ1-JBNF-W0VF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 11, 2022 Friday 6:45 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:3

**Length:** 874 words

**Byline:** Patrick Daly

**Highlight:** The Liberal Democrat leader also pushed for checks on ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to be carried out in the UK to speed up the visa process.

**Body**

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) has a poor reputation on the international stage and should resign over lockdown party allegations despite dealing with the Ukraine crisis, the [*Liberal Democrat*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/liberal-democrat) leader has said.

Sir [*Ed Davey*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ed-davey) said he did not share the same view as Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer, who in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine has tempered his demand for the [*Prime Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prime-minister) to resign after so-called partygate.

Speaking to the PA news agency before his party's spring conference speech on Sunday, Sir Ed said Britain needs a "prime minister who people can trust" in a time of international crisis.

Mr Johnson has submitted a police questionnaire in relation to his possible attendance at alleged coronavirus lockdown-busting parties held in Downing Street, with a handful of Tory MPs calling for a no confidence vote in his leadership.

However, with Russia's invasion of Ukraine meaning political focus has shifted to international affairs, opposition leader Sir Keir - who has previously urged the Prime Minister to resign - said Mr Johnson needs to be allowed to "concentrate on the job in hand".

But Sir Ed, who described the Prime Minister as "not competent", said: "I think at the top of [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) we have someone who has lost the trust of British people, whose international reputation isn't very high actually.

"And I think it would be much better for Britain to be able to face these dual crises that we have - abroad and domestic, with the cost-of-living crisis - if we had a prime minister who people can trust."

Meanwhile, the Lib Dems have called for tougher sanctions for those who break the ministerial code, including being fined or forced to resign.

The party said urgent changes are needed to restore faith in Parliament and the democratic process.

It suggested a package of reforms, including enshrining the ministerial code in law - making sure it is fully independent of the prime minister - and introducing a "range of sanctions" for those found to have broken it.

These could involve apologies, fines, and demanding a minister's resignation, the party said.

Downing Street has been approached for comment on the Lib Dems' proposals.

The Government has faced criticism over its response to the situation in Ukraine, including on the speed of processing visas for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Sir Ed said it was "unacceptable" that "paperwork" was getting in the way of bringing more people to safety from the warzone.

The Home Office has moved to scrap requirements for applicants to provide their biometrics, such as fingerprints, but the Kingston and Surbiton MP said ministers could still go "further and faster".

"There are security checks that can be done once people are here, once they're away from all of the horrible threats and horrible experience they're going through," he told PA on Friday in Westminster.

Throughout our history, the UK has stepped up to provide sanctuary to refugees fleeing war and persecution.Yet now this Government is turning Ukrainians away as it ties itself in bureaucratic knots. It is a tragic and shameful spectacle.- Ed Davey MP (@EdwardJDavey) [*March 7, 2022*](https://twitter.com/EdwardJDavey/status/1500829044501274627?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

"So no-one's saying there shouldn't be some sort of checks, but leaving people at the borders, leaving people for hours and even days to wait for appointments, giving them bureaucracy and turning them away because of paperwork - that's unacceptable."

Sir Ed was in government during the coalition years and supported the UK joining air strikes on Syria in 2013 after President Bashar Assad used chemical weapons on his people during the country's civil war.

He said the UK and Nato allies would have to send the "strongest possible signal" to the Kremlin in the event Russian President Vladimir Putin follows Mr Assad's example and deploys chemical weapons in the conflict with Ukraine - a move feared by the Prime Minister and the US.

But the former cabinet minister said it would be "inappropriate" to outline what any action could look like, adding: "We don't want to feed into President Putin's calculations."

With the ramifications of war being felt at home through soaring petrol prices, the opening of the Lib Dem conference on Friday has seen the party argue for a year-long VAT cut, taking it from 20% to 17.5%, in a move the party said could save families an average of £600.

Chancellor Rishi Sunak, who has announced a £200 deferred energy payment and a £150 council tax rebate for some households to tackle the cost-of-living crisis, has previously argued a VAT cut would be too broad as the saving would be pocketed by some of the wealthiest.

In response, former energy secretary Sir Ed said his party was still arguing for targeted measures, such as doubling the winter fuel allowance.

But, arguing in favour of slashing VAT, he said Mr Putin's assault on Kyiv had escalated household budget pressures into "an emergency" and pushed for a "bigger measure" to help the public.

Defending his party's decision to hold the majority of its spring conference online, with only a small element of it taking place in York despite Covid-19 restrictions having been lifted in England, Sir Ed said members "wanted" it to be virtual as it meant they did not have to travel and "spend lots of money in these very difficult times".

**Load-Date:** March 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Government 'unleashing chaos' with Homes for Ukraine refugee scheme*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6516-CKV1-DY4H-K1HD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 17, 2022 Thursday 4:21 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 896 words

**Byline:** Jemma Crew

**Highlight:** More than 122,000 Britons have registered their interest in taking in Ukrainians.

**Body**

The [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) is "unleashing chaos" through its [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme and refugees could die before they are matched with a sponsor and can safely reach the UK, a charity has warned.

The scheme is a "smokescreen" and distraction from what really needs to happen, which is remove the visa requirement for Ukrainians like other European countries have done, said Robina Qureshi, director of Positive Action in Housing.

More than 122,000 [*Britons*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/britons) have registered their interest in taking in Ukrainians, and those who have found someone to sponsor will be able to apply from Friday.

The scheme aims to match refugees with individuals, charities and other organisations who can provide accommodation for at least six months, enabling Ukrainians without family ties in the UK to enter the country.

But Ms Qureshi said the Government had put NGOs in an "invidious" position and foistered the scheme on them without prior consultation.

She only expects a "trickle" of refugees to arrive through the scheme because they will have to find people to become sponsors while abroad before they can apply, and then make their own way to the UK.

She said it could take "months and months of processing" to safely match people to appropriate homes.

She told the PA news agency: "The people that need to come here, their life depends on being able to get into this country using the current route, and that's what's worrying us more than more than anything.

"Are some of the people going to be alive by the time the process has been gone through?

"They should be letting people in now, but the Government is doing to refugees what they've done to the Syrians and to Jewish refugees fleeing the Holocaust, and what they're doing is to reduce to an absolute minimum the number of refugees making their way to the UK in the midst of the worst refugee crisis since World War Two."

Positive Action in Housing runs Room for Refugees, the UK's longest running refugee hosting programme which has been in place since 2002.

Ms Qureshi said the charity is receiving around 40 calls and up to 150 emails an hour from Brits wanting to offer accommodation to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Almost 70 Ukrainian refugee families have registered with the charity, including 60 children and several heavily pregnant women currently in Ukraine, France, Poland, Belgium and Germany.

The team will be working through the night to match them with vetted people who have registered as potential sponsors, and to support them while they apply for visas from Friday.

Ms Qureshi also questioned how many people who have expressed an interest via the Government's website will have to withdraw because they later realise they do not have "the physical or mental room".

She said: "We do not have half a hosting program in place.

"All they've got is expressions of interest - they have not identified individuals to match them up.... this is an illusion of people helping because they're distracting from the fact that they haven't lifted visa restrictions."

It comes as the Government was urged to set up an emergency airlift for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** on the Polish border.

Liberal Democrat leader Sir [*Ed Davey*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ed-davey) said the UK Government should provide free flights to the UK, as well as coaches to take people from border crossing points to the airport.

Writing to Home Secretary Priti Patel and Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, he also called for welcome centres to be opened for refugees arriving in Britain.

The public has been praised for its "hugely generous response" after the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal reached £200 million - two weeks after launching.

This equates to around £3 for every person in the UK, the DEC said.

We are concerned the scheme could be too slow and complex to help some of the most vulnerable

Andy Hewett, of the Refugee Council

The Refugee Council said it has several concerns about the scheme, specifically around red tape, safeguarding and resourcing.

Andy Hewett, head of advocacy, said it is concerned the scheme could be "too slow and complex" to help the most vulnerable, and said it favours those who already have a contact in the UK, who may not necessarily be the most at risk.

James Jamieson, chairman of the Local Government Association, said councils will need to be given as much data as possible on who a visa has been issued to, such as their age, medical and educational needs, family make-up, and more clarity on the safeguarding and accommodation checks they will need.

He acknowledged councils will not be able to do everything they would like to do "up front" but said "taking people from a very, very, very dangerous situation to a relatively safe space is something that we need to do as quickly as possible".

He told PA: "I think this will be a two-stage process: there will be an initial check, let's get people away from the bombs as fast as possible, because clearly a bomb landing on your head is a very dangerous situation.

"And then once we've got them here, we've got a roof over their head and we've moved on from the immediate danger, then I think there will be a second or third process or a phase where we will go back, we will check what the situation's like with these people in this accommodation."

Under the separate Ukraine family scheme, 6,100 visas have been issued as of 4pm on Wednesday, the Home Office said.

Some 25,000 applications have been submitted.

**Load-Date:** March 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'Rough years' ahead as Russia threatens Europe, says Germany's president*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66R9-K2W1-JCS0-D061-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

October 29, 2022 Saturday

First Edition

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**Section:** WORLD; Pg. 23

**Length:** 448 words

**Byline:** JONATHAN LANDAY

**Body**

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has plunged Europe into an era of insecurity, Germany said yesterday a day after Vladimir Putin predicted a "dangerous" decade ahead. German president Frank-Walter Steinmeier said the 24 February invasion had ended "old dreams" of a united continent.

"It has plunged us into another time, into an insecurity we thought we had overcome: a time marked by war, violence and flight, by concerns about the expansion of war into a wildfire in Europe," said the president, who is from a wing of Germany's Social Democrats that long argued for closer economic ties to Moscow. "Harder years, rough years are coming."

Germany, which has joined European sanctions against Russia and weapons deliveries to Ukraine, has recorded the arrival of more than a million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and warned of possible energy shortages this winter after cuts in Russian gas supplies.

Mr Putin, addressing a conference in Moscow on Thursday, played down the prospect of a nuclear stand-off with the West but accused Western leaders of inciting the war in Ukraine, which he says was justified by Kyiv's expressed wish to join Nato. Western dominance over world affairs was coming to an end and "ahead is probably the most dangerous, unpredictable and, at the same time, important decade since the end of the Second World War," Putin said.

The Russian leader insisted Moscow's war in Ukraine, which he calls a "special military operation", was going to plan as both sides prepare for a key battle in Kherson in Ukraine's south. One of four partially occupied provinces that Russia declared annexed last month, the region controls the only land route to the Crimea peninsula - seized by Russia in 201 - and the mouth of the Dnipro river that bisects Ukraine.

Ukrainian and Russian troops dug into muddy trench lines north of the regional capital, also called Kherson, exchanged rocket, mortar and artillery fire yesterday, a daily ritual since Ukraine drove Moscow's forces back toward the port city last month.

In recent weeks, Putin has escalated the conflict, discussing nuclear arms and launching a partial mobilisation of men to fight in Ukraine. Russia's central bank governor Elvira Nabiullina said yesterday the mobilisation could spur inflation by affecting the labour market but vowed to contain price rises.

Russia has also unleashed a wave of missile and drone strikes, hitting Ukraine's energy infrastructure and forcing power cuts in Kyiv and other places, officials said. Ukraine has shot down more than 300 Iranian Shahed-136 "kamikaze" drones so far, air force spokesperson Yuriy Ihnat said. Iran has denied Ukrainian and Western assertions it is sending drones to Russia.

Reuters

**Load-Date:** October 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Watch live as Ukrainian refugees arrive in Poland*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6509-ND71-DY4H-K4G2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 13, 2022 Sunday 11:30 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 103 words

**Byline:** Kate Gill

**Body**

[*Refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) continue to arrive in [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) in the hunt for food and shelter more than two weeks after [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) launched an all-out invasion of Ukraine.

Hundreds of thousands of children are among two million refugees who have fled Ukraine to neighbouring countries.

The [*Ukrainian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) government-enforced [*martial law*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/martial-law) , banning all-male citizens 18-60 years old from leaving the country.

To sign our Refugees Welcome campaign petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) and if you are able to donate then please [*click here.*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome)

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/independent-premium#newsletters) to sign up to our free newsletters.

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Who is in the Royal Box at Wimbledon today?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65V1-7N21-JBNF-W4CC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 2, 2022 Saturday 5:06 PM GMT

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**Section:** LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 398 words

**Byline:** Kate Ng and Joanna Whitehead

**Highlight:** Fashion, Olympic and football royalty make appearances

**Body**

[*Tom Daley*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/tom-daley) and his husband Dustin Lance Black, as well as Dame [*Anna Wintour*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/anna-wintour) and [*Gareth Southgate*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/gareth-southgate) are among the guests sitting in the Royal Box at [*Wimbledon*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/wimbledon) today, Saturday 2 July.

The Royal Box, located on Centre Court at the legendary SW19 sports venue, has 74 seats reserved for the royal family and invited guests of the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club (AELTC).

Wimbledon organisers also handed out [*hundreds of free tickets*](https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/tennis/wimbledon-tickets-free-ukraine-refugees-b2107957.html) to ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) in a bid to welcome them to their new homes last week.

In a couple of weeks, the special ticket holders will be able to spend the day at No.1 Court, an opportunity to see some “amazing tennis”, according to Wimbledon Foundation head Paige Murphy.

She said: “It’s an incredibly proud moment for us – it’s really part of our mission… to give people a really special experience after a really traumatic few months.

“To be able to provide a unique day when they can hopefully have a bit of respite and really get some enjoyment out of it is incredibly inspiring for us.”

Who is in the Royal Box today?

Olympic diving champion Tom Daley is in the Royal Box today with his husband, director Dustin Lance Black. Daley wore a bright yellow suit, accessorised with a pink tie, while Black wore a pale blue suit and a matching patterned tie.

Vogue editor-in-chief Dame Anna Wintour was also among the attendees and wore a leather jacket with a metallic sheen and her trademark large sunglasses.

England football manager Gareth Southgate was also there and stood to wave to fans from the Royal Box. Southgate became the first England manager to reach the final of a European Championship at the UEFA Europ 2020.

Paralympian Kadeena Coz, who has won the gold medal four times, also made an appearance. Other Paralympians who were there included Sir Lee Pearson, a 14-time gold medallist who has represented British para-equestrianism, and Dame Sarah Storey, a multiple gold medalist in cycling and swimming.

Scottish curler and 2022 Olympic champion in women’s curling, Jennifer Dodds, and her teammate Eve Muirhead were also in the Royal Box and sat beside Daley.

Also in the box was Olympic swimmer Adam Peaty, Olympic gymnast Max Whitlock, BMX racer Bethany Shriever, Olympic modern pentathlete Kate French, and Olympic sailor Eilidh McIntyre.

Additional reporting by PA

**Load-Date:** July 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[*King Charles makes historic address to Bundestag parliament in fluent German*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67WS-BVH1-DY4H-K087-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 30, 2023 Thursday 10:25 AM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 474 words

**Byline:** Maryam Zakir-Hussain

**Highlight:** King celebrates long-standing history between the two nations

**Body**

[*King Charles III*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/king-charles-iii) has made history as he becomes [*the first British monarch to address German politicians*](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/royal-family/king-charles-iii-germany-prince-harry-court-b2310740.html) from the [*Bundestag*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/bundestag) , while the parliament is in session.

Charles is delivering a speech in German which celebrates the deep-rooted links between [*Germany*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/germany) and the UK on his first state visit to the country.

The King spoke of the importance of renewing the “special bond of friendship” between the two countries.

“This friendship meant so much to my beloved mother, the late Queen, who often spoke about the official 15 visits she often made to Germany,” he said.

He added: “Germany, her people and its distinctive culture have made such a profound impact on me.

“Since I first came to Germany when I was just 13, I have grown to become familiar with the different corners of this remarkable land. Like many British people, I have close personal ties here.”

Charles also reflected on the war in Ukraine, which he said has caused “unimaginable suffering to so many people”.

Before the address, the King and [*Queen Consort*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/queen-consort) were invited to view and sign the first volume of the Bundestag’s Golden Book, which was signed by Her Late Majesty The Queen.

The King and Queen Consort’s state visit to Germany, the first of Charles‘ reign, began on Wednesday with a ceremonial greeting at Berlin’s iconic Brandenburg Gate.

During a speech at a state banquet staged in his honour on Wednesday evening, Charles pledged to “strengthen the connections” between the UK and Germany as he paid tribute to the “enduring value” of the two nations’ relationship.

After the speech, Charles will pay tribute to Germany’s history of welcoming refugees by touring the Tegel Refugee Centre to meet some of the group.

Germany has welcomed more than a million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** seeking sanctuary after Russia invaded their homeland.

Separately the Queen Consort will visit the Refugio House community centre, a meeting place for locals and new Berlin residents, including refugees.

Later this afternoon, the King is set to meet representatives from a joint German and UK military unit and watch a demonstration of their bridge-building amphibious vehicles.

Earlier today, Charles and [*Camilla*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/camilla) visited the Wittenbergplaztz Food Market and met a range of local business owners who discussed the history of the market.

The King also attended a meeting with Chancellor Olaf Scholz in the Federal Chancellery building on Thursday morning.

The overseas visit comes amid [*Prince Harry*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prince-harry) ’s high-profile privacy dispute against the Mail publishers which is being heard at the High Court in London.

On Tuesday, the Duke of Sussex accused the royal family of “without doubt” withholding information from him “for a long time” about [*phone hacking*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/phone-hacking) as they did not want to “open a can of worms”, the High Court heard.

More follows on this breaking story...

**Load-Date:** March 30, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Who is in the royal box at Wimbledon today?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65T5-7SN1-JBNF-W0BF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 28, 2022 Tuesday 3:39 PM GMT

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**Section:** LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 376 words

**Byline:** Joanna Whitehead

**Highlight:** Figures from the local community, academia and business are represented in today’s Royal Box

**Body**

[*Bear Grylls*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/bear-grylls) , the Polish ambassador to the UK, Piotr Wilczek, and CEO of the UK Health Security Agency Dame Jennifer Harries are just some of the guests in the Royal Box on the second day of the 2022 [*Wimbledon*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/wimbledon) tournament.

The Royal Box, which is located on Centre Court at the legendary SW19 sports venue, has 74 seats reserved for the royal family and invited guests of the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club (AELTC).

Wimbledon organisers handed out [*hundreds of free tickets to* ***Ukrainian******refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/tennis/wimbledon-tickets-free-ukraine-refugees-b2107957.html) in a bid to welcome them to their new homes last week.

In a couple of weeks, the special ticket holders will be able to spend the day at No.1 Court, an opportunity to see some “amazing tennis”, according to Wimbledon Foundation head Paige Murphy.

She said: “It’s an incredibly proud moment for us – it’s really part of our mission… to give people a really special experience after a really traumatic few months.

“To be able to provide a unique day when they can hopefully have a bit of respite and really get some enjoyment out of it is incredibly inspiring for us.”

Who is in the Royal Box?

Other attendees include figures from the worlds of academia, sports, business and the local community.

These include Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, the Labour Councillor for Colliers Wood in London, Councillor Joan Henry, the mayor of the London borough of Merton, and the Reverend Mandy Hodgson of St Mary’s Church, Wimbledon.

Sanjay Lobo, the CEO of Be On Hand, a platform to connect volunteers with older people seeking help, who was awarded an MBE in March for services to older people, is also in attendance.

Alison Oliver, the chief executive of Youth Sport Trust, is also a guest.

The Rt Hon Professor Lord Kakkar, Professor of Surgery at University College, the Rt Hon Lord Deighton, chairman of the Economist Group, and Sergio Oslé Varona, the president of the telecommunications giant Movistar, are also present.

Other guests inside Tuesday’s Royal Box include:

Syed Ahmed: Chair of Community Energy London

Reg Bamford: Croquet world champion

Diana Ifill: CEO Sustainable Merton

Julie Jackson: Managing director of Jackson Nugent Vintners

Professor Dame Sarah Springman: Former GB rower and triathlete, civil engineer and academic

**Load-Date:** June 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Sunak unable to commit to lowering migration as Border Force bring people ashore*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:688F-R381-DY4H-K0YK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 19, 2023 Friday 2:51 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 503 words

**Byline:** Ellie Ng

**Highlight:** A Border Force vessel brought about 70 people thought to be migrants in to Dover, Kent, on Friday, after a small boat incident in the Channel.

**Body**

[*Rishi Sunak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rishi-sunak) was unable to commit to bringing migration levels down by the next election as the [*Border Force*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/border-force) rescued and brought ashore a group of people thought to be migrants.

A Border Force vessel brought about 70 people, including some children, in to [*Dover*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dover) , [*Kent*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kent) , on Friday after a small boat incident in the Channel.

It comes as the [*Prime Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prime-minister) conceded he believes immigration into the UK is “too high” but would not spell out what he believes is an acceptable level as he faces pressure after dodging a Tory manifesto commitment to bring net migration down to the scale seen in 2019.

There have been a total of 7,217 small boat crossings this year – up to and including Thursday – according to the Home Office.

During a round of interviews at Hiroshima’s Seifukan tea house before attending the G7 summit, Mr Sunak said he is “crystal clear” he wants to reduce net migration.

But he said to BBC News: “I’m not going to put a precise figure on it but I do want to bring them down.

“The numbers are too high and we want to bring them down. Now, the numbers last year were impacted by the fact that we welcomed ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to the UK. Again, that’s something I think we are proud of.”

The 2019 Conservative manifesto promised that “overall numbers will come down” as the Government ends freedom of movement in the wake of Brexit.

Migration levels were at 226,000 then, they exceeded 500,000 in the year to June 2022 and it could be as high as one million in new figures due to be published in the coming weeks.

But Mr Sunak avoided giving a specific commitment when pressed by Sky News whether he can bring down net migration to below 500,000 by the next election.

Instead, he said: “I’m committed to bringing down the levels of migration that I inherited, and I’m relentlessly focused on stopping the boats, that’s one of my five priorities, and we’re doing absolutely everything we can to do that.”

Downing Street said: “(The Prime Minister) said specifically, ‘I won’t put a number on it’. We don’t know what the numbers will be next week and it’s right we take stock of those.

“But, of course, the Prime Minister speaks to his Cabinet colleagues and the Home Secretary specifically, they’ve worked incredibly closely on the stop-the-boats Bill and the work the Government’s taking forward to try and tackle illegal immigration.

“Of course, the Prime Minister will work closely with Cabinet ministers on the ambition to reduce overall migration.”

A Home Office spokesperson said: “The unacceptable number of people risking their lives by making these dangerous crossings is placing an unprecedented strain on our asylum system.

“Our priority is to stop this illegal trade, and our Small Boats Operational Command is working alongside our French partners and other agencies to disrupt the people smugglers.

“The government has gone further by introducing legislation which will ensure that those people arriving in the UK illegally are detained and promptly removed to their country of origin or a safe third country.”

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Grant Shapps is new Defence Secretary after Ben Wallace resignation*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:692K-HT31-DY4H-K36B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 31, 2023 Thursday 8:41 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:5

**Length:** 537 words

**Byline:** Sam Blewett

**Highlight:** Rishi Sunak handed the energy secretary the key role overseeing British support for Ukraine in its resistance against Russia.

**Body**

[*Grant Shapps*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/grant-shapps) has been appointed Defence Secretary in Rishi Sunak’s mini-reshuffle prompted by Ben Wallace’s formal resignation.

The Prime Minister handed the role overseeing British support to [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) during its resistance against the Russian invasion to the energy secretary on Thursday.

Mr Shapps has never held a role in the Ministry of Defence before but is taking on his fifth role in the Cabinet in the last year by becoming its Secretary of State.

[*Claire Coutinho*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/claire-coutinho) , another Tory MP seen as being close to Mr Sunak, was promoted from education minister to replace Mr Shapps as Energy Secretary.

Mr Shapps said he was “honoured” to take on the role “continuing the UK’s support for Ukraine in their fight against Putin’s barbaric invasion”.

In Westminster, Mr Shapps is seen as an effective communicator and will be key for Mr Sunak as he leads the Tories towards a general election, expected next year.

The war in Ukraine had been a prominent feature of Mr Shapps’ tenure as energy secretary, as he sought to mitigate the effects on fossil fuel availability.

He visited Kyiv last week and his family has hosted ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in their home after Vladimir Putin launched his invasion last year.

Mr Sunak first appointed Mr Shapps to the role of business secretary after entering No 10. He served as Liz Truss’s home secretary for six days and Boris Johnson’s transport secretary until September.

Mr Wallace confirmed his departure as defence secretary on Thursday morning after announcing last month that he would bring an end to his four years in the job.

In a letter to the Prime Minister, Mr Wallace said: “The Ministry of Defence is back on the path to being once again world class with world-class people.

“The United Kingdom is respected around the world for our armed forces and that respect has only grown more since the war in Ukraine.

“I know you agree with me that we must not return to the days where defence was viewed as a discretionary spend by Government and savings were achieved by hollowing out.”

Mr Sunak had been expected to launch a full reshuffle ahead of the Tory party conference in October but now appears to be holding off on the more wide-ranging move.

Conservative MP David Johnston was given his first ministerial role as he steps up from the backbench to replace Ms Coutinho as education minister.

Shadow defence secretary John Healey congratulated Mr Shapps at being appointed Defence Secretary but hit out at “13 years of Tory defence failures”, arguing that “a change at the top will not change this record”.

The Liberal Democrats accused Mr Sunak of appointing a “yes-man” to the key role, calling for an end to the ministerial “merry-go-round” under the Tories.

Mr Wallace, who served as defence secretary under three prime ministers, had made little secret of his desire to boost the defence forces budget and repeated his case for investment in his resignation letter.

“I genuinely believe that over the next decade the world will get more insecure and more unstable,” he told the Prime Minister.

“We both share the belief that now is the time to invest.”

Mr Sunak praised Mr Wallace, who was a captain in the Scots Guards before entering politics, for having “served our country with distinction”.

**Load-Date:** August 31, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Live updates | Luxembourg: Turkey likely to let 2 join NATO*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65G5-87F1-DY4H-K55C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 17, 2022 Tuesday 9:00 AM GMT

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**Length:** 408 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Luxembourg's foreign minister says he doesn't believe Turkey will prevent Sweden and Finland from joining NATO, despite the Turkish president's stated objections

**Body**

BERLIN - Luxembourg's foreign minister says he doesn't believe [*Turkey*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/turkey) will prevent [*Sweden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sweden) and Finland from joining NATO, despite the Turkish president's stated objections.

All 30 current NATO members, among them Turkey, must agree to let the Nordic neighbors join. But Turkish President [*Recep Tayyip Erdogan*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/recep-tayyip-erdogan) has said they failed to take a "clear" stance against Kurdish militants and other groups that Ankara considers terrorists, and imposed military sanctions on Turkey.

However, Luxembourg's long-serving Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn told Germany's Deutschlandfunk radio on Tuesday that he suspects Erdogan is merely "pushing up the price" for the two countries' membership. He said: "At the end of the day, I am convinced that Turkey can't slam the brakes on this."

Asselborn added that "this will take some time, I hope not too long."

He pointed to Turkey's removal in 2019 from the U.S.-led F35 stealth fighter jet program and the possibility of Ankara getting F-16 fighter jets from the U.S.

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KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR:

- Ukraine mounts effort to rescue last fighters at steel mill

- In targeting Ukraine's schools, Russia bombs the future

- From civilian to soldier: Ukrainian army volunteer buried

- With echoes of Trump, GOP splinters over $40B for Ukraine

- Vatican minister visits Ukraine as pope toes delicate line

- Europe accused of `double-standard' on ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***

- Follow all [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) stories on Russia's war on Ukraine at [*https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine*](https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine)

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OTHER DEVELOPMENTS:

LONDON - British military authorities say Russia will probably rely heavily on massive artillery strikes on towns as it seeks to make gains in the eastern Donbas region of Ukraine, citing widespread damage to residential buildings in areas attacked earlier in the war.

The U.K. Ministry of Defense says residential structures accounted for 80% of the roughly 3,500 buildings that were damaged or destroyed in the Chernihiv region during Russia's now-abandoned advance toward the capital, Kyiv.

"The scale of this damage indicates Russia's preparedness to use artillery against inhabited areas, with minimal regard to discrimination or proportionality," the ministry says in a briefing posted Tuesday morning.

The ministry says Russia has probably resorted to "indiscriminate artillery bombardment" because it has limited ability to accurately target such strikes and doesn't want to risk flying combat aircraft beyond its own front lines.

**Load-Date:** May 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Watch live as Ukrainian refugees arrive into Poland*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6503-HHV1-DY4H-K44B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 12, 2022 Saturday 10:52 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:2

**Length:** 115 words

**Byline:** Kate Gill

**Body**

[*Refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) continue to arrive in [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) in the hunt for food and shelter after [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) launched an all-out invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Hundreds of thousands of children are among two million refugees who have fled Ukraine after Russia's invasion of its neighbour began two weeks ago.

Fathers and brothers have been forced to stay behind after the Ukrainian government-enforced martial law, banning all-male citizens 18-60 years old from leaving the country.

To sign our Refugees Welcome campaign petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) and if you are able to donate then please [*click here.*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome)

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/independent-premium#newsletters) to sign up to our free newsletters.

**Load-Date:** March 12, 2022

**End of Document**



[*British businessman 'buys warplanes to help Ukraine fight Russia'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GM-PMR1-DY4H-K3CV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 19, 2022 Thursday 6:18 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:3

**Length:** 381 words

**Byline:** Kim Sengupta

**Highlight:** Philanthropist Mohammad Zahoor purchased the aircraft after talks with Kyiv

**Body**

A British businessman living in London has bought two warplanes to help Ukraine's armed forces in the ongoing war against Russia, it is reported.

Multi-millionaire Mohammad Zahoor, who is married to a popular Ukrainian singer, has been involved in mobilising funds and aid and helping to resettle refugees from the country in the UK and other parts of Europe.

Mr Zahoor, 66, purchased the aircraft, believed to be jet fighters, after holding talks with Ukrainian officials. His wife, Kamalia, said in an interview with Ukrainian media that her husband was at first reticent about publicising his military assistance, but now "Zahoor has given me the green light to tell".

As well as the warplanes, said Ms Zahoor, her husband is also currently engaged in constructing a £1m housing project for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in Germany.

Two Ukrainian officials said that they were aware of Mr Zahoor's plans to donate the planes, but could not go into details due to reasons of security and confidentiality.

The Zahoors have been living in Hampstead in north London and the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, for a number of years. Kamaliya launched her musical career in England nine years ago.

In 2013 they appeared in Meet the Russians, a British reality show produced by Fox TV about wealthy people from Russia and the former Soviet Union living in London.

Mr Zahoor, who arrived in Ukraine as a student from Pakistan in the 1970s, is the founder and owner of the ISTIL Group, whose assets included, at one stage, a steel mill in Donetsk sold for an estimated £760m in 2009 to the Russian MP Vadim Varshavsky. He is also the former owner of the English-language Kyiv Post, which he bought the same year and sold in 2018.

Diplomatic sources say Mr Zahoor had clashed with some Ukrainian officials in the past after highlighting alleged malpractice in a defence contract.

In March, following the Russian invasion, Mr Zahoor said in an interview with Arab News: "This is time, actually, for us not to keep quiet. We have to take sides. I am openly taking the side of Ukraine because after seeing [reports in] western, Ukrainian and Russian media, I can see who is telling the truth.

"This is the time actually for everyone to speak up for Ukraine, otherwise every big country is going to swallow its next-door neighbour."

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2022

**End of Document**



[*British businessman 'buys warplanes to help Ukraine'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GS-9DM1-JCS0-D07V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

May 20, 2022 Friday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 11

**Length:** 381 words

**Byline:** KIM SENGUPTA IN KHARKIV

**Body**

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Multimillionaire Mohammad Zahoor, who is married to a popular Ukrainian singer, has been involved in mobilising funds and aid and helping to resettle refugees from the country in the UK and other parts of Europe.

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Diplomatic sources say Mr Zahoor had clashed with some Ukrainian officials in the past after highlighting alleged malpractice in a defence contract.

In March, following the Russian invasion, Mr Zahoor said in an interview with Arab News: "This is time, actually, for us not to keep quiet. We have to take sides. I am openly taking the side of Ukraine because after seeing [reports in] western, Ukrainian and Russian media, I can see who is telling the truth.

"This is the time actually for everyone to speak up for Ukraine, otherwise every big country is going to swallow its next-door neighbour."

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Germany announces $3 billion military aid package for Ukraine before possible Zelenskyy visit*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6874-X1W1-JBNF-W291-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 13, 2023 Saturday 9:05 AM GMT

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**Length:** 532 words

**Byline:** Frank Jordans

**Highlight:** Germany says it's providing Ukraine with additional military aid worth more than 2.7 billion euros ($3 billion) including tanks, anti-aircraft systems and ammunition

**Body**

Germany will provide [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) with additional military aid worth more than 2.7 billion euros ($3 billion), including tanks, anti-aircraft systems and ammunition, the government said Saturday.

The announcement came as preparations were underway in [*Berlin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/berlin) for a possible first visit to Germany by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy since [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) invaded his country last year.

Defense Minister Boris Pistorius said that Berlin wants to show with the latest package of arms “that Germany is serious in its support” for Ukraine.

“Germany will provide all the help it can, as long as it takes,” he said.

While Zelenskyy's visit on Sunday has yet to be officially confirmed, it would be a sign that relations between Ukraine and Germany have improved markedly after a rocky patch.

[*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) has long been suspicious of Germany's reliance on Russian energy and support for the Nord Stream gas pipelines circumventing Ukraine, defended by then Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Her successor, Olaf Scholz, agreed to phase out Russian energy imports after the invasion but initially hesitated to provide Ukraine with lethal weapons, fearing Germany could be drawn into the conflict.

With Washington, Warsaw and London more overtly supportive of Ukraine's efforts to defend itself, Berlin got the cold diplomatic shoulder from Kyiv.

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier was disinvited from Ukraine last year,prompting annoyance in Germany, which pointed out that it has given considerable financial aid to Kyiv and taken in more than a million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. Scholz eventually visited Kyiv with French President Emmanuel Macron and other leaders in June.

Though slow to provide military aid, Germany has since become one of the biggest suppliers of arms to Ukraine, crucially giving the green light for deliveries of modern battle tanks like its own Leopard 1 and 2, along with sophisticated anti-aircraft systems needed to fend off drone and missile attacks.

The new military aid package, first reported by German weekly Der Spiegel, includes 30 Leopard 1 A5 tanks, 20 Marder armored personnel carriers, more than 100 combat vehicles, 18 self-propelled Howitzers, 200 reconnaissance drones, four IRIS-T SLM anti-aircraft systems and other air defense equipment.

The Ukrainian president would be arriving from Rome, where he will meet with Pope Francis and Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni.

Berlin police confirmed last week that they are preparing for a possible visit by Zelenskyy and have imposed a security cordon throughout much of the capital's government district Sunday.

After meeting Scholz and other senior officials at the chancellery, the two leaders are expected to fly to the western city of Aachen, where Zelenskyy would receive the International Charlemagne Prize awarded to him and the people of Ukraine. Organizers say the award recognizes that their resistance against Russia's invasion is a defense "not just of the sovereignty of their country and the life of its citizens, but also of Europe and European values.”

Zelenskyy last visited Berlin in July 2021. He also attended the Munich Security Conference the following February, days before Russia launched its full-scale attack on Ukraine.

**Load-Date:** May 13, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian refugees treated to tennis-themed afternoon tea in Wimbledon*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65S9-CRK1-JBNF-W4DC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 24, 2022 Friday 3:46 PM GMT

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**Section:** LIFESTYLE,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 84 words

**Byline:** Holly Patrick

**Body**

Refugees who had fled war-torn Ukraine were treated to a tennis-themed afternoon tea by The [*Wimbledon*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/wimbledon) Foundation to welcome them to the local area.

Wimbledon's organisers handed out hundreds of free tickets to the tennis competition to the recent arrivals and their families, who have settled in Merton.

The classic Wimbledon strawberries and cream were served as part of the high tea, with themed bunting and tennis balls used as decorations for the room and tables.

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**Load-Date:** June 24, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Jill Biden to Ukrainian mom: Russia war 'hard to understand'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65D8-1Y21-DY4H-K0PS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 8, 2022 Sunday 10:49 AM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 341 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** U.S. first lady Jill Biden spent Mother's Day in Slovakia, meeting with Ukrainian mothers who have been displaced by Russia's war

**Body**

U.S. first lady [*Jill Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jill-biden) spent Mother's Day in Slovakia, meeting with Ukrainian mothers who have been displaced by Russia's war and assuring them that the "hearts of the American people" are behind them.

At a bus station in the city of Kosice that is now a 24-hour refugee processing center, Biden found herself in an extended conversation with an emotional Ukrainian woman who said she struggles to explain the war to her three children because she cannot even explain it to herself.

"I cannot explain because I don't know myself and I'm a teacher," Viktoriia Kutocha, who had her arms around her 7-year-old daughter, Yulia, told Biden.

At one point, Kutocha asked "why?" seeming to seek an explanation for Russia's decision to invade Ukraine on Feb. 24.

'It's so hard to understand," the first lady replied.

The 24-hour facility is one of six refugee centers in Slovakia, providing an average of 300 to 350 people daily with food, showers, clothing, emergency on-site accommodations and other services, according to information provided by the White House.

Biden, wearing a flower corsage on her wrist - a Mother's Day gift from President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) - also dropped in at a Slovakian public school that has taken in displaced students.

Slovakian and Ukrainian moms were brought together at the school for a Mother's Day event while their children made crafts to give them as gifts.

Biden went from table to table meeting the mothers and kids. She told some of the women that she wanted to come "and say the hearts of the American people are with the mothers of Ukraine."

"I just wanted to come and show you our support," she said before departing for the border village of Vysne Nemecke to tour its border processing facility.

Biden is on a four-day visit to Eastern Europe to highlight U.S. support for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and for the allied countries, like Romania and Slovakia, that are providing a safe haven for them.

She spent Friday and Saturday in Romania, visiting with U.S. troops and meeting with Ukrainian refugee mothers and children.

**Load-Date:** May 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Pope on the banks of the Danube in final Mass in Hungary*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:684C-MCT1-JBNF-W0J0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 30, 2023 Sunday 7:38 AM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 502 words

**Byline:** Nicole Winfield and Justin Spike

**Highlight:** Tens of thousands of Hungarians have filled Budapest’s main square for Pope Francis’ final Mass in Hungary

**Body**

Tens of thousands of Hungarians flocked to Budapest’s main square Sunday for Pope Francis’ final Mass, gathering on the banks of the Danube as the pontiff wrapped up a weekend visit to the heart of [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) with pleas for a peaceful end to Russia’s war next door.

The Mass on Kossuth Lajos Square, with the Hungarian parliament and Budapest’s famed Chain Bridge as a backdrop, provided the visual highlight of Francis’ three-day visit that has been dominated by the Vatican’s concern for the plight of neighboring Ukraine.

Citing local organizers, the Vatican said some 50,000 people were participating at the Mass, more than 30,000 of them in the square on a brilliantly sunny spring morning. Among them were President Katalin Novak and Hungary’s right-wing populist prime minister, Viktor Orban, whose lukewarm support for Ukraine has rankled fellow European Union members.

After the Mass, Francis had a final event in [*Budapest*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/budapest) before returning to Rome: a speech on European culture at the Pazmany Peter Catholic University.

The 86-year-old Francis has tried to forge a diplomatic balancing act in his pleas to end the war, expressing solidarity with Ukraine while keeping the door open to dialogue with Moscow. On Saturday, he prayed with ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and then met with an envoy of Russian Patriarch Kirill, who has firmly supported Moscow’s invasion and justified it as a metaphysical battle against the liberal West.

Francis kissed the cross of Metropolitan Hilarion in a sign of respect for the Russian Orthodox Church during what the Vatican said was a “cordial” 20-minute meeting at the Vatican’s embassy in Budapest. Hilarion, who developed good relations with the Vatican as Kirill’s longtime foreign minister, said he briefed Francis on his work now as the Moscow Patriarchate’s representative in Budapest.

Francis’ visit to Hungary, his second in as many years, brought him as close as he’s been to the Ukrainian front but also to the heart of Europe, where Orban's avowedly right-wing Christian government has cast itself as a bulwark against a secularizing Western world.

Francis, though, has used the visit to call for the continent to find again its spirit of unity and purpose, referencing Budapest's bridges across the Danube as symbols of unity and connection.

The site for his final Mass couldn’t have been more appropriate for that message: The sprawling square is named for one of Hungary’s most famous statesmen who served as its first prime minister after the 1848-1849 revolution against Habsburg rule. It is separated from the left bank of the Danube river only by Hungary’s iconic neo-Gothic parliament, the country’s largest building and home of its National Assembly. Nearby is the Chain Bridge, one of several bridges spanning the river and linking the Pest and Buda sides of the city. \_\_\_

Associated Press religion coverage receives support through the AP’s collaboration with The Conversation US, with funding from Lilly Endowment Inc. The AP is solely responsible for this content.

**Load-Date:** April 30, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Polish government plans referendum asking if voters want 'thousands of illegal immigrants'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68XS-JK01-DY4H-K0VD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 13, 2023 Sunday 8:59 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 574 words

**Byline:** Vanessa Gera

**Highlight:** Poland’s ruling party wants to ask voters in a referendum if they support accepting “thousands of illegal immigrants from the Middle East and Africa” as part of a European Union relocation plan

**Body**

Poland’s ruling party wants to ask voters in a referendum whether they support accepting “thousands of illegal immigrants from the Middle East and Africa” as part of a European Union relocation plan, the prime minister said Sunday, as his conservative party seeks to hold onto power in an October parliamentary election.

[*Mateusz Morawiecki*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mateusz-morawiecki) announced the referendum question in a new video published on social media. It indicated that his party, [*Law and Justice*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/law-and-justice) , is seeking to use migration in its election campaign, a tactic that helped it take power in 2015.

Poland is hosting more than a million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, who are primarily white and Christian, but officials have long made clear that they consider Muslims and others from different cultures to be a threat to the nation’s cultural identity and security.

EU interior ministers in June endorsed a plan to share out responsibility for migrants entering Europe without authorization, the root of one of the bloc’s longest-running political crises.

The [*Polish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/polish) government wants to hold the referendum alongside the parliamentary election, scheduled for Oct. 15. Morawiecki said that the question would say: “Do you support the admission of thousands of illegal immigrants from the Middle East and Africa under the forced relocation mechanism imposed by the European bureaucracy?”

The video announcing the question includes scenes of burning cars and other street violence in Western Europe. A Black man licks a huge knife in apparent anticipation of committing a crime. Party leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski then says: “Do you want this to happen in Poland as well? Do you want to cease being masters of your own country?”

Leaders have announced two other questions in recent days. One will ask voters for their views on privatizing state-owned enterprises and the other will ask if they support raising the retirement age, which Law and Justice lowered to 60 for women and 65 for men.

The questions are presented in a way clearly intended to show the opposition party, Civic Platform, as a threat to the interests of Poles. The pro-business and pro-EU party, which governed from 2007 to 2015, raised the retirement age during its time in power, favored some privatization and signaled a willingness to accept a few thousand refugees before it lost power.

Europe’s asylum system collapsed eight years ago after well over a million people entered the bloc — most of them fleeing conflict in Syria — and overwhelmed reception capacities in Greece and Italy, in the process sparking one of the EU’s biggest political crises.

The 27 EU nations have bickered ever since over which countries should take responsibility for people arriving without authorization, and whether other members should be obliged to help them cope.

Initially Poland was neither an entry country nor a destination country for migrants and refugees. It became a front-line state two years ago when migrants began crossing from Belarus, something European authorities view as an effort by the Russian ally to generate turmoil in Poland and other European countries.

Poland responded by building a large wall on its border. It has recently increased its military presence on the border fearing an uptick in migration and other possible instability.

As well as disagreements over migration, Law and Justice has long been in conflict with the EU over a perception by the bloc that the [*Warsaw*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/warsaw) government has been eroding democratic norms.

**Load-Date:** August 13, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Sport news in brief*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:683G-C121-JCS0-D11K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 26, 2023 Wednesday

First Edition

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**Section:** SPORT; Pg. 40

**Length:** 495 words

**Body**

Ireland reach highest-ever test score in Sri Lanka

Taking full advantage of ideal batting conditions and a tired Sri Lankan bowling attack, Ireland piled up 492 all out before the hosts responded by reaching 81-0 at stumps on day two of the second test yesterday. Nishan Madushka was unbeaten on 41 in only his third test match, and Sri Lanka skipper Dimuth Kurunaratne remained not out on 39 when play was suspended 30 minutes before the scheduled close due to bad light and rain.

Earlier, Ireland reached its highest test score by a distance, surpassing their previous best of 339 against Pakistan in 1998 in Dublin. The Sri Lankan bowling looked uninspired for the best part of the day and was sent on a leather hunt by Paul Stirling (103) and Curtis Campher (111) who scored their maiden centuries. They joined Kevin O'Brien and Lorcan Tucker as Irish test centurions in the country's short test cricket history. AP

Bairstow hits 97 on his return from injury

Jonny Bairstow fell three short of a dashing century on his first outing in almost eight months, picking up where he left off last summer in a low-key comeback for Yorkshire's second XI. Coming in at number four, Bairstow cracked 97 in just 88 deliveries, with 13 boundaries and two sixes, before hammering fellow England international Olly Stone to cover with a hundred in sight.

The arrival of Harrison's leg-spin allowed him to shift up a gear, with one slog sweep landing in the seats of the East Stand and another disappearing over wide long-on. By then a century seemed almost inevitable, but the return of Stone brought instant rewards as Bairstow looked to get on top of a shorter ball outside off stump only to find Harrison's hands at cover.

The 33-year-old has not played since a freak golfing accident last September left him with three separate fractures in his left leg as well as a dislocated ankle and ligament damage but took the biggest step yet on what has been a long and arduous recovery. PA

Wimbledon set to make £500k Ukraine donation

Substantial financial support to Ukrainian players and causes will be offered by Wimbledon this summer after the tournament's board reversed the ban on Russian and Belarusian athletes. At the spring press conference to announce plans for this summer's tournament, organisers revealed that £1 for every ticket holder - expected to be more than £500,000 in total - will be donated to Ukrainian relief.

Meanwhile, the All England Club and the Lawn Tennis Association will provide two hotel rooms per Ukrainian player free of charge and training facilities for the duration of the summer grass-court season as well as funding a day at the tournament for 1,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Wimbledon and the LTA announced at the end of last month that the controversial ban on Russian and Belarusian players would not continue after they were left out in the cold by the rest of the sport and punished by the WTA and ATP, with hefty fines and the removal of ranking points. PA

**Load-Date:** April 25, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Biden to rally allies as Ukraine war gets more complicated*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67KV-KR91-JBNF-W4HM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 21, 2023 Tuesday 5:02 AM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 1132 words

**Byline:** Aamer Madhani and Zeke Miller

**Highlight:** President Joe Biden is set to consult with allies from NATO’s eastern flank in Poland as the Russian invasion of Ukraine edges toward an even more complicated stage

**Body**

President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) is set to consult with allies from NATO's eastern flank in Poland on Tuesday as the Russian invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) edges toward an even more complicated stage.

After paying an unannounced visit to Kyiv, Biden made his way to Warsaw on Monday on a mission to solidify Western unity as both Ukraine and Russia prepare to launch spring offensives. The conflict — the most significant war in Europe since World War II — has already left tens of thousands dead, devastated Ukraine’s infrastructure system and damaged the global economy.

“I thought it was critical that there not be any doubt, none whatsoever, about U.S. support for Ukraine in the war,” Biden said as he stood with Ukrainian President Volodomyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv before departing for Poland. “The Ukrainian people have stepped up in a way that few people ever have in the past.”

Biden is scheduled to meet with Polish President Andrzej Duda and deliver an address from the gardens of Warsaw's Royal Castle on Tuesday, where he’s expected to highlight the commitment of the central European country and other allies to Ukraine over the past year. On Wednesday, he’ll consult with Duda and other leaders of the Bucharest Nine, a group of the easternmost members of NATO military alliance.

[*White House*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/white-house) national security adviser Jake Sullivan said Biden would underscore in his Warsaw address that Russian President [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) wrongly surmised “that Ukraine would cower and that the West would be divided” when he launched his invasion.

“He got the opposite of that across the board,” Sullivan said.

While Biden is looking to use his whirlwind trip to Europe as a moment of affirmation for Ukraine and allies, the White House has also emphasized that there is no clear endgame to the war in the near term and the situation on the ground has become increasingly complex.

The administration on Sunday revealed it has new intelligence suggesting that China, which has remained on the sidelines of the conflict, is now considering sending Moscow lethal aid. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said it could become a “serious problem” if Beijing follows through.

Biden and Zelenskyy discussed capabilities that Ukraine needs “to be able to succeed on the battlefield” in the months ahead, Sullivan said. Zelenskyy has been pushing the U.S. and European allies to provide fighter jets and long-range missile systems known as ATACMS — which Biden has declined to provide so far. Sullivan declined to comment on whether there was any movement on the matter during the leaders' talk.

With no end in sight for the war, the anniversary is a critical moment for Biden to try to bolster European unity and reiterate that Putin's invasion was a frontal attack on the post-World War II international order. The White House hopes the president's visit to Kyiv and Warsaw will help bolster American and global resolve.

“It is going to be a long war,” said Michal Baranowski, managing director of the German Marshall Fund East. “If we don’t have the political leadership and if we don’t explain to our societies why this war is critical for their security ... then Ukraine would be in trouble.”

In the U.S., a poll published last week by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research shows that support for providing Ukraine with weapons and direct economic assistance is softening. And earlier this month, 11 House Republicans introduced what they called the “Ukraine fatigue” resolution urging Biden to end military and financial aid to Ukraine, while pushing Ukraine and Russia to come to a peace agreement.

Biden dismissed the notion of waning American support during his visit to Kyiv.

“For all the disagreement we have in our Congress on some issues, there is significant agreement on support for Ukraine,” he said. “It’s not just about freedom in Ukraine. … It’s about freedom of democracy at large.”

Some establishment Republicans say it’s now more important than ever for Biden and others in Washington to hammer home why continued backing of Ukraine matters.

“The bottom line for me is this is a war of aggression, war crimes on steroids, on television every day. To turn your back on this leads to more aggression," said Sen. Lindsay Graham, R-S.C. "Putin won’t stop in Ukraine. I’m firmly in the camp of it’s in our vital national security interest to continue to help Ukraine and I can sell it at home and will continue to sell it."

Former U.S. Ambassador John Herbst, who served as the top diplomat to Ukraine from 2003 to 2006, said Biden's White House can do better making the case to a domestic audience that “at minimum keeping Putin bottled up in Ukraine" is in U.S. economic and foreign policy interest and lessens the chance that Russia can turn the conflict into a wider war.

“The smart play is to give Ukraine the substantial assistance to make sure that the Putin problem is solved,” said Herbst, senior director of the Atlantic Council’s Eurasia Center. “If this were something laid out clearly from the Oval Office and then repeated constantly by the president, his senior foreign policy and national security team, I don’t have any doubt the American public will embrace it.”

Ahead of the trip, the White House spotlighted Poland's efforts to assist Ukraine. More than 1.5 million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have settled in Poland since the start of the war and millions more have crossed through Poland on their way to other countries. Poland has also provided Ukraine with $3.8 billion in military and humanitarian aid, according to the White House.

The Biden administration announced last summer that it was establishing a permanent U.S. garrison in Poland, creating an enduring American foothold on NATO's eastern flank.

The U.S. has committed about $113 billion in aid to Ukraine since last year, while European allies have committed tens of billions of dollars more and welcomed millions of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have fled the conflict.

“We built a coalition from the Atlantic to the Pacific,” Biden said. “Russia’s aim was to wipe Ukraine off the map. Putin’s war of conquest is failing.”

For the second time in less than a year, Biden will use Warsaw as the backdrop to deliver a major address on the Russian invasion. Last March, he delivered a forceful and highly personal condemnation of Putin at the Royal Castle just weeks after the start of the war.

Duda said Biden's presence on Polish soil as the war's anniversary approaches sends an important signal about the U.S. commitment to European security.

“In Warsaw, the president will deliver a very important address — one that a large part of the world, if not the whole world actually, is waiting for," Duda said.

\_\_\_

Associated Press writers Monika Scislowska in Warsaw, Evan Vucci in Kyiv and Kevin Freking in Washington contributed to this report.

**Load-Date:** February 21, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Watch live as Ukrainian refugees cross border into Poland*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WR-NTW1-DY4H-K41B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 1, 2022 Tuesday 9:01 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 89 words

**Byline:** Mared Parry

**Body**

Hundreds of thousands of [*people*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/people) have already fled Ukraine, heading into its neighbouring countries.

Yesterday it was reported that at least 368,000 people had left the country, which is currently under attack from the Russian [*military*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/military).

The [*Polish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/polish) [*border*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/border) reportedly had a 25-mile long queue formed of desperate [*asylum seekers*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/asylum-seekers-0) yesterday afternoon, and Polish officials confirmed that over 150,000 people had already crossed the border since the start of the invasion on Thursday, 24 February.

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters) to sign up to our free newsletters

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Sean Penn says he's considered 'taking up arms against Russia'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:656N-MB41-JBNF-W503-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 12, 2022 Tuesday 5:20 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,FILM,CULTURE; Version:1

**Length:** 386 words

**Byline:** Inga Parkel

**Highlight:** 'My intention is to go back into Ukraine. But I'm not an idiot, I am not certain what I can offer,' actor said

**Body**

[*Sean Penn*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sean-penn) revealed that he has considered joining Ukrainian forces to fight against [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia).

In a recent interview, the 61-year-old actor - [*who fled Ukraine in February while filming a VICE documentary about Russia's invasion of the country*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/sean-penn-ukraine-border-russia-b2026387.html) - discussed returning to the war zone.

"My intention is to go back into Ukraine. But I'm not an idiot, I am not certain what I can offer," Penn told [*Hollywood Authentic*](https://hollywoodauthentic.com/sean-penn/).

Speaking about his time in the country earlier this year, he added: "The only possible reason for me staying in Ukraine longer last time would've been for me to be holding a rifle."

"So, where I am in life is short of doing that, but if you've been in Ukraine [fighting] has to cross your mind. And you kind of think what century is this?" Penn continued.

"I was at the gas station in Brentwood the other day and I'm now thinking about taking up arms against Russia? What the f\*\*\* is going on?" he questioned.

Penn has been a prominent voice in speaking out against Russia, [*previously urging the US to "invest everything"*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/sean-penn-president-zelensky-russia-ukraine-b2030193.html) into supporting the country and its people, or lose sight of "what America hoped to be".

The actor's nonprofit CORE (Community Organised Relief Effort), which he founded in 2010, is currently supporting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in Poland.

"I've got plenty to do with CORE on the receiving side of refugees in Poland," Penn said. "I'm shooting more for the documentary, but I'll be doing a last-minute assessment of what value that will have."

He concluded: "Long term, we don't have any tangible evidence that documentaries really change anything. We just don't. We only know they can give hope."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** April 12, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Sean Penn says he's considered 'taking up arms against Russia'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:656J-0BK1-DY4H-K0C0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 11, 2022 Monday 7:02 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,FILM,CULTURE; Version:1

**Length:** 386 words

**Byline:** Inga Parkel

**Highlight:** 'My intention is to go back into Ukraine. But I'm not an idiot, I am not certain what I can offer,' actor said

**Body**

[*Sean Penn*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sean-penn) revealed that he has considered joining Ukrainian forces to fight against [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia).

In a recent interview, the 61-year-old actor - [*who fled Ukraine in February while filming a VICE documentary about Russia's invasion of the country*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/sean-penn-ukraine-border-russia-b2026387.html) - discussed returning to the war zone.

"My intention is to go back into Ukraine. But I'm not an idiot, I am not certain what I can offer," Penn told [*Hollywood Authentic*](https://hollywoodauthentic.com/sean-penn/).

Speaking about his time in the country earlier this year, he added: "The only possible reason for me staying in Ukraine longer last time would've been for me to be holding a rifle."

"So, where I am in life is short of doing that, but if you've been in Ukraine [fighting] has to cross your mind. And you kind of think what century is this?" Penn continued.

"I was at the gas station in Brentwood the other day and I'm now thinking about taking up arms against Russia? What the f\*\*\* is going on?" he questioned.

Penn has been a prominent voice in speaking out against Russia, [*previously urging the US to "invest everything"*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/sean-penn-president-zelensky-russia-ukraine-b2030193.html) into supporting the country and its people, or lose sight of "what America hoped to be".

The actor's nonprofit CORE (Community Organised Relief Effort), which he founded in 2010, is currently supporting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in Poland.

"I've got plenty to do with CORE on the receiving side of refugees in Poland," Penn said. "I'm shooting more for the documentary, but I'll be doing a last-minute assessment of what value that will have."

He concluded: "Long term, we don't have any tangible evidence that documentaries really change anything. We just don't. We only know they can give hope."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** April 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[*President reiterates condemnation of Ukraine war after row over wife’s letter*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:662D-74C1-JBNF-W368-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 1, 2022 Monday 3:55 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 420 words

**Byline:** Jonathan McCambridge

**Highlight:** Sabina Higgins wrote to the Irish Times last week to criticise one of the newspaper’s editorials on the conflict.

**Body**

[*President*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/president) [*Michael D Higgins*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/michael-d-higgins) has issued a statement reiterating his condemnation of the war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) following criticism of a letter written by his wife on the conflict.

President Michael D Higgins had faced calls to state unequivocal support for the Ukrainian cause and oppose Russian aggression amid the furore created by his wife Sabina’s letter.

Mrs Higgins wrote to the [*Irish Times*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/irish-times) last week to criticise one of the newspaper’s editorials on the conflict.

In the letter, she said the fighting would go on until the world “persuades President [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) of Russia and President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine to agree to a ceasefire and negotiations”.

He has repeatedly condemned what he has described as the illegal, immoral and unjustifiable Russian invasion of Ukraine

Spokesperson for Irish President

Critics have suggested Mrs Higgins was drawing an equivalence between the actions of Ukraine and Russia.

Scrutiny of the letter intensified after it was reportedly published for a brief period on the Irish president’s official website. It appears since to have been removed from the site.

A number of representatives from parties in Ireland’s coalition government have voiced concern.

A statement issued to the Irish Times by a spokesperson for President Higgins said: “The record shows President Higgins has been unequivocal in his condemnation of the Russian invasion of Ukraine from his original statement on March 1.

“He has repeatedly condemned what he has described as the illegal, immoral and unjustifiable Russian invasion of Ukraine.

“He has called for an immediate Russian withdrawal and end to the violence. He has voiced his steadfast support for the victims of this terrible conflict and met with ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in Ireland and the Ukrainian Ambassador many times.

“President Higgins has stressed the importance of using every available ‘chink of diplomacy’.”

The spokesperson added: “President Higgins has also publicly commended and continues to commend people and communities across Ireland for their generosity and solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

“It is heartening to witness so many people in Ireland and across the globe unite in their support for the Ukrainian people, offering shelter, food, aid and other forms of assistance to those fleeing the war.”

The President’s statement today made no mention of Mrs Higgins’ letter.

Fine Gael senator John McGahon had earlier called on Mr Higgins to clarify whether he was aware of the letter before it was published or had any role in drafting it.

**Load-Date:** August 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Consideration of Ireland’s foreign policy stance should not be ‘binary issue’*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:680Y-K7H1-JBNF-W2SX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 14, 2023 Friday 8:22 AM GMT

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**Section:** WORLD,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:2

**Length:** 514 words

**Byline:** David Young

**Highlight:** Micheal Martin’s comments came after US President Joe Biden referenced Ireland’s policy of military neutrality in a speech to the Dail.

**Body**

Consideration of Ireland’s international security policy should not by a binary choice on whether it joins a military alliance, the country’s deputy premier has said.

Micheal Martin’s comments came after US [*President*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/president) [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) referenced Ireland’s long-standing policy of neutrality in a speech to the parliament in Dublin.

The Irish Government has established a forum to examine issues related to Ireland’s independent foreign policy position.

The forum, which will convene this summer, has been set up amid increasing focus on the policy of military neutrality in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

In his speech to the [*Dail*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dail) on Thursday, Mr Biden highlighted a quote by President [*John F Kennedy*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/john-f-kennedy) 60 years ago when he stated that [*Ireland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ireland) has never been neutral “between liberty and tyranny”.

“Over the past year Ireland has proved him right, and stood proudly with the United States and partners around the world for liberty against tyranny,” President Biden added, as he highlighted that Ireland has committed more than 170 million euro in non-lethal aid to Ukraine.

Mr Martin said the President had been “very taken” by the Irish humanitarian response to the Ukrainian situation.

Heartfelt and inspirational words by [*@POTUS*](https://twitter.com/POTUS?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Joe Biden in the Oireachtas.Wonderful day again in Dublin for the President’s visit. [*pic.twitter.com/JZeohlugNL*](https://t.co/JZeohlugNL) — Micheál Martin (@MichealMartinTD) [*April 13, 2023*](https://twitter.com/MichealMartinTD/status/1646589392042053652?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

“He constantly refers to the number of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** that have been welcomed into Ireland and he really thinks it stands out in respect of the responses of other countries,” he told RTE Radio One.

“He knows that we’ve been a leader in terms of Ukraine becoming members of the European Union, we would have advocated strongly for that.

“In terms of the broader issue of an independent foreign policy, as he said himself are we are not militarily aligned, but we’re not politically neutral.”

Mr Martin said Ireland was already part of the rules-based international order and value system.

“That value system that the President spoke about is exactly where Ireland is in terms of values around democracy, freedom of the individual, the dignity of the individual and human rights and all of that and in terms of our work in Africa together, and in terms of food hunger,” he said.

“But there are broad threads coming our way, in terms of cybersecurity, hybrid warfare, and we have to be intelligent about that and we have to work in partnership, as we will be, and I think it’s important that we have a national conversation about that, in terms of the future threats and challenges to this country, and how do we respond to that?

“Are we equipped for that, and how do we manifest our independent foreign policy into the future?

“We wish to avoid a binary issue. It’s not just about whether you join a military alliance or not. It’s much broader than that.

“And I think most people in the international community are far more tolerant of our position than we might think ourselves, or some people might think here, and I think that’s the context for the national conversation.”

**Load-Date:** April 14, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine war refugees top 5 million as assault intensifies*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:658D-J9B1-DY4H-K085-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 20, 2022 Wednesday 11:58 AM GMT

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**Length:** 984 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** The U.N. refugee agency says more than 5 million refugees have fled Ukraine since Russian troops invaded the country

**Body**

After spending weeks with no electricity or water in the basement of her family's home in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , Viktoriya Savyichkina made a daring escape from the besieged city of Mariupol with her 9-and 14-year-old daughters.

Their dwelling for now is a huge convention center in Poland's capital. Savyichkina said she saw a photo of the home in Mariupol destroyed. From a camp bed in a foreign country, the 40-year-old bookeeper thinks about restarting her and her children's lives from square one.

"I don't even know where we are going, how it will turn out," Savyichkina said. "I would like to go home, of course. Maybe here, I will enjoy it in Poland."

With the war in Ukraine approaching eight weeks, more than 5 million people have fled the country since Russian troops invaded on Feb. 24, the U.N. refugee agency reported Wednesday. When the number reached 4 million on March 30, the exodus exceeded the worst-case predictions of the Geneva-based U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

The even bigger milestone in Europe's biggest refugee crisis since World War II was reached as Russia unleashed a full-scale offensive in eastern Ukraine that will disrupt and end more lives.

Ukraine had a pre-war population of 44 million, and [*UNHCR*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/unhcr) says the conflict has displaced more than 7 million people within Ukraine along with the 5.03 million who had left as of Wednesday. According to the agency, 13 million people are believed to be trapped in the war-affected areas of Ukraine.

"We've seen about a quarter of Ukraine's population, more than 12 million people in total, ,,,have been forced to flee their homes, so this is a staggering amount of people," UNHCR spokesperson Shabia Mantoo told The Associated Press.

More than half of the refugees, over 2.8 million, fled at least at first to Poland. They are eligible for national ID numbers that entitle them to work, to free health care, schooling and bonuses for families with children.

Although many of have stayed there, an unknown number have traveled on to other countries. Savyichkina said she is thinking about taking her daughters to Germany.

"We hope we can live there, send children to school, find work and start life from zero," she said inside the vast premises of the Global EXPO Center in [*Warsaw*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/warsaw) , which is providing basic accommodations for about 800 refugees.

If "everything goes well, if the children like it first of all, then we will stay. If not...," Savyichkina said.

Further south, Hungary has emerged as a major transit point for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. Out of more than 465,000 who arrived, some 16,400 have applied for protected status, meaning they want to stay. Many are members of the ethnic Hungarian minority in Ukraine.

Hungary's government says it has provided around $8.7 million to several charitable organizations and is giving subsidies to companies that employ Ukrainians granted asylum.

In March, a non-governmental organization, Migration Aid, rented an entire five-story building in Budapest, a former workers' hostel, to provide temporary accommodation for people escaping the war in Ukraine. It has helped some 4,000 refugees so far.

Tatiana Shulieva, 67, a retired epidemiologist who fled from Kharkiv in eastern Ukraine and wants to travel on to Egypt, said the night she spent in the hostel was "like a fairytale" after having sheltered in a basement for weeks to escape constant shelling.

Neighboring Romania has received over 750,000 refugees from Ukraine. Oxana Cotus, who fled the southern Ukrainian city of Mykolaiv with her four small children, initially decided to go to Denmark but ended up in Bucharest because she speaks Romanian and didn't want to be far from Ukraine.

She praised the help she received from the International Red Cross in helping her relocate and get settled.

The European nations hosting refugees say they need international help to manage the challenge, especially now as Russia has intensified attacks in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region.

"If we have a second wave of refugees, then a real problem will come because we are at capacity. We cannot accept more," Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski told The Associated Press.

About 300,000 waar refugees are in the city of some 1.8 million, most of them staying in private homes, Trzaskowski said. Warsaw residents expected to host refugees for a few months, but not indefinitely, he said.

Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki was in Lviv, Ukraine, on Tuesday, visiting a refugee center made of mobile modules that the governments of Ukraine and Poland jointly built to house displaced individuals who do not want to leave Ukraine.

Organizations for refugees say the best help would be for the war to stop.

"Unfortunately, without an immediate end to the fighting, the unspeakable suffering and mass displacement that we are seeing will only get worse," UNHCR's Mantoo said.

Data from Poland show that some 738,000 people have crossed back into Ukraine during the war. Some of them shuttle back and forth to do shopping in Poland, while others return to Ukraine to check on relatives and property, electing to either stay or depart again depending on what they find.

More than half of the refugees from Ukraine are children, according to UNHCR. Thousands of civilians, including children, have been killed or wounded in shelling and air strikes.

Mantoo, called the "outpouring of support and the generosity" shown to arriving ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** has been "remarkable."

"But what is important is that it is sustained and that it is channelled across to ensure that refugees are enabled to receive that support while the fighting continues, while they are unable to return home," she said.

\_\_\_\_

Amer Cohadzic in Sarajevo, Justin Spike in Budapest and Nicolae Dumitrache in Bucharest contributed to this report.

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Follow [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) 's coverage of the war in Ukraine at [*https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine*](https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine) and of migration issues at [*https://apnews.com/hub/migration*](https://apnews.com/hub/migration)

**Load-Date:** April 20, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Trafficking fears as lone Ukrainian children arriving in UK to live with unrelated adults*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6563-1X51-JBNF-W4X2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 9, 2022 Saturday 1:31 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 1012 words

**Byline:** May Bulman

**Highlight:** Exclusive: Councils raise alarm as minors who have fled war appearing with no parent or legal guardian

**Body**

Lone [*children*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/children) fleeing Ukraine are being housed with adults under the UK's refugee schemes scheme without proper checks taking place, The Independent can reveal.

More than 200,000 Britons have signed up to the government programme which allows UK sponsors to "match" with Ukrainians fleeing the war. In total 1,200 [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) have arrived under the scheme so far, while a further 10,800 have come under the family scheme, which allows [***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) ***refugees*** to join relatives in Britain.

But while the government claims unaccompanied children are not eligible for either scheme, The Independent is aware of cases in which minors have been granted visas and arrived in the UK without a legal guardian.

Authorities warn that gaps in the vetting process mean cases are "falling through the net", prompting concerns about exploitation and trafficking, with more than 4.5 million Ukrainian children displaced in recent weeks, some of whom have been separated from parents and family.

The Local Government Association (LGA), which represents councils, said authorities had seen lone children arriving without any adult who had parental or caring responsibility for them.

The Independent is raising money for the people of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) - if you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

Lisa Nandy, Labour's shadow levelling up secretary, said local authorities and charities were getting "far too little information and support" on how to respond.

Describing the situation as "disgraceful", she added: "This was always a risk with this DIY refugee scheme. The government should have taken charge of matching sponsors to refugees from day one.

"Before Michael Gove launched Homes for Ukraine he didn't even pick up the phone to councils and charities - the people who would be responsible for looking after vulnerable children."

The LGA said it was "unclear" if councils were expected to take unaccompanied children into care. In one case, an unaccompanied child recently arrived in Redbridge council after being matched with an unrelated adult under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

The council said it did not have safeguarding concerns about the case, but that it would follow up with the Home Office to better understand what safeguarding checks were done when agreeing to the match.

When an application is made to the Homes for Ukraine scheme - which can only happen once the applicant has found a sponsor who can host them in the UK - the "match" appears on a portal that local councils can access so that they can begin carrying out safeguarding checks.

But the LGA has said that in some cases councils are only being told who is arriving in their local area once matches have been made and visa granted, with many reporting "significant issues" with the data.

The organisation also called for councils to be given advance notice of new arrivals under the family scheme, in particular if there are individuals or families with vulnerabilities, to enable local services to meet their needs.

Kevin Bonavia, of Lewisham Council, said some locals had tried to match with unaccompanied minors, adding: "Fortunately none have been approved as yet, but we're worried that they will be and we will need to scramble to intervene.

"We've heard of this happening in another council, so it's a real concern. We can't allow vulnerable children to fall through the net."

Sian Summers-Rees, of charity City of Sanctuary UK, described one case of a couple that applied to sponsor two 17-year-olds they met via social media, and were reportedly told when they contacted Home Office that the children were eligible under the sponsorship scheme.

"The ones coming to our attention are people who are well-intentioned, but obviously there's a massive concern that there are people who are signing up to it for sinister reasons. There are serious exploitation and trafficking concerns," she said.

"We also know of cases where minors have arrived with people who are not their parents or carers."

Steve Crocker, of the Association of Directors of Children's Services, said the Ukraine schemes were "not designed with unaccompanied children in mind".

He said: "We continue to raise the need for any current and future arrangements for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to be child-focused and for local authorities to get necessary information, including about the age of arrivals, as soon as possible so that we can plan accordingly, and so children's needs can be met in the short and long term."

A government spokesperson said councils should use normal safeguarding processes if an unaccompanied Ukrainian child arrives.

Claire O'Meara, of Unicef, said: "Whilst the scheme offers a valuable route for those fleeing the war, it has not been designed to support unaccompanied children who require additional care and support.

"There is a fine balance between getting children to safety as quickly as possible whilst doing so in a way that does not cause further harm or trauma. Unaccompanied children must therefore only be brought to the UK where it is in their best interests to do so, and their safety can be ensured."

A government spokesperson said safeguarding checks were in place and would ensure visa applications from unaccompanied minors were not approved by the Home Office.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** April 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian Catholic church in UK marks ‘tragic’ two-year anniversary of invasion*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BCY-DRM1-DY4H-K1K7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 22, 2024 Thursday 2:13 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 759 words

**Byline:** Sam Hall

**Highlight:** Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski said the anniversary was a ‘sad’ date but that the Ukrainian community in the UK had ‘not felt abandoned’.

**Body**

The leader of the Ukrainian Catholic community in the UK said it was “tragic” to have to mark the approaching second anniversary of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski said the anniversary was a “sad” date but that Ukrainians in the UK had “not felt abandoned”.

He said there was a “mood and a hope” among ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** that they would be able to return to their home country, but added he was “not sure” how realistic that prospect was.

Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine began on February 24 2022 and followed the Kremlin’s military intervention in the eastern [*Donbas*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/donbas) region and its annexation of [*Crimea*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/crimea) in 2014.

We’ve also had a great response and co-operation from other faith communities so we have not been alone

Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski

At a press conference at the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral in central [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) on Thursday morning, Bishop Nowakowski said the war had been a “tragic two-year period”.

Sitting in front of a Ukrainian flag and a [*Union*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/union) flag, Bishop Nowakowski said: “We know that there are over 280,000 people that have arrived here seeking shelter since the full-scale invasion and that has had a major impact on our pastoral needs here in the UK.

“We’ve also had a great response and co-operation from other faith communities so we have not been alone.

“We have not felt abandoned and we’ve also had very good relations with the UK [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government). ”

Bishop Nowakowski referenced the visit by the King to the cathedral on November 30 2022 to commemorate the opening of the Ukrainian Welcome Centre.

Ukrainian refugee Nataliya Zayats said her country must be “independent” so Ukrainians can live in “peace”.

I must return to Ukraine because it's my country. I must work for my country -I must rebuild my country

Ukrainian refugee Nataliya Zayats

Ms Zayats has lived in Doncaster and Borehamwood since coming to the UK from Kharkiv in July 2022 and thanked the Government for its refugee scheme.

She told the PA news agency: “Ukrainian children and women who live in the UK now have an opportunity to live in peace.”

The 48-year-old, who came to the UK with her daughter, said children in Kharkiv were having to study “underground” because of the war and that she wanted to return to her “beautiful country”.

“I must return to Ukraine because it’s my country. I must work for my country – I must rebuild my country.”

Olesya Khromeychuk, director of the Ukrainian Institute London, said Ukraine had been given “a lot of support” in terms of military equipment over the last two years, but “never enough to win”.

She added that this had “facilitated Russia’s ability to dig in” and that Ukraine had been “resisting” Moscow for 10 years rather than just the last two.

Ms Khromeychuk said: “This time two years ago, most of the commentators around the world gave Ukraine between two days and two weeks to last.

“And two years later, of course, Ukrainians are standing strong and continuing to fight.

She said the length of the war depends on the “level of support” given to Ukraine, adding that delays “benefit Russia”.

Ms Khromeychuk said: “This war is not just existential for Ukraine. It’s existential for Ukrainians because they’re fighting for their survival and that of the state – but it’s also existential when it comes to the survival of the democratic order around the world.”

The second anniversary of the invasion comes a week after the death of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

Petro Rewko, chairman of the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain, said Mr Navalny was “killed without a doubt”.

We are calling for individuals and organisations across the UK to participate in events and rallies to show continuing solidarity with Ukrainians in Ukraine and across the world

Petro Rewko

On Saturday, an ecumenical interreligious prayer service will be held at the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral to mark the anniversary of the invasion.

This will be followed by a march in central London organised by Ukrainian community organisations ending in a vigil in Trafalgar Square.

Mr Rewko said Ukrainians were “extremely grateful” to the UK for its support and assistance.

At the press conference, he said: “We are calling for individuals and organisations across the UK to participate in events and rallies to show continuing solidarity with Ukrainians in Ukraine and across the world.”

He added he wanted the UK Government to further strengthen sanctions against Russia, establish an international tribunal for war crimes and to work with international partners to “bring every illegally abducted child back home to Ukraine”.

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Boris Johnson hosting Ukrainian refugee in No 10 would be 'security challenge', Downing Street says*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650J-4NR1-JBNF-W03M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 14, 2022 Monday 1:48 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 355 words

**Byline:** Jon Stone and Andrew Woodcock

**Highlight:** Hosting someone at Chequers under new scheme may also not be possible, No 10 says

**Body**

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) hosting ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) in No 10 would present "security challenges", Downing Street has said.

Asked whether the prime minister would take part in the government's new scheme to help people fleeing the Russian invasion Mr Johnson's spokesperson said it would also represent a "significant commitment"

And No 10 said Mr Johnson may not be able to unilaterally decide to put anyone up in the prime minister's country mansion of Chequers as it is owned by a private trust.

It comes as the government launches a new humanitarian programme that will pay households £350 a month to open their homes to people fleeing the war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Under the new Homes for Ukraine scheme, people will be able to nominate a named Ukrainian individual or a family to stay with them or in another house they own for at least six months, rent-free.

Asked if Boris Johnson would offer to take in a Ukrainian individual or family, the prime minister's spokesperson said:

"There are specific challenges around the security of having someone in No 10. Various ministers have been asked about this and it will come down to individual circumstances.

"It's a significant commitment and it will depend on individual circumstances and is a matter for them."

Later asked if PM was ruling out taking in a Ukrainian, the spokesperson told reporters that he hasn't asked Mr Johnson directly.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps is among prominent politicians to commit to taking in a Ukrainian refugee under the scheme.

"We've spent the past few weeks as a family discussing the devastating situation in Ukraine, and so we intend to apply today to join other UK households in offering our home to provide refuge to Ukrainians until it is safe for them to return to their country," he said in a message at lunchtime on Monday.

The new scheme comes amid criticism of the UK government's approach to helping people fleeing the Russian invasion. Britain has not followed EU member states' lead in putting in place an open border policy for Ukrainians and instead is still requiring lengthy visa applications for people with links to the UK or a nominated sponsor.

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Biden says ‘everything between Ireland and US runs deep’ as he ends island tour*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6811-RGK1-JBNF-W0GH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 14, 2023 Friday 9:29 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 483 words

**Byline:** Pa Reporters

**Highlight:** The president spoke of his fondness for the US and Ireland relationship throughout his speech in Ballina, Co Mayo.

**Body**

US president [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) has said “everything between [*Ireland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ireland) and America runs deep” as he concluded his historic tour of the island.

Mr Biden made a public speech in the town of Ballina in Co Mayo on Friday where he spoke throughout of his fondness for the relationship between the US and Ireland – describing it as “united by history, heritage and hope”.

He thanked the thousands in the crowd for their “incredible generosity” for opening up their homes to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** “fleeing Russia’s brutal violence”.

Once again speaking of his [*Irish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/irish) ancestry, Mr Biden said millions of Americans claim to have Irish heritage – adding: “More would if they could.”

Opening his speech, Mr Biden said: “It feels like coming home.”

The president referenced a visit he made earlier in the day to the Mayo Roscommon Hospice, where there is a plaque in memory of his son Beau.

He said: “I can tell you how special it is that a piece of his legacy lives here among his ancestors.

“Thinking about it I could hear my dad’s voice again. He’d always say ‘Joe remember family is the beginning, the middle and the end’.

“The beginning, middle and end, that’s the Irish of it.”

He added: “Everything between Ireland and America runs deep; our history, our heritage, our sorrows, our future, our friendship. But more than anything, hope is what beats in the hearts of all our people.

“For centuries during times of darkness and despair, hope has kept us marching forward toward a better future, one of greater liberty, greater dignity and greater possibilities.”

The president’s son [*Hunter Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hunter-biden) and sister Valerie Biden Owens sat in the front row of the VIP section to the side of the stage for the speech.

During his 20-minute speech, Mr Biden spoke of his ancestor Edward Blewitt, whom he said worked in the old Ballina brickyard.

The president said during one of his engagements in Co Mayo, he saw a record from 1828 that said Mr Blewitt was paid 21 pounds and 12 shillings to help supply 27,000 bricks for St Muredach’s Cathedral, which was nearby as he addressed the crowd.

“As he laboured, I’m sure he would imagine that one day his family would worship here, that his children would be baptised here like his son [*Patrick*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/patrick) was, and that future generations of his family would mark the milestones of their lives here in the sturdy walls,” he said.

“But I doubt he ever imagined his great-great-great grandson would return 200 years later as president of the United States of America.”

He also thanked Ballina for celebrating his election as president in 2020.

“You decked out the town I’m told in red, white and blue with cars and crowds gathered in the market square singing the green and the red of Mayo,” he said.

“It means the world to me, it meant the world to me and my entire family to be embraced as Mayo Joe, son of Ballina.

“My mother, my grandmother – whose maiden name was Blewitt – would be smiling down on me right now.”

**Load-Date:** April 14, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Traditional conservatism is subverted by Ukraine crisis*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6520-GFK1-F072-43DS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 21, 2022 Monday

First Edition

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**Section:** VOICES; Pg. 26

**Length:** 973 words

**Byline:** PHIL MCDUFF

**Body**

Recent weeks have seen an upsurge in sympathy for the plight of displaced Ukrainians in the wake of Putin's shock invasion of the country. The Home Office is suddenly under fire for being slow to offer aid to those in need, even from the right-wing opinion formers who until a few weeks ago would incessantly demand the exact opposite.

There are several plausible explanations for why Ukrainians have received such a markedly different response to, say, Iraqis or Libyans over the years. For a start, as has been demonstrated by various unguarded remarks by certain sections of the media, Ukrainians seem to have become racialised as white, "blue-eyed" Europeans, in contrast both to the dark-skinned, Muslim populations of the Middle East, or indeed to the populations of Romania or Poland, who have been subjected to demonisation and stereotyping in the British press under the generic banner of "Eastern European".

Secondly, many of the conflicts that have triggered previous waves of refugees are the result of our own foreign policy, or those of our allies. We cannot afford to be too concerned with what they are fleeing from, lest we implicate ourselves. In contrast, Putin's actions in Ukraine have propelled Russia back up to its Cold War position as our favourite official enemy nation. There is no conflict between condemning Russia as the instigator of a brutal invasion and drawing attention to the predicament of the Ukrainians fleeing the war zone.

Whatever the reason, ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** seem to be seen as more "genuine" - both in sectors of the press and by the public - unlike "bogus asylum seekers" taking advantage of us, and we are therefore more inclined to accept them.

Whatever the cause of the sharp change in sentiment, it has run afoul of a major issue. The UK has spent several decades making the process of migrating here more difficult, time-consuming and costly. From the opening of migrant detention centres under the New Labour government in the early 2000s to the Nationality and Borders Bill currently before parliament, the trend has been towards tightening, restricting and preventing immigration, with concessions towards ensuring the safe and humane treatment of refugees being little more than lip service in practice.

As a result, Ukrainians trying to come to the UK have faced a system described as "humiliating". The UK's insistence on requiring visas, in contrast to other European countries, has introduced many Ukrainians to a system which is both byzantine and Kafkaesque by design, its very complexity and inaccessibility a part of the system of deterrence.

Responding to the change in public sentiment, the government launched a new "Homes for Ukraine" scheme. Under this, people in the UK can offer to sponsor visas and provide rooms or homes for Ukrainians fleeing the conflict.

But as Enver Solomon, chief executive of the Refugee Council, has said, the government is still insisting on visas. "The government is relying on what is effectively a managed migration route to respond to a humanitarian crisis," he writes. "This inevitably means paperwork and bureaucracy are being put before people's urgent needs." Even in the face of overwhelming public support for accepting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, the government finds itself incapable of simply doing the right thing.

Daniel Trilling, author of Lights in the Distance: Exile and Refuge at the borders of Europe, said: "It looks like the government wants to pick and choose which groups of refugees it offers help to." As Trilling points out, "this threatens to undermine a key principle of the international system for refugee protection, which is that everyone has the right to seek asylum regardless of where they're from. If every country behaved like the UK, that international system would quickly disintegrate."

But is such a cherry-picking approach to humanitarianism even possible? There are deeper issues being revealed here. The institutions through which state power is expressed have an inertia to them. They are lumbering behemoths - as you would expect from organisations tasked with the management of millions of people.

The ideological underpinnings of the UK's asylum system are deeply conservative. Like the benefits system, it is designed with the assumption that everyone applying should be first assumed to be a fraudster or scrounger, and that they must prove that they are not. However, there is a caveat to this: we don't mean me or my friends or other people that we like.

The nature of Johnsonism, in particular, has brought this undercurrent to the surface. The exceptions to the rule were definitely going to include you and yours, because the prime minister acts like your pal who gets that you're not one of the scroungers. At last, the British state would be making sure the right kind of people were getting special treatment and those "others" would be suffering at its hand.

We are seeing in real time that this myth cannot hold up. If you design a border system to exclude as many people as possible, to punish before it helps, then that is exactly what it will do, even if you try to carve exclusions into it. Large, lumbering beasts of bureaucracy will not read the mind of Dave in Essex and ask if he really meant these refugees when he voted for a party which promised to tighten the system. It will simply respond to the rules and practices that were put in place because millions of people voted for them.

There is a hard lesson to be learned here: to have a system capable of helping the most vulnerable, it must help everyone. If we do not err on the side of too much compassion, we will instead err on the side of cruelty. There is no point, in 2022, asking why the Home Office is behaving this way towards Ukrainians who clearly deserve better, when it is simply doing exactly what we have asked it to do.

**Load-Date:** March 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ex-PM David Cameron driving 'small lorry' to Poland with supplies for refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651D-P4M1-JBNF-W4YF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 18, 2022 Friday 6:48 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 355 words

**Byline:** Geraldine Scott

**Highlight:** The former prime minister said it would be 'a long drive'.

**Body**

Former prime minister [*David Cameron*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/david-cameron) is driving a small lorry full of supplies for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to the country's border with [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland).

Mr Cameron announced the trip on [*Twitter*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/twitter) , where he said he had been volunteering for two years at a food project in west [*Oxfordshire*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/oxfordshire) called the Chippy Larder.

Through the project, he said donations had been taken in for refugees from Ukraine and they now had enough "to fill a small lorry with everything from nappies to sanitary products, warm clothes to first aid kits".

I'm currently driving to Poland with two Chippy Larder colleagues to make our delivery to the Red Cross. It's going to be a long drive, but I'll keep you updated along the way. [*#StandWithUkraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/StandWithUkraine%EF%B8%8F?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/T0ORCT4Eek*](https://t.co/T0ORCT4Eek) - David Cameron (@David\_Cameron) [*March 18, 2022*](https://twitter.com/David_Cameron/status/1504871407607500803?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Posting a photograph sitting behind the wheel of the lorry, Mr Cameron said: "I'm currently driving to Poland with two Chippy Larder colleagues to make our delivery to the Red Cross.

"It's going to be a long drive, but I'll keep you updated along the way."

Earlier this week, Mr Cameron called for more humanitarian help to be given to Ukraine.

Speaking to Channel 4 News, he called on the Government to "get back" to dedicating 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) to overseas aid, after it was cut to 0.5% last year.

Mr Cameron said the [*Cabinet*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/cabinet) should have an aid minister, who would be "100% dedicated" to the role.

Chancellor Rishi Sunak has promised to return the UK's aid contributions to 0.7% by the end of this Parliament.

Let's have a dedicated aid minister in the Cabinet doing development

David Cameron

But Mr Cameron said: "Let's do more on humanitarian aid. We achieved 0.7% of GDP in our aid payments. I'm sad we've got away from that. I hope we can get back there.

"Let's - with the EU - lead the donor conference, lead the aid effort.

"Let's have a dedicated aid minister in the Cabinet doing development.

"The Foreign Office ministers do a great job but it'd be good to have someone who's 100% dedicated to humanitarian aid and development."

He also said permanent Nato bases should be created in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

**Load-Date:** March 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*‘Rough years’ ahead as Russia threatens Europe, says Germany*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66R6-0CC1-JBNF-W433-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

October 28, 2022 Friday 6:04 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 459 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Landay

**Highlight:** In recent weeks, Putin has escalated the war in Ukraine

**Body**

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has plunged Europe into an era of insecurity, Germany said on Friday a day after Vladimir Putin predicted a "dangerous" decade ahead.

German president Frank-Walter Steinmeier said the 24 February invasion had ended “old dreams” of a united continent.

"It has plunged us into another time, into an insecurity we thought we had overcome: a time marked by war, violence and flight, by concerns about the expansion of war into a wildfire in Europe," said the president, who is from a wing of Germany’s Social Democrats that long argued for closer economic ties to Moscow.

"Harder years, rough years are coming."

Germany, which has joined European sanctions against Russia and weapons deliveries to Ukraine, has recorded the arrival of more than a million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and warned of possible energy shortages this winter after cuts in Russian gas supplies.

Putin, addressing a conference in Moscow on Thursday, played down the prospect of a nuclear stand off with the West but accused Western leaders of inciting the war in Ukraine, which he says was justified by Kyiv’s expressed wish to join NATO.

Western dominance over world affairs was coming to an end and "ahead is probably the most dangerous, unpredictable and, at the same time, important decade since the end of World War Two", Putin said.

The Russian leader insisted Moscow’s war in Ukraine, which he calls a "special military operation" was going to plan as both sides prepare for a key battle in Kherson in Ukraine’s south.

One of four partially occupied provinces that Russia declared annexed last month, the region controls both the only land route to the Crimea peninsula -seized by Russia in 2014, and the mouth of the Dnipro river that bisects Ukraine.

Ukrainian and Russian troops dug into muddy trench lines north of the regional capital, also called Kherson, exchanged rocket, mortar and artillery fire on Friday, a daily ritual since Ukraine drove Moscow’s forces back toward the port city last month.

In recent weeks, Putin has escalated the conflict, discussing nuclear arms and launching a partial mobilisation of men to fight in Ukraine. Russia’s central bank governor Elvira Nabiullina said on Friday the mobilisation could spur inflation by affecting the labour market but vowed to contain price rises.

Russia has also unleashed a wave of missile and drone strikes, hitting Ukraine’s energy infrastructure and forcing power cuts in Kyiv and other places, officials said.

Ukraine has shot down more than 300 Iranian Shahed-136 ‘kamikaze’ drones so far, air force spokesman Yuriy Ihnat said. It was not possible to verify the report. Iran has denied Ukrainian and Western assertions it is sending drones to Russia.

Reuters

**Load-Date:** October 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Two detained for trying to breach cordon around squat at oligarch's mansion*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650K-4KC1-JBNF-W1WN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 14, 2022 Monday 8:01 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 391 words

**Byline:** William Janes

**Highlight:** The pair were stopped by officers near the property belonging to Oleg Deripaska in Belgrave Square, west London.

**Body**

[*Two*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/two) people have been detained after trying to breach a cordon outside a Russian oligarch's [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) mansion which has been occupied by squatters.

The pair were stopped by police near the property belonging to Oleg Deripaska in Belgrave Square, west London, at around 6.30pm on Monday.

The Metropolitan [*Police*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/police) said: "Police have detained two people who attempted to breach a police cordon close to the building where a protest remains ongoing in Belgrave Square, W1."

Police have detained two people who attempted to breach a police cordon close to the building where a protest remains ongoing in Belgrave Square, W1.- MPS Westminster (@MPSWestminster) [*March 14, 2022*](https://twitter.com/MPSWestminster/status/1503436971653410817?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Police remain at the scene where four protesters have been surrounded by officers on the balcony of the central London mansion.

The squatters broke into the property at around 1am on Monday and declared that it "belongs to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***".

The street has been cordoned off with at least 10 police vehicles and more than 30 officers at the scene.

A [*Scotland Yard*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scotland-yard) spokesperson said officers completed a search of the property early in the afternoon and found no protesters inside.

Officers wearing harnesses first tried to deploy a ladder to access the balcony but after the squatters sat in the way to obstruct them, a JCB crane was moved in to lift them up instead.

Police wearing riot gear used a drill to break open the front door and enter the house.

The squatters call themselves the London Mahknovists, after Nestor Makhno, who led an anarchist force that attempted to form a stateless society in Ukraine during the Russian Revolution of 1917-23.

They hung a Ukrainian flag as well as two signs which read "this property has been liberated" and "Putin go f\*\*\* yourself".

They also danced, played music and one man sang lines from the Dirty Dancing song (I've Had) The Time Of My Life.

Mr Deripaska has been described as "a prominent Russian businessman and pro-Kremlin oligarch" who is "closely associated" with the Russian government and President Vladimir Putin.

His wealth is estimated to be £2.3 billion and he has a multimillion-pound property portfolio in the UK which, according to a 2007 High Court judgment, includes the house at 5 Belgrave Square.

Records indicate it has not changed hands since and is owned by an offshore British Virgin Islands company.

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2022

**End of Document**



# [*Retired major rows to Isle of Wight in home-made tin boat for Ukraine charity*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:660F-TNR1-DY4H-K2BK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 23, 2022 Saturday 12:28 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 353 words

**Byline:** Lily Ford

**Highlight:** Michael Stanley, known as ‘Major Mick’, set off aboard ‘Tintanic II’ to cross the Solent on Saturday in his latest fundraising challenge.

**Body**

A retired [*Army*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/army) major who rowed across the Solent in a home-made tin boat for charity said the journey “couldn’t have been better”.

Michael Stanley, known as “Major Mick”, set off in the “Tintanic” across the Solent on Saturday, making his way from Hurst Castle in Lymington to the Isle of Wight.

The 81-year-old has raised more than £8,000 and rowed 44 out of a planned 100 miles so far this year for Children on the Edge, a charity helping ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** crossing the border to [*Moldova*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/moldova) and Romania.

“The Ukrainians need every help they can possibly get,” Mr Stanley told the PA news agency.

“And I just felt that if I could raise a few pounds for them, it’s a drop in the ocean but it’s something rather than nothing.”

Donning his famous [*Union Jack*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/union-jack) suit, Mr Stanley captained Tintanic II across the water on a short trip which took around one hour.

“Beautiful sunshine and wonderful scenery, and the sea was very calm,” he said.

“It couldn’t have been better.”

Mr Stanley, who served in the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards for 35 years, said his sailing mission – which has included trips across the Beaulieu river in the [*New Forest*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/new-forest) and the Serpentine in Hyde Park – is about “putting smiles on people’s faces”.

“[*People*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/people) have been extremely generous and kind,” he said.

“And it’s not all about money, but it’s about putting smiles on people’s faces.

“I’m dressed in a Union Jack suit this year out of respect for Her Majesty’s jubilee year.

“It’s a lot of fun, I’m enjoying it.”

He made the Tintanic out of two sheets of corrugated iron in March 2020, the year he started rowing.

“(It is) two sheets of corrugated iron which I bought and then bits and pieces which I had in the house or the garden to make the rest of it,” he explained.

“It’s very sturdy – it’s well built.”

Mr Stanley is not yet sure where he will row next but is “very glad” to be supporting Children on the Edge, decorating his boat in many Ukrainian flags.

“It’s a local Chichester charity run by young and enthusiastic staff and they are really helpful,” he said

To find out more about Mr Stanley and his fundraiser, go to: [*www.justgiving.com/tintanicforukraine*](http://www.justgiving.com/tintanicforukraine)

**Load-Date:** July 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[*‘Rough years’ ahead as Russia threatens Europe, says Germany*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66RB-YBY1-JBNF-W1PB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

October 28, 2022 Friday 6:18 PM GMT

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**Section:** WORLD,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:1

**Length:** 453 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Landay

**Highlight:** In recent weeks, Putin has escalated the war in Ukraine

**Body**

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has plunged Europe into an era of insecurity, Germany said on Friday a day after Vladimir Putin predicted a “dangerous” decade ahead.

German president Frank-Walter Steinmeier said the 24 February invasion had ended “old dreams” of a united continent.

“It has plunged us into another time, into an insecurity we thought we had overcome: a time marked by war, violence and flight, by concerns about the expansion of war into a wildfire in Europe,” said the president, who is from a wing of Germany’s Social Democrats that long argued for closer economic ties to Moscow.

“Harder years, rough years are coming.”

Germany, which has joined European sanctions against Russia and weapons deliveries to Ukraine, has recorded the arrival of more than a million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and warned of possible energy shortages this winter after cuts in Russian gas supplies.

Mr Putin, addressing a conference in Moscow on Thursday, played down the prospect of a nuclear stand off with the West but accused Western leaders of inciting the war in Ukraine, which he says was justified by Kyiv’s expressed wish to join Nato.

Western dominance over world affairs was coming to an end and “ahead is probably the most dangerous, unpredictable and, at the same time, important decade since the end of the Second World War,” Putin said.

The Russian leader insisted Moscow’s war in Ukraine, which he calls a “special military operation”, was going to plan as both sides prepare for a key battle in Kherson in Ukraine’s south.

One of four partially occupied provinces that Russia declared annexed last month, the region controls the only land route to the Crimea peninsula – seized by Russia in 201 – and the mouth of the Dnipro river that bisects Ukraine.

Ukrainian and Russian troops dug into muddy trench lines north of the regional capital, also called Kherson, exchanged rocket, mortar and artillery fire on Friday, a daily ritual since Ukraine drove Moscow’s forces back toward the port city last month.

In recent weeks, Putin has escalated the conflict, discussing nuclear arms and launching a partial mobilisation of men to fight in Ukraine. Russia’s central bank governor Elvira Nabiullina said on Friday the mobilisation could spur inflation by affecting the labour market but vowed to contain price rises.

Russia has also unleashed a wave of missile and drone strikes, hitting Ukraine’s energy infrastructure and forcing power cuts in Kyiv and other places, officials said.

Ukraine has shot down more than 300 Iranian Shahed-136 “kamikaze” drones so far, air force spokesman Yuriy Ihnat said. Iran has denied Ukrainian and Western assertions it is sending drones to Russia.

Reuters

**Load-Date:** October 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'Proud Ukrainian' Mila Kunis and husband Ashton Kutcher vow to match refugee donations of $3m*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XC-KJM1-JBNF-W52T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 4, 2022 Friday 9:18 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,FILM,CULTURE; Version:1

**Length:** 425 words

**Byline:** Jacob Stolworthy

**Highlight:** 'Today, I have never been more proud to be a Ukrainian,' Kunis said

**Body**

[*Mila Kunis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mila-kunis) and [*Ashton Kutcher*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ashton-kutcher) have said they will match donations of $3m (£2.3m) to help aide ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Kunis, who was born in Chernivtsi, [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , said in a video posted to her Instagram page: "The events that have unfolded in Ukraine are devastating. There is no place in this world for this kind of unjust attack on humanity".

"I have always considered myself an American, a proud American. I love everything this country has done for myself and my family. But today, I have never been more proud to be a Ukrainian."

Kutcher, who is Kunis's husband, added: "While we witness the bravery of the people in the country she was born in, we're also witness to the needs of those who have chosen safety."

The couple said they would match donations made to rental company AirBnB and freight transporter Flexport, with the aim of raising $33m (£22.5m).

Just three hours after going live, the page had raised more than $2.5m thanks to an offline donation from the Ron Conway Family.

View this post on Instagram [*A post shared by Ashton Kutcher (@aplusk)*](https://www.instagram.com/tv/CaqQZ-clv8u/?utm_source=ig_embed&utm_campaign=loading)

Kunis said: "The people of Ukraine are strong and brave but being strong and brave doesn't mean you're not worthy of support. We need to support the people of Ukraine."

On Sunday (27 February), Vladimir Putin placed [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's nuclear deterrence forces on high alert, citing aggressive statements by Nato leaders and economic sanctions against Moscow.

In the most recent update, a series of large explosions were heard in Kyiv on Wednesday (2 March) as Russia continues its bombardment of cities across Ukraine.

This comes as Russian troops appeared to have taken "complete control" of Kherson, the first major city to be captured during Putin's war.

Follow the latest updates about the Russian invasion of Ukraine [*here.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-latest-update-kyiv-explosion-putin-news-b2027373.html)

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[*PM urged to sack Patel over handling of refugee crisis*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650G-PTG1-JCS0-D072-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 14, 2022 Monday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 6

**Length:** 415 words

**Byline:** ADAM FORREST

**Body**

Boris Johnson has been urged to sack home secretary PritiPatelover her department's handling of the Ukrainian refugee crisis. Liberal Democrat leader Sir Ed Davey said Ms Patel's response to the "humanitarian catastrophe" had been "utterly shameful".

In a speech at the party's spring conference yesterday the Lib Dem leader said: "She has answered desperation with delays; crisis with confusion; pain with paperwork." Sir Ed alleged that MsPatelhas shown "incompetence, indifference and sheer inhumanity", which "does not befit our United Kingdom, with its proud history of providing sanctuary to those in need".

He added: "It couldn't be clearer that PritiPatelis not up to the job. The buck stops with the prime minister so Boris Johnson must sack her now."

Priti Pateland the Home Office were approached for comment.

Despite levelling-up secretary Michael Gove's announcement of a new sponsorship scheme to help people fleeing the Russian invasion, the government has been criticised over the speed and scale of its efforts to bring people fleeing the war to the UK, with access previously limited to those with family members settled in this country.

Labour also cautioned that "too many questions remain unanswered" about the new scheme - accusing the government of being "far too slow, far too mean" in its approach to refugees. Scottish first minister and SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon said yesterday that Scotland "stands ready" to take 3,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** immediately.

Ms Sturgeon also said she was worried the UK sponsorship scheme will be "slow and cumbersome", lack proper support and safeguarding, and may not be sustainable for the length of time that people may need to stay in the UK. Last week, Conservative MPs joined the opposition in launching a furious attack on the UK's "snail's pace" response to the crisis.

Sir Ed told the Lib Dem conference that "people across the UK have said loud and clear: we want to welcome them, with open arms", adding: "The British people want to offer them a home - but PritiPatelhas slammed the door in their face."

Mr Gove said yesterday that "more than 3,000 visas" have now been issued, up from the 1,305 figure given by Home Office minister Baroness Williams on Friday.

In a previous statement, the government said: "We are standing shoulder to shoulder with Ukrainians, which is why we've made it easier for those with valid Ukrainian passports to come here. This is alongside changes to visas to ensure Ukrainians in the UK can stay here."

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*King Charles makes historic address to Bundestag parliament in fluent German*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67WS-HFP1-JBNF-W1R6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 30, 2023 Thursday 11:05 AM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 507 words

**Byline:** Maryam Zakir-Hussain

**Highlight:** King celebrates long-standing history between the two nations

**Body**

[*King Charles III*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/king-charles-iii) has made history as he becomes [*the first British monarch to address German politicians*](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/royal-family/king-charles-iii-germany-prince-harry-court-b2310740.html) from the [*Bundestag*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/bundestag) , while the parliament is in session.

Charles is delivering a speech in German which celebrates the deep-rooted links between [*Germany*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/germany) and the UK on his first state visit to the country.

The King spoke of the importance of renewing the “special bond of friendship” between the two countries.

“This friendship meant so much to my beloved mother, the late Queen, who often spoke about the official 15 visits she often made to Germany,” he said.

He added: “Germany, her people and its distinctive culture have made such a profound impact on me.

“Since I first came to Germany when I was just 13, I have grown to become familiar with the different corners of this remarkable land. Like many British people, I have close personal ties here.”

The politicians burst into jovial chuckles and applause as the King made several jokes during the speech, saying: “Over the years, we have laughed at each and with each other.”

In a more sombre tone, Charles also reflected on the war in Ukraine which he said has caused “unimaginable suffering to so many people”.

Before the address, the King and [*Queen Consort*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/queen-consort) were invited to view and sign the first volume of the Bundestag’s Golden Book, which was signed by Her Late Majesty The Queen.

The King and Queen Consort’s state visit to Germany, the first of Charles‘ reign, began on Wednesday with a ceremonial greeting at Berlin’s iconic Brandenburg Gate.

During a speech at a state banquet staged in his honour on Wednesday evening, Charles pledged to “strengthen the connections” between the UK and Germany as he paid tribute to the “enduring value” of the two nations’ relationship.

After the speech, Charles will pay tribute to Germany’s history of welcoming refugees by touring the Tegel Refugee Centre to meet some of the group.

Germany has welcomed more than a million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** seeking sanctuary after Russia invaded their homeland.

Separately the Queen Consort will visit the Refugio House community centre, a meeting place for locals and new Berlin residents, including refugees.

Later this afternoon, the King is set to meet representatives from a joint German and UK military unit and watch a demonstration of their bridge-building amphibious vehicles.

Earlier today, Charles and [*Camilla*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/camilla) visited the Wittenbergplaztz Food Market and met a range of local business owners who discussed the history of the market.

The King also attended a meeting with Chancellor Olaf Scholz in the Federal Chancellery building on Thursday morning.

The overseas visit comes amid [*Prince Harry*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prince-harry) ’s high-profile privacy dispute against the Mail publishers which is being heard at the High Court in London.

On Tuesday, the Duke of Sussex accused the royal family of “without doubt” withholding information from him “for a long time” about [*phone hacking*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/phone-hacking) as they did not want to “open a can of worms”, the High Court heard.

More follows on this breaking story...

**Load-Date:** March 30, 2023

**End of Document**



[*We cannot forget saving our planet despite energy security risks - Sarwar*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XV-1MJ1-JBNF-W3FS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 6, 2022 Sunday 12:46 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 369 words

**Byline:** Neil Pooran

**Highlight:** The Scottish Labour leader said the transition to renewable energy should continue.

**Body**

[*Scotland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scotland) cannot forget the need to "save our planet" despite concerns about energy security ignited by Russia's war with [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , Anas Sarwar has said.

The Scottish Labour leader said the transition towards renewable energy should continue as [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) reconsiders its reliance on Russian gas.

Both Mr Sarwar and Sir Keir Starmer have stressed the need for countries to take a united stance against Russia at Scottish Labour's conference in Glasgow.

Speaking to the BBC's Sunday Show, Mr Sarwar said it is important to "continue to support the Ukrainian people and Ukrainian [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) with all their asks around defensive support".

He said he had commissioned an energy transition commission to look at reducing bills and ensuring energy security, including the consideration of nuclear power as part of the energy mix.

Mr Sarwar said: "I think renewables clearly has to be a huge part of the focus.

"I think how we wind down from oil and gas - I think we need to be careful in how we do it, both in terms of that supply, but also more importantly in terms of the jobs.

"But I think we do need to have a more complex mix of our energy security, and that's why I think we should be considering, for example, nuclear energy as part of that mix."

The Scottish Labour leader was asked if [*Nicola Sturgeon*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nicola-sturgeon) should reconsider her opposition to the Cambo oil field.

He replied: "No, and I think the problem is I don't think we can say now that we see new risks in our world that we forget saving our planet.

"I think we have to do both.

"Yes, we have to address the immediate risk we face from Russia, the immediate risks we face to our energy security

"But we've also got to save our planet in the process. Because yes, we're living in it right now.

"But it also needs to be safe to live in for our children and our grandchildren."

Read More

[*Ukraine-Russia war news: Zelensky responds to nuclear plant attack*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-news-putin-war-b2028568.html)

[*Why has Russia invaded Ukraine? The conflict explained*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/why-russia-ukraine-invasion-putin-b2026550.html)

[*Sign The Independent's petition to help the people of Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-refugees-russia-petition-help-b2025628.html)

[*More than 80,000* ***Ukrainian******refugees*** *could arrive in Ireland, minister says*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/ireland-department-of-justice-department-of-justice-europe-dublin-b2029680.html)

[*Hampshire couple take Molly the motorhome to help people fleeing Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/ukraine-hampshire-andover-un-refugee-agency-gofundme-b2029669.html)

[*Former head of Orange Order must abide by Labour values - Sarwar*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/labour-orange-order-north-lanarkshire-scotland-islamophobia-b2029668.html)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Government plans to vet Ukraine refugee hosts 'not enough' to avoid risk of exploitation, experts warn*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650S-Y7P1-JBNF-W1GR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 15, 2022 Tuesday 7:56 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 1013 words

**Byline:** May Bulman

**Highlight:** Britain's modern slavery watchdog joins calls for ministers to bolster sponsorship scheme checks amid warnings there may be criminals in Britain 'wishing to exploit refugees'

**Body**

The government's plans for vetting households offering to host ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) are "not enough" to ensure vulnerable people are not placed a risk of [*exploitation*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/exploitation) , trafficking and safeguarding experts have warned.

The UK's modern slavery watchdog, along with a number of charities, have called on ministers to bolster the checks that will be carried out on people wishing to offer their homes under the new sponsorship scheme after it emerged they would be taking a "light touch" approach to vetting.

[*Announcing the Ukraine sponsorship scheme*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/ukraine-refugees-sponsorship-scheme-michael-gove-uk-b2035658.html) on Monday, minister for Levelling Up [*Michael Gove*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/michael-gove) said full DBS checks would not be required and that "very light touch criminal checks" would be sufficient to ensure someone is an appropriate sponsor, with local authorities "following up".

The Homes for Refugees scheme, which will open on Friday, will allow Ukrainians with no family links to come to the UK and live in homes offered by members of the public or charities and organisations. Individuals offering their homes will receive a monthly payment of £350.

More than 100,000 people have registered their interest on the first day of the scheme launching via a website set up by the government, after the site initially [*crashed within minutes of it going live*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/homes-for-ukraine-refugees-government-sponsor-b2035528.html).

Mr Gove said the government would balance the "speed with which people can be placed and the security of the setting in which they are placed" in order to "minimise bureaucracy".

But this approach has prompted concern -with experts warning that it could place refugees at risk further down the line.

The UK's independent anti-slavery commission Dame Sara Thornton told The Independent she was "gravely concerned" about the risks faced by refugees fleeing Ukraine and coming to the UK, including the "very real threat of trafficking and exploitation".

"We know that vulnerable individuals are often targeted by traffickers and therefore systematic prevention measures must be put in place to mitigate immediate vulnerabilities and safeguard people's basic needs. But we must also develop a considered longer-term approach to prevent exploitation," she said.

Tim Naor Hilton, chief executive of [*Refugee*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugee) Action, said the charity was "deeply concerned" that the government's "light touch" approach to safeguarding showed a "deep lack of awareness of the risks facing displaced people, particularly single women and children".

"Trafficking and exploitation are so rampant during refugee crises that it beggars belief that safeguarding was not central to the Homes for Refugees scheme," he added.

Refugees at Home, which specialises in placing refugees with volunteer hosts, echoed his concerns, saying a simple DBS check was "not enough".

Lauren Scott, executive director of the charity, added: "A proper home visit needs to be undertaken to ensure that homes are suitable and that everyone in the host household is fully committed and knows what to expect."

Follow-up support must be provided to both hosts and guests, move-on plans must be put in place and there must be a "fall back" for the rare situations in which a placement does not work out, Ms Scott said.

Lauren Agnew, trafficking policy expert at charity CARE, said: "The government should be aware that criminals wishing to exploit refugees are not going to advertise their intent. They may use individuals with 'clean' records to act as a sponsor, including those who are themselves victims of exploitation.

"We would also note that getting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to safety shouldn't be the end of the story. Can it really be left to local authorities alone to ensure the safety and wellbeing of refugees six months, a year, or three years down the line?"

Ms Agnew called on ministers to consult with experts in human trafficking and modern slavery to develop a series of "appropriate safeguards" for this scheme.

There are concerns specifically about the safety of child refugees in these placements. More than half of the 3 million people who have fled the war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) are minors, and there are believed to be a considerable number of unaccompanied children among them.

Daniela Reale, global lead of refugee, migrant and displaced children at Save the Children UK, said it was "imperative" that the government "urgently implements" DBS checks for any applications where children and young people are involved to ensure their safety is being prioritised.

Philip Ishola, chief executive of anti-child trafficking charity Love146 UK, said the "light touch" approach to vetting announced by Mr Gove would create "significant risks to the welfare of children".

He added that while he recognised the "unprecedented" need, the sponsorship scheme in its current form was "not the answer" as it "omits crucial safeguarding and welfare mechanisms designed to ensure that people who are vulnerable and in need are not put at further risk".

Iryna Pona, policy and impact manager at the Children's Society, demanded that the government clarified "crucial details" around the vetting process.

"We'd like to know what light touch checks the government is planning to do, such as making sure that potential hosts do not have a history of violent or sexual offences, as a minimum," she said.

The government has said each host will be checked against the police national computer and that refugees will be registered with GPs and schools, where safeguarding checks will be carried out.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Capita boss hails transformation as revenue grows for first time in years*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YN-DM61-DY4H-K52S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 10, 2022 Thursday 9:18 AM GMT

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**Section:** BUSINESS; Version:1

**Length:** 368 words

**Byline:** August Graham

**Highlight:** Jon Lewis said the company has simplified over recent years.

**Body**

The boss of [*Capita*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/capita) hailed the transformation of the company as it posted its first rise in revenue in six years.

Jon Lewis said the business is paying down its debt, has dealt with its pension deficit, and has regained the trust of clients.

He told the PA news agency that, in the last four years, Capita has transformed from a company that was criticised as "overly complex and difficult to understand".

"That is no longer the case," he said.

Capita's 2021 full-year results: [*https://t.co/zxjZBHplOP*](https://t.co/zxjZBHplOP) [*pic.twitter.com/871VfI7F0H*](https://t.co/871VfI7F0H) - Capita (@CapitaPlc) [*March 10, 2022*](https://twitter.com/CapitaPlc/status/1501825204577832960?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

It was not just Capita that needed transforming - only a few years ago the entire outsourcing sector was facing problems.

Mr Lewis said: "I think the sector got to where it got to through mismanagement, quite frankly. The race-to-the-bottom bidding, on contracts based on price, taking on scope which couldn't be delivered, etc.

"What has happened over the last several years across the sector is new leadership teams have come in which have brought a much more disciplined approach to how we engage both in the public and private sector."

He said the problems had in part been due to bosses trying to keep shareholders happy by pushing up dividends.

"I think management teams get into a situation where they come under considerable pressure to continue to deliver top-line growth and feed the dividend. Candidly, that resulted in some suboptimal decisions," he said.

Last year revenue rose by 0.4% to £3 billion. It was modest growth, but ended six years of decline for the business.

Pre-tax profit swung to £286 million, from a loss of £49 million the year before.

The business won contracts worth £3.8 billion in 2021, an increase of nearly a third, while its order book grew for the first time since 2017.

Capita was especially helped by its public service division, which grew nearly 11%, while the experience unit dropped 9.4%.

The business won major contracts and extended deals with the [*Royal Navy*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/royal-navy) and the [*RSPCA*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rspca) among others.

It has very little to do with [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) or Ukraine, but it has a large operation in [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) , where it will offer ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** employment and free accommodation while they settle in, Mr Lewis said.

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[*PM vows to 'bring maximum pressure' on Putin ahead of Poland and Estonia trip*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WP-3X11-DY4H-K10P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 28, 2022 Monday 11:30 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 387 words

**Byline:** Patrick Daly

**Highlight:** Boris Johnson said the Russian president must 'feel the consequences' for invading Ukraine.

**Body**

The [*Prime Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prime-minister) has said the UK will "continue to bring maximum pressure to bear" on Russia as he pledged that Vladimir Putin would "feel the consequences" for invading [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

On the eve of his trip on Tuesday to [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) and [*Estonia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/estonia) , [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) said international leaders were united in agreeing that the Russian president "must fail" after his decision to send troops into the neighbouring country.

Mr Johnson is due to meet with Warsaw and Tallinn leaders and visit British troops serving in Estonia, which shares a border with Russia.

We speak with one voice when we say, Putin must fail

Prime Minister Boris Johnson

Speaking before his visit to the two eastern European members of Nato, the Prime Minister said: "Today I will visit Poland and Estonia, two countries that are acutely affected by the current crisis in Ukraine.

"We have shared values that are more important than ever to protect, as the humanitarian situation gets worse.

"Alongside all our international allies the UK will continue to bring maximum pressure to bear on Putin's regime to ensure he feels the consequences of his actions in Ukraine.

"We speak with one voice when we say, Putin must fail."

Officials said Mr Johnson will meet Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki to underpin the UK's financial and diplomatic support for central Europe as it faces the prospect of a humanitarian crisis, with ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** continuing to head for the Polish border.

The Prime Minister will then travel on to Estonia, where he will speak with Nato secretary general Jens Stoltenberg.

They will jointly visit British troops serving "on the front line of Russian aggression" in Tapa, No 10 officials said.

Mr Johnson will also meet Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas and Estonian President Alar Karis to discuss European security and stability.

The trip comes after Poland and Romania joined a G7, European Union and Nato leaders' phone call on Monday to discuss the crisis in Ukraine.

Downing Street said the leaders "agreed to pursue every avenue to ensure that Putin fails in his ambitions".

During the call, Mr Johnson stressed the need for allies to continue to provide Kyiv with defensive weapons and the requirement to support Ukraine's neighbours, which include Poland, in dealing with "large numbers of Ukrainians escaping violence in the country".

**Load-Date:** February 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine war in pictures: Powerful images from the front line of Putin's deadly invasion*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WS-C091-DY4H-K40R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 1, 2022 Tuesday 1:32 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 390 words

**Byline:** Eleanor Sly

**Highlight:** Warning: This article contains images that some viewers may find distressing

**Body**

Harrowing images taken from across [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) show the grim reality of President [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) 's invasion of Ukraine.

Six days since [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) n President ordered troops to march into neighbouring Ukraine the conflict is still ongoing, despite a brief ceasefire which took place on Monday during talks between Russian and Ukrainian officials.

Shelling continued on Tuesday with [*mass civilian casualties following a huge explosion in Kharkiv.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/missile-kharkiv-ukraine-russia-b2025600.html)

A missile struck the city's Freedom Square on Monday morning, just outside the regional administration offices, an attack which was denounced as a "treacherous war crime" by head of the regional administration, Oleh Synehubov.

Kharkiv is located in the east of Ukraine and is the country's second largest city. It is home to some of the country's most important industries and includes multiple IT companies and a tank factory.

Ukraine's President Zelensky has condemned bombardments as a war crime and said that Russia is deliberately targeting civilians.

The war, which broke out on 24 February, has already claimed hundreds of lives and injured many more.

Thousands of Ukrainians have stayed and taken up arms to help defend their country, with Ukrainian's from across the world returning to fight.

Meanwhile, more than 660,000 people, mostly women and children, have fled Ukraine to neighbouring countries in the last six days, the United Nations refugee agency said on Tuesday.

Shabia Mantoo, spokesperson of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), told a briefing in Geneva that there were reports of people waiting for up to 60 hours to enter Poland, while queues at the Romanian border are reported to be up to 20 km long.

The European Union (EU) estimates that up to four million people may try to leave the country and has relaxed its rules on taking refugees and says that member states of the EU will welcome ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** with "open arms."

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson came under increasing pressure on Monday to do more to help those fleeing the conflict, after his government said that only Ukrainians with family in the UK would be allowed to travel there without visas.

Home Secretary Priti Patel has rejected demands to offer a full visa waiver to Ukrainians fleeing war but on Monday night said that expanding the visa scheme was something ministers were "absolutely working on."

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Refugees may have to stay at Dublin airport as Citywest reaches capacity*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66NG-6P51-DY4H-K0XC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

October 20, 2022 Thursday 5:56 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 475 words

**Byline:** By Grinne N. Aodha

**Highlight:** There have been repeated warnings about a squeeze on accommodation for refugees and asylum seekers in recent months.

**Body**

[*Refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) arriving in [*Ireland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ireland) may have to stay at [*Dublin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dublin) Airport overnight as the Citywest welcome hub has reached capacity.

In a statement on Thursday afternoon, the Department of Children, Equality and Integration said there had been a “significant” increase in the number of people seeking accommodation in recent weeks.

This has resulted in the transit centre at Citywest reaching capacity and a decision being taken to put a pause on new arrivals until numbers reduce.

Between then and now, the Department said that those arriving at the airport “may have to wait there if arriving overnight”, and that supports will be provided to them by an NGO.

If room becomes available at Citywest, families and those with vulnerabilities will be prioritised where possible, the Department said.

For asylum seekers or those claiming temporary protection, the Department said if accommodation is not immediately available, they will be communicated with and supports will be offered to them through [*NGOs*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ngos) where possible.

Those who have alternative accommodation options are asked to avail of these, “including pledged accommodation”, the Department said.

The Ukrainian Embassy was also briefed on the development by officials from the Department.

The Government warned back in July that it was facing a “severe shortage” of accommodation for arriving Ukrainians, which resulted in a number of asylum seekers having to stay in a [*Dublin Airport*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dublin-airport) terminal overnight.

***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** were temporarily living in tents at the Gormanstown military camp in Co Meath as other accommodation was sourced.

Since then, most of the thousands of units of student accommodation that were used to house some international protection applicants are now unavailable as the housing need continues to grow.

Departments were asked to list possible buildings in their possession that could be repurposed to house Ukrainians and other refugees and asylum seekers.

The government is also considering whether to charge refugees who have been granted full status and who are working full time rent, if they are still staying in Direct Provision centres.

Ireland is now accommodating more than 58,000 people: around 42,000 Ukrainian nationals and 16,000 international protection applicants.

This figures compares with 7,250 at the same time last year.

The Department said that “access to suitable accommodation is severely constrained”.

“Current projections indicate a shortfall of 15,000 beds by December as the number of Ukrainians and IP applicants arriving is expected to remain at elevated levels.

“To date, the Department has contracted approximately 25% of hotel beds in Ireland, alongside hostels, guest houses, pledged accommodation, sports stadiums, scout facilities, tented accommodation and modular units.

“It continues to work to explore all suitable offers as it has done since March 2022.”

**Load-Date:** October 20, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainians need open and unconditional help - now*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WX-SDS1-F072-4350-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 2, 2022 Wednesday

Second Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 2

**Length:** 970 words

**Byline:** EDITORIAL

**Body**

The images coming from Ukraine of bombed-out apartment blocks and the hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing for their lives speak of the terror enveloping a blameless people. It demands an immediate humanitarian response. It is a looming disaster. ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** need open, unconditional, generous help. Now.

We say: Refugees Welcome.

The Independent is calling for authorities across the west to respond to a clear and present danger to life and public health - to do whatever it takes to save lives and protect families. We need to supply aid to Ukraine, to the surrounding countries dealing with the refugees, and indeed to help Ukrainians find safety in Britain. Here's how:

\* We have started a petition with change.org to call on the UK government to be at the forefront of the international community offering aid and support to a nation in need. Please sign here

\* We have also started a fundraiser in partnership with gofundme.org.uk to raise money for the thousands of men, women and children who are fleeing the fighting in Ukraine. Your donations will go to charities on the ground, including the Red Cross, who are supporting refugees crossing the border into Ukraine's neighbours - Poland, Romania, Hungary, Moldova and Slovakia - as well as people displaced from their homes within Ukraine. Please give generously

Aid on the border

In the short term, we know that the shivering refugees have to be offered shelter, warmth, food and comfort for themselves and their children. They need access to phones and the internet. They need these things right now, particularly in the borderlands around Ukraine.

The need is extremely urgent and local, and we have partnered with charitable organisations to deliver accommodation, clothing, food, sanitary goods, medicines, toys and other necessities to those who have had to leave their homes and loved ones behind. The money is needed - and needed now.

Welcome all Ukrainians

We cannot know how long this war will last, or what course it will take. In the short to medium term, many frightened Ukrainian people will wish to join relatives in Europe for temporary safety and shelter. They naturally will want to return home when they can - but what they will go back to, or when, is uncertain.

At the moment, the official response in the UK for those seeking asylum in this way has been found wanting. It is not good enough to relax the visa requirements, as the British government has now done. There needs to be a far more big-hearted, liberal approach to accepting refugees. Indeed, the UK's obligation to accept refugees is absolute under the relevant international conventions.

As with unaccompanied Syrian children, and the Afghans who helped British forces and agencies during the war, the government has shown a lack of compassion and urgency in facing up to its obligations.

Provide protection

The Nationality and Borders Bill, currently going through parliament, is designed to weaken those international legal responsibilities. That means that Ukrainians who are desperately trying to reach the UK - however they can - can be denied asylum without any chance to plead their case.

Indeed, Priti Patel, the home secretary, plans to go further by making it an offence even to make the journey, meaning those arriving could be deported to a third country or jailed. If not removed or imprisoned, people will be granted a form of temporary status which affords them no access to benefits and no family reunion rights, and will be regularly reassessed for removal - leaving them in a perpetual state of uncertainty, and given a lower status than the rest of society.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has raised the alarm that this two-tiered approach will also breach the 1951 Refugee Convention and unnecessarily "stigmatise" people fleeing persecution. This is no way to treat defenceless people running from President Putin's missiles.

There is significant opposition to these inhumane moves, and more pressure is needed. We must urge the government to think again and consider the human cost of the new policy, and the more support it receives, the more chance that orderly and practical routes for asylum seekers will be established and the people traffickers stopped. That will benefit any ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, and many others too with a proper claim to be offered a place of safety.

Resettlement scheme

In the longer term, depending on what happens in Ukraine, there may be a need for more refugees to be settled in the UK. This may be true whether they have relatives in Britain or not. More widely there is also an obvious need to replace the smuggling routes across the English Channel with what are termed by the government "safe and legal" routes - but there is a distinct lack of these routes available.

Official data shows that the number of people who come to Britain under refugee resettlement schemes has plummeted by 75 per cent in the last four years. The Home Office scrapped its numerical target on refugee resettlement last year, prompting calls from charities for the UK to commit to taking 10,000 refugees from around the world through these schemes annually. These calls have so far gone ignored. These commitments will have to be increased if events in Ukraine trigger another mass movement across Europe.

Given that President Putin has been threatening war for weeks, if not months, woefully little has been done by western governments who, as we know, had remarkably accurate intelligence about his intentions. Because of that failure of preparedness, the need to act now is even more pressing.

It is time to extend the hand of help and declare: Refugees Welcome.

The Independent's Refugees Welcome campaign is calling for the UK government to set up a resettlement scheme to give Ukrainians fleeing the invasion sanctuary in Britain

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Poland's plan to gift Orban precious document draws scorn*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64SK-S7C1-DY4H-K0VY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 14, 2022 Monday 7:25 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS; Version:1

**Length:** 368 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Local authorities and officials in central Poland are protesting government plans to gift Hungary a precious, 15th century manuscript in order to highlight the two countries' close ties

**Body**

Local authorities and officials in central Poland on Monday protested government plans to gift [*Hungary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hungary) one of the country's most precious manuscripts that dates back 500 years in order to highlight the two nations' close ties.

Torun city leaders and church authorities signed a petition urging lawmakers to abandon the plan to give away the 15th century document authored by Naldus Naldius, a writer and painter from [*Florence*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/florence).

"We have the opinion of experts who say that this move would be against the constitution," said Regional Governor Piotr CaÅbecki. "I think we should appeal to the hearts of the lawmakers and to their conscience. There is no room for politics here."

A historian and lawmaker with Poland's right-wing ruling party, Piotr Babinetz, has proposed legislation that would enable the government to take possession of the manuscript for sum of 25 million zlotys ($6.2 million) and give it to the government of Prime Minister Viktor [*Orban*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/orban).

The gesture would aim to underscore the close relations between the two nations and governments as well as to reciprocate for Hungary's decision to hand over last year a gilded suit of armor of the 16th century Polish king Sigismund II Augustus.

Naldus Naldius crafted the elaborately decorated manuscript while serving at the court of Hungary's King Matthias Corvinus. The book, which describes the Hungarian king's library, was sold by a merchant to the city of Torun in the mid 16th century and it has remained there ever since.

Danetta Ryszkowska-Mirowska, head of the Torun public library, described the manuscript as "unique and priceless" and said that no amount of money could compensate its loss for Poland's cultural heritage.

She joined other library officials to protest the plan she called "bizarre" and contrary to Poland's national heritage protection laws.

Poland lost much of its cultural heritage -particularly from its art and book collections -throughout its history, but especially during the bombings and plunder of World War II.

Read More

[*Eastern Europe prepares for refugees as Russia-Ukraine tensions rise*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-invasion-tensions-eastern-europe-b2014811.html)

[*Poland prepares to accept* ***Ukrainian******refugees*** *in case of war*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/poland-warsaw-european-union-viktor-orban-slovakia-b2014683.html)

[*What is happening with Russia and Ukraine? The crisis explained*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-explained-simple-guide-b2014561.html)

**Load-Date:** February 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainians need open and unconditional help - now*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WX-SDS1-F072-434T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 2, 2022 Wednesday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 2

**Length:** 970 words

**Byline:** EDITORIAL

**Body**

The images coming from Ukraine of bombed-out apartment blocks and the hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing for their lives speak of the terror enveloping a blameless people. It demands an immediate humanitarian response. It is a looming disaster. ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** need open, unconditional, generous help. Now.

We say: Refugees Welcome.

The Independent is calling for authorities across the west to respond to a clear and present danger to life and public health - to do whatever it takes to save lives and protect families. We need to supply aid to Ukraine, to the surrounding countries dealing with the refugees, and indeed to help Ukrainians find safety in Britain. Here's how:

\* We have started a petition with change.org to call on the UK government to be at the forefront of the international community offering aid and support to a nation in need. Please sign here

\* We have also started a fundraiser in partnership with gofundme.org.uk to raise money for the thousands of men, women and children who are fleeing the fighting in Ukraine. Your donations will go to charities on the ground, including the Red Cross, who are supporting refugees crossing the border into Ukraine's neighbours - Poland, Romania, Hungary, Moldova and Slovakia - as well as people displaced from their homes within Ukraine. Please give generously

Aid on the border

In the short term, we know that the shivering refugees have to be offered shelter, warmth, food and comfort for themselves and their children. They need access to phones and the internet. They need these things right now, particularly in the borderlands around Ukraine.

The need is extremely urgent and local, and we have partnered with charitable organisations to deliver accommodation, clothing, food, sanitary goods, medicines, toys and other necessities to those who have had to leave their homes and loved ones behind. The money is needed - and needed now.

Welcome all Ukrainians

We cannot know how long this war will last, or what course it will take. In the short to medium term, many frightened Ukrainian people will wish to join relatives in Europe for temporary safety and shelter. They naturally will want to return home when they can - but what they will go back to, or when, is uncertain.

At the moment, the official response in the UK for those seeking asylum in this way has been found wanting. It is not good enough to relax the visa requirements, as the British government has now done. There needs to be a far more big-hearted, liberal approach to accepting refugees. Indeed, the UK's obligation to accept refugees is absolute under the relevant international conventions.

As with unaccompanied Syrian children, and the Afghans who helped British forces and agencies during the war, the government has shown a lack of compassion and urgency in facing up to its obligations.

Provide protection

The Nationality and Borders Bill, currently going through parliament, is designed to weaken those international legal responsibilities. That means that Ukrainians who are desperately trying to reach the UK - however they can - can be denied asylum without any chance to plead their case.

Indeed, the home secretary, Priti Patel, plans to go further by making it an offence even to make the journey, meaning those arriving could be deported to a third country or jailed. If not removed or imprisoned, people will be granted a form of temporary status which affords them no access to benefits and no family reunion rights, and will be regularly reassessed for removal - leaving them in a perpetual state of uncertainty, and given a lower status than the rest of society.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has raised the alarm that this two-tiered approach will also breach the 1951 Refugee Convention and unnecessarily "stigmatise" people feeling persecution. This is no way to treat defenceless people running from President Putin's missiles.

There is significant opposition to these inhumane moves, and more pressure is needed. We must urge the government to think again and consider the human cost of the new policy, and the more support it receives, the more chance that orderly and practical routes for asylum seekers will be established and the people traffickers stopped. That will benefit any ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, and many others too with a proper claim to be offered a place of safety.

Resettlement scheme

In the longer term, depending on what happens in Ukraine, there may be a need for more refugees to be settled in the UK. This may be true whether they have relatives in Britain or not. More widely there is also an obvious need to replace the smuggling routes across the English Channel with what are termed by the government "safe and legal" routes - but there is a distinct lack of these routes available.

Official data shows that the number of people who come to Britain under refugee resettlement schemes has plummeted by 75 per cent in the last four years. The Home Office scrapped its numerical target on refugee resettlement last year, prompting calls from charities for the UK to commit to taking 10,000 refugees from around the world through these schemes annually. These calls have so far gone ignored. These commitments will have to be increased if events in Ukraine trigger another mass movement across Europe.

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It is time to extend the hand of help and declare: Refugees Welcome.

The Independent's Refugees Welcome campaign is calling for the UK government to set up a resettlement scheme to give Ukrainians fleeing the invasion sanctuary in Britain

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Macron: NATO troops in Romania are a "powerful deterrent"*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65P6-91V1-DY4H-K3KB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 14, 2022 Tuesday 8:16 PM GMT

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**Length:** 407 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** French President Emmanuel Macron has arrived in Romania to hold bilateral talks and meet with French troops stationed there who are part of NATO’s response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine

**Body**

[*French*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/french) President [*Emmanuel Macron*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/emmanuel-macron) arrived in Romania on Tuesday to hold bilateral talks and meet with French troops stationed there who are part of NATO’s response to Russia’s invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Macron’s visit to Romania, a European Union member since 2007 and a NATO member since 2004, marked the beginning of a regional tour that includes a visit Wednesday to non-NATO Moldova. Both countries share long borders with embattled Ukraine.

“Nobody knows what is in store for us in the coming weeks and months, but we will do all we can to put an end to the Russian invasion, to help Ukrainians and continue with negotiations,” Macron said at the eastern Mihail Kogalniceanu air base, where he was greeted by Romanian Prime Minister Nicolae Ciuca.

In a brief address to French soldiers deployed at the NATO base, Macron praised them for “honoring our commitment to defend Europe as war is being waged again.”

France has around 500 soldiers deployed in Romania and has been a key player in NATO’s bolstering of forces on the alliance’s eastern flank following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24. In May, France deployed an air defense system to Romania that NATO said “can ensure protection to the forces operating within the area.”

In the long term, Macron said ”we need to be able to protect ourselves” and went on to say NATO's multinational battlegroup in Romania — which includes French, Belgian and American military personnel — will serve as a “powerful deterrent” on Europe’s eastern flank.

On Wednesday, Macron will meet with Romanian President Klaus Iohannis at the air base for official talks in preparation for a European Council meeting in Brussels, as well as a key NATO “Strategic Concept” summit in Madrid later this month.

French spokesperson Olivia Grégoire said Macron is expected to address the consequences of the war in Ukraine, from a surge of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to the spike in energy prices and the disruptions to global grain markets.

He will also discuss Ukraine’s and Moldova’s demands to join the EU ahead of a European summit next week, she said. France currently holds the presidency of the EU Council.

Macron will “underline the importance of the strength of the European project in these troubled moments,” she said.

After Romania, Macron will head to Chisinau, Moldova’s capital, where he will meet with President Maia Sandu.

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Sylvie Corbet in Paris and Barbara Surk in Nice, France, contributed to this report.

**Load-Date:** June 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Surely falling house prices can only be a good thing...*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68N8-6JJ1-JCS0-D46B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

July 9, 2023 Sunday

First Edition

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**Section:** VOICES; Pg. 24

**Length:** 562 words

**Body**

"A fall in house prices is a bad thing.'' What a load of nonsense! When the price of anything is lower it is deemed a good thing for consumers. And it is no different for housing. There will be different reasons why prices are lower, but the end result of a lower price is good for consumers. That some have to borrow and pay higher borrowing costs to pay for housing is an entirely different article.

I long for the days when the cost of a house reflected a much lower multiple of average earnings. And so should everyone else. Everyone should be able to afford to live in decent housing. I know no one who does not want housing to become more attainable. All political parties want that. The real secret is to build more houses and provide more council houses. Over decades all political parties have talked a good talk. We all know the reality.

Philip Pound London

As the hand-wringing over our surging interest rates continues unabated, and gleeful pundits predict a tanking of the housing market, you'd assume it was all bad news for borrowers. But conversely, you'd also assume savers would be coining it in, wouldn't you? "A rising tide lifts all boats" is one of those truisms we hold dear, but sadly when it comes to the banks it seems it isn't quite so true.

Mortgage rates follow the upward trajectory with immediate effect, and you'll find your bank won't be dragging its feet in advising you of the new rate. But when it comes to my meagre savings it's a different story. No announcements emails or letters in the post announcing an immediate upward lurch in my savings rate, and a call to one of their calls centres was countered with blank incomprehension when I asked about it.

Bank profits will lurch upwards again on the strength of the Bank of England's ineffectual measures to curb inflation. While we dupes just take it on the chin, our chancellor offers nothing more than a hapless shrug and allows another uncontrolled sector of our economy to fleece us with impunity.

Steve Mackinder Denver, Norfolk

<strong>Scum rises to the top</strong>

They say that the cream always rises to the top. What happens, though, when politicians who arein charge of the entire assets of the state start appointing the incompetent and the corrupt into all the top positions, and then slip in the odd bad apple to catalyse this witches' brew?

The only thing left that can possibly appear on the top at that stage is scum. Of course, the same thing can be said of the electorate when they make the same choice when appointingpoliticians, whichresults in where we are now - a feedback loop that makes sense of runaway capitalism and supercharged climate change.

Liam Power Dundalk, Ireland

<strong>The infirm and tourists are being left behind</strong>

I read Claire Pike's letter in praise of the unappreciated ticket office (Friday), soon to be killed off by managers who seem to only see the bottom line, in absolute agreement. Like Claire, I usually don't need the ticket office as I just buy on those machines.

However, I was so grateful we have one at our station because they could give my ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** a family rail pass immediately instead of having to wait for an online one, which they would have found hard to fill in. They help disabled people, tourists, the elderly and confused. Oh, but I forgot, the rail companies don't care about them do they?

Eleanor Holloway Berks

**Load-Date:** July 8, 2023

**End of Document**



[*760 UK visas issued to Ukrainian refugees, says Grant Shapps*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YG-3X21-DY4H-K31W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 9, 2022 Wednesday 1:16 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 95 words

**Byline:** Ross Martin-Pavitt

**Body**

Ukrainian president [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) supports the UK government's approach to the refugee crisis in the war-torn country, cabinet minister [*Grant Shapps*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/grant-shapps) has said.

The transport secretary said he was "proud" of the government's approach, as he revealed only 760 [*visas*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/visas) had been granted for Ukrainians fleeing the Russian invasion.

To sign our [*Refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) Welcome campaign petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) and if you are able to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome)

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters) to sign up to our free newsletters

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Eurovision tickets for Liverpool shows to go on sale*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67PV-VY51-DY4H-K1D7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 7, 2023 Tuesday 8:59 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 507 words

**Byline:** Connie Evans

**Highlight:** The costs for the live and preview shows range from £30 to £380.

**Body**

Tickets for the Eurovision Song Contest 2023 live shows in [*Liverpool*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/liverpool) are set to go on sale at midday on Tuesday.

The international singing competition will take place at the 11,000-capacity Liverpool Arena later this year, culminating in the grand final on May 13.

Tickets for nine different live shows, which are being held in the city after the UK was chosen to host the competition on behalf of war-torn 2022 winner [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , will go on sale at 12pm.

Fans hoping to see one of six previews and three televised shows will need to head to Ticketmaster’s website, where they will be able to purchase tickets for between £30 and £380.

It's the big day! Tickets for [*#Eurovision2023*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Eurovision2023?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) go on sale today at 13:00 CET!Everything you need to know to get ready here ️[*https://t.co/duxkQFxaC9*](https://t.co/duxkQFxaC9) — Eurovision Song Contest (@Eurovision) [*March 7, 2023*](https://twitter.com/Eurovision/status/1633014625825435648?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Tickets for the semi-final shows are priced from £30 to £290, with the cost increasing to between £80 and £380 for the grand final shows.

Eurovision fans hoping to secure tickets have been advised to register for a Ticketmaster account ahead of tickets going on sale.

They will need to have registered before they can make a purchase – for one show at a time.

Fans will be able to buy up to four tickets in a single order for the live shows and six in a single order for the preview performances.

The evening preview show – previously referred to as the jury show at previous contests – is a dress rehearsal-style full run through of the show that takes place the night before the televised version.

Audiences attending the evening preview will be able to stay for a randomised version of the qualifier and points reveal, which gives the presenters a chance to practise for the possible different outcomes.

There will also be an afternoon preview show – previously referred to as the family show – which is a full run through of the live show that will take place earlier in the day and is therefore ideal for those wishing to bring younger children along.

There will also be a randomised points reveal at the afternoon preview show.

Highly sought after tickets will also be available for the live televised show, which will see audiences across Europe, and Australia, able to cast their real votes.

Eurovision is set to air on the BBC and will be hosted by singer and Britain’s Got Talent judge [*Alesha Dixon*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/alesha-dixon) , Ted Lasso actress [*Hannah Waddingham*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hannah-waddingham) and Ukrainian singer Julia Sanina, as well as returning favourite, comedian and talk show host Graham Norton.

***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** living in the UK through the Homes for Ukraine scheme, the Ukraine Family Scheme and the Ukraine Extension Scheme will be able to apply for cheaper tickets.

It was previously announced that the [*UK Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/uk-government) will make around 3,000 tickets available for those who were forced to flee their home country when Russian troops invaded last year.

The subsidised tickets will cost £20.

The semi-final evening preview kicks off at 8pm on May 8, with the grand final live show bringing the contest to an end starting at 8pm on May 13.

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Almost 60 million people displaced worldwide, says study*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GM-VXF1-DY4H-K402-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 19, 2022 Thursday 6:40 PM GMT

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**Section:** WORLD,LONG READS; Version:1

**Length:** 431 words

**Byline:** Rory Sullivan

**Highlight:** Millions of people forced to live elsewhere in their countries, due to either conflict or disaster

**Body**

The number of people displaced within their own borders rose to an all-time high by the end of 2021, [*a new study*](https://www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/IDMC_GRID_2022_LR.pdf) has shown.

A total of 59.1 million people had been forced to leave their homes and live elsewhere in their countries as a result of [*violence*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/violence) or disasters as of December last year, according to data collated by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC).

This is up from the 55 million internally displaced persons ([*IDPs*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/idps) ) recorded in the IDMC's previous annual world survey. The increase was largely driven by the high numbers of new IDPs in Afghanistan, Burkino Faso, Ethiopia and Yemen, the IDMC said.

More than half of all IDPs are now under the age of 25, while 25.2 million of this group are under the age of 18, raising significant questions about the effects of global instability on younger generations.

Of all the internal displacements driven by conflict and violence last year, 80 per cent of them occurred in Sub-Saharan Africa due to fighting in places including the Central African Republic, Ethiopia and Somalia.

Similarly, four in every five displacements triggered by disasters in 2021 took place in Asia and the Pacific, with China, the Philippines and India the countries most affected.

Commenting on the report, Jan Egeland, the secretary general of the [*Norwegian Refugee Council*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/norwegian-refugee-council) , which set up the IDMC 24 years ago to document IDPs who would otherwise go "unseen", said the findings showed the world was in a state of ill health.

"The world is falling apart, too many countries are falling apart," he said. "2021 was, as we documented here, a very bleak year and 2022 is proving to become even worse," he said, adding that the war in Ukraine would lead to a new record this year.

"It's a damning indictment of the world's lack of ability for conflict prevention and conflict resolution," he added.

53.2 million people were living in [*#internaldisplacement*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/internaldisplacement?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) at the end of 2021 after fleeing [*#conflict*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/conflict?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) & violence.This increase is mostly driven by growing numbers of [*#IDPs*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/IDPs?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) in [*#Afghanistan*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Afghanistan?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) , [*#BurkinaFaso*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/BurkinaFaso?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) , [*#Ethiopia*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Ethiopia?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) & [*#Yemen*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Yemen?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw). Find out more in [*#GRID2022*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/GRID2022?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw). [*https://t.co/yrIetqyhzA*](https://t.co/yrIetqyhzA) [*pic.twitter.com/HzGNkdIt3g*](https://t.co/HzGNkdIt3g) - IDMC (@IDMC\_Geneva) [*May 19, 2022*](https://twitter.com/IDMC_Geneva/status/1527294185216233474?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Mr Egeland also expressed his concern that some countries were spending most of their aid budgets on helping ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, meaning there would be less money for the rest of the world.

Between the start of Vladimir Putin's invasion on 24 February and 5 May, the UN estimates that more than 6 million people fled Ukraine, while another 7.7 million people had become internally displaced.

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian refugees flee to Hungary as Russia's war worsens-*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64X6-0281-JBNF-W1C6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 3, 2022 Thursday 11:07 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 81 words

**Byline:** Mared Parry

**Body**

[*Hungary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hungary) is currently taking in tens of thousands of [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) from Ukraine, with more than 80,000 entering the bordering country over the last week, since Russia began its invasion.

The country's capital city, [*Budapest*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/budapest) , is very busy, and its Nyugati railway station is serving as a humanitarian relief hub for refugees.

Both Hungarian locals and Ukrainians are helping each other out, with many lining up to hand out necessities, food and drinks.

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters) to sign up to our free newsletters

**Load-Date:** March 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Thousands of Afghan asylum seekers evicted from hotels ‘at risk of homelessness due to housing shortage’*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68M6-D0D1-DY4H-K0JY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 4, 2023 Tuesday 2:55 AM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 589 words

**Byline:** Eleanor Noyce

**Highlight:** Councils at ‘crisis point’ as they scramble to find housing for 8,000 Afghan asylum seekers

**Body**

Thousands of Afghan asylum seekers being [*evicted from Home Office hotels*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/afghan-refugees-hotels-eviction-home-office-b2327022.html?src=rss) face homelessness due to a housing shortage and long waiting lists, council leaders have warned.

The[*government announced in March that 8,000 Afghans*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/afghan-refugees-hotels-eviction-home-office-b2327022.html?src=rss) living in the UK after fleeing the Taliban in August 2021 would have to leave their government-paid for hotels [*by the end of August*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/afghans-hotels-home-office-eviction-notices-b2348959.html) because it could no longer help with housing.

The vast majority will not be offered an alternative place to live and will be expected to support themselves. One notice sent to those in a hotel housing around 250 Afghan families in West Sussex in May read: “If possession is not delivered up by the Notice Expiry Date, you will be a trespasser, and the Secretary of State for the Home Department shall be at liberty to evict you from the Property.”

As the August deadline looms, the Local Government Association (LGA), which represents councils in England, has warned that the timeframe for those needing to find alternative housing is too short.

Combined with nationwide housing shortages, it said councils were struggling to secure accommodation ahead of the August deadline.

In a speech to its annual conference in Bournemouth on Tuesday, LGA chairman Shaun Davies will say: “Councils have a proud history of stepping up and supporting asylum seekers and refugees to settle in the UK and rebuild their lives. But combined pressures from government asylum and resettlement schemes are growing on councils.”

“We are at crisis point. We want to work with the government to get this right. Not just in a way that best supports the people arriving in the UK but also tackles the unsustainable pressures on our local services and on our communities.”

The LGA will also raise the funding of councils for their support for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have fled the war and the change to the roles and responsibilities for councils proposed in the Illegal Migration Bill that will see anyone who arrives in the UK illegally deported. It will also highlight the impact on local services of the rapid rise in numbers of new arrivals of those crossing the channel.

In May, it was announced that councils would receive £35 million in government funding to support asylum seekers living in government-funded hotels and tackle potential homelessness. A second fund, equating to £250 million, was similarly announced to help councils secure homes for Afghan asylum seekers.

Alongside this funding announcement, the Home Office iterated that hotels “were never designed to be suitable long-term accommodation” for refugees.

“Hotels are not, and were never designed to be, suitable long-term accommodation for Afghans resettled in the UK. That is why we have announced a plan, backed by £285m of new funding, to speed up the resettlement of Afghans into long-term homes,” a Home Office spokesperson said.

“Where available, the government will continue to make offers of suitable housing, which we strongly encourage Afghan families to accept. Where an offer cannot be made or is rejected, increased government support is available to help Afghans find their own homes and begin rebuilding their lives here.”

Meanwhile, last week, peers in the House of Lords [*attacked the Illegal Migration Bill’s plans to deport trafficking victims to Rwanda*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/small-boats-illegal-migration-bill-lords-b2365903.html) and other countries.

Concern was also expressed over its compliance with international law following home secretary Suella Braverman’s declaration to parliament that while the bill may not be compatible with the Human Rights Act, it did comply with international law.

**Load-Date:** July 4, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Make Ukraine homes scheme permanent, says refugee minister*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GM-CDJ1-DY4H-K4V8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 19, 2022 Thursday 4:05 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 403 words

**Byline:** Christopher McKeon

**Highlight:** Frustrations continue to surround the Homes for Ukraine scheme, but the minister in charge hopes the plan could be used in other crises.

**Body**

The [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme could become a model for dealing with future refugee crises, the minister in charge has said, but frustrations remain on the Ukrainian side.

Lord Harrington, who was drafted in to run the refugee scheme in March 2022, told an audience in [*Westminster*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/westminster) on Thursday: "My vision is for this system to be a permanent part of [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) , so that when refugee crises happen - and unfortunately they do all the time - we have a machinery.

He added: "We've got lots of goodwill, we've got this machinery of Government in place - it's not perfect but it's improving day by day - and I hope it will become a permanent part of how this country deals with refugees."

Some 53,800 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have already arrived in the UK under visa schemes, including Homes for Ukraine, which amounts to just over half the number of visas granted.

The Homes for Ukraine scheme has been criticised for the length of time it has taken for the refugees to reach the UK and the fact that some Ukrainians have reportedly been made homeless after falling out with their hosts.

At Thursday's event, hosted by centre-right think tank Onward, Ukrainian ambassador Vadym Prystaiko also expressed frustration with the visa process and called for the introduction of visa-free travel for Ukrainians.

Speaking to the PA news agency after the event, Mr Prystaiko said some Ukrainians had "lost patience" with waiting for a visa and could not understand why the process took so long when EU nations required no visas, seeing the policy as "a bit artificial".

He said: "You don't even see the status of what is happening to you in the months. You're losing patience because you're being bombarded and the sirens are sounding."

Mr Prystaiko added that even his own family had had to wait more than a month for a UK visa after fleeing to Slovakia, but were still in a much more "fortunate" position than some others.

He also called for a "hybrid approach" that would allow some Ukrainians to be accommodated in hotels if they were made homeless by their British hosts, describing the problem as "a big, big deal".

Lord Harrington said the [*Prime Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prime-minister) had insisted on a visa scheme for reasons of security in order to prevent paedophiles smuggling children into the country.

But he added that the process had been streamlined and said the Government was working on a solution to rehouse the "very few cases" who had been made homeless.

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Leo Varadkar: Youngest ever taoiseach who played key role in Brexit negotiations*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BKP-T431-JBNF-W2Y6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 20, 2024 Wednesday 2:57 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 801 words

**Byline:** Cate McCurry

**Highlight:** Mr Varadkar became the first person from an ethnic minority to become taoiseach and he is also the country’s first gay leader.

**Body**

[*Leo Varadkar*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/leo-varadkar) became Ireland’s youngest ever Irish premier when he took up the reins of the government at the age of 38 in 2017.

His rise to the top made history as he became the first person from an ethnic minority to become taoiseach and he is also the country’s first gay leader.

Born in Castleknock in 1979, Mr Varadkar is the son of an Irish nurse and an Indian doctor.

He joined the centre right youth wing of the [*Fine Gael*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/fine-gael) party while studying medicine at Trinity College Dublin.

At the age of seven, he announced he wanted to become the minister for health when he grew up.

“My mum wanted me to be a doctor like my dad, and at seven, I really wanted to be a politician, and I managed in my mind to combine the two,” he once said in an interview.

After succeeding [*Enda Kenny*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/enda-kenny) to the role of Fine Gael leader, Mr Varadkar held the post of taoiseach from 2017 until 2020, and then returned to the role in 2022 following an historic agreement with Fine Gael coalition partners Fianna Fail and the Green Party.

Now aged 45, he has made the shock decision to step down as Taoiseach.

On Wednesday, Mr Varadkar made his way to the front doors of Government Buildings, joined by his ministerial party colleagues.

At 12.14pm he delivered his resignation statement, to the surprise of many in Government circles and across the political establishment.

Emotional and holding back tears, Mr Varadkar struggled as he said he was no longer the best person for the job.

His speech was met with rapturous applause from ministers and party staff gathered on the steps at the Merrion Street office.

It was during a radio interview in January 2015 that Mr Varadkar came out as gay and said he would be campaigning in support of the same-sex marriage referendum later that year, some 22 years after homosexuality was decriminalised in the Republic.

He has been in a long-term relationship with doctor Matthew Barrett.

While his election as taoiseach was feted as Ireland’s transition from a conservative Catholic country to an outward-looking socially liberal one, Mr Varadkar’s own political views are conservative.

While social protection minister Mr Varadkar launched a campaign on welfare cheats, he advocates free markets and only made known his pro-choice views on abortion in the run-up to the historic referendum in 2018.

During Mr Varadkar’s time as taoiseach, Ireland passed the landmark referendum to liberalise its strict abortion laws.

He also played a key role in the [*Brexit*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/brexit) negotiations, with a famous meeting with then-prime minister [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) at a manor house on the Wirral in England seen as a significant moment in paving a way for the deal on the UK’s exit from the EU.

The agreement staved off the prospect of a hard trade border being introduced on the island of Ireland, but it did prompt years of further political turmoil, particularly within unionism in Northern Ireland, over the creation of a so-called Irish Sea border on the movement of goods between the region and Great Britain.

Mr Varadkar was taoiseach at the onset of the Covid pandemic in 2020 and announced a lockdown in arguably his most famous address while on an annual St Patrick’s Day trip to Washington DC.

His detractors will point to Ireland’s ongoing housing shortages and chronic problems within the health service as his government’s major failings.

The political establishment in Ireland has also been under increasing pressure on migration issues over recent times, with an influx of tens of thousands of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and asylum seekers from elsewhere in the world heaping further strain on state services and accommodation stock.

His party suffered a major blow when Fine Gael lost seats in the 2020 general election, which ultimately led to the historic coalition with its biggest political rival, Fianna Fail, and the Green Party.

The Government suffered another major defeat after it lost the recent twin referenda on family and care.

The result on the care issue was the greatest loss of a referendum in the history of the state.

In his resignation speech, Mr Varadkar cited the development of the National Broadband Plan, increasing public infrastructure spending in housing, healthcare facilities, schools and climate action and the welcoming of Ukrainians as some of his achievements.

He also pointed out that he will leave office as the institutions under the Good Friday Agreement are working again and the country’s trading relationship with the UK in the post-Brexit era is stable.

The findings of the most recent poll revealed that Mr Varadkar’s approval rating is sitting at 41%, ahead of Sinn Fein leader Mary Lou McDonald with a rating of 39%.

But Fine Gael now faces a difficult few months as it battles to find a replacement leader who will bear the tough responsibility of steering the party through a general election.

**Load-Date:** March 20, 2024

**End of Document**



[*More than 50,000 refugees arrive in UK after fleeing war in Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GK-JN01-JBNF-W345-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 19, 2022 Thursday 10:52 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 404 words

**Byline:** Jemma Crew

**Highlight:** Some 107,400 visas have been granted under the family scheme and Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme, Government figures show.

**Body**

More than 50,000 refugees have arrived in the UK under the [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) visa schemes, [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) figures show.

Some 53,800 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** had arrived under the family scheme and [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine sponsorship scheme as of Monday, the data shows.

Some 107,400 visas have been granted under both schemes, meaning just over half of those with visas granted have arrived.

It is the first time the number of arrivals has been greater than the number who have been granted visas but who have not travelled to the UK.

Almost 54,000 Ukrainians have now arrived safely in the UK through our Ukraine schemes; we are doing all we can to support new arrivals into work and education so they can create a life here and I look forward to welcoming more families to the UK

Minister for refugees Lord Harrington

Of those who have arrived, 20,800 have come to the UK under the family scheme, and 33,000 people under the sponsorship scheme.

Overall, there have been around 128,100 applications for visas.

These include 43,700 applications under the family scheme, of which 38,700 visas have been granted, and 84,400 applications under the sponsorship scheme, of which 68,700 visas have been granted.

The Homes for Ukraine scheme in particular has faced widespread criticism over the length of time it has taken for refugees to receive visas and come to the UK.

The latest figures show that the number of people who have received visas under the scheme and are reaching the UK is growing, but more than half have still not reached the UK.

Charities have continued to call for visa rights to be waived for those fleeing Ukraine, with some criticising the schemes as "not fit for purpose".

Government officials believe some people applied for visas so they have the option of coming to the UK but are staying near Ukraine so they can return home sooner, or have since changed their minds.

Minister for refugees Lord Harrington said: "Almost 54,000 Ukrainians have now arrived safely in the UK through our Ukraine schemes; we are doing all we can to support new arrivals into work and education so they can create a life here and I look forward to welcoming more families to the UK.

"Together, our uncapped Ukraine Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine routes are amongst the fastest and biggest visa schemes in UK history, with over 107,000 visas issued in just over two months, showing the work we've done to speed up the process is working and improving daily."

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine refugees homeless in UK 'after falling out with hosts'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GC-7DY1-JBNF-W01R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 18, 2022 Wednesday 9:13 AM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 460 words

**Byline:** Zoe Tidman

**Highlight:** Ukrainians are reportedly facing conflicts with sponsors caused by costs and lifestyle differences

**Body**

***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) are being left homeless as relationships with host families in the UK break down, community groups have warned.

The issues have been reported with the Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme, which allows Britons to sponsor and host those fleeing the [*warzone in eastern Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-war-latest-news-putin-zelensky-b2081507.html).

Disagreements between refugees and host families -including over costs and different lifestyles -have resulted in Ukrainians being turfed out, according to[*The Guardian*](https://amp.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/may/17/homes-for-ukraine-refugees-being-left-homeless-uk).

Others reportedly include conflicts caused by communication problems, a lack of proper house rules and personality clashes.

"Our community is seeing these cases frequently and our perception is that they're increasing," Iryna Terlecky from the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain told The Guardian.

One case reported by the newspaper included a host that was strictly vegetarian and did not want meat in the house, which caused tension resulting in the host wanting the refugee family to leave as soon as possible.

Councils have [*previously warned*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugees-homeless-councils-family-visa-home-office-uk-b2046311.html) relationship breakdowns with hosts were leaving Ukrainians in the UK without a place to stay.

The Local Government Association found at least three dozen Ukrainian households [*had registered as homeless in the UK within the first two weeks*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugees-homeless-homes-councils-uk-b2047207.html) of the Homes for Ukraine scheme opening.

Reports of Ukrainians being kicked out of homes have sparked calls for a rematching system for those who have arrived on the Homes for Ukraine scheme but need to find a new host family.

A Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities spokesperson said: "We do not recognise these claims -more than 46,100 people have arrived through both Ukraine schemes and the vast majority of these are settling in well."

They added: "There are stringent safeguarding measures in place for the Homes for Ukraine scheme and according to council data reports, very few of these sponsorships are breaking down.

"Where they do, councils are able to provide support or find a more suitable sponsor."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015.

Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered.

To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ministers must take the ‘risk of homelessness to Ukrainian families seriously’*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67NM-P0T1-JBNF-W0R9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 1, 2023 Wednesday 6:51 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 514 words

**Byline:** Elizabeth Arnold

**Highlight:** Ukrainians are struggling to access the private rented sector which can penalise those on Universal Credit or with no credit history, MPs heard.

**Body**

Ministers need to take the “risk of homelessness to Ukrainian families seriously and act quickly,” a [*Labour*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/labour) MP has warned.

Olivia Blake raised concerns over the “shameful prospect of homelessness for some Ukrainian families and the restrictions they face as they transition into private sector rented housing”.

The MP for [*Sheffield*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sheffield) , Hallam said that according to the [*British Red Cross*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british-red-cross) “more than 160,000” Ukrainians had fled their country since the outbreak of the war.

As the cost-of-living crisis continues to bite, many sponsors simply cannot afford to continue hosting

Olivia Blake

Speaking during her Westminster Hall debate on the anniversary of the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine scheme, she said: “Government figures reveal well over 4,000 Ukrainian households in England have been homeless or are at risk of homelessness in the last year.”

She added: “We urgently do need to support people either to continue to stay with their hosts or to move into their own longer-term accommodation… The reasons behind the homelessness facing many ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** (are) multi-faceted.

“They range from the impact of the rising cost of living for hosts, the changing circumstances of hosts and guests, the inappropriateness of accommodation, and the difficulties of being re-matched with other hosts if their relationship breaks down… As the cost-of-living crisis continues to bite, many sponsors simply cannot afford to continue hosting.”

Ministers she said “should also consider increasing the monthly payment immediately for all hosts no matter what scheme they’re on” adding it was “time to transform hope into certainty”.

Lib Dem Layla Moran (Oxford West and Abingdon) said supporting a female refugee “in her time of need has been an absolute honour and privilege”.

She said: “Ukrainians are struggling to access the private rented sector as referencing procedures can penalise people on [*Universal Credit*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/universal-credit) or those with no credit history. I do think there is place for Government to step in pretty strongly on this point.”

Responding housing minister Felicity Buchan said since launching in March 2022, 115,800 people had been welcomed to the UK through Homes for Ukraine and when combined with the Ukraine Family Scheme “we’ve now helped to find over 163,500 people a safe and secure home”.

She added: “In recognition of the generous support of sponsors, all Homes for Ukraine sponsors will receive an increased thank you payment of £500 a month once guests have been in the country for over a year and we have extended the duration that sponsors can get thank you payments from one year to two years.”

On homelessness assistance, she said: “For the Homes for Ukraine scheme it is 2,495, for Ukrainians as a whole including the Family scheme it is 4,295…

She added: “We don’t want any Ukrainian to be in a situation where they are homeless, but if you look at the prevention and relief duties – this is a good thing, that local authorities are doing their jobs and doing them incredibly well, it is a small percentage. On temporary accommodation, the number is 735 households in temporary accommodation.”

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Biden to meet eastern flank NATO leaders amid Russia worries*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67M2-RWW1-DY4H-K0Y4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 22, 2023 Wednesday 5:00 AM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 535 words

**Byline:** Aamer Madhani

**Highlight:** President Joe Biden is wrapping up his whirlwind, four-day visit to Poland and Ukraine

**Body**

President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) is wrapping up his whirlwind, four-day visit to [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) and [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) by reassuring eastern flank NATO allies that his administration is highly attuned to the looming threats and other impacts spurred by the grinding Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Before departing Warsaw on Wednesday, Biden will hold talks with leaders from the Bucharest Nine, a collection of nations on the most eastern parts of the NATO alliance that came together in response to Russian President Vladimir Putin's 2014 annexation of Crimea from Ukraine.

As the war in Ukraine drags on, the Bucharest Nine countries’ anxieties have remained heightened. Many worry Putin could move to take military action against them next if he’s successful in Ukraine. The alliance includes Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

“When Russia invaded, it wasn’t just Ukraine being tested. The whole world faced a test for the ages,” Biden said in an address from the foot of Warsaw's Royal Castle on Tuesday to mark the somber milestone of the year-old Russian invasion. “Europe was being tested. America was being tested. NATO was being tested. All democracies were being tested.”

Biden met Tuesday in Warsaw with Moldovan President [*Maia Sandu*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/maia-sandu) , who last week claimed Moscow was behind a plot to overthrow her country’s government using external saboteurs.

Sandwiched between Ukraine and Romania and one of Europe’s poorest countries, the Eastern European nation has had historic ties to Russia but wants to join the 27-nation European Union. Biden in his remarks endorsed Moldova's bid to join the EU

“I’m proud to stand with you and the freedom-loving people of Moldova,” Biden said of Sandu and her country in his Tuesday address.

Since Russia invaded Ukraine nearly a year ago, Moldova, a former Soviet republic of about 2.6 million people, has sought to forge closer ties with its Western partners. Last June, it was granted EU candidate status, the same day as Ukraine.

Sandu spoke out last week about a Russian plot “to overthrow the constitutional order.” She spoke out after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said his country had intercepted plans by Russian secret services to destroy Moldova. Those claims were later confirmed by Moldovan intelligence officials.

Biden's speech on the Ukraine war came one day after he made a surprise visit to Kyiv, a grand gesture of solidarity with the Ukraine. The address was part affirmation of Europe's role in helping Ukraine repel Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine and part sharply worded warning to Putin that the U.S. won't abide Moscow defeating Ukraine.

The White House has praised several eastern flank countries, including Lithuania, Poland and Romania, over the last year for stepping up efforts to back Ukraine with weapons and economic aid and taking in refugees.

Biden has given particular attention to Poland's efforts. The country is hosting about 1.5 million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and has committed $3.8 billion in military and economic assistance to Kyiv.

"The truth of the matter is: The United States needs Poland and NATO as much as NATO needs the United States," Biden said during talks with Duda on Wednesday.

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Travelodge to hire 700 staff amid strong recovery*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65DD-27P1-JBNF-W200-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 9, 2022 Monday 12:01 AM GMT

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**Section:** BUSINESS; Version:2

**Length:** 405 words

**Byline:** Alan Jones

**Highlight:** The hotel chain expects to benefit from the growing number of 'staycation' breaks.

**Body**

[*Travelodge*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/travelodge) has revealed plans to hire 700 staff ahead of an expected busy summer season for "staycations" as it reported a strong rebound from the pandemic.

The hotel chain is looking to take on 640 staff across its UK sites, with 40 roles also open at its head office in [*Oxfordshire*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/oxfordshire) and 20 maintenance engineer positions.

It is seeking to fill the permanent positions immediately as it gears up for another strong summer for staycation demand, while it also rolls out a hotel revamp programme and is set to open three new sites in the UK.

The group confirmed it will welcome applications from all candidates, including ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, whom it said "need a fresh start and have a right to work in the UK".

Travelodge - which has 594 sites across the UK, [*Ireland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ireland) and [*Spain*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/spain) - announced the hiring plans as it reported a 1.8% increase in revenue in the last quarter of 2021 compared with 2019, to £185 million.

Revenue for the year was down by 23% compared with 2019, but Travelodge said trading has improved this year following the lifting of work-from-home guidance.

The company said it expects strong demand from leisure travellers, adding that 60 of its hotels are being upgraded this year.

Chairman Martin Robinson said: "The business continued to outperform the market for the seventh year in a row and enjoyed a record-breaking summer, and, in line with our growth plans, we opened a further 17 new hotels.

"Trading so far in 2022 has been extremely encouraging, despite a slow start amidst the Omicron restrictions in January, and we are excited to launch our new budget-luxe hotel design, which offers a more premium look and feel whilst maintaining our great value price proposition.

This is our most radical brand transformation to date and has been created in response to Britain becoming a nation of budget travellers

Martin Robinson, Travelodge

"This is our most radical brand transformation to date and has been created in response to Britain becoming a nation of budget travellers, with more of us choosing to stay in budget hotels."

Travelodge is also opening three new hotels in London over the summer - in Docklands, [*Peckham*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/peckham) and Wimbledon.

Mr Robinson added: "The budget hotel segment, whilst not immune from the broader economic uncertainty, has proven resilient and continues to recover ahead of the rest of the UK hotel market; and we believe that the opportunities to grow our business have never been more exciting."

**Load-Date:** May 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'Major Mick' sets sail in Tintanic II to raise funds for Ukraine charity*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65BB-G491-DY4H-K4DF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 29, 2022 Friday 1:02 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 358 words

**Byline:** Ben Mitchell

**Highlight:** Retired Army major launches his latest fundraising challenge to row his home-made tin boat, the Tintanic, on the seas and rivers of southern England.

**Body**

A retired Army major has launched his latest fundraising challenge to row his home-made tin boat, the Tintanic, on the seas and rivers of southern [*England*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/england).

"Major Mick" Michael Stanley has previously completed 100 miles rowing at 2mph twice a week along the Chichester Canal in December 2020 and a further 100 miles at 20 locations across the country.

Now the 81-year-old, who sold his original boat for £480 for charity, is using his second version, Tintanic II, for use in his latest fundraising bid.

Mr Stanley, who has previously raised tens of thousands of pounds for charity, is now hoping to collect at least £5,000 for Children on the Edge, a charity based in [*Moldova*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/moldova) and [*Romania*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/romania) supporting refugees from the war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Dressed in a [*Union Jack*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/union-jack) suit, Mr Stanley set off from Chichester Yacht Club at Birdham, West Sussex, for the first leg of his challenge on board the Tintanic II which was decked out in Ukrainian flags.

Further trips will include the Beaulieu river in the New Forest, the River Medina on the Isle of Wight and the Serpentine in Hyde Park, London.

Mr Stanley, who served in the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards for 35 years, told the PA news agency: "Having done the canals, I want to do something a bit more salty, a bit more edgy, so this year I am taking to the sea.

"I have a target of £5,000 because all of my friends have already given and perhaps people are a bit harder up than they were before.

"But anyway we are all having a lot of fun and it's fun for me and I really enjoy talking to people when I'm out and about."

Describing his motivation to support ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, he said: "We have seen such terrible pictures on the television and people are in absolute dire straits and anything I can do to help in a very small way will go some way to helping."

Mr Stanley said he had an open target of about 50 miles for the challenge, depending on the weather.

He said that the Tintanic was up to the job and added: "It's very seaworthy, I have made a few alterations, the cross beam is now made of oak rather than plywood and it's pretty robust."

To donate, visit: [*http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/tintanicforukraine*](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/tintanicforukraine)

**Load-Date:** April 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[*What the papers say – August 23*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6671-XDM1-DY4H-K3F9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 23, 2022 Tuesday 5:39 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 510 words

**Byline:** PA Reporter

**Highlight:** A worsening cost-of-living forecast features on Tuesday’s front pages.

**Body**

The nation’s papers are lead by dire inflation predictions and sewage concerns.

The Financial Times, the Daily Express, The Independent and The Times lead on the “spiralling” inflation, with [*Citigroup*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/citigroup) warning of an 18% January peak.

Just published: front page of the Financial Times UK edition Tuesday August 23 [*https://t.co/MFJgWEs8Fg*](https://t.co/MFJgWEs8Fg) [*pic.twitter.com/NPHp9sDVes*](https://t.co/NPHp9sDVes) — Financial Times (@FinancialTimes) [*August 22, 2022*](https://twitter.com/FinancialTimes/status/1561802920403804160?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Tomorrow's front page: Inflation 'to hit 18%'... How will millions cope? [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/btpcGLDtbW*](https://t.co/btpcGLDtbW) — Daily Express (@Daily\_Express) [*August 22, 2022*](https://twitter.com/Daily_Express/status/1561839736028905472?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Independent digital front page: 'Time to see the next generation shine’ -[*@ellsbells89*](https://twitter.com/ellsbells89?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/Du91GVbdYS*](https://t.co/Du91GVbdYS) — George Mann ️ (@sgfmann) [*August 22, 2022*](https://twitter.com/sgfmann/status/1561829170698665985?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Times: Winter woe for air passengers as BA cancels 10,000 flights [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/jB4MtRcZ0K*](https://t.co/jB4MtRcZ0K) — George Mann ️ (@sgfmann) [*August 22, 2022*](https://twitter.com/sgfmann/status/1561830225595580417?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The impact of sewage pollution has been worsened by cuts made by Liz Truss, according to The Guardian, while the Tory leadership contender’s “u-turn” on an emergency budget is front page of the i.Guardian front page, Tuesday 23 August 2022: Truss cut millions from services that kept sewage off UK beaches [*pic.twitter.com/hLzM8MdFvY*](https://t.co/hLzM8MdFvY) — The Guardian (@guardian) [*August 22, 2022*](https://twitter.com/guardian/status/1561821474402582531?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) i: Truss to risk ‘flying blind’ after Budget pledge U-turn [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/sZMdWgz2ly*](https://t.co/sZMdWgz2ly) — George Mann ️ (@sgfmann) [*August 22, 2022*](https://twitter.com/sgfmann/status/1561821750857449473?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The Daily Telegraph reports on a plea from refugee minister Lord Harrington for a doubling of payments for families hosting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.The front page of tomorrow's Daily Telegraph:'Refugee host cash should be doubled'[*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Sign up for the Front Page newsletter[*https://t.co/x8AV4Oomry*](https://t.co/x8AV4Oomry) [*pic.twitter.com/lTOYMUxWM2*](https://t.co/lTOYMUxWM2) — The Telegraph (@Telegraph) [*August 22, 2022*](https://twitter.com/Telegraph/status/1561846405022597120?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The Daily Mail has an op-ed from [*Justice*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/justice) Secretary [*Dominic Raab*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dominic-raab) in which he accuses striking barristers of “holding justice to ransom”.Mail: Raab: ‘Justice is being held to ransom’ [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/OnN1cM9b5C*](https://t.co/OnN1cM9b5C) — George Mann ️ (@sgfmann) [*August 22, 2022*](https://twitter.com/sgfmann/status/1561831379461148676?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) A mother who claims her son was assaulted by Cristiano Ronaldo says the player does not feel sorry, says the Daily Mirror.Tuesday's front page: "Ronaldo doesn't feel sorry at all..... he left me crying and shaking."[*https://t.co/PdVXPXjjmq*](https://t.co/PdVXPXjjmq) [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/5siT76PKLR*](https://t.co/5siT76PKLR) — The Mirror (@DailyMirror) [*August 22, 2022*](https://twitter.com/DailyMirror/status/1561830305052479490?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) And Metro says “snowflakes” are blocking A&E departments, while the Daily Star reports a new study proves naps at work are beneficial.Tomorrow's Paper Today SNOWFLAKES BLOCKING A&E Patient walks into hospital and demands treatment for dandruff Burnt out staff face violence trivial cases adding to the pressure[*#tomorrowspapertoday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/tomorrowspapertoday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/QRA13VnngK*](https://t.co/QRA13VnngK) — Metro (@MetroUK) [*August 22, 2022*](https://twitter.com/MetroUK/status/1561810647440048129?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Tuesday's front page: 'Nap to the Future'[*https://t.co/ZRO5X8jyzQ*](https://t.co/ZRO5X8jyzQ) [*#tomorrowsfrontpage*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/tomorrowsfrontpage?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/gq50OLjxB2*](https://t.co/gq50OLjxB2) — Daily Star (@dailystar) [*August 22, 2022*](https://twitter.com/dailystar/status/1561826697766395905?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

**Load-Date:** August 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Cut of £800m in overseas aid 'snuck out' by ministers*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66XN-1BC1-JCS0-D0HS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

November 23, 2022 Wednesday

Second Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 12

**Length:** 491 words

**Byline:** ROB MERRICK

**Body**

A further £800m is being slashed from the UK's overseas aid spending, days after Jeremy Hunt pledged that the country would remain a world leader "in tackling global poverty". The 30 per cent cut in direct aid to needy countries - for the next two years - follows those projects being hit by a steep budget cut last year, a senior MP has warned.

Sarah Champion, chair of the Commons international development committee, also accused the foreign secretary James Cleverly of burying the bad news as he announced that a "pause" on non-essential spending was being lifted. The Labour MP said it was an attempt to disguise the £800m cut from spending in 2021-22, which would "balance the books on the backs of its bilateral partners, the projects which have already seen the harshest cuts".

"The devastation the world's poorest people face without assistance will be profound," Ms Champion added, referring to warnings of famine in Somalia and neighbouring countries.

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office refused to answer any questions from The Independent about the fresh cuts. Mr Cleverly's statement said only: "We are now able to lift the pause on ODA [official development assistance] spending and activity and will act swiftly to manage our bilateral programmes this financial year."

The Independent revealed in August that billions of pounds' worth of additional cuts were looming unless ministers abandoned rules diverting a quarter of funds to cover the cost of hosting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in the UK. The alarm was raised over a controversial decision to include spending on the 118,000 Ukrainians welcomed to Britain within a budget reduced to only 0.5 per cent of GDP and then capped.

Under pressure, Mr Hunt announced an extra £1bn in this financial year and £1.5bn in 2023-24 to help meet those costs - but not enough to avoid the further cuts. He told MPs in his autumn statement that the UK remained "the third-highest donor in the G7 last year" and would "continue to play a leadership role in tackling global poverty".

The government has broken a pledge to restore aid funding to 0.7 per cent of national income in 2024, as the country heads into recession. But it is expected to spend around 0.55 per cent - not the 0.5 per cent intended - over the next two years, as the "pause" on non-essential spending failed to find all the sought-after cuts.

Ms Champion added: "The foreign secretary commits to being more transparent about the government's spend, but, without warning, his department has snuck out a statement on the UK's spending on foreign aid, with no meaningful figures attached.

"Unlike the previous Department for International Development, we see no substantial detail, no impact assessment or predictability of funding to give the poorest in the world hope that we will honour our development pledges. What we can glean from the statement is the ODA allocation is down by £0.8bn compared to the last financial year."

**Load-Date:** November 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Cut of £800m in overseas aid 'snuck out' by ministers*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66XN-1BC1-JCS0-D0H4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

November 23, 2022 Wednesday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 11

**Length:** 491 words

**Byline:** ROB MERRICK DEPUTY POLITICAL EDITOR

**Body**

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**Load-Date:** November 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Watch live as Jill Biden meets Ukrainian refugees and humanitarian workers*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65DF-V6T1-DY4H-K4G4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 9, 2022 Monday 11:02 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 81 words

**Byline:** Holly Patrick

**Body**

Watch live as Dr [*Jill Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jill-biden) meets Slovakian ministers on her tour of eastern Europe.

The US [*First Lady*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/first-lady) made an unannounced visit to western Ukraine on Sunday during her tour, where she met with Ukraine's first lady Olena Zelenska in Uzhhorod.

"I thought it was important to show the [*Ukrainian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) people that this war has to stop and this war has been brutal and that the people of the United States stand with the people of Ukraine," Dr Biden said.

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters?itm_channel=native&itm_campaign=newsletters&itm_content=video-articles) to sign up to our newsletters.

**Load-Date:** May 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*110 million people forcibly displaced as Sudan, Ukraine wars add to world refugee crisis, UN says*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68FY-0CC1-JBNF-W3BR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 14, 2023 Wednesday 3:21 AM GMT

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**Length:** 589 words

**Byline:** Renata Brito

**Highlight:** The U.N. says 110 million people in the world today have had to flee their homes because of conflict, persecution, or human rights violations

**Body**

Some 110 million people have had to flee their homes because of conflict, persecution, or human rights violations, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees says. The war in [*Sudan*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sudan) , which has displaced nearly 2 million people since April, is but the latest in a long list of crises that has led to the record-breaking figure.

“It’s quite an indictment on the state of our world,” Filippo Grandi, who leads the U.N. refugee agency, told reporters in Geneva ahead of the publication Wednesday of [*UNHCR*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/unhcr) 's Global Trends Report for 2022.

Last year alone, an additional 19 million people were forcibly displaced including more than 11 million who fled Russia's full-scale invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) in what became the fastest and largest displacement of people since World War II.

“We are constantly confronted with emergencies,” Grandi said. Last year the agency recorded 35 emergencies, three to four times more than in previous years. “Very few make your headlines,” Grandi added, arguing that the war in Sudan fell off most front pages after Western citizens were evacuated.

Conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Myanmar were also responsible for displacing more than 1 million people within each country in 2022.

The majority of the displaced globally have sought refuge within their nation’s borders. One-third of them -35 million -have fled to other countries, making them refugees, according to the UNHCR report. Most refugees are hosted by low to middle-income countries in Asia and Africa, not rich countries in Europe or North America, Grandi said.

Turkey currently hosts the most refugees with 3.8 million people, mostly [*Syrians*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/syrians) who fled the civil war, followed by Iran with 3.4 million refugees, mostly Afghans. But there are also 5.7 million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** scattered across countries in Europe and beyond. The number of stateless people has also risen in 2022 to 4.4 million, according to UNHCR data, but this is believed to be an underestimate.

Regarding asylum claims, the U.S. was the country to receive the most new applications in 2022 with 730,400 claims. It's also the nation with the largest backlog in its asylum system, Grandi said.

“One of the things that needs to be done is reforming that asylum system so that it becomes more rapid, more efficient,” he said.

The United States, Spain and Canada recently announced plans to create asylum processing centers in Latin America with the goal of reducing the number of people who trek their way north to the Mexico-U.S. border.

As the number of asylum-seekers grows, so have the challenges facing them. “We see pushbacks. We see tougher and tougher immigration or refugee admission rules. We see in many countries the criminalization of immigrants and refugees, blaming them for everything that has happened,” Grandi said.

Last week European leaders renewed financial promises to North African nations in the hopes of stemming migration across the Mediterranean while the British government insists on a so-far failed plan to ship asylum-seekers to Rwanda, something UNHCR is opposed to. But there were also some wins, Grandi said, pointing to what he described as a positive sign in the European Union's negotiations for a new migration and asylum pact, despite criticism from human rights groups.

Grandi also celebrated the fact that the number of refugees resettled in 2022 doubled to 114,000 from the previous year. But he admitted this was "still a drop in the ocean."

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Follow AP’s global migration coverage at [*https://apnews.com/hub/migration*](https://apnews.com/hub/migration)

**Load-Date:** July 20, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Varadkar vows to fight racism after protests against refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67H5-0K71-JBNF-W2D4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 8, 2023 Wednesday 5:26 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 482 words

**Byline:** Rebecca Black

**Highlight:** The Taoiseach urged members of the Irish parliament not to inadvertently make excuses for racists by blaming the housing crisis for causing tensions.

**Body**

Ireland’s premier has vowed to tackle racism after a number of protests against refugees.

Protests have been held in recent weeks in Waterford, Cork and areas of [*Dublin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dublin) where refugees or asylum seekers have been accommodated.

During leader’s questions in the [*Irish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/irish) parliament on Wednesday, People Before Profit–[*Solidarity*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/solidarity) TD Mick Barry accused of the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) “handing racists their number one gift” in terms of the housing crisis in the Ireland.

He said the Government’s efforts to house ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, compared with the “lack of effort” to house victims of the housing crisis, mean people feel aggrieved, adding: “The door opens up for the racist messaging of the far right facilitated by your Government.”

Referring to himself as a man of colour, Mr Varadkar urged TDs not to inadvertently make excuses for racists.

He described protests outside hospitals where foreign nationals are members of staff as a “new low if health care workers who we’re so grateful for the fact that they’ve come here, are now facing protests”.

The [*Taoiseach*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/taoiseach) said the Government will publish a national action plan against racism in March, described as a “whole-of-Government effort”, including funding for integration and countering racist activities.

“Racists and the far right will blame whatever problem the country is facing on migrants. That’s the way it works. That’s the way they think,” he told TDs.

“So if we have a housing crisis, it’ll be ‘the foreigners are taking our homes’. If we have an unemployment crisis, it’ll be ‘the foreigners are taking our jobs’. If we’ve got high levels of crime, they’ll blame the foreigners for the high levels of crime.

“If there’s violence against women – one of the oldest tropes in the book – they will blame that on migrants and people who’ve come here from overseas, particularly those who are brown or black.

Don't make any excuses for them. No matter what problem a country faces the far right and racists will blame that on migrants

Leo Varadkar

“We shouldn’t play into those arguments.

“Whatever country, whatever problem any country faces, they’re going to blame it on the brown man or the brown woman.

“It’s housing now, it could just as easily be employment, it could just as easily be crime.”

Mr Varadkar said that as a person of colour and someone who is biracial, he did not want to see the issue of race or migration at centre-stage in Irish politics.

He urged Mr Barry to be careful “not to play their game”.

“I know you’re well intentioned and I know you’re fervently anti-racist and internationalist, so I absolutely accept that, but I just asked you not to inadvertently play their game,” he said.

“Don’t make any excuses for them. No matter what problem a country faces the far right and racists will blame that on migrants.

“They will always pick on whatever issue is hurting a country at a particular point in time and try to blame that on the other.”

**Load-Date:** February 8, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Lifting of cap on bankers’ bonuses expected in Chancellor’s autumn budget*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66W4-TGH1-DY4H-K282-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

November 16, 2022 Wednesday 1:49 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 475 words

**Byline:** Dominic McGrath

**Highlight:** Earlier, the Prime Minister urged bosses to keep down their pay to not exacerbate inflation.

**Body**

[*Jeremy Hunt*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jeremy-hunt) is expected to lift the cap on bankers’ bonuses when he delivers his autumn budget on Thursday.

The Financial Times first reported the [*Chancellor*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/chancellor) will make the lifting of the cap one of the few measures to survive from Kwasi Kwarteng’s disastrous mini-budget, as he bids to use the autumn statement to restore the UK’s economic credibility.

Earlier, the [*Prime Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prime-minister) urged bosses to keep down their pay in order not to exacerbate inflation.

“Of course I would say to all executives to embrace pay restraint at a time like this and make sure they are also looking after all their workers,” Mr Sunak told ITV News.

Speculation continues about what exact measures will form part of the budget on Thursday, which has come with warnings from both the PM and the Chancellor of “difficult decisions” to be taken as Mr Hunt tries find up to £60 billion from a combination of hikes and spending cuts.

In part, the budget is widely expected to raise finances through stealth taxes by freezing the rates in which workers begin paying higher rates of tax with inflation and pay increases dragging more people into higher bands.

But tough spending cuts are likely too, with Mr Hunt reportedly eyeing up plans to cut funding for the Government’s homes for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** scheme.

Over the last decade, Tory economic failures and wasted opportunities have led to Britain falling behind on the global stage, and left us with low growth, low productivity and widening inequality

Labour's Rachel Reeves

The Telegraph on Wednesday reported that the Chancellor is considering plans to reduce the amount of funding received by councils for some of the services for refugees hosted by UK families, in a move apparently being resisted by Levelling Up Secretary Michael Gove.

The paper also reported that Mr Hunt will use the budget to announce measures to support the long-term sick back into jobs, an issue that has becoming a growing preoccupation for the Government.

Office for National Statistics figures on Tuesday showed that the number of people off work due to long-term sickness jumped to a record high of 2.5 million.

With only a day until the budget, [*Labour*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/labour) has stepped up its attack on the Government over the gloomy economic outlook as the party said that under the Tories GDP is expected to “flatline” at the same level by the end of this current Parliament than it was at the beginning.

Shadow chancellor [*Rachel Reeves*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rachel-reeves) said: “Over the last decade, Tory economic failures and wasted opportunities have led to Britain falling behind on the global stage, and left us with low growth, low productivity and widening inequality.

“If I was Britain’s Chancellor giving the autumn statement this, I’d be focused on making fairer choices for working people who are bearing the brunt of this crisis – and I’d be putting forward a real plan to grow our economy.”

**Load-Date:** November 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*How do we deal with the increasing politicisation of migration?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65K0-WC51-DY4H-K40T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 30, 2022 Monday 9:30 PM GMT

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**Section:** LONG READS,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:3

**Length:** 1812 words

**Byline:** May Bulman

**Highlight:** Some narratives have become dominant over others, writes May Bulman. What impact does this have on both the public and policymakers' decisions and attitudes?

**Body**

In Britain, we have become accustomed to seeing images of Black and brown people packed into dinghies crossing the English Channel. Rarely does a week go by without versions of this image from boats arriving on the Kent coast. The focus is on a collective of [*migrants*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/migrants) crossing the border without permission - rarely on the passengers as people with complex stories.

This centring of border crossings in reporting on migration is not unique to the British media. In EU countries we see similar trends. During what became known as the "migrant crisis" in 2015 the situation was framed by some as an unwelcome influx of anonymous foreigners pouring across the seas from Africa and the Middle East, or "swarming" in overland from Turkey. The very term "crisis" reflects a sense of panic. This has continued to the present day, with much of the media in Europe portraying the continuing arrival of [*asylum seekers*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/asylum-seekers-0) from these regions as an emergency, with the attention focused on the border.

But there is, of course, far more to the migration story than the act of crossing a border, and the narrative that is often pushed in some quarters is not necessarily the full picture. Why have these people left their homes? What has their journey been up until now? What happens to them next?

The war in Ukraine has brought this into sharp perspective. Unlike in a significant proportion of reporting of people arriving from African, Middle Eastern and Central Asian countries, the portrayal of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** has been centred on the human suffering, with a focus on individual stories. In a very short space of time, millions of people have crossed the border into Poland, Romania and Moldova and many have continued onto other European nations, and the narrative has been one of keen willingness to help these families forced to flee their homes.

In light of this disparity, a group of European academics have come together to investigate how migration narratives form in the European media and the consequences of this, particularly in a context of increasing politicisation and polarisation across the continent. The EU-funded research project, called Bridges, is exploring why some migration narratives become dominant over others, and what impact they have on both the public and policymakers' decisions and attitudes.

"The border is staged, but not all the time," said Blanca Garcés Mascareñas, scientific coordinator and senior researcher for the Bridges project during a workshop at the Barcelona Centre for International Affairs on 20 May 2022. "Borders often remain in the darkness, but all of a sudden the lights turn on and the spectacle begins, perpetuating a sense of 'us and them' ... This staging of the border depends on journalists. These lights cannot turn on without journalists."

Indeed, without this, there would be no border spectacle. Very few people would see migrants crossing borders and, given the relatively small numbers when compared to the resident population, the majority of the public would never know these individuals had arrived.

It is interesting to note that in the UK, images of asylum seekers arriving were less ubiquitous in years past. Migrants were still reaching Britain via unofficial routes, but usually by stowing away in lorries, trains or ferries - a far less visible mode of transport - meaning there wasn't much of a spectacle to see. The overall number of asylum seekers arriving in 2018 and 2019 was not very different to previous years, yet suddenly images of boat arrivals were dominating the news agenda.

By publicising the border spectacle, do journalists become part of it? Is there a way that they can avoid this?

Giacomo Zandonini, an Italian freelance journalist with a focus on migration and human trafficking, says it is impossible for migration reporters to avoid becoming part of the border spectacle, as the very act of writing about the fact that people are crossing borders contributes to it. But he argues that reporters can make an effort to "deconstruct" it.

We can describe people as citizens of specific countries: a farmer from Dafur in Sudan, a medical worker from Yemen. This helps to avoid falling into the 'us and them' narrative "We can put it into context and avoid contributing to any dehumanising narrative that can then be manipulated by those in power," he told the Bridges workshop in Barcelona. "Avoid using too many collective words, portraying people as 'migrants' or 'refugees' and using adjectives like 'poor' and 'desperate' people."Rather, we can describe people as citizens of specific countries: a farmer from Dafur in Sudan, a medical worker from Yemen. This helps to avoid falling into the 'us and them' narrative."Zandonini also suggested putting these border crossings in a global context to create connections between migrants' decisions to flee to other countries and what is happening in their own - a famine, a war, difficulties accessing resources, a political crisis - to contextualise the narrative.Highlighting the importance of reporting on the government-constructed border policies, he said: "This is the reason people are showing up in this way rather than obtaining a visa. Vast amounts of public money are being spent to build a wall that is putting people's lives in danger - and it is not stopping them from making the journey. "We need to show that the people we are meeting trying to cross borders are not the unique protagonists of the story. There's someone who sits in a comfortable office somewhere and is deciding on their life."This more human-focused, critical approach to reporting on migration is more important than ever, according to Hungarian freelance journalist and video-journalist Andrs Földes, who has been covering his country's increasingly hardline stance towards asylum seekers over recent years."In Hungary the government criminalises migration," Földes told the Bridges event. "From this point of view, our task as journalists is not to think about how not to dramatise this situation, but simply to show our readers that these are people and not criminals."Migration is sometimes used as a weapon of mass distraction, to distract from other more pressing issues. People are often lured into a fear of migration

Földes described a "two-faced mentality" towards refugees in Hungary, adding: "While we've had harsh anti-migrant propaganda - this government won four elections on this - now we are receiving Ukrainians. But the old anti-migrant laws are still in place.

"We receive a few thousand Ukrainians every day, and on the same day people caught on the southern borders of Hungary - Afghans, Yemenis and others - are pushed back to Serbia. We as journalists try to shed light on this really awkward situation. These are the same people."

Across Europe - including to a large extent the UK - we have seen increasing politicisation of migration in recent years. Those in power, or those vying for power, have used it as a political weapon, pledging to tackle the issue more effectively than their opponents as a tool for attracting voters. Panic around the arrival of migrants has increasingly become part of the political discourse - must it in turn be given more prominence in media reporting?

Saskia Smellie, a research fellow at the University of Edinburgh, who is focusing on British media coverage as part of the Bridges project, noted the "voice" politicians have on the coverage of migration in the UK.

"David Cameron's 'swarm of people' comment in an interview in July 2015 was on the front page of the Daily Mail the next morning," she said. "It was picked up by newspapers across the political spectrum. My analysis suggests that whilst it was critically engaged with, it was very prominent.

"This wasn't a migration event, it was a political story. Yet it received significant attention. Politicians seem to be relatively dominant characters in narratives around migration, rather than the immigrants themselves."

Ferruccio Pastore, director of FIERI, an Italian research institute on migration, and scientific co-coordinator of Bridges, echoed her concerns, saying that one of the "striking" findings from the project has been that migration narratives are "crafted by non-migrants, based on information provided by non-migrants, and for non-migrants."

"It's a conversation in which certain categories - primarily politicians - play a central role, using migration as a tool, or often as an emotional weapon," he explained. "It is like coverage football without ever talking to players or even coaches - only to the public or the owners of the clubs.

"Migration is sometimes used as a weapon of mass distraction, to distract from other more pressing issues. People are often lured into a fear of migration, when in fact there are other trends to be feared more."

This rings true in the UK today, with the home secretary, [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) , after announcing hardline policies proclaiming to tackle migration. From drafting the Navy in to tackle Channel crossings to shipping asylum seekers thousands of miles away for processing, her dramatic statements have received far more attention than the direct experiences of people seeking refuge.

And in making such statements, and having them amplified by sections of the media, politicians fuel the sense that there is a problem that urgently needs to be tackled, which can have the effect of whipping up anti-migrant sentiment - even if the issue is being overstated. Is it a journalist's job to prevent this from happening?

"We need to challenge the frame to change the narrative," says Cristina Mas, a journalist at the Spanish newspaper Diari Ara. "The frame is that Europe is threatened and is being invaded and we need to stop it to protect ourselves from this invasion, that there are millions wanting to come and we can't have all of them here, that we deserve our privileges because we were here before them.

"What can be done? We must confront and fact check the statements to hold accountable the authorities and focus on the results of the policies. Are they working to deter immigration? The answer is no."

But achieving sweeping change in the way migration is covered would be no easy feat. The act of covering news can mean snapshots of broader stories to make events digestible, but broader questions should always be kept in mind.

Pastore believes there is hope that the narrative can change, particularly in light of the ***Ukraine*** ***refugee crisis***, which he said shows that welcoming very large and totally unexpected migration flows is possible.

"It can be done. It's within the scope of human possibility. Especially for rich and advanced societies like ours," the researcher said. "We are capable of producing different narratives. Before, with say, Syria, there were no migrant voices, this time there are. It is now time to rebalance the agenda."

**Load-Date:** June 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Railway glitch delays, halts trains in Poland, Italy*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6515-W7G1-DY4H-K1PM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 17, 2022 Thursday 1:36 PM GMT

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**Length:** 435 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Railway authorities in Poland and Italy say major malfunctions in the electronic control systems have caused significant delays and cancellations on train routes in both countries

**Body**

Major malfunctions in the electronic control systems of railway networks in Poland and [*Italy*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/italy) have caused significant delays and cancellations along train routes, railway authorities in both countries said Thursday.

In Poland, government cybersecurity chief Janusz Cieszynski, said a team tasked with handling emergency situations will meet Thursday to investigate the malfunction.

Poland's PKP PLK railway company Director Miroslaw Skubiszynski, said that the sudden outage took place at 0300GMT Thursday and affected 19 out of Poland's 33 control centers, idling train traffic on some 820 kilometers (500 miles) of railroads.

"Because the reach of the outage is almost nationwide, it is clear that some of the trains will not run at all today," Skubiszynski told reporters.

Skubiszynski did not say what could have caused the outage. Poland's railway was asking travelers to put off train journeys Thursday as railway experts worked alongside the government's cyber security team to gradually restore traffic.

Skubiszynski said authorities were working to ensure that the outage does not hamper the travel plans of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. Special bus services were made available.

Poland has admitted some 1.95 million refugees fleeing war and Russian aggression on Ukraine. On Tuesday, the prime minister of Poland joined his Czech and Slovenian counterparts on a special train trip from Poland to Ukraine's capital [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) to show their solidarity with the country. They safely returned Wednesday morning.

In Italy, railway company TRENITALIA issued an alert saying that control system outage had caused major problems along the key Rome-Florence line.

Many trains faced delays of up to two hours or have been cancelled because of problems to the centralized computer control system, Italian State Railway said.

Infrastructure company [*Alstom*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/alstom) said in a statement that Thursday's delays on the Italian State Railway were due to a computer bug in signaling software provided by Bombardier Transportation.

Alstrom said the malfunction was not the result of a cyberattack and that the safety of passengers was not at risk. A "mitigation plan" has proactively been put in place to minimize and potential disruption, the company said.

The company's Italy branch said that the same problem affected railway systems in Thailand and India.

Alstom owns a 20% stake in Transmashholding (TMH), the Russian locomotives and rail equipment provider. It has suspended all future business investments in Russia. Talks on a partnership between Alstom and Ukraine rail operator UZ have been put on hold as a result of the war in the country.

**Load-Date:** March 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Biden will travel to Belgium to 'reaffirm' US 'ironclad commitment' to Nato*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650S-STJ1-DY4H-K3JX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 15, 2022 Tuesday 6:25 PM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:3

**Length:** 397 words

**Byline:** Andrew Feinberg

**Highlight:** 'His goal is to meet in person face to face with his European counterparts and talk about where we are at this point in the conflict', the White House says

**Body**

US President Joe Biden will fly to Brussels, Belgium for an extraordinary summit of Nato leaders later this month, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said Tuesday.

Ms Psaki said Mr Biden will use the trip to discuss Nato's "ongoing deterrence and defence efforts in response to Russia's unprovoked and unjustified attack on [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) ," and to "reaffirm" America's "ironclad commitment" to the alliance.

"His goal is to meet in person face to face with his European counterparts and talk about where we are at this point in the conflict in the invasion of Ukraine by Russia," Ms Psaki said. "We've been incredibly aligned to date - that doesn't happen by accident. The president is a big believer in face-to-face diplomacy, so it's an opportunity to do exactly that."

Ms Psaki added that a face-to-face meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is "an option" for the trip, but said the details of Mr Biden's itinerary were still being worked out.

She also announced that the president will join a previously scheduled European Council summit, at which he plans to discuss "shared concerns" about the invasion, including US and European efforts to "impose economic costs on Russia" and provide humanitarian support to the millions of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** displaced by the invasion.

The announcement of Mr Biden's upcoming travel comes just one day before Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky is set to address members of the US House of Representatives and Senate.

Asked whether Mr Zelensky is expected to ask for the US to support transfer of Soviet-made MiG-29 fighter jets to his Air Force, Ms Psaki would only say that Mr Biden held a "nearly hour-long" call with the Ukrainian leader on Friday and stressed that US officials are in contact with him and his advisers "every day".

Ms Psaki also touted the latest round of sanctions imposed in response to the invasion against Belarusian dictator Alexander Lukashenko, his wife, and 11 other Russian defence officials.

Ms Psaki said the US and European efforts have so far imposed "unprecedented costs" on Russia by reversing three decades of progress made since the fall of the Soviet Union in less than a month.

"Our actions have hit hard at the things President Putin cares about the most - degrading his military access to cutting edge technology and ability to project power and influence," she said.

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Open door for Ukraine refugees could lead to 'devastating' terror attack on UK, Tory minister claims*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651C-VP61-DY4H-K233-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 18, 2022 Friday 1:23 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 403 words

**Byline:** Jon Stone

**Highlight:** Suella Braverman says checks needed as it will be hard to deport Ukrainians once they are in Britain

**Body**

Dropping security checks on ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) could lead to a "devastating" terror attack on British soil, a cabinet minister has claimed.

Conservative [*Suella Braverman*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/suella-braverman) on Thursday defended the government's policy of making those fleeing the Russian invasion deal with Home Office bureaucracy.

Britain stands isolated in Europe in not giving free entry to Ukrainians fleeing the invasion - an approach which has been accused of lacking humanity by other governments.

Speaking on the BBC's Question Time programme on Friday night attorney general Ms Braverman said mirroring the EU's approach and dropping controls was against security advice.

"God forbid we drop the checks because there's political pressure and because ambitious MPs are making political footballs out of this issue - and someone gets through illegally, and then they carry out an attack on British soil, something which is devastating," Ms Braverman said.

"Everybody here would be rightly outraged that we dropped checks and we allowed someone to slip through the net.

"I'm not willing to take that chance on British people's security. It's right that we have checks is right that we offer a warm welcome to refugees, but we need to do it right."

She added that it was "really important" to carry out checks before Ukrainians arrived in the UK because "if they don't pass the standard, it's very hard to remove people".

The British government has launched two schemes to help Ukrainians come to the UK: one for those with existing family here, and other for named individuals who can find sponsors in Britain.

It also says it has streamlined the application process to allow more people to apply online, and to collect biometric data from some people once they have arrived in the UK.

Around three million people have fled [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) since the Russian invasion, but as of 15 March just 5,500 visas have been issued by British authorities.

In contrast, EU countries are allowing Ukrainians entry without a visa for up to three years. Poland, which borders Ukraine, has taken 1.1 million people, and the UK's neighbour Ireland is already hosting nearly 7,000.

Labour says the government has not gone far enough in making life easier for Ukraine refugees. Shadow Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said last week that applications were still requiring up to 50 pages of forms and documentation, and that there were "long caseworker delays in the Home Office system".

**Load-Date:** March 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Chelsea fans told to stop chanting Roman Abramovich's name by Downing Street*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650J-98R1-DY4H-K0JN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 14, 2022 Monday 3:13 PM GMT

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**Section:** FOOTBALL,SPORT; Version:1

**Length:** 404 words

**Byline:** Pa Sport Staff

**Highlight:** Abramovich was sanctioned by the UK Government last week.

**Body**

Chelsea fans must stop the "completely inappropriate" chanting of Russian owner Roman Abramovich's name, the Prime Minister's spokesman has said.

Blues supporters again expressed their backing for Abramovich during Sunday's home match against [*Newcastle*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/newcastle) , after he was sanctioned by the British [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) last week over his ties to Russian president Vladimir Putin.

Abramovich's assets were frozen, with Chelsea placed under a special licence which allows them to operate but unable to generate new revenue.

The billionaire has brought unprecedented success to Chelsea since he bought the club in 2003, but Boris Johnson's official spokesman insists supporters should not let that blind them to Abramovich's association to the man leading the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

"We recognise the strength of feeling around people's clubs but that does not excuse behaviour which is completely inappropriate at this time," he said.

"I think people can show passion and support for their club without resorting to that sort of stuff."

The Government has said it is still "open" to Chelsea being sold but that a new application would be needed to enable a sale. So far, the spokesman said, the club had not applied for a variation to its strict special licence.

"We are open to the sale of the club, we would consider an application for a licence to allow that to happen in the right circumstances," the spokesman said.

"But it is for Chelsea to determine the exact process. My understanding is potential buyers would approach the club, who would then need to apply for a further amended licence to facilitate the sale.

"As far as I'm aware that hasn't happened at this point."

Abramovich first put the club up for sale on March 2 and a number of interested parties are understood to remain in the frame despite the imposition of sanctions.

These include British billionaire Nick Candy, a consortium featuring Los Angeles Dodgers part-owner Todd Boehly and Swiss billionaire [*Hansjorg Wyss*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hansjorg-wyss) , plus interest from former Liverpool chairman Martin Broughton.

The Government will oversee the sale process to ensure there is no benefit to Abramovich, with New York merchant bank the Raine Group handling the sale.

[*Downing Street*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/downing-street) did not rule out the hotel at Chelsea's Stamford Bridge ground being used to house ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

The PM's official spokesman said: "We would certainly want to see wherever is possible (used), we are open to all options."

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Russia 'built itself a trap' in Ukraine and are 'getting desperate', Ben Wallace says*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y7-9J11-DY4H-K2S8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 8, 2022 Tuesday 8:57 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 419 words

**Byline:** Ashley Cowburn

**Highlight:** Defence secretary says the Kremlin has 'built itself a trap' in Ukraine

**Body**

[*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) is "way off timetable" with the the indiscriminate shelling of civilians showing the military becoming increasingly "desperate", [*Ben Wallace*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ben-wallace) has claimed.

Insisting the Kremlin had "built itself a trap" by waging a war and uniting the international community against Russia, Mr Wallace stressed the country's military were facing "real logistic problems".

"It's not going particularly well for the Russians - it's day 13. Way off their timetable," the defence secretary told Sky News in the latest update on the situation.

"There were reports overnight of Ukrainian special forces destroying over 20 helicopters on the ground and I think we can see the Russians having real logistic problems".

He added: "That affects morale. They're getting more desperate and we can see them getting more desperate as they are shelling more and more innocent people."

"This goes right to the heart of the challenge for Russia, which is Russia has built itself a trap. It's sent itself in with the international community united against them and we see the devastation they are leaving behind."

The defence secretary also revealed the Ministry of Defence (MoD) would offer to support the Home Office process visas for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** amid intense criticism over the government's progress.

In an update last night, the Home Office said 8,900 applications had been submitted, with just 300 visas given the green light so far.

"We've said over 200,000 people can come here," the cabinet minister insisted."The question really relies on how many checks we do once people reach a safe space"

He added: "I will be offering to the Home Office assistance from the MoD in the same way we did in Op Pitting [Afghanistan evacuation] to increase the processing time to help those people".

Speaking on Tuesday, the cabinet minister also said he would support Poland whether or not it decided to donate MiG-29 fighter jets to Ukraine. The US has urged Poland to supply the Soviet-era planes, offering to provide replacement US jets instead.

Mr Wallace said: "Poland will understand that the choices it makes will not only directly help Ukraine, which is a good thing, but also may bring them into direct line of fire from countries such as Russia or Belarus.

"They will have to calibrate that. That's a really big responsibility on the shoulders of the President of Poland and, indeed, defence minister.

"So, it's not for me to second-guess their choice. But it is for me as a fellow Nato member to say I will stand by Poland."

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Our campaign raises more than £60,000 on first day*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64X4-RK81-F072-43R4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 3, 2022 Thursday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 6

**Length:** 445 words

**Byline:** JANE DALTON

**Body**

The Independent's campaign to raise funds for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** has exceeded £60,000 in less than 24 hours - money that will buy life-saving and vital support for many of the hundreds of thousands of innocent people forced to flee their homes.

Working with the Red Cross and Save The Children, we will be giving aid to Ukrainians crossing the border in freezing temperatures into Poland, Romania, Hungary, Moldova and Slovakia, as well as people displaced from their homes within Ukraine.

The fundraiser, part of ourRefugees Welcome appeal, will deliver accommodation, clothing, food, sanitary goods, medicines, toys and other necessities.

It will allow people escaping the war to phone loved ones left behind and follow developments on the internet.

Save the Children, a beneficiary of the appeal and a charity that has worked in Ukraine since 2014, will provide cash and vouchers, as well as shelter, warm clothes and blankets, hygiene packs and psychological support to refugees.

With more than half a million Ukrainians having to leave behind homes, schools and normal lives, together with nearly everything they own, the need is urgent. So please give generously through our GoFundMe page.

Save the Children says £10 will buy a family hygiene kit, £50 will feed a mother and her children for a fortnight and £100 will provide a displaced family with emergency shelter.

The Independent has also launched a petitioncalling on the UK government to be at the forefront of the international community offering aid and support to a nation in need.

Thousands of Ukrainian children have lost parents, brothers, sisters and friends in the Russian attacks or have had to say a heartbreaking goodbye to fathers who stayed behind to fight.

Gwen Hines, chief executive of Save the Children UK, said: "Millions of children are at grave risk of physical harm and emotional distress. Any family forced from their home needs shelter, food, water - the absolute basics.

"We're also in mid-winter with temperatures below zero, which makes displacement even more dangerous. We're providing life-saving assistance in the form of food, water, cash. Please help."

To donate, pleasetap herefor our GoFundMe page.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. Find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign here.

**Sign our petition urging the government to offer more support to refugees here**

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Scottish ministers renew call for visa waiver as UK opens homes to Ukrainians*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650N-NTG1-JBNF-W194-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 14, 2022 Monday 11:50 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 413 words

**Byline:** Katharine Hay

**Highlight:** Scottish government's Minister for Refugees from Ukraine Neil Gray said there was concern that the sponsorship scheme would be slow and cumbersome.

**Body**

[*Scottish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scottish) ministers have renewed calls for the need for Ukrainians to require visas to be waived as the country prepares to welcome thousands fleeing conflict.

The UK [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) launched the sponsorship scheme - [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) - to allow people and organisations to give displaced Ukrainians a place to stay on Monday afternoon.

Those offering a place to stay will receive a tax-free monthly payment of £350 which will not affect benefit entitlements or council tax status.

At the weekend, Nicola Sturgeon and Mark Drakeford announced Scotland and Wales were willing to become "super sponsors" for refugees, to which Communities Secretary Michael Gove said "we are doing everything we can in order to facilitate that".

But in response to the scheme, the Scottish government's Minister for Refugees from Ukraine Neil Gray renewed calls for the UK Government to waive all visa requirements for Ukrainian nationals, "and put people, not processes, first".

He said there was concern that the sponsorship scheme would be slow and cumbersome and lack proper support and safeguarding.

"By acting as 'super sponsor' rather than waiting for the UK government's matching process, we can provide safety and sanctuary to people immediately and welcome significant numbers of refugees from Ukraine to Scotland," he said.

Mr Gray said this would include providing temporary accommodation and wraparound support while longer-term arrangements are put in place.

He added: "Whilst noting that the Secretary of State for Levelling Up Michael Gove has said that the UK Government will do everything it can to facilitate our offer, we await the UK Government's detailed response to our proposals.

"We are keen to support people now, so will be pressing the UK Government for detail that did not emerge today."

Speaking about the scheme, SNP home affairs spokesperson [*Stuart McDonald*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/stuart-mcdonald) said: "We will do whatever we can to support this initiative.

"But we do very much regret that it is only phase one today, things are still not going fast enough."

He called for the Government to "stop asking Ukrainians to apply for visas altogether".

He asked if the £350 a month will be available to sponsors such as community groups as well as individuals, and pushed for Scottish and Welsh governments to operate as "super sponsors".

Earlier, Mr Gray said he expected Scotland will be able to provide accommodation for at least 3,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, and there was no limit on the number that would be given sanctuary.

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Four arrested for trying to breach cordon around squat at oligarch's mansion*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650K-9DB1-JBNF-W36P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 14, 2022 Monday 9:03 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 409 words

**Byline:** William Janes

**Highlight:** They were stopped by police near the property belonging to Oleg Deripaska in Belgrave Square, west London.

**Body**

Four people have been arrested after trying to breach a cordon outside a Russian oligarch's [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) mansion which has been occupied by squatters.

They were stopped by police near the property belonging to [*Oleg Deripaska*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/oleg-deripaska) in Belgrave Square, west London, at around 6.30pm on Monday.

The [*Metropolitan Police*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/metropolitan-police) said: "Four people, inc the two detained earlier, have been arrested after attempting to gain access to the row of buildings where a protest remains ongoing in Belgrave Square, W1.

Four people, inc the two detained earlier, have been arrested after attempting to gain access to the row of buildings where a protest remains ongoing in Belgrave Square, W1.Officers remain on scene engaging with four people who remain on the balcony of a building there.- MPS Westminster (@MPSWestminster) [*March 14, 2022*](https://twitter.com/MPSWestminster/status/1503454891720642561?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

"Officers remain on scene engaging with four people who remain on the balcony of a building there."

The squatters broke into the property at around 1am on Monday and declared that it "belongs to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***".

The street has been cordoned off with at least 10 police vehicles and more than 30 officers at the scene.

A [*Scotland Yard*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scotland-yard) spokesperson said officers completed a search of the property early in the afternoon and found no protesters inside.

Officers wearing harnesses first tried to deploy a ladder to access the balcony but after the squatters sat in the way to obstruct them, a JCB crane was moved in to lift them up instead.

[*Police*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/police) wearing riot gear used a drill to break open the front door and enter the house.

The squatters call themselves the London Mahknovists, after Nestor Makhno, who led an anarchist force that attempted to form a stateless society in Ukraine during the Russian Revolution of 1917-23.

They hung a Ukrainian flag and two signs which read "this property has been liberated" and "Putin go f\*\*\* yourself".

They also danced, played music and one man sang lines from the Dirty Dancing song (I've Had) The Time Of My Life.

Mr Deripaska has been described as "a prominent Russian businessman and pro-Kremlin oligarch" who is "closely associated" with the Russian government and President Vladimir Putin.

His wealth is estimated to be £2.3 billion and he has a multimillion-pound property portfolio in the UK which includes the house at 5 Belgrave Square, according to a 2007 High Court judgment.

Records indicate it has not changed hands since and is owned by an offshore British Virgin Islands company.

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Chelsea fans told to stop chanting Roman Abramovich's name by government*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650J-98R1-DY4H-K0KG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 14, 2022 Monday 3:34 PM GMT

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**Section:** FOOTBALL,SPORT; Version:1

**Length:** 412 words

**Byline:** Pa Sport Staff

**Highlight:** Abramovich was sanctioned by the UK government last week

**Body**

[*Chelsea*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/chelsea-fc) fans must stop the "completely inappropriate" chanting of Russian owner [*Roman Abramovich*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/roman-abramovich) 's name, the Prime Minister's spokesman has said.

Blues supporters again expressed their backing for Abramovich during Sunday's home match against Newcastle, after he was sanctioned by the UK government last week over his ties to Russian president Vladimir Putin.

Abramovich's assets were frozen, with Chelsea placed under a special licence which allows them to operate but unable to generate new revenue.

LIVE: [*Follow the latest Chelsea news*](https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/football/roman-abramovich-takeover-chelsea-news-tuchel-b2035168.html%22%20title=%22Chelsea%20news%20LIVE:%20Roman%20Abramovich%20assets%20set%20to%20be%20frozen%20by%20EU%20as%20Thomas%20Tuchel%20long-term%20future%20in%20doubt)

The billionaire has brought unprecedented success to Chelsea since he bought the club in 2003, but Boris Johnson's official spokesman insists supporters should not let that blind them to Abramovich's association to the man leading the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

"We recognise the strength of feeling around people's clubs but that does not excuse behaviour which is completely inappropriate at this time," he said.

"I think people can show passion and support for their club without resorting to that sort of stuff."

The government has said it is still "open" to Chelsea being sold but that a new application would be needed to enable a sale. So far, the spokesman said, the club had not applied for a variation to its strict special licence.

"We are open to the sale of the club, we would consider an application for a licence to allow that to happen in the right circumstances," the spokesman said.

"But it is for Chelsea to determine the exact process. My understanding is potential buyers would approach the club, who would then need to apply for a further amended licence to facilitate the sale. As far as I'm aware that hasn't happened at this point."

Abramovich first put the club up for sale on 2 March and a number of interested parties are understood to remain in the frame despite the imposition of sanctions.

These include British billionaire Nick Candy, a consortium featuring Los Angeles Dodgers part-owner Todd Boehly and Swiss billionaire Hansjorg Wyss, plus interest from former Liverpool chairman Martin Broughton.

The Government will oversee the sale process to ensure there is no benefit to Abramovich, with New York merchant bank the Raine Group handling the sale.

Downing Street did not rule out the hotel at Chelsea's Stamford Bridge ground being used to house ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

The PM's official spokesman said: "We would certainly want to see wherever is possible (used), we are open to all options."

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Steven Seagal speaks out about Russia's invasion of Ukraine: 'I look at both as one family'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WR-NTW1-DY4H-K41P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 1, 2022 Tuesday 9:21 AM GMT

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**Section:** CULTURE,FILM,NEWS; Version:4

**Length:** 386 words

**Byline:** Peony Hirwani

**Highlight:** 'I believe it is an outside entity spending huge sums of money on propaganda to provoke the two countries to be at odds with each other,' actor claims

**Body**

[*Steven Seagal*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/steven-seagal) has shared his thoughts about [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Speaking to Fox News Digital, the 69-year-old actor said that he looks at both Russia and Ukraine "as one family".

"Most of us have friends and family in Russia and Ukraine," he told the outlet. "I look at both as one family and really believe it is an outside entity spending huge sums of money on propaganda to provoke the two countries to be at odds with each other.

"My prayers are that both countries will come to a positive, peaceful resolution where we can live and thrive together in peace," Seagal added.

In 2018, Russia [*appointed the Above The Law actor as a special envoy*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/steven-seagal-us-russia-envoy-hollywood-putin-humanitarian-a8478461.html) to improve ties with the US.

The Russian Foreign Ministry announced at the time that Seagal's responsibility would be to "facilitate relations between Russia and the United States in the humanitarian field, including cooperation in culture, arts, public and youth exchanges".

When Seagal received his Russian citizenship in 2017, [*Ukraine barred him from entering the country,*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/steven-seagal-ukraine-blacklists-actor-russia-putin-ties-a7720986.html) as fighting between Russian rebels and Ukrainian forces escalated in eastern Ukraine.

[*UK exclusive: The story behind the image that defined the Russian invasion of Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/features/ukraine-war-photo-olena-kurilo-b2026568.html)

Seagal's comments about the ongoing conflict come after podcaster [*Joe Rogan shared a fake CNN report*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/news/joe-rogan-cnn-steven-seagal-russia-ukraine-b2024764.html) claiming that the Under Siege actor has joined Russian special forces stationed near Kyiv.

On Monday (28 February), the 54-year-old podcaster posted a forged screenshot of a news report that depicted Seagal wearing the special force's uniform with a gun in his hand.

"Intelligence agencies around the world have spotted American actor Steven Seagal among Russian special forces positioned around the outskirts of Gostomel airfield near Kyiv captured by Russian airborne troops," the fake news report stated.

Follow the latest updates about the Russian invasion of Ukraine in our live blog [*here.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-news-belarus-war-putin-b2024734.html)

Read More

[*One million* ***Ukrainian******refugees*** *flee as Kherson falls to Russia -live*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-latest-update-kyiv-explosion-putin-news-b2027373.html)

[*Why has Russia invaded Ukraine? The conflict explained*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/why-russia-ukraine-invasion-putin-b2026550.html)

[*Sign The Independent's petition to help the people of Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-refugees-russia-petition-help-b2025628.html)

[*Joe Rogan mocked for sharing fake report about Steven Seagal joining Russian forces*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/news/joe-rogan-cnn-steven-seagal-russia-ukraine-b2024764.html)

[*Sean Penn reveals he walked 'miles' to Polish border after abandoning car in Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/sean-penn-ukraine-border-russia-b2026387.html)

[*Here are all the films and TV shows leaving Netflix this month*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/netflix-movies-shows-leaving-march-2022-b2027439.html)

**Load-Date:** March 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Is Williamson's knighthood reward for staying quiet?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XJ-P2D1-JCS0-D36K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 5, 2022 Saturday

First Edition

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**Section:** VOICES; Pg. 38

**Length:** 447 words

**Body**

When I first heard that our former, unlamented education secretary had been awarded a knighthood, I honestly thought that somebody was pulling my leg. Surely even this useless prime minister could not be so stupid as to so honour a man whose incompetence made Boris Johnson's cabinet of dolts and charlatans look effective?

Then the penny dropped. Courtesy of his former role as chief whip and master of the dark arts, Gavin Williamson knows where the Tory bodies are buried. Even this useless minister had his value, if only in helping to save his master's political skin.

Yet again we see the values at work in this government. Johnson's political survival comes before the country every time.

Patrick Moore Norwich

Arise, Sir Gavin Williamson, knighted for serial incompetence and loyal service to the prime minister. Since, we are told, rather distastefully, that "he knows where the bodies are buried", the honour will guarantee his compliance so that, rather than exposing Boris Johnson for what he is, he will simply shut up and go away. The question remains: what exactly does he know?

Graham Powell Cirencester

There is much derision about Gavin Williamson's knighthood among those of us with any sense of decency left in this country.

That our political elite sees justification in such an honour for Mr Williamson, or should I say Sir Gavin, rewarding incompetence, not only reflects badly on them, but dishonours the monarchy as well. The Queen should never have allowed herself to be manipulated into putting her signature on such a recommendation. It puts her position, not to say validity, into serious doubt.

What this country needs urgently is proportional representation so we can, finally, call ourselves a democracy and to wheel the monarchy into oblivion.

Gunter Straub London NW3

<strong>Russian invasion of Ukraine</strong>

The Russian Football Union has protested against its exclusion from international competitions, saying that it believes that Fifa and Uefa did not have a legal basis when deciding on the removal of Russian teams. Someone should explain to these blinkered fools that Vladimir Putin and his Kremlin thugs did not have a legal basis when deciding to attack an independent peaceful democratic sovereign nation that was no threat to them.

Sam Boote Nottingham

Given that the Conservative Party has received £2m in donations from Russian sources, surely the only decent thing for it to do is to donate £2m to relief for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***?

Felicity Pollard Isle of Mull

I remember the reply of a gunner when asked how could he shell such a beautiful city as Sarajevo: "If we can't have it, then neither can they." Goodbye, beautiful Kyiv.

Vincent Ryan Edinburgh

**Load-Date:** March 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'Nobody talking' to black refugees who were split up from Ukrainians in France*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YX-2F91-JBNF-W136-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 11, 2022 Friday 1:43 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 942 words

**Byline:** Jemma Crew

**Highlight:** A refugee from Ukraine said he feels 'awful, neglected, angry' after being taken to a hotel around 70 miles from other refugees.

**Body**

A black refugee from Ukraine hoping to join family in the UK has said "nobody is talking to us" after he and other people of colour were split up from a group of Ukrainians in [*France*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/france).

Uwandu Michael, originally from [*Nigeria*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nigeria) , said he was "really shocked" when he realised he had been sent to a hotel around 70 miles away from other ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** when they were bussed out of [*Calais*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/calais) this week.

The 37-year-old, who moved to Ukraine in 2009 and secured permanent residency eight years ago, said he was granted Ukrainian citizenship in late February but had to flee before he could collect his passport.

As he attempted to travel across the border into [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) , he became separated from his Ukrainian ex-partner and nine-year-old daughter and has not been able to contact them since.

Hoping to join his sister and cousin in London, he made his way alone to Calais, where he was helped to apply online for a visa by a charity.

The majority of Ukrainians who had gathered at the port town were taken to hotels near Lille on Wednesday, close to where a pop-up visa centre is being set up, or nearer to existing centres in Paris or Brussels.

But Uwandu Michael and around five other people of colour with UK relatives were taken to a hotel on a remote industrial estate near Boulogne-sur-Mer.

We are alone -nobody is talking to us

Uwandu Michael, a refugee from Ukraine

They say they have been given no information about why they were separated and are unclear which authorities put them into the mini van.

They have received no update about their visa applications or had any help from officials since they arrived.

The 37-year-old told the PA news agency he feels "tired of life, traumatised, and confused".

He suspects they may have been treated differently because of the colour of their skin, adding: "We are alone - nobody is talking to us".

He said: "It's like all the stress, everything is beginning again to multiply.

"I think we don't have anybody to speak to, except you... We cannot continue to be living in this kind of tense condition, coupled with what we've seen in Ukraine."

Uwandu Michael said he is desperate to reach the people who love him so they can "heal my wounds", and urged the UK Government to speed up the visa process.

He said: "I just want them to help us, because our situation here, we lost a lot of things... and putting me here is actually making me go crazy."

He also described experiencing discrimination when trying to get a train from Lviv, with Ukrainian women and children given priority over people of colour, including his daughter who is mixed race.

He said he believes he was able to get to Poland because a journalist tipped him off that a train was leaving on another platform that most people were not aware of.

Another refugee, [*Kevin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kevin) , originally from Kenya, was three months away from completing his computer science university course in western Ukraine, where he had a temporary residence permit, when the country was invaded.

He wants to continue his studies in England and join his uncle in Northampton.

He believes the group were separated from the other refugees because they are not Ukrainian, which has left him feeling "awful, neglected, angry".

He said: "It's pretty awful, it makes us feel like we're left out.

"But all we're doing is just escaping the war and hoping for the best for ourselves."

Clare Moseley, founder of Care4Calais, said the charity had initially understood that people living in Ukraine who were not Ukrainian nationals would be eligible under the current scheme if they had loved ones in the UK.

Home Office guidance says applicants must be joining UK-based family members, be Ukrainian or have an immediate relative who is a Ukrainian national who is applying to the scheme, and have been residing in the country on or immediately before January 1 2022.

Her biggest fear now is what will happen to people "who for one reason or another are at the edges of the scheme, who don't quite qualify who do have family in the UK".

Ms Moseley said the group near Boulogne-sur-Mer are "very scared" due to the lack of certainty.

They speak English and several are students who would like to continue learning in England, but have been "repeatedly" asked to apply for asylum in France.

She said: "If they've got close family relations in the UK who are willing to support them, then it doesn't make any sense for them to live in France where they don't know anyone."

Asked if she believed racism may have played a part in the decision to move them to a separate location, she said: "It's a very big coincidence that the nationality of these people is basically Kenyan, Nigerian and Yemeni.

"And it seems extremely coincidental that all the people that have been taken elsewhere are these nationalities."

Details of a separate visa route, allowing UK individuals and companies to sponsor people from Ukraine to come to the country, and who will be eligible, are due to be set out next week.

A Government spokesman said: "We are standing shoulder to shoulder with Ukrainians which is why we've made it easier for those with Ukrainian passports to come here.

"This is alongside changes to visas to ensure Ukrainians in the UK can stay here.

"We have expanded our Visa Application Capacity to 13,000 a week, deployed additional staff across the EU, with a 24/7 helpline in place to ensure those who need appointments can get them to come here.

"This allows us to balance security risks while welcoming those in need."

Home Office minister Baroness Williams of Trafford told peers 1,305 visas for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** had been issued as of Thursday morning, adding: "Those figures are going up rapidly and that is a good thing."

**Load-Date:** March 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Taoiseach restates solidarity with Ukraine as he arrives in Kyiv*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65VT-GMK1-JBNF-W51Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 6, 2022 Wednesday 7:13 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 462 words

**Byline:** David Young

**Highlight:** Micheal Martin will witness the damage caused by Russian forces on his visit to the Ukrainian capital.

**Body**

Ireland’s premier pledged his country’s support for the people of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) as he arrived in [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) for a visit to the war-torn capital.

Micheal Martin will use the trip to reiterate Irish solidarity with the Ukrainian authorities in the face of the Russian invasion.

He will discuss how Ireland and the EU can support the country and will also witness first-hand the devastation caused by the Russian forces.

Mr Martin will restate Ireland’s full backing for continuing sanctions against Russian [*President*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/president) Vladimir Putin’s regime, for Ukraine’s path to full EU membership, as well as Ireland’s commitment to work with the EU on the reconstruction of Ukraine.

The spirit and resolve of the Ukrainian people has inspired us all, and Ireland will provide every support for Ukraine’s path to full EU membership, and continue to welcome and support civilians fleeing this war

Taoiseach Micheal Martin

“The people of Ireland stand with Ukraine and its people in the face of Russia’s immoral and unprovoked war of terror,” he said.

“The bombardment and attacks on civilians are nothing short of war crimes, and I will use my visit to express Ireland’s support for moves to hold those behind these attacks fully accountable.

“The spirit and resolve of the Ukrainian people has inspired us all, and Ireland will provide every support for Ukraine’s path to full EU membership, and continue to welcome and support civilians fleeing this war.”

Mr Martin’s trip comes two weeks after President [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) invited him to visit Ukraine.

It is the first visit by a [*Taoiseach*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/taoiseach) to the eastern European country.

It also comes after Mr Putin on Monday declared victory in seizing the eastern Ukrainian province of Luhansk, with his troops escalating their offensive in neighbouring Donetsk.

Mr Martin has warned previously that the Russian president appeared to be leveraging its natural gas supplies to exert maximum pressure on Europe ahead of the winter period.

The Taoiseach has also been a vocal advocate for Ukraine’s fast-tracked membership of the EU.

Mr Zelensky has previously thanked Ireland for its “active support of Ukraine’s European aspirations”.

Ireland has also taken in more than 36,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** since Russia invaded neighbouring Ukraine at the end of February.

The Irish State has given 20 million euro in humanitarian support and assistance to the country, as well as health equipment and medical donations worth more than 4.5 million euro.

In April, Simon Coveney became the first foreign minister of the UN Security Council to visit Kyiv, and met Ukraine’s foreign minister Dmytro Kuleba and defence minister Oleksii Reznikov.

Mr Coveney also visited the town of Bucha, on the outskirts of the capital, where suspected killings of civilians prompted global condemnation.

**Load-Date:** July 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Uncertainty remains over Ukrainian sponsorship scheme as minister fails to answer questions*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6510-7RH1-DY4H-K2Y5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 16, 2022 Wednesday 3:25 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:3

**Length:** 1005 words

**Byline:** May Bulman

**Highlight:** Refugees minister says he can provide no guarantee that Ukrainians won't be placed in hotels

**Body**

Uncertainty remains over how the [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) sponsorship scheme will work in practice after the minister for [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) was unable to provide answers to crucial questions from MPs.

[*Richard Harrington*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/richard-harrington) , who was appointed refugees minister last week in response to the Russian invasion, was quizzed by the Home Affairs Select Committee on Wednesday about the new Homes for Refugees scheme, which will see members of the public in the UK able to host refugees in their homes.

It emerged during the evidence session that the minister was not yet sure how refugees will be dealt with on arrival, how it would be ensured that they would have access to basic services such as school places and mental health support and how vetting checks on hosts would be carried out.

Mr Harrington also admitted that he could not guarantee that Ukrainians wouldn't end up in hotel accommodation, where thousands of Afghan refugees and asylum seekers are currently living as they wait for housing.

The scheme, which will open on Friday, will allow Ukrainians with no family links to come to the UK and live in homes offered by members of the public or charities and organisations, with individuals offering their homes offered a monthly payment of £350 and local councils receiving £10,500 per refugee in the first year.

More than 100,000 people have registered their interest in hosting under the scheme via a government website launched on Monday.

Labour MP [*Clive Betts*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/clive-betts) , who is also vice-president of the Local Government Association (LGA) warned that there could be "problems" if there is a concentration of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** arriving in areas where "there may already be enormous pressure on things like child mental health, school places".

"It will simply not be possible to give them the sorts of services they need. Is there going to be any involvement of government with the local authorities to try address that sort of issue before it becomes a real problem?" he asked Mr Harrington.

The Independent is raising money for the people of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) - if you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

The minister responded: "I'm not turning my mind to that yet Clive. It's a very valid point and don't think I'm fobbing you off. For the moment we just have to get these people in [...] In the end, the local authorities will be a huge part of this."

Mr Betts expressed "particular concern" about access to service for child refugees arriving under the scheme, asking: "What if there isn't a school place for them, or mental health support?"

The refugees minister said he too was concerned about this, before adding: "But we're going to have to find school places and we're going to have to find extra social workers, and we're going to have to find whatever it takes."

Mr Betts responded that he thought this was "probably easier said than done", to which Mr Harrington said: "I know, but I can't give you a better answer than that."

Questions were also asked about the vetting checks for hosts under the scheme and at what point these would be carried out.

Mr Harrington said it "may not be possible" to carry out these checks before refugees arriving, adding: "I'm talking next week, we're expecting thousands of people to come, but it will be [local councils'] responsibility and particularly where there are vulnerabilities or children, that will take priority.

"But if we started saying we're going to pre-do it, it's just not possible, we'd have people stuck in temporary accommodation and held there while a load of bureaucratic -but very important -checks take place."

Asked whether he could give assurances that ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** would not be placed in hotels, the minister said: "I honestly can't give you that undertaking. I'd like to. It's not our intention, but if all else fails it's our duty to make sure they've got a roof over their head and their fed properly."

The Home Office [*revealed last month*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/home-office-asylum-seekers-hotels-b2006885.html) that around 25,000 asylum seekers from a range of nationalities and 12,000 people evacuated from Afghanistan were currently in hotel accommodation, at a cost to the taxpayer of £4.7m per day.

Asked what would happen to refugees on arrival, Mr Harrington said: "We don't exactly know where they will be arriving . We hope to make sure they have the same kind of welcome centres that we had for the Syrian programme [...] The local authorities will be a key part of that."

Speaking to The Independent after the evidence session, Mr Betts said he was concerned by some of the minister's responses, and in particular the responsibility placed on local authorities.

"They're saying it's over to you councils. You're going to do the heavy lifting [...] We know the strain many councils are already under. Using people's homes is probably a good idea, but what isn't good is them putting the rest on councils," he said.

"There's no support apart from the money, and it's alright having the money, but if you haven't got the social workers and school places no amount of money can provide them."

He called on the government to create a "focal point" where councils can get advice on the scheme, and said he was hopeful that through having further discussions with the minister the plans could be improved.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainians voice outrage in second day of protest outside Russian consulate*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64VY-0VJ1-JBNF-W2TS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 25, 2022 Friday 4:33 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 407 words

**Byline:** Neil Pooran

**Highlight:** They sang the Ukrainian anthem and held signs condemning Vladimir Putin outside the building in Edinburgh.

**Body**

Demonstrators have gathered outside the Russian consulate in [*Edinburgh*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/edinburgh) for a second day as Scotland's Ukrainian community voices outrage at the ongoing war.

Hundreds chanted "slava Ukraini" (glory to Ukraine) outside the consulate on Friday afternoon, with many bringing Ukrainian flags and anti-Putin signs.

A bagpiper played Ukraine's national anthem and some Ukrainians addressed the crowd through a megaphone, calling for more Western help to resist the invasion.

[*One*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/one) of those who spoke was Daryna Tryndiuk, 21, who is from [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) and now lives in [*Durham*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/durham). She travelled to Edinburgh for the protest.

She told the PA news agency: "It's horrible at the moment. Today I got the news that Kyiv came under a phase of defence.

"My friends and family, they've spent the whole night in bomb shelters and the Metro."

Many of her friends are volunteering to fight the Russian invasion, she said.

She said: "My friends are absolutely united and ready to fight for Ukraine and their city.

"[*People*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/people) are ready, they will not surrender."

Iryna Zamuruieva, 29, is from central Ukraine and now lives in Edinburgh.

She said the West should provide more weapons to Ukraine, shut out Russia from the Swift financial payments system and impose a no-fly zone.

She told the PA news agency: "I have a lot of anxiety for the future. I don't know when I'm going to be able to see my parents again.

"Kyiv the capital is being attacked. I have a lot of admiration for people who are staying there and fighting back."

Linda Allison is chair of the Edinburgh branch of the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain.

She said: "Most of us were crying yesterday.

"But what's happening now is we're angry, we're angry at the inaction of the West.

"The Swift banking system could still be taken away from Russia, we're angry that they're not giving enough support to Ukraine."

People in Ukraine are feeling "abandoned", she said, calling for visa-free travel for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

She said: "Ukrainians are very proud people, they want their independence, it's been proven through all the things they've been doing.

"Through Maidan (revolution), peaceful demonstrations, the Orange Revolution before that."

One of those who attended the demonstration was a young woman from Russia who held a sign saying "Russian people don't want war". She did not want her name to be published.

She said many of her friends in Russia are protesting against the war and want to show their support for Ukraine.

**Load-Date:** February 25, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Patel urged to do more to help Ukrainians come to the UK*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YP-S4J1-DY4H-K3PC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 10, 2022 Thursday 5:58 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 1048 words

**Byline:** David Hughes

**Highlight:** Home Secretary Priti Patel's measures to streamline the visa system were criticised for not going far enough.

**Body**

[*Home Secretary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-secretary) [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) was urged to do more to make it easier for Ukrainians to find sanctuary in the UK after announcing a limited series of changes to the visa regime.

From Tuesday many Ukrainians will be able to apply online for permission to come under the scheme allowing family members to be reunited with relatives already settled in the UK.

But the British Red Cross said the quickest way of fixing the problem would be to remove the requirement for a visa, while the Refugee Council said Ms Patel's announcement "does not go anywhere near far enough".

We welcome any step to ease the process for desperate Ukrainians in search of safety in this country -but today's announcement from our Home Secretary does not go anywhere near far enough.[*https://t.co/Tn7T5UkwBC*](https://t.co/Tn7T5UkwBC) - Refugee Council (@refugeecouncil) [*March 10, 2022*](https://twitter.com/refugeecouncil/status/1501895215669518338?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Ministers have insisted that visa checks are required to make sure [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) does not send Russian agents posing as refugees.But the scale of the humanitarian crisis has led to demands for the UK to take in more Ukrainians, with up to four million people expected to flee the war zone.So far around 2.2 million people have left in a crisis unseen in [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) since the Second World War.The Home Office has come under pressure from opposition and Tory MPs - as well as the Ukrainian government - to simplify the system which allows family members of people settled in the UK to join their relatives.Ms Patel said: "From Tuesday, I can announce that Ukrainians with passports will no longer need to go to a visa application centre to give their biometrics before they come to the UK."Instead, once their application has been considered and appropriate checks completed, they will receive direct notification that they're eligible for the scheme and can come to the UK."In short, Ukrainians with passports will be able to get permission to come here fully online from wherever they are and will be able to give their biometrics once in Britain."This will mean that visa application centres across Europe can focus their efforts on helping Ukrainians without passports."The fastest-growing refugee crisis in Europe since World War II is happening now. More than 2 million people have already fled war in Ukraine. Please donate to help these refugees: [*https://t.co/ZvSmvCXUl7*](https://t.co/ZvSmvCXUl7) [*pic.twitter.com/SyawslpQyg*](https://t.co/SyawslpQyg) - UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency (@Refugees) [*March 9, 2022*](https://twitter.com/Refugees/status/1501694570161180679?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) While the European Union allows visa-free travel for Ukrainians fleeing the fighting, the UK insisted they are necessary to guarantee security.Ms Patel told the Commons: "I am in daily contact with the intelligence and security agencies who are providing me with regular threat assessments."What happened in Salisbury showed what (Russian President Vladimir) Putin is willing to do on our soil. It also demonstrated that a small number of people with evil intentions can wreak havoc on our streets."Ms Patel said she was able to change the visa regime following security agencies' fresh advice.Prime Minister [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) backed the need for continued checks.He told reporters: "I think people do understand that when you have got large numbers of people leaving from a war zone - some of them still armed, perhaps not all of their identities completely clear, their motivations completely clear - it is responsible to have checks."Shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper, whose urgent question resulted in Ms Patel's appearance in the Commons, said the Government's approach had been "shameful". NEW: We're making changes to the Ukraine Family Scheme to make it quicker & simpler.This will mean from Tuesday Ukrainians with passports don't need to visit a Visa Application Centre to provide biometrics before coming here.Security checks will continue on all cases. [*pic.twitter.com/cpJjgmSwXo*](https://t.co/cpJjgmSwXo) - Home Office (@ukhomeoffice) [*March 10, 2022*](https://twitter.com/ukhomeoffice/status/1501912093464924161?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

The current visa route is restricted to family members of people settled in the UK.

Another promised route, allowing individuals and companies to sponsor Ukrainians to come to the UK, has yet to be established.

Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer said: "The Home Office approach to visas has been the complete opposite, a complete shambles that is diminishing our reputation across the world."

Andy Hewett, from the Refugee Council, said: "Whilst we welcome any step to ease the process for desperate Ukrainians in search of safety in this country, this announcement does not go anywhere near far enough.

"Rather than continuing with a system that requires ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to apply for a visa, the Government urgently needs to temporarily waive visa requirements so that all Ukrainian families fleeing war and bloodshed can easily reach the UK and access the protection that is their fundamental right under the Refugee Convention."

Mike Adamson, chief executive of British Red Cross, said: "The simplest way of fixing this quickly is to remove visa requirements for Ukrainians who want to come here, at least temporarily, in line with the actions of countries across Europe."

Mr Johnson said that more than a thousand visas have been granted by the UK.

In Ireland - a smaller country, further away from Ukraine - more than 2,500 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have already arrived.

Ukrainians seeking to come to the UK have faced a series of bureaucratic hurdles and difficulties in obtaining appointments to complete the necessary paperwork and armed forces minister James Heappey said British troops could help in processing claims.

Capacity has expanded to 13,000 applications a week, additional staff have been deployed across the European Union and a helpline has been set up, officials said.

The situation has been especially chaotic for Ukrainians at Calais seeking permission to cross the channel. A visa centre was due to be established in Lille while another site is now being set up in Arras.

It is understood the latest visa application centre to open - just under 70 miles from Calais - will only handle the cases of people who have been referred there and is anticipated to operate along similar lines of a small "pop-up" site now established in Lille.

Some refugees who were moved from Calais to Lille have now been told they need to make their own way to Paris; others have been told their visa applications will be processed at a centre in Arras, not Lille.

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Voices: Traditional conservatism is being subverted by the Ukraine crisis*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651V-8KT1-DY4H-K04N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 20, 2022 Sunday 4:11 PM GMT

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**Section:** VOICES; Version:3

**Length:** 1131 words

**Byline:** Phil McDuff

**Highlight:** There is a hard lesson to be learned here: to have a system capable of helping the most vulnerable, it must help everyone

**Body**

Recent weeks have seen an upsurge in sympathy for the plight of displaced Ukrainians in the wake of Putin's shock invasion of the country. The Home Office is suddenly under fire for being slow to offer aid to those in need, even from the right-wing opinion formers who until a few weeks ago would incessantly demand the exact opposite.

There are several plausible explanations for why Ukrainians have received such a markedly different response to, say, Iraqis or Libyans over the years. For a start, as has been demonstrated by various unguarded remarks by certain sections of the media, [*Ukrainians seem to have become racialised*](https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/ukraine-refugees-racial-bias-western-media-b2024864.html) as white, "blue eyed" Europeans, in contrast both to the dark-skinned, Muslim populations of the Middle East, or indeed to the populations of Romania or Poland, who have been subjected to demonisation and stereotyping in the British press under the generic banner of "Eastern European".

Secondly, many of the conflicts that have triggered previous waves of refugees are the result of our own foreign policy, or those of our allies. We cannot afford to be too concerned with what they are fleeing from, lest we implicate ourselves. In contrast, Putin's actions in Ukraine have propelled Russia back up to its Cold War position as our favourite official enemy nation. There is no conflict between condemning Russia as the instigator of a brutal invasion and drawing attention to the predicament of the Ukrainians fleeing the war zone.

Whatever the reason, ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** seem to be seen as more "genuine" - both in sectors of the press and by the public - unlike "bogus asylum seekers" taking advantage of us, and we are therefore more inclined to accept them.

Whatever the cause of the sharp change in sentiment, it has run afoul of a major issue. The UK has spent several decades making the process of migrating to the UK more difficult, time-consuming and costly. From the opening of migrant detention centres under the New Labour government in the early 2000s to the Nationality and Borders Bill currently before parliament, the trend has been towards tightening, restricting and preventing immigration, with concessions towards ensuring the safe and humane treatment of refugees being little more than lip service in practice.

As a result, Ukrainians trying to come to the UK have faced a system described as "[*humiliating*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/14/a-humiliating-process-ukrainians-caught-in-red-tape-trying-to-reach-uk-relatives) ". The UK's insistence on requiring visas, in contrast to other European countries, has introduced many Ukrainians to a system which is both byzantine and Kafkaesque by design, its very complexity and inaccessibility a part of the system of deterrence.

Responding to the change in public sentiment, the government has launched a new "Homes for Ukraine" scheme this week. Under this, people in the UK can offer to sponsor visas and provide rooms or homes for Ukrainians fleeing the conflict.

But as Enver Solomon, chief executive of the Refugee Council, [*has said*](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/mar/15/britons-support-ukrainian-refugees-homes) , the government is still insisting on visas. "The government is relying on what is effectively a managed migration route to respond to a humanitarian crisis," he writes. "This inevitably means paperwork and bureaucracy are being put before people's urgent needs." Even in the face of overwhelming public support for accepting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, the government finds itself incapable of simply doing the right thing.

Daniel Trilling, author of Lights in the Distance: exile and refuge at the borders of Europe, said: "It looks like the government wants to pick and choose which groups of refugees it offers help to." As Trilling points out, "this threatens to undermine a key principle of the international system for refugee protection, which is that everyone has the right to seek asylum regardless of where they're from. If every country behaved like the UK, that international system would quickly disintegrate."

But is such a cherry-picking approach to humanitarianism even possible? There are deeper issues being revealed here. The institutions through which state power is expressed have an inertia to them. They are lumbering behemoths - as you would expect from organisations tasked with the management of millions of people.

The ideological underpinnings of the UK's asylum system are deeply conservative. Like the benefits system, it is designed with the assumption that everyone applying should be first assumed to be a fraudster or scrounger, and that they must prove that they are not. However, there is a caveat to this: we don't mean me or my friends or other people that we like.

To keep up to speed with all the latest opinions and comment sign up to our free weekly Voices Dispatches newsletter by [*clicking here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Fnewsletters%3Fitm_channel%3Dnative%26itm_campaign%3Dfooter%26itm_audience%3Dprospecting%26itm_content%3Dnewsletters&data=04%7C01%7CVictoria.Richards%40independent.co.uk%7C062b3d811f2541e4220808d98fb59a11%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637698832400255119%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=cljURBTtBLaWfVwBrZv8UPgOVVFGM0rPoexRmk0aRHA%3D&reserved=0)

The nature of Johnsonism, in particular, has brought this undercurrent to the surface. The exceptions to the rule were definitely going to include you and yours, because the prime minister acts like your pal who gets that you're not one of the scroungers. At last, the British state would be making sure the right kind of people were getting special treatment and those "others" would be suffering at its hand.

We are seeing in real time that this myth cannot hold up. If you design a border system to exclude as many people as possible, to punish before it helps, then that is exactly what it will do, even if you try to carve exclusions into it. Large, lumbering beasts of bureaucracy will not read the mind of Dave in Essex and ask if he really meant these refugees when he voted for a party which promised to tighten the system. It will simply respond to the rules and practices that were put in place because millions of people voted for them.

There is a hard lesson to be learned here: to have a system capable of helping the most vulnerable, it must help everyone. If we do not err on the side of too much compassion, we will instead err on the side of cruelty. There is no point, in 2022, asking why the Home Office is behaving this way towards Ukrainians who clearly deserve better, when it is simply doing exactly what we have asked it to do.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our [*Refugees Welcome*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome) campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 20, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine-Russia war: This is what a 50km-long refugee crisis looks like*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WC-7C41-DY4H-K52K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 27, 2022 Sunday 6:19 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:2

**Length:** 416 words

**Byline:** Bel Trew and Lamiat Sabin

**Highlight:** Refugees have been waiting outdoors in icy conditions for hours, clips filmed for Independent TV show

**Body**

Thousands of cars packed with ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** desperately trying to flee the Russian invasion have formed a huge queue near [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) 's border with [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland).

Just a fraction of the 50km-long tailback has been captured in extraordinary footage filmed for [*Independent TV*](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/editors-picks).

Bel Trew, a foreign correspondent for The Independent, filmed the chaotic scenes in western Ukraine, close to the border with Poland - a country which tens of thousands of Ukrainians have fled to over the past few days.

In the clip, people are waiting inside and outside their vehicles that are stuffed with belongings. Hardly any traffic can be seen going the other direction that leads further into Ukraine.

People are also seen walking in the direction of the Polish border, pulling wheeled suitcases as well as carrying backpacks and plastic bags.

Many soup kitchens have dotted the main road that connects the Ukrainian city Lviv to the Polish border, and some of them are littered with discarded belongings and suitcases, Ms Trew said.

Another clip she filmed shows scores of people waiting on a train station platform for a way out of Ukraine.

Snow falls heavily as families huddle together to shield from the freezing cold, while children are heard chattering and crying in the background.

Ms Trew said she met families who had "walked for more than 10 hours in sub-zero temperatures" to leave Ukraine, after [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's president Vladimir Putin launched a bloody invasion on Thursday.

She added: "Many slept overnight in the ice. Families carrying a single backpack and their pet appeared through the darkness.

"I have never seen anything like it."

Freezing conditions are set to continue over the coming week as the western Ukraine region, near to the border of Poland, is forecast to feel temperatures drop to as low as -5C in the evenings.

The Independent [*launched an appeal this weekend -Refugees Welcome -*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-russia-refugee-crisis-b2024020.html) for the British government to grant more Ukrainians refuge in the UK.

On Sunday, foreign secretary Liz Truss said ministers are urgently examining how to help refugees fleeing the war, after getting intense criticism over current UK visa rules.

Ministers have already announced some changes to visa rules to help Ukrainians who are in the UK and unable to return home, and people in Ukraine with British relatives.

But so far there has been no announcement of a resettlement scheme for Ukrainians, or other measures in response to an expected exodus of refugees from the country.

**Load-Date:** February 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Shapps in fifth Cabinet role in a year as Sunak appoints him Defence Secretary*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:692M-BV31-JBNF-W2HP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 31, 2023 Thursday 12:43 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 639 words

**Byline:** Sam Blewett

**Highlight:** The Prime Minister promoted his ally after the formal resignation of Ben Wallace.

**Body**

[*Grant Shapps*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/grant-shapps) has been promoted to [*Defence Secretary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/defence-secretary) as Rishi Sunak handed him his fifth [*Cabinet*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/cabinet) role in a year in a mini-reshuffle prompted by Ben Wallace’s resignation.

With an eye on a general election, the Prime Minister brought another ally closer by moving up [*Claire Coutinho*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/claire-coutinho) from education minister to replace Mr Shapps as Energy Secretary.

Mr Shapps said he was “honoured” to take over from Mr Wallace and vowed to continue British support for Ukraine in its fight against Vladimir Putin’s “barbaric invasion”.

But, having never held a role at the Ministry of Defence, his credentials to take on the role during a major war in Europe were questioned.

Lord Richard Dannatt, a former chief of the general staff of the British Army, praised Mr Wallace for doing a “good job” in his four years in the post.

“And now we have a new Defence Secretary who knows very little about defence, and it’s a complex portfolio. It will take him quite some time to get up to speed,” Lord Dannatt told Sky News.

Former armed forces minister Mark Francois, a member of the Commons Defence Committee, said it will be an “incredibly tough act to follow” for Mr Shapps.

“I think, to put it mildly, because it’s such a complex department, this is going to be a very steep learning curve for Grant Shapps,” the Tory MP told GB News.

“Grant Shapps is a bright bloke, but he’s going to have to come up with the speed very, very quickly.”

Mr Shapps is seen as an effective communicator and will be key for Mr Sunak as he leads the Tories towards the general election, expected next year.

The war in Ukraine had been a prominent feature of Mr Shapps’ tenure as energy secretary, as he sought to mitigate the effects on fossil fuel availability.

He visited Kyiv last week and his family has hosted ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in their home after the Russian president launched his invasion last year.

Mr Shapps is one of Westminster’s most prolific users of TikTok, where he covered his own trip to Ukraine despite ministers being banned from using the Chinese-owned app on official devices over security concerns.

Mr Sunak first appointed him to the role of business secretary on his entrance to No 10. Mr Shapps served as Liz Truss’s home secretary for six days and Boris Johnson’s transport secretary until September.

Climate campaigners welcomed Mr Shapps’ departure from the energy brief.

Friends of the Earth said: “He seemed to be more concerned with playing childish politics on social media than the serious policies needed to address the greatest challenge of our time.”

Mr Wallace confirmed his departure as defence secretary on Thursday morning after announcing his intentions last month.

No 10 will hope appointing a close ally to the role will cool tensions over spending, with Mr Wallace having frequent run-ins in an attempt to boost MoD coffers.

In his resignation letter to the Prime Minister, he wrote: “I know you agree with me that we must not return to the days where defence was viewed as a discretionary spend by Government and savings were achieved by hollowing out.”

Mr Sunak praised Mr Wallace, who was a captain in the Scots Guards before entering politics, for having “served our country with distinction”.

The Prime Minister had been expected to launch a full reshuffle before the Tory party conference in October but now appears to be holding off.

Conservative MP David Johnston was given his first ministerial role as he steps up from the backbenches to replace Ms Coutinho as education minister.

Shadow defence secretary John Healey congratulated Mr Shapps for being appointed Defence Secretary but hit out at “13 years of Tory defence failures”, arguing that “a change at the top will not change this record”.

The Liberal Democrats accused Mr Sunak of appointing a “yes man” to the key role, calling for an end to the Tories’ ministerial “merry-go-round”.

**Load-Date:** August 31, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Voices: I've worked with refugees from Ukraine, Afghanistan and Uganda. These are the differences in how they're treated*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6517-6YR1-DY4H-K0GM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 17, 2022 Thursday 9:37 PM GMT

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**Section:** VOICES; Version:2

**Length:** 948 words

**Byline:** Amy Aves Challenger

**Highlight:** The Ukrainians I met at a recent refugee center were stuck outside, unsure what to do after being told not to access the old 'bad' system for refugees and instead to wait for a 'good' one. These are people who have suffered immensely - and, like so many others, are confused by a system that keeps changing around them

**Body**

I was thrilled to see that Benedict Cumberbatch used his influence to [*show support*](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/fashion/benedict-cumberbatch-ukraine-baftas-award-b2034887.html) for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** on the Baftas Red Carpet this week, as he [*told Sky News*](https://twitter.com/SkyNews/status/1503046984575463425) that he hopes to open his doors and be part of the UK government's refugee-hosting program. In my years working with asylum seekers from Afghanistan, Uganda, Eritrea, Ivory Coast, Turkey, Syria, Georgia, and now Ukraine, I've never seen displaced people become such a popular talking point. Nearly overnight, helping refugees has become a part of Europe's everyday language - in chats, on social media, in businesses, schools, on trains and in phone stores, and now on the red carpet. Right now, everybody wants to help asylum seekers - at least from Ukraine.

Two weeks ago on a Saturday night, I met my first ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. My husband and I were spending our time as volunteers eating popcorn and playing Uno with Afghan teens at a refugee camp in Zürich, Switzerland. Walking out, we found eight Ukrainian adults, some crying, with their children running around the armed building. They told me they'd been advised by registration guards not to enter the ''bad'' system for refugees, but that they should wait for the new "good'' system coming soon just for Ukrainians.

These women had traveled days through Ukraine, then in Europe; some said they were leaving husbands who were medical workers, who had had to stay behind to look after patients. A Swiss man they'd met wanted to help. ''I have kids,'' he said to me. ''I can't imagine this.'' He paid for housing for all 18 refugees for several nights while we created a community chat to support them in finding longer-term housing, supplies, and answers to registration questions. As they stood in lines daily and talked with government staff, they taught the people in our growing chat about local government, about the evolving Swiss Ukrainian permit news, so that we could share information with others. Then they joined us in helping other refugees as they arrived.

I consider some of the refugees I've known who would have benefited from such connections. I think of an Afghan teen refugee who arrived, unaccompanied, in a shipping container from Greece three years ago. It took her several midnight attempts on a crowded raft without a life vest - though she can't swim - to reach Greece from Turkey. Before Turkey, she crossed the snowy mountains of Iran on foot.

I got to know this Afghan refugee over dough we kneaded for pizzas at the camp. She told me she'd lost her mom during the years-long journey they undertook toward Switzerland. She was scared to sleep in the small bunk room she was given, where she shared with adults in the locked-down ''bad camp'' where I later met the Ukrainians. There was no system designed for her to stay in a private home as we can now thankfully offer Ukrainians. There was no way for her to live without armed guards, with a foster family or host. Eventually, she was admitted to a psychiatric unit several times for PTSD, where I could only visit her by waving from the outside. She still hasn't received guaranteed long-term residency.

Or I consider my friend from another eastern European country who came to Switzerland to save her son's life. He needed several surgeries, and eventually a transplant that was unavailable in his home country. His college-educated parents want to work, but aren't permitted to by authorities. So the mom volunteers for the Red Cross, visiting lonely seniors in their homes. This family waited for almost three years for an answer to their asylum application, recently receiving a rejection.

Or I consider a Ugandan woman who escaped her traffickers after two years of slavery. She traveled to Switzerland alone. When she arrived, she received no welcome; rather, she began to process her trauma all by herself. We became friends when I received a call that someone needed help getting to church. About a month later, she was shipped across the country, forced to stay in a small refugee center atop a mountain in a remote part of Switzerland. There, she slept in a bunk room with several other women, learning French for six months before she was allowed to leave and begin efforts to track down her children, who were still living in danger in Uganda.

Each one of these people has become a teacher to me. They've learned new languages, cared for babies and toddlers, survived the cold with suitcases or small bags, lived in tents, walked, boated, run often without money, some without identity documents, always without a home. At times they have not been able to see a future beyond their chilly feet. Now I hope that seeing them through me, a simple mom who has heard their stories, and especially through the eyes of celebrities like Cumberbatch will open more doors and minds.

As we follow Ukrainians and their iconic leader President Volodymyr Zelensky, I hope we become part of something bigger than our small worlds. After all, as Justin Trudeau recently [*said*](https://www.rmotoday.com/beyond-local/ukrainian-president-volodymyr-zelenskyys-quotes-from-his-speech-to-canadas-parliament-5162364) to Zelensky in front of Canada's parliament, "You're defending the values that form the pillars of all free, democratic countries: freedom, human rights, justice, truth, international order."

May we all defend such values, for all displaced people, by challenging ourselves and our systems, and by keeping doors wide open.

Amy Aves Challenger has been organizing activities and building international relationships within the refugee community for over five years in Switzerland in conjunction with a government organization, several NGOs, and schools. She recently received a grant via the Schusterman Foundation to provide creative writing workshops to 24 refugees across Europe

**Load-Date:** March 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'It's a mad push to the front'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YM-HVV1-JCS0-D2BD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 10, 2022 Thursday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1015 words

**Byline:** MAY BULMAN

**Body**

When Andrei Toloshko heard that the UK had launched a family migration route for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** last week, he thought he, along with his wife and young son, would be able to join his London-based brother in the UK within days.

The family had fled from their home in Kyiv on 25 February after hearing bombs in the middle of the night. After a 48-hour-drive they crossed the border to Moldova. Without relatives there, they hoped they wouldn't be there long. But when Mr Toloshko tried to book an appointment to submit their application under the UK visa scheme, he was told there were "no available appointments for this month, for next month, May, or June".

The 37-year-old, who worked as the director at a commercial property consulting company in Kyiv, went to the visa centre in Chisinau - the only centre in Moldova - on Monday morning. There were already dozens of Ukrainians waiting there, and only two members of staff were there to assist them. He was told to return at 2pm. When they did so there were even more people and they could not get an appointment. The family returned to the centre on Tuesday in the hope of getting an appointment - only to find that it was shut for a public holiday.

"I'm shocked," Mr Toloshko told The Independent after returning from the centre. "The Home Office said they would try to make it faster, but it's no different to normal. They are obviously completely unprepared for this situation. They should make sure their commercial partner working in these centres understands this urgent situation. They should create another queue for Ukrainians, put more staff on the ground - just for one week or two weeks - or start collecting documents at the embassy."

The home secretary announced a family migration route for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** last week, under which she said tens of thousands of close relatives of British nationals and people settled in the UK would be eligible to come to the UK. The scheme was opened on Friday.

In order to submit an application, refugees are required to attend a UK visa centre, which are run by the Home Office's commercial partner TLScontact. There are only one or two of these centres in most EU countries, meaning many refugees must travel for several hours to attend one.

There are also issues with capacity, with UK-based family members and immigration lawyers reporting that they have been unable to find a free appointment slot on the website. Home Office figures show only 760 visas have been granted so far under the family route, despite tens of thousands of applications having been submitted. The Home Office has placed 35 additional Home Office staff in visa centres across Europe. There are believed to be 57 centres across the continent.

Chris Allsford, from southwest England, is currently in Warsaw, Poland, where he drove from the UK to meet his Ukrainian wife Svitlana, on Sunday evening after she fled from eastern Ukraine, described "poor organisation" in the UK visa system. "They've set up a visa centre in a hotel. There are around 300 people there every morning. You're told to go away and make an application online, but you've got people here who don't speak any English and are probably not accustomed to using the internet," he said.

"They say if you don't have an appointment come back at 6pm. At 5pm there's a huge queue, then they shut the door at 5.45. I asked why a staff member told everyone to come back at 6pm, and she just said I thought we could do more but we're tired. You don't want to argue with them, but you're looking around at people who have fled a warzone and are exhausted. In the whole queue there are probably three men - the rest are women and children."

Mr Allsford spoke of a woman with three young children who arrived on Tuesday with an appointment, but was told to leave because she needed to make a separate application for her and each of her children. "There's a real lack of information. It would help if they had more staff to give people information. At the moment you literally push your way through the crowd to the door, and then they tell you to go away, book an appointment and print a checklist. It's a mad push to the front; there's no control at all. Everybody is worried and afraid."

In another case, Uliana, whose sister-in-law is currently in Bergamo, Italy, with her two young children - Uliana's brother stayed in Ukraine to defend the country - and her mother, trying to submit a visa application, said the family was "driven onto the streets" after trying to get an appointment on Tuesday. The family, who are staying in a monastery, travelled for an hour and 20 minutes by car - which they rented out for Euro 150 - to reach the nearest visa centre in Milan on Monday, only to be told that they had filled out the forms incorrectly as each individual had to have their own form.

Uliana, who didn't want to use her full name, said were told that there were no appointments available for the rest of the month, but that they could come back early the following day and the staff would try to fit them in. The family did so - again paying Euro 150 for a rental car - only to be told they could not be seen again.

"They arrived there so early, woke up a small child. By 8am they were already there, waiting for them when they open there at 8:30, but when they went in the same man who told them to come back did not want to accept them," said Uliana. "[The staff] are so ruthless. They drove them out into the street, and they told them to leave. They didn't look at those poor little children. They all cried and begged them, saying they had already travelled twice, in a rented a car, from such a long way."

A government spokesperson said: "We are working to process applications as quickly as possible and submitting an application in English reduces delays, which means we can get people here more efficiently. However, if someone is unable to provide translated documents they should still submit their application with untranslated documents. Support is available to applicants through our free 24/7 helpline and in visa application centres."

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*What Vice President Kamala Harris didn't say in Poland*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YR-DM91-DY4H-K25C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 10, 2022 Thursday 9:22 PM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 1127 words

**Byline:** Andrew Feinberg

**Highlight:** Vice President Kamala Harris touched all the bases in her remarks. But what did she leave unsaid

**Body**

As Ukraine entered its third week of defending itself from [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's unprovoked invasion, Vice President [*Kamala Harris*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kamala-harris) has emerged as one of President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) 's go-to emissaries to key allies in America's effort to shore up Ukraine's defence and coordinate aid and relief efforts with Nato allies.

The vice president left Washington on Wednesday for a two-leg trip to [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) and Romania - both ex-Warsaw Pact nations that have joined Nato over the decades since the fall of the Soviet Union.

Perhaps more importantly, both of her destinations share land borders with Ukraine, and in the weeks since Russia began attacking have taken in many of the approximately two million refugees the United Nations estimates to have fled their homes.

At the vice president's first public appearance - a bilateral meeting with Polish Prime Minister [*Mateusz Morawiecki*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mateusz-morawiecki) - the Polish leader thanked Ms Harris for "the unity of the Western world," while she commended the "extraordinary work" performed by the Polish population to welcome the largest flood of European refugees since the Second World War.

At a joint media availability with Polish President [*Andrzej Duda*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/andrzej-duda) a short time later, Ms Harris again praised the "leadership" shown by Polish citizens, telling reporters: "we've witnessed extraordinary acts of generosity and kindness. We have seen through images on the television -looking at images of ordinary people doing extraordinary things in support of the dignity and the wellbeing of perfect strangers"

The vice president later announced a $50 billion contribution to the UN World Food Programme and pledged to "continue" with US efforts to support the work Mr Duda and the Polish people have undertaken to bear the burden of this latest refugee crisis.

[*Read the latest on the invasion of Ukraine here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-latest-news-russia-tanks-b2033037.html)

Ms Harris also reaffirmed what Mr Biden has called America's "ironclad" support for Nato and the mutual defence provisions of the North Atlantic Treaty, and vowed that the US - together with Poland - would do "everything together, in partnership, in solidarity, to support what is necessary at this very moment in terms of the humanitarian and security needs of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people".

Under questioning from a Polish journalist, she described the US-Poland relationship as "deep, enduring, and strong" and said the crisis brought on by Russia's invasion of Ukraine has made it stronger still.

At a time when Russian president Vladimir Putin's escalating military adventurism and bombastic rhetoric about reclaiming territory of a "greater Russia" has put former governments and residents of former Soviet bloc states on edge, Ms Harris touched all the bases in her remarks. But what she left unsaid and the issues she did not raise underscore the fact that there are some gaps in the relationship between Washington and Warsaw that aren't likely to be resolved so long as the threat of Russia looms.

Those Polish planes

Ms Harris denied that the Pentagon's rejection of a plan - floated earlier this week by Mr Duda's government - to place Polish Soviet-made MiG-29 fighter jets "at the disposal" of the US for eventual retrieval and use by Ukrainian pilots.

US defence officials appeared caught unawares when the Polish government issued a statement about the plan earlier this week after repeated pleas for the aircraft from Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky, and Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby put the kibosh on the proposal at a Wednesday press briefing, telling reporters the US intelligence community had found the Polish jets were "not likely to significantly change the effectiveness of Ukrainian Air Force relative to Russian capabilities," and would provide "little increased capabilities at high risk" of being seen as Nato escalating the conflict.

When asked what the US was prepared to do to bolster Ukrainian air defence in the absence of a plan to provide aircraft familiar to Ukrainian pilots, Ms Harris pointed to what she called the "ongoing process" of delivering anti-armour and anti-aircraft missiles to Ukrainian forces.

Mr Duda interjected to say Poland had "behaved in such a way as a reliable member of Nato should behave" by involving the US in the proposal to provide Ukraine with the Soviet-era jets, and tacitly defended the US response.

But the continuing reports of Russian atrocities in Ukraine, most recently Wednesday's bombing of a maternity hospital - and Mr Zelensky's impassioned pleas for the West's help to "close the skies" above his country - mean the issue of how far to go in arming Ukrainian forces is not going away any time soon.

Will the US take in ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***?

Asked whether the United States would "make a specific allocation for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***," Ms Harris responded with nervous laughter before remarking: "A friend in need is a friend indeed".

The vice president said she had discussed the matter with Mr Duda and reiterated her previous praise for Poland's efforts to absorb the record flow of Ukrainians fleeing Russia's destruction.

However, she made no commitment beyond pledging that the US would remain "absolutely prepared to do what we can and what we must to support Poland in terms of the burden that they have taken".

What about the rest of the Biden administration's prior concerns about Poland?

When Ms Harris and Mr Biden took office in January 2021, Poland's current position as a key ally on Nato's eastern flank was not the most pressing facet of the Washington-Warsaw relationship.

Instead, the Biden administration was looking to prevent Poland from continuing the democratic backsliding that has kept the country in an ongoing constitutional crisis since the Polish Law and Justice party gained unified control of the presidency and parliament in the 2015 elections.

One potential source of tensions was diffused in late 2021, when Mr Duda vetoed a law that would've required US-based Discovery Communications to offload control of TVN24 - Poland's most-watched news channel and one of the last independent television stations in the country.

But the vice president's remarks showed how the present crisis brought on by Russia's invasion of Ukraine has pushed a whole host of issues to the side.

Not once did Ms Harris mention LGBT+ rights, press freedom, the importance of an independent judiciary, reproductive freedom, or the need for free, fair elections - all top priorities in what she and Mr Biden have tried to characterise as part of a foreign policy that promotes democracy in a global battle against autocracy.

As long as Russia looms, those issues will most likely remain on the back burner as far as the US-Poland relationship is concerned.

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Home Office helpline for Ukraine refugees manned by advisers who 'know nothing' about new scheme*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64X0-B7T1-DY4H-K0W7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 2, 2022 Wednesday 1:39 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:4

**Length:** 1065 words

**Byline:** May Bulman

**Highlight:** Helpline advisers say they 'haven't been briefed' about refugee scheme so cannot assist, say Ukrainians

**Body**

The [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) [*helpline*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/helpline) for ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) wishing to join loved ones in Britain under the new visa scheme is being manned by advisers who know nothing about the scheme, it has been claimed.

British nationals and Ukrainians in the UK have said they are "angry and disappointed" after discovering on calling the helpline, published in a Home Office press release, that it could offer them no assistance with getting their relatives to Britain.

The [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) [*announced*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugees-visas-home-office-priti-patel-uk-b2026074.html) on Tuesday that it was expanding the route to include parents, grandparents, adult children and siblings of British nationals and people settled in the UK, and that a new sponsorship scheme was being established to help people fleeing the Russia invasion.

The Independent has set up a petition calling on the UK government to be at the forefront of the international community offering aid and support to those in Ukraine. To sign the petition click [*here.*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees)

In a press release on Tuesday, the department said people in the region who are eligible under this route were encouraged to call a dedicated helpline, and provided a phone number.

However, it has emerged that when people have called this phone number, the advisers at the other end of the line are not aware of the changes to the scheme.

Stanislav Yurtyn, a Ukrainian IT manager living in London, said he was thrilled to hear about the rule changes on Tuesday, as it would enable his wife's parents, who have fled from [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) in recent days, to join his family in the UK.

But when the 42-year-old tried to call the helpline on Wednesday morning to start the process, he said he was told by the adviser who answered the phone that "they don't know anything about this new scheme".

"The advisor said they deal only with British nationals and family visas for immediate members of British nationals, not the new scheme. He advised me to call to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)," he said.

"I called UKVI and it took 30 minutes to get through. They said that if I'm not a British national, the scheme is not applied. The advisor said that he saw the press release but that they had had no new updates from their managers."

Mr Yurtyn, whose parents-in-law are currently relying on support and accommodation from friends in Maldova, added: "I feel angry. I understand it may take time to set this up in the systems, but can't they speed it up?

"People suffering now. They cannot wait. The UK knew this was likely to happen. They could have thought about immigration policy earlier. I'm disappointed and frustrated."

Andrii Zharikov, a Ukrainian-born lecturer at the University of Portsmouth who has been in the UK for six years, said he called the helpline on Monday to ask about getting his younger sister, 19, to the UK after she fled Ukraine earlier this week.

"I was on the phone for over an hour only to learn that they have no guidance about the administration of the scheme which they announced yesterday. I was told to call later," he said.

"I am appalled by yet another instance of disorganisation. Many refugees may not have the time and money to call and wait for an hour only to be told to call back later.

"It seems like the statement about the new scheme was made just to appeal to general British public, but not to help refugees themselves as the system remains unclear and confusing."

Peter Baron, a British national living in Chichester, who is hoping to bring his Ukrainian partner to the UK after she fled from the country, said he too was told by the helpline that staff couldn't help.

"I have just spent another hour on the phone to the helpline. It's a broken system -the adviser basically said they haven't been briefed yet and I should ring back tomorrow," he said.

"I made the point that refugees very likely don't have the money in their phone to hang around on a helpline for an hour and would he please pass this feedback up the line."

Mr Baron, whose partner is currently sleeping on the floor of a friend's apartment in Istanbul, added: "Nothing has been thought through no one is prepared and meantime our loved ones are camped out somewhere in Europe. I am distressed and ashamed."

Sophie Spector, an immigration lawyer in London, said that she had phoned the helpline to discover the scheme for extended family members of people in the UK was "not open" and that there was "no means to apply.

I have just got off the phone with the helpline. The scheme for extended family members where the British National is in the UK IS NOT OPEN! There is no means to apply. Helpline are frustrated and upset as we all are as receiving thousands of calls. Do not call the number. 1/2 [*https://t.co/d3xrqjGsD1*](https://t.co/d3xrqjGsD1) - Sophie Spector (@SophieSpector) [*March 2, 2022*](https://twitter.com/SophieSpector/status/1498974473915092995?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

"Helpline [staff] are frustrated and upset as we all are as [they are] receiving thousands of calls. Do not call the number," she said in a tweet on Wednesday.

Relatives of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** also took to Twitter to express their frustration. One said on Wednesday morning: "Helpline advisers saying they have no guidance for my 73-year-old nan who is trying to escape the Ukraine war, no form to fill in."

Another appealed to the Home Office Twitter account, asking: "How can Ukrainians apply for a humanitarian visa route? Helpline is saying it's not open. How they can put an application in?"

A Home Office spokesperson said: "We have been working at pace to launch the Ukraine family scheme and it is already open for immediate family members to apply.

"The scheme will be open to extended family members from Friday. Call handlers are taking contact details in the interim, and callers will be contacted with further information on applying."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine war in numbers: How many people killed and how many refugees in Russian invasion*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YH-4931-DY4H-K2TG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 9, 2022 Wednesday 7:17 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 1111 words

**Byline:** Chiara Giordano

**Highlight:** Two weeks after Russia's tanks first rolled into Ukraine both sides have suffered hundreds of casualties while two million people have fled

**Body**

Two weeks after [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's tanks first rolled into [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , both sides have suffered hundreds of casualties while an estimated two million civilians have fled the country.

The Kremlin on Wednesday claimed its so-called special operation was "going to plan".

After staging more than 150,000 troops on Ukraine's borders, the Russians launched their invasion 24 February, pressing south toward the capital Kyiv from points in southern Belarus and Russia.

But Russia has achieved less and struggled more than anticipated amid fierce resistance from its neighbours.

And with no sign of Russian president Vladimir Putin backing away, the war appears likely to drag on.

The biggest land conflict in Europe since the Second World War has also sparked a humanitarian crisis in Ukraine that has accelerated in recent days.

Hundreds of Ukrainian civilians have been caught in the crossfire, with entire families killed while trying to flee their homes.

Here, we've taken a look at the headline figures from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, including how many people are thought to have been killed during the conflict. All figures are correct as of 9 March.

Ukraine civilians killed

Russia and Ukraine have given vastly different numbers for civilian and military casualties since the invasion began on 24 February.

According to the latest statistics verified by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on Wednesday, 516 Ukrainian civilians had been killed in total as of 8 March, 37 of whom were children.

OHCHR said it believed the actual figures were "considerably higher", especially in government-controlled territory and especially in recent days.

A further 908 people, including 50 children, were also reported to have been wounded, according to the same statistics.

Most civilian casualties were caused by explosive weapons including shelling and missile and air strikes, OHCHR said.

Russia has denied targeting civilians in its assault on Ukraine.

Ukraine children killed

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the latest verified figures show a total of 37 children had been killed in Ukraine as of 8 March.

Nine of these were boys, five girls, and 23 whose sex was yet unknown.

Fifty children had also been injured, including 12 girls, four boys and 34 children whose sex was not known.

[*These include a nine-year-old girl killed*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-irpin-mother-daughter-son-killed-b2031841.html) by Russian shelling while attempting to flee the city of Irpin, on the outskirts of Kyiv, along a humanitarian corridor with her mother and 18-year-old brother.

[*A six-year-old girl in unicorn pyjamas*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-girl-killed-shelling-b2024832.html) also died after an apartment block was hit in the southern port city of Mariupol.

Ukraine soldiers killed

While keen to report Russian casualties, Ukraine has not been as quick to mention deaths within its own ranks.

In the first week of the invasion, it was reported that [*70 Ukrainian soldiers were killed after Russian artillery hit a military base*](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/russia-ukraine-soldiers-okhtyrka-shelling-b2026296.html) in the eastern city of Okhtyrka, between Kharkiv and Kyiv.

But little more has been reported about Ukrainian military casualty numbers.

Russian troops killed

Ukraine and Russia have given varying accounts of how many Russian troops have died during the conflict.

On Sunday 6 March, Ukraine claimed more than 11,000 Russian soldiers had been killed since the start of the invasion.

Three days later, Lieutenant General Scott Berrier, director of the Pentagon's Defence Intelligence Agency, said Russia had likely lost between 2,000 and 4,000 troops so far, although he acknowledged his agency had "low confidence" in its estimate.

But both of those numbers were significantly lower than that recognised by the Kremlin, [*which was 498 as of 2 March*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russian-soldiers-ukraine-war-death-toll-b2026999.html) with no updates since.

How many refugees have left Ukraine

The United Nations (UN) estimates 2.16 million Ukrainians have so far fled their country, and the number is expected to grow.

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)'s latest figures show that, of the 2.16m total, 1.3mn Ukrainians have headed towards Poland while Hungary has received 203,000 people. Slovakia counted 153,000 across its border, with Romania taking in 35,000 and Moldova 83,000.

Another 236,000 have gone to other European countries, the UNHCR said.

The mayor of Calais has claimed UK border guards have turned away 350 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** trying to cross to the UK.

It comes after Number 10 announced hundreds of refugees who have travelled to the French town in the hope of reaching loved ones in Britain would have to make a 70-mile journey to Lille to apply for visas, despite previous suggestions that there would be a visa centre closer to the port.

The Home Office has said ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** could take free tickets offered by Eurostar to make the journey from Calais to Lille - [*but there were no journeys available on the Eurostar website between these two locations*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukrainian-refugees-home-office-visa-uk-b2031392.html) on Wednesday.

How many Russian troops in country

Russia is thought to have stationed more than 150,000 troops on Ukraine's borders before launching its invasion on 24 February.

The Pentagon on Tuesday estimated Russia retained about 95 per cent of the combat power it has deployed in Ukraine, accounting for weapons and vehicles destroyed or made inoperable as well as troops killed and wounded.

Those losses, while modest at first glance, are significant for two weeks of fighting.

Security and defence analyst Michael Clarke told Sky News he believed Russia was about to run out of available troops because it had committed about 190,000 to the operation, which were now all in Ukraine apart from a few thousand.

British defence secretary Ben Wallace said the Ministry of Defence's assessment of Russian forces suggested more than 90 per cent of its forces on the border have now been committed to Ukraine and inside Ukraine.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Queen guitarist, women's soccer team top UK honors list*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:676R-5191-JBNF-W0HP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

December 30, 2022 Friday 11:34 PM GMT

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**Length:** 459 words

**Byline:** Joanna Kozlowska

**Highlight:** Those at the forefront of the U.K.'s response to Russia's war in Ukraine joined Queen guitarist Brian May and a fashion designer dubbed “the mother of the miniskirt" on the country's new year's Honors list

**Body**

Those at the forefront of the U.K.'s response to [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's war in Ukraine joined Queen guitarist [*Brian May*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/brian-may) and a fashion designer dubbed “the mother of the miniskirt” on the country’s New Year's Honors list on Friday.

Artists, community leaders and members of England's award-winning women's soccer team were also among the more than 1,100 people included in this year’s list, the first to be signed off by King [*Charles III*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/charles-iii).

May, who is also an animal welfare campaigner, was appointed a knight bachelor for his services to music and charity. The former Queen guitarist, who also holds a doctorate in astrophysics, said he regarded his new title as “a kind of commission to do the things one would expect a knight to do — to fight for justice, to fight for people who don’t have any voice.”

[*Mary Quant*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mary-quant) , the 92-year-old designer best known for popularizing the miniskirt during the 1960s, received the U.K.'s top honor for her services to fashion. Quant’s appointment to the Order of the Companions of Honor, a special status held by no more than 65 people at any one time, came seven years after she was made a dame — the female equivalent of a knight — in recognition of her designs.

Artist Grayson Perry, known for his tapestries and ceramics, was also knighted for services to the arts.

Elsewhere, diplomats shaping the U.K.'s response to the war in Ukraine were recognized, with damehoods for the ambassadors to both Kyiv and Moscow, and a British Empire Medal (BEM) for a campaigner who led donation drives for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Nanny Louenna Hood, 37, who raised more than 160,000 pounds through online auctions, said she was “completely stunned” to be recognized.

“I started the campaign, but I would never have been able to do it without the community,” she said.

Half of this year’s honors went to women, including members of the England soccer team that won the 2022 Women's European Championship and the first woman to lead a major U.K bank.

England captain Leah Williamson received an OBE, while teammates Lucy Bronze, Beth Mead and Ellen White were all made MBEs.

Alison Rose, the chief executive of banking group NatWest and the first woman to run one of the U.K.'s largest banks, was also awarded a damehood.

U.K. monarchs have awarded honors as part of orders of chivalry since the Middle Ages. In modern times, nominations are submitted to the government’s Cabinet Office and vetted by a committee before being passed on to the prime minister and the monarch for approval.

Others honored this year included those campaigning for environmental and climate change action, youth engagement and combating discrimination. Britain’s chief rabbi, Ephraim Mirvis, who received a knighthood, was among several Jewish community leaders to be recognized.

**Load-Date:** December 30, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine war pushing UK aid programmes 'to breaking point', campaigners warn*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651Y-YYB1-JBNF-W2M5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 21, 2022 Monday 2:46 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 618 words

**Byline:** Andrew Woodcock

**Highlight:** Exclusive: Report finds cut to aid budget leaves UK unable to meet strategic priorities and international obligations

**Body**

Anti-poverty campaigners have warned that war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) is stretching the UK's overseas aid budget "to breaking point".

Researchers from [*the ONE Campaign*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/one-campaign) said the Russian invasion has destroyed the government's rationale for cutting [*aid spending*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/aid-spending) from the level of 0.7 per cent to 0.5 per cent of gross national income in 2020.

The non-profit group has called on chancellor [*Rishi Sunak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rishi-sunak) to bring forward the planned restoration of the 0.7 per cent figure, warning that failure to do so will mean life-saving programmes will be withdrawn from some of the world's poorest nations.

[*The Ukrainian war*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-war-latest-missiles-hypersonic-b2039942.html) means that the UK will no longer be able to meet its strategic priorities and international obligations within the reduced budget, it added.

Some £220m of UK aid money has been diverted so far to meet immediate humanitarian needs in Ukraine. Meanwhile, the disruption to Ukrainian wheat exports, which make up 10 per cent of global supply, has sent food prices soaring around the world, including in developing countries.

ONE UK director Romilly Greenhill said it was "absolutely the case" that refugees fleeing Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine need to be supported as much as people facing famine in east Africa do.

But she said "by keeping our aid budget unnecessarily reduced, the UK is not in a position to do both; it's forcing itself into a situation where it has to choose between people in crisis," adding that "we're seeing a convergence of crises that mean you can't just pick and choose which problem to deal with in a vacuum".

The aid cut - equivalent to £4.5bn a year - was described as a "temporary" measure. Mr Sunak has said he hopes to restore spending to its previous level in 2024-25, but Ms Greenhill said this timetable needs to be accelerated.

A report by ONE found that a series of humanitarian disasters, including the ***Ukraine*** ***refugee crisis*** and the controversial decision to include Covid vaccines in the aid budget, had made the argument for the cut increasingly "out of date".

The group's report comes days before Mr Sunak's mini-budget statement on Wednesday and ahead of the expected publication of the Foreign Office's international development strategy.

"We're in a different place to when the aid budget was first cut," said Ms Greenhill. "Since the chancellor announced the cut in 2020, circumstances have changed, and the justification that was used then no longer holds.

"The government cannot deliver on its own agenda at the current budget, and with more and more spend being added, UK aid is being stretched to breaking point. It's pushing existing anti-poverty work out."

ONE's analysis, carried out before the invasion of Ukraine, found that the decision to cut UK aid meant 4 million fewer girls will have access to a decent education and that 1 million women and children under five will be at risk of malnutrition.

It also found that aid to low-income countries like Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen had been slashed, while some middle-income countries like China and Brazil saw a rise in funds received.

UK overseas development aid to Ethiopia fell by 55 per cent from £240.5m in 2020-21 to £107.5m in 2021-22, while China's funding rose from £2.2m to £13.7m in the same period, the report found.

A government spokesperson said: "The UK has a long history of helping other countries in need and we are one of the largest aid spenders globally.

"We are leading the world in protecting people fleeing the conflict in Ukraine and have already provided £220 million in aid, including for life-saving medical supplies, shelter and hygiene kits."

"International development remains a core FCDO priority and we will return to 0.7 per cent as soon as the fiscal situation allows."

**Load-Date:** March 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainians need open, unconditional, generous help - now*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WS-C091-DY4H-K427-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 1, 2022 Tuesday 1:58 PM GMT

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**Section:** EDITORIALS,VOICES; Version:7

**Length:** 1069 words

**Byline:** Editorial

**Highlight:** Refugees Welcome: The Independent has launched a petition and a fundraiser to help those affected by the crisis in Ukraine

**Body**

The images coming from Ukraine of bombed-out apartment blocks and the hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing for their lives speak of the terror enveloping a blameless people. It demands an immediate humanitarian response. It is a looming disaster. ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** need open, unconditional, generous help. Now.

We say: [*Refugees Welcome*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0).

The Independent is calling for authorities across the west to respond to a clear and present danger to life and public health - to do whatever it takes to save lives and protect families. We need to supply aid to [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , to the surrounding countries dealing with the refugees, and indeed to help Ukrainians find safety in Britain. Here's how:

We have started a [*petition*](https://www.change.org/p/uk-government-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) with change.org to call on the UK government to be at the forefront of the international community offering aid and support to a nation in need. [*Please sign here*](https://www.change.org/p/uk-government-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) We have also started a [*fundraiser*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) in partnership with gofundme.org.uk to raise money for the thousands of men, women and children who are fleeing the fighting in Ukraine. Your donations will go to charities on the ground, including the Red Cross, who are supporting refugees crossing the border into Ukraine's neighbours - Poland, Romania, Hungary, Moldova and Slovakia - as well as people displaced from their homes within Ukraine. [*Please give generously*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome)

Aid on the border

In the short term, we know that the shivering refugees have to be offered shelter, warmth, food and comfort for themselves and their children. They need access to phones and the internet. They need these things right now, particularly in the borderlands around Ukraine.

The need is extremely urgent and local, and we have partnered with charitable organisations to deliver accommodation, clothing, food, sanitary goods, medicines, toys and other necessities to those who have had to leave their homes and loved ones behind. The money is needed - and needed now.

Welcome all Ukrainians

We cannot know how long this war will last, or what course it will take. In the short to medium term, many frightened Ukrainian people will wish to join relatives in Europe for temporary safety and shelter. They naturally will want to return home when they can - but what they will go back to, or when, is uncertain.

At the moment, the official response in the UK for those seeking asylum in this way has been found wanting. It is not good enough to relax the visa requirements, as the British government has now done. There needs to be a far more big-hearted, liberal approach to accepting refugees. Indeed, the UK's obligation to accept refugees is absolute under the relevant international conventions.

As with unaccompanied Syrian children, and the Afghans who helped British forces and agencies during the war, the government has shown a lack of compassion and urgency in facing up to its obligations.

Provide protection

The Nationality and Borders Bill, currently going through parliament, is designed to weaken those international legal responsibilities. That means that Ukrainians who are desperately trying to reach the UK - however they can - can be denied asylum without any chance to plead their case.

Indeed, the home secretary, Priti Patel, plans to go further by making it an offence even to make the journey, meaning those arriving could be deported to a third country or jailed. If not removed or imprisoned, people will be granted a form of temporary status which affords them no access to benefits and no family reunion rights, and will be regularly reassessed for removal - leaving them in a perpetual state of uncertainty, and given a lower status than the rest of society.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has raised the alarm that this two-tiered approach will also breach the 1951 Refugee Convention and unnecessarily "stigmatise" people feeling persecution. This is no way to treat defenceless people running from President Putin's missiles.

There is significant opposition to these inhumane moves, and more pressure is needed. We must urge the government to think again and consider the human cost of the new policy, and the more support it receives, the more chance that orderly and practical routes for asylum seekers will be established and the people traffickers stopped. That will benefit any ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, and many others too with a proper claim to be offered a place of safety.

Resettlement scheme

In the longer term, depending on what happens in Ukraine, there may be a need for more refugees to be settled in the UK. This may be true whether they have relatives in Britain or not. More widely, there is also an obvious need to replace the smuggling routes across the English Channel with what are termed by the government "safe and legal" routes - but there is a distinct lack of these routes available.

Official data shows that the number of people who come to Britain under refugee resettlement schemes has plummeted by 75 per cent in the last four years. The Home Office scrapped its numerical target on refugee resettlement last year, prompting calls from charities for the UK to commit to taking 10,000 refugees from around the world through these schemes annually.

These calls have so far gone ignored. These commitments will have to be increased if events in Ukraine trigger another mass movement across Europe.

Given that President Putin has been threatening war for weeks, if not months, woefully little has been done by western governments who, as we know, had remarkably accurate intelligence about his intentions. Because of that failure of preparedness, the need to act now is even more pressing.

It is time to extend the hand of help and declare: [*Refugees Welcome.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0)

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here.*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Ftopic%2Frefugees-welcome-0&data=04%7C01%7CKaty.Clifton%40independent.co.uk%7C2a2d4959602a48a7514408d9fbc3eb4d%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817641167117856%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=RZ7crcxX9U9jftiU38S4VVIl8uiLT6BXiwvDblkPG%2Fo%3D&reserved=0)

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Prayers and despair: Ukrainians in the US decry invasion*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64W5-DXM1-JBNF-W212-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 26, 2022 Saturday 7:00 PM GMT

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**Length:** 1014 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Ukrainians in the United States are praying for friends and family, donating money and supplies, and registering outrage

**Body**

The Rev. Myron Myronyuk stayed up all night at home in [*Pennsylvania*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/pennsylvania) as his twin brother tried to flee [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) , the Ukrainian capital, only to turn back because the road out was choked with traffic. His in-laws, also in Ukraine, told him they couldn't get basics like bread and milk.

There was little Myronyuk could do but pray that his loved ones would survive the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

A sense of helplessness overcame Ukrainians in America as the war unfolded half a world away, with little chance their loved ones in Ukraine would find refuge in the U.S. any time soon. For now, they are trying to donate money and supplies, desperately seeking advice from immigration attorneys about how to get family here and pleading for world leaders to intervene more forcefully.

"I say, 'We're praying for you, we wish you to be safe, go to a safe place,'" said Myronyuk, pastor of St. Vladimir Ukrainian Catholic Church in Scranton, Pennsylvania. "We have to continue to pray and ask God for help," he said, but "there's not much else we can do here."

Demonstrators gathered in Manhattan's Times Square and near the Russian Federation's mission to the United Nations on Thursday, waving blue-and-yellow Ukrainian flags and denouncing Russian President [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin). About 100 people took to an overpass in [*Chicago*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/chicago) , putting their hands to their hearts as the Ukrainian national anthem blared from a big speaker.

"The worst part is we cannot help them any more. We would send money, but everything is closed," said Chicago resident Hrystyna Klym, who has been in the U.S. for 15 years and has family in Ukraine. Klym volunteers with an organization that has regularly sent clothes, magazines, money and other items to help Ukraine's needy, particularly wounded soldiers, but she said there's no way to donate directly now.

At Ukrainian Village Food & Deli in the Cleveland suburb of Parma Heights, Mila Radeva, 39, said her father - who lives near the Ukrainian port city of Odessa - had taken shelter in his basement as explosions rocked the area.

"A lot of people are going to die," said a worried Radeva, who emigrated to the U.S. 20 years ago. Asked if her father and other relatives might flee to another country, she said: "There's no place for them to run."

Ekaterina Mouratova, a Miami immigration attorney, said Thursday was "a crazy day," with phone calls and emails from Ukrainians and Russians seeking refuge in the United States. Ukrainians hope to flee Russian troops, while Russians worry they may get drafted and have bank accounts frozen in a wartime economy.

She offered little encouragement, predicting [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) would be a far more realistic possibility for escape.

"There is no effective legal mechanism to bring people here," she said.

Ukrainians could potentially flee their country, fly to Mexico from Europe as tourists, and enter the U.S. by land to claim asylum, as a growing number of Russians have done over the last year, Mouratova said. Fleeing war, however, is not considered legal grounds for asylum.

Ukrainians could also be eligible for refugee resettlement - under which up to 125,000 can be accepted in the U.S. this year after being approved abroad - but processing has been slow as U.S. authorities focus on Afghans seeking to flee Taliban rule.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said the U.S. was prepared to accept ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, "but we certainly expect that most if not the majority will want to go to Europe and neighboring countries."

Immigration advocates urged the Biden administration to grant Temporary Protected Status to Ukraine, a form of reprieve for its citizens already in the United States. The U.S. has granted TPS to 12 countries afflicted by war or natural disaster.

Chicago immigration attorney Natalia Blauvelt, who also fielded calls from desperate Ukrainian clients, potential clients and friends, said they are "absolutely devastated, extremely sad.... They are panicking because of what is happening in Ukraine, and many of them don't know what to do and help their relatives."

More than 1 million people in the U.S. report Ukrainian ancestry, according to the Census, with sizable populations in New York City, Chicago, Seattle, Sacramento and Los Angeles.

Oksana Bilobran, an attorney in Seattle's Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, came to the U.S. from Ukraine 17 years ago. She and others have been urging elected officials to do more to support Ukraine, including securing a no-fly zone over the country and providing humanitarian protection for Ukrainians currently in the U.S. so they don't have to return.

They are also working on ways to support Ukraine financially, since apps like Venmo and PayPal aren't readily available there.

"We need to up our fundraising to provide necessities, because the Ukrainian military is no match for the Russian army, so we need to provide as much help as we can here," she said.

In Philadelphia, the United Ukrainian American Relief Committee - formed in World War II to help resettle ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** - pivoted to a wartime footing once again, readying a container packed with clothing, diapers, wheelchairs, medical supplies and personal hygiene items. Donations had increased over the past several weeks as Russia massed its military on Ukraine's doorstep, according to the executive director, Motrja Watters.

The group plans to send the container to Ukraine, or Poland if Russia blocks humanitarian aid. Watters, whose parents were born in Ukraine, said relief groups are coordinating their response so aid is delivered as effectively as possible.

"Everybody's trying to get a grip on the how and the where the needs are in Ukraine," she said. "We're working around the clock... There are so many people already injured, families already split up, and those are the people we need to help right now."

\_\_\_

Rubinkam reported from northeastern Pennsylvania and Spagat reported from San Diego. Associated Press reporters Don Babwin and Sophia Tareen in Chicago, Mark Gillispie in Parma Heights, Ohio, Gene Johnson in Seattle and Deepti Hajela in New York contributed to this story.

**Load-Date:** March 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian refugees take shelter at Polish train stations as they flee war*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651B-P9J1-JBNF-W0SV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 17, 2022 Thursday 12:47 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 82 words

**Byline:** Mared Parry

**Body**

Footage shows refugees and volunteers taking shelter at the Prezemsyl train station in Poland, after fleeing the war in Ukraine.

Over three million people have now left the country seeking refuge.

Yana Syniavina, 26, details her sadness at leaving her homeland and the long journey ahead of her to [*Austria*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/austria) , where she plans to stay with relatives.

To sign our Refugees Welcome campaign petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-a%20nofollow).

[*Click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/newsletters) to sign up to our free newsletters.

**Load-Date:** March 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Cutting Ukraine refugee funding is short-sighted, devolved Governments tell Gove*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6753-NN91-DY4H-K4YF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

December 23, 2022 Friday 1:44 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 507 words

**Byline:** Craig Paton

**Highlight:** Ministers from Wales and Scotland wrote to the Communities Secretary Michael Gove on Friday.

**Body**

Cutting the funding that local authorities receive for each Ukrainian refugee they house is “counter-productive and short-sighted” [*Michael Gove*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/michael-gove) has been told.

The Communities Secretary announced earlier this month that the funding would be cut, while the money given to people who host those fleeing the Russian invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) is set to rise.

Funding provided to councils will drop from £10,500 per person to £5,900 per person as a result of “wider pressures on the public finances”, Mr Gove said.

In a letter from Scottish Ukraine minister, Neil Gray, and Welsh social justice minister, Jane Hutt, the two asked for the decisions to be “urgently” reviewed.

“The changes announced amount to a reduction in funding available to help people fleeing Putin’s illegal war in Ukraine settle into a new home,” the letter said.

“In the face of continued and acute need, it is counter-productive and short-sighted to cut vital funding available to deliver public services to the most vulnerable.

“It will place local authorities under extreme and unacceptable pressure during an unprecedented cost of living crisis.

“Those arriving from Ukraine deserve the same care and support which we provide to those arriving from [*Afghanistan*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/afghanistan) or through the UK Resettlement Scheme.

“The approach and funding model used under those schemes is internationally recognised as good practice and supported by each of our Governments.

“The decision to undermine the success of this safe and legal route to the UK is at odds with recent [*UK Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/uk-government) claims about a generous approach.”

Elsewhere, the funding given to individuals who take in ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** will rise from £350 to £500 a month after the first year.

Mr Gove also announced a £500 million fund aimed at allowing councils in England to buy up housing stock for the use of refugees, which is expected to provide up to 4,000 homes.

Addressing the funding increases, the ministers said the £500 payments should start immediately rather than after 12 months, adding that the devolved nations do not have the “fiscal headroom” to offer similar funds to local authorities to buy up housing stock.

“We therefore ask that you urgently revisit this decision, which was made without appropriate consultation and engagement with devolved Governments, and to meet with us quickly to find a more effective way forward,” the ministers concluded.

A spokeswoman for the UK Government said: “We are grateful to all sponsors who have opened their homes to Ukrainians. We understand they may be concerned about rising costs, which is why we have increased thank you payments to £500 a month, once the guest has been in the UK for a year.

“Councils have received £1.1 billion through the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine scheme so they can support arrivals and they have a duty to ensure families are not left without a roof over their heads.

“Ministers and officials meet regularly with their counterparts in the devolved governments and we will continue to work closely with them to ensure Ukrainians and their hosts have the support they need.”

**Load-Date:** December 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[*British man transports 80 Ukrainian refugees across Polish border in taxi*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y7-MTF1-DY4H-K3WX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 8, 2022 Tuesday 10:01 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 109 words

**Byline:** Ross Martin-Pavitt

**Body**

A [*British*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british) -[*Ukrainian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) who is helping to evacuate refugees across the [*Polish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/polish) border using a [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) black cab has said he is "doing everything he can".

Roman Tymchyshyn has already transported around 80 people including pregnant women, disabled elderly people, children and even a nine-month-old baby.

He began driving refugees in his black cab across the Polish border on February 28, and has since racked up around 2,169 miles - which is around 300 miles a day.

To sign our Refugees Welcome campaign petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) and if you are able to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome)

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Watch live as Ukrainian refugees cross the border and enter Romania*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WB-7F61-DY4H-K3WB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 27, 2022 Sunday 10:27 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 100 words

**Byline:** Ross Martin-Pavitt

**Body**

Ukrainians flee to the northeastern Romanian border checkpoint of Sighetu MarmaÈiei, after [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) launched an all-out invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Heavy fighting is underway in Ukraine's second city as Russian troops entered [*Kharkiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kharkiv) in the early hours of Sunday morning.

Major attacks overnight included a [*gas pipeline*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/gas-pipeline) outside Kharkiv that was set ablaze by Russian troops.

As the Kremlin wages war on their eastern European neighbour, Yvette Cooper, the UK shadow home secretary, said it was "immoral" to apply usual visa restrictions to Ukranians escaping war.

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**Load-Date:** February 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[*‘World’s largest sing-along’ to take place in solidarity with Ukraine ahead of Eurovision*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:684K-3971-JBNF-W18K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 1, 2023 Monday 7:23 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,MUSIC,CULTURE; Version:1

**Length:** 561 words

**Byline:** Ellie Harrison

**Highlight:** Campaign aims to bring together choirs, musicians and the general public by asking them to perform and upload a version of the Beatles song ‘With a Little Help from My Friends’

**Body**

A campaign to create the world’s largest sing-along in solidarity with [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) during the Eurovision Song Contest is bringing together choirs, musicians and the general public.

HelpUkraineSong is asking people to perform and upload a version of the 1967 Beatles song “With a Little Help from My Friends”.

The Museum of Liverpool will then hold a “flash mob” moment at midday on the day of the final, 13 May, with people at famous UK attractions including the [*London Eye*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london-eye) , [*Blackpool Tower*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/blackpool-tower) and [*Warwick Castle*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/warwick-castle) , joining in simultaneously. Gatherings will also take place around the world.

Eurovision 2023 is being held in Liverpool after the UK was chosen to host the competition on behalf of war-torn Ukraine (last year’s winners).

Valerie Bounds, 47, who co-founded and runs a creative agency in Liverpool, thought of the idea last year.

She told the PA news agency: “I came up with this idea while I was watching someone play the piano in Euston station at Christmas time, and thought, ‘Wouldn’t it be wonderful to do an incredible moment in public spaces?’

“I’m a big fan of Eurovision, I also volunteer with the Red Cross and [I] have worked with ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, so it kind of all melded together.”

Partners involved in the campaign include President Zelensky’s United 24 fundraising platform, the children’s charity War Child and the Ukraine Ministry of Culture.

“It’s going really broad here, but the really fantastic thing is that we have joined up with organisations and institutions in Ukraine and they are very enthusiastic about it,” Bounds said.

“Having been told directly from Ukrainians themselves, music and singing is integral to their culture so this is the perfect way to express support.”

She said Eurovision seemed like the right opportunity to “create a platform [and] a moment of solidarity with Ukraine”, adding: “Obviously Eurovision is that anyway, but this was about taking it outside of Liverpool, taking it UK-wide and international and giving people an opportunity to join in.”

For Eurovision on Saturday 13 May the [*#HelpUkraineSong*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/HelpUkraineSong?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) will see people and organisations coming together to perform ‘With A Little Help From My Friends’ to create the world’s biggest ever physical and digital flash mob We were busy preparing something last night ️ [*pic.twitter.com/CyG7GkgBJB*](https://t.co/CyG7GkgBJB) — Hull City Council (@Hullccnews) [*April 27, 2023*](https://twitter.com/Hullccnews/status/1651604172821676032?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Ukraine’s Eurovision 2023 act TVORCHI and British actor and contest host [*Hannah Waddingham*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hannah-waddingham) have both been spreading awareness of the event.

“We’re getting all kinds of people now taking part,” Bounds said.

“Most of the choirs that we’ve talked to all across the country are community, inclusive choirs that include Ukrainians, so it’s about seeing that integration and connection.”

Bounds stressed that those interested can contribute to the campaign in whatever way they like.

“We don’t care how they do the song, that’s really important. This is about including everyone.

“We would love to see people signing it, [or] just breaking into song acapella!”

Kalush Orchestra, the Ukrainian group who won 2022’s Eurovision song contest, [*have high hopes that the country will be able to host next year’s competition.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/2022-eurovision-winners-ukraine-host-b2288806.html)

This year’s Eurovision will take place in Liverpool at the 11,000-capacity Liverpool Arena between 9 May and 13 May.

Additional reporting by Press Association

**Load-Date:** May 1, 2023

**End of Document**



[*My children have been taught a lesson by a Ukrainian refugee – and so have I*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68XJ-RKX1-DY4H-K004-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 12, 2023 Saturday 12:15 PM GMT

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**Section:** LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 589 words

**Byline:** Will Gore

**Highlight:** CENTRIST DAD: Realising he has cosseted his kids for too long, Will Gore takes a long, hard look at himself

**Body**

If you love them, set them free,” so the saying goes. But what if the gilded cage you’ve surrounded them with is too comfortable to want to leave?

I asked myself that question this week, as I dutifully sliced an apple for my 13-year-old daughter. I had already cut, toasted and buttered a bagel for her; and poured some cereal and milk into a bowl for her younger brother. They had sat at my parents’ kitchen table, eating their breakfast, before heading off to watch whatever screen was nearest to hand – both still pyjama-clad – leaving me to tidy up.

They had both been perfectly pleasant about it all, and I’d not had to demand pleases or thank yous. In other circumstances, I would not have blinked twice at this fairly standard breakfast routine. But on this occasion, there had been another child present, and his breakfasting habits had thrown my children’s ways into sharp focus.

Five months ago, my parents opened their home to two [***Ukrainian******refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/ukraine-ap-brussels-vladimir-putin-lodewijk-asscher-b2352251.html) , a young woman and her nine-year-old son. Her English was pretty good; his was limited – although he and my son bonded over the shared language of football and Minecraft. In the time since their arrival, the Ukrainians have respectively started a job and school, and they have settled into English village life. They seem to find living with my parents bearable; and my folks rather like having some youngsters in the house.

This week, my children and I had added to the household for a few days. The kids played, while I took advantage of my parents’ proximity to my office and headed to work each day. But before leaving in the morning, I sorted breakfast out, thinking it would be useful to relieve my mum and dad of a minor burden. On Thursday, as my two cosseted children waited patiently for their father to serve their meal, their new Ukrainian pal arrived in the kitchen, already dressed, and began to root around in the cupboard.

He eventually found the small frying pan he’d be looking for, smartly lit the hob and began to heat some oil. Next, he cracked an egg into the pan, before chopping some pieces of smoked sausage in too. Without any fuss whatsoever, he finished his cooking, ate his meal, washed up the implements he’d used, rinsed the plate, then put it in the dishwasher. Finally, as a coup de grace, he began to make his mother – who was elsewhere, getting ready for work – a cup of tea. What a boy, I thought.

My next response was to look at my own, delightful children, and wonder why they were quite such lazy little wretches who wouldn’t even butter a piece of toast, let alone fry an egg. I determined that the law should be laid down; that no more would they be free to swan about and be waited on hand and foot by their parents. They were an embarrassment; a disgrace; a pair of wanton layabouts who had been shown up by a boy who six months ago had been living in a war zone.

I rang my wife and said we must put up with it no longer: the children must learn to stand on their own two feet, come what may. “But it’s not them,” she replied, “it’s you. You’re an enabler!”

It sounded harsh. I protested. But when I later told my daughter about the conversation, she concurred. “Why do you think we ask you, and not mum?” she said.

So, there we have it – it’s me, I’m the problem. I have sheltered my children from the rigours of life because I adore them so much, but also because I can’t bear to see anyone do something more slowly or messily than I could do it myself.

But no more! I love them, so I will set them free – even if they do trash the kitchen.

**Load-Date:** August 12, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Breakfast epiphanies; My children have been taught a lesson by a Ukrainian refugee - and so have I. Will Gore takes a long, hard look at himself and the pair of lazy little wretches he has raised*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68XR-5Y41-JCS0-D1HC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

August 13, 2023 Sunday

First Edition

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**Section:** THE NEW REVIEW; Pg. 34

**Length:** 591 words

**Byline:** WILL GORE

**Body**

"If you love them, set them free," so the saying goes. But what if the gilded cage you've surrounded them with is too comfortable to want to leave?

I asked myself that question this week, as I dutifully sliced an apple for my 13-year-old daughter. I had already cut, toasted and buttered a bagel for her; and poured some cereal and milk into a bowl for her younger brother. They had sat at my parents' kitchen table, eating their breakfast, before heading off to watch whatever screen was nearest to hand - both still pyjama-clad - leaving me to tidy up.

They had both been perfectly pleasant about it all, and I'd not had to demand pleases or thank yous. In other circumstances, I would not have blinked twice at this fairly standard breakfast routine. But on this occasion, there had been another child present, and his breakfasting habits had thrown my children's ways into sharp focus.

Five months ago, my parents opened their home to two ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, a young woman and her nine-year-old son. Her English was pretty good; his was limited - although he and my son bonded over the shared language of football and Minecraft. In the time since their arrival, the Ukrainians have respectively started a job and school, and they have settled into English village life. They seem to find living with my parents bearable; and my folks rather like having some youngsters in the house.

This week, my children and I had added to the household for a few days. The kids played, while I took advantage of my parents' proximity to my office and headed to work each day. But before leaving in the morning, I sorted breakfast out, thinking it would be useful to relieve my mum and dad of a minor burden. On Thursday, as my two cosseted children waited patiently for their father to serve their meal, their new Ukrainian pal arrived in the kitchen, already dressed, and began to root around in the cupboard.

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So, there we have it - it's me, I'm the problem, it's me. I have sheltered my children from the rigours of life because I adore them so much; but also because I can't bear to see anyone do something more slowly or messily than I could do it myself.

But no more! I love them, so I will set them free - even if they do trash the kitchen.

**Load-Date:** August 12, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian sculptor becomes part of prestigious UK art society after fleeing war*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BP5-XFD1-JBNF-W046-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 31, 2024 Sunday 11:01 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 858 words

**Byline:** Danielle Desouza

**Highlight:** Alex Lidagovsky arrived in Kingston upon Thames in April 2022 with his wife, stepdaughter and pets.

**Body**

A sculptor who fled Ukraine with just his family, pets and a suitcase after his studio was destroyed in the Russian invasion, has been accepted into the [*Royal Society*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/royal-society) of [*British*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british) Artists.

Alex Lidagovsky, his wife, Dasha Nepochatova, and stepdaughter, Sofia Krotova, who is 16, were forced to leave [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) when Russia’s invasion began on February 24 2022.

Now settled in the UK, Lidagovsky, 63, who was an in-demand sculptor in Ukraine, welcomed the PA news agency into his studio at Fusion Arts Studios, in Kingston upon Thames, in south-west London.

Reflecting on the beginning of the war, Lidagovsky, whose words were translated into [*English*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/english) by his wife, said: “My studio was destroyed at the beginning of the war and was near Kyiv and I knew about it later from my friends when they sent me photos of destroyed and bombed studio.

“When we were leaving Ukraine to save our daughter we never thought it would be for so long.

“Now, because I’m so far away from my country and it looks like I live another life, I try not to think about it, to deny it, to drive this pain into the depths of my consciousness and give myself more time to reflect on it.”

Ms Nepochatova, 43, has recently been accepted on to the MPhil in Slavonic Studies at [*Oxford University*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/oxford-university) , which starts in October and has “always been a dream” of hers.

“My focus will be Ukrainian female literature as a women empowerment tool because, in Ukraine in 2020, I founded the first, feministic, publishing house called Creative Women Publishing and we want Ukrainian female voices to be heard,” she explained.

She said the day Russia launched its invasion on Ukraine was “unbelievable” and “surrealistic”.

“You don’t plan to be in another country, and one day you just wake up in your own bed and somebody calls you on the phone and tells you that the war has started,” she added.

“And then you have an hour to get your suitcase and put in some stuff.”

The couple made sure their pet dog and rat went with them as they travelled to western Ukraine and then Poland.

They reached Kingston upon Thames on April 13 2022 via the Homes for Ukraine scheme because one of Ms Nepochatova’s friends, Liz Smith, lived there and hosted them in her house for six months.

Initially, Lidagovsky said it was difficult to forge a new life in the UK due to the language barrier.

However, the kindness of people he met and becoming a part of World Jewish Relief (WJR)’s specialist training and employment programme (Step) for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, which set him up with a dedicated employment adviser, Caitlin Bugler, in November 2023 – allowed him to flourish.

He said Ms Bugler was “amazing” and from the first moment they met, she “behaved like a proper art manager” and offered support and information about opportunities.

“Starting from scratch here in the UK with the status of a refugee, it was very important for me to stay in the profession because I felt like I lost my voice and my language, so it was important for me to not lose my professional identity,” he said.

“When I arrived here, I just felt emptiness because I was cut off from my previous life.

“Compared to Ukraine, I knew the market and society there, but I was invisible and nobody knew me here so the first step was to show up to let people see me and become visible.”

Some of Lidagovsky’s highlights from his career in the UK so far include showcasing a work at the Winter Sculpture Park in Bexley, south-east London, in February 2023, and being granted honorary membership of the Royal Society of British Artists.

He said the honorary membership was an “exciting” and “unexpected” surprise and was a way for the UK art community to show support to Ukrainian artists.

“I also found out the news on the same day as my birthday, so it felt like a birthday gift.”

Lidagovsky recently won one of the five residency prizes for indoor sculpture at Lucca Biennale Cartasia, the biggest event in the world about paper art and architecture, which will see his sculpture, Swallow’s Flight, on display in Lucca, Italy.

A miniature paper model of the piece was present in the studio, which Lidagovsky used to describe the work.

“The piece will be made from corrugated cardboard and the sculpture is in an acrobatic position called swallow and metaphorically shows her leg is in the past and her head is in the future, but she’s trying to balance in the present with her hands open,” he said.

He will travel with his wife to Lucca on May 27 and will have roughly one month to create the sculpture, with the show to take place from June 29 to September 29.

His metal sculpture, Tightrope Walker, will also be featured in a new public art trail commissioned by Great Yarmouth Borough Council, alongside nine other sculptures from other artists in November 2024.

Lidagovsky said: “I am extremely thankful to my friends and colleagues in Britain, as well as the British Government and World Jewish Relief, for giving me the chance to stay true to myself and my profession and continue to fight for my country, Ukraine.

“The ability to keep creating art is a valuable opportunity for me to represent Ukrainian culture, which Russia is trying so hard to destroy, to the world.”

**Load-Date:** April 1, 2024

**End of Document**



[*PM: Fifty migrants told they will be sent to Rwanda*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65FP-FCS1-JCS0-D002-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

May 15, 2022 Sunday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 7

**Length:** 444 words

**Byline:** THOMAS KINGSLEY

**Body**

Boris Johnson has revealed that the first 50 migrants have been told they will be sent to Rwanda within two weeks. The policy has been widely criticised by human rights charities and even faced backlash from Tory backbenchers, former prime minister Theresa May and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The government said it is braced for a flurry of legal claims as it prepares to send migrants to the east African nation within a fortnight. In an interview with the Daily Mail, Mr Johnson said the migrants have already been served "notices of intent", marking the start of the process.

"There's going to be a lot of legal opposition from the types of firms that for a long time have been taking taxpayers' money to mount these sorts of cases, and to thwart the will of the people, the will of parliament," Mr Johnson said. "We're ready for that. We will dig in for the fight - we will make it work. We've got a huge flowchart of things we have to do to deal with it with the leftie lawyers."

The controversial policy has faced heavy scrutiny since it was announced, with the latest reports claiming LGBT+ refugees sent to Rwanda could face persecution and ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** fleeing Russia's invasion could also be sent to east Africa. The Home Office's equality impact assessment for the policy, published this week, states that there are "concerns" over the treatment of some LGBT+ people, and that investigations point to "ill-treatment" of this group being "more than a one-off".

The document also reveals that some asylum seekers in Rwanda are forced to wait years for a decision and two-thirds are ultimately rejected. Meanwhile, immigration minister Tom Pursglove said that decisions to ship asylum seekers to the east African country would be considered on a "case by case basis" - and did not deny that people who have fled Ukraine could be among them.

During an evidence hearing with the Home Affairs Select Committee, he also declined to rule out that Afghan nationals who worked alongside the British army could be deported under the policy. Asked whether refugees who have escaped the Russian invasion could be among the cohort relocated, Mr Pursglove said: "There is absolutely no reason why any Ukrainian should be getting in a small boat, paying a smuggler to get to the UK.

"People should be using those safe and legal routes that are available. We look at cases on a case by cases basis, but it is crucial to get the message across that people should be using the safe and legal routes if they come from Ukraine. It would be absurd to do otherwise."

Home Office figures suggest 28,526 people crossed the English Channel in 2021, up from 8,466 the year before.

**Load-Date:** May 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Supporting each other can get us through any crisis*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:668R-9C61-JCS0-D2FN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

August 31, 2022 Wednesday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 14

**Length:** 450 words

**Byline:** HELEN WHITEHOUSE

**Body**

No one gets through life without needing a bit of help from time to time. That could be a small handhold or a big leg up. It can feel hard to reach out and ask for help - but it shouldn't.

We're living through unprecedented times. The rising cost of living is pinching everyone's purse strings. Whether it's the price of energy or the cost of a pack of butter, it's impossible not to feel it. And we've got challenging times to come, as the energy cap continues to rise in the coming months. It's hard not to feel worried about how our own families, as well as the most vulnerable in society might cope.

At GoFundMe, we see hundreds of fundraisers started every day to lend help to those who need it. We've also seen the thousands of people willing to donate to help them. We've seen fundraisers by parents helping families with the cost of living over the holidays. People are starting GoFundMe's to cover uniform costs, to help friends with rent or bills, and to cover expenses now everything feels so much tighter.

People are also raising money for strangers, for friends and for charities such as The Trussell Trust. And not just that - we've seen donations for not just the everyday, but also the inspiring. One example is former the former Arsenal and England player Anita Asante, who has raised thousands to give young fans who cannot afford them football shirts.

GoFundMe is the home of help and it's these everyday heroes helping with the leg up so many need at the minute. Now, The Independent has released their Happy List, shining a light on 50 extraordinary people who've done things to help others.

We've got Harriet Asher on the List who has helped over 500 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** resettle in the UK. Her GoFundMe raised £25,000 in just 48 hours. Or Iain Butterworth, who set up the Scarborough Sunflower Appeal to help Ukrainian families resettling in the area after feeling "helpless" over the war.

There's Beryl Carr, the NHS's oldest volunteer at 100 years old - and Oscar Jones, who has been inspired to raise money for defibrillators after seeing Denmark footballer Christian Eriksen's heart attack last year. It's proof that people are willing to give out help in spades when it's needed and turn their compassion into a superpower. Seeing something and doing something - and helping someone. Help is hard to ask for but for many, it's easy to give. Here at GoFundMe, we facilitate the want or need for help to be changed into a tangible action. We see how a fundraiser on the internet can get food on the table, or essential bills paid.

If you want to help or if you need help, you can do it with us. Whether it's for yourself, for a friend, or for a charity, you can start a GoFundMe today.

**Load-Date:** August 30, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Hancock to face MPs in Westminster this week following I’m A Celeb stint*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6700-6V91-DY4H-K4BY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

November 29, 2022 Tuesday 12:10 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:3

**Length:** 500 words

**Byline:** Amy Gibbons

**Highlight:** The West Suffolk MP is facing questions over his political future in the wake of his third place finish on the ITV reality show.

**Body**

[*Matt Hancock*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/matt-hancock) will come face-to-face with angry [*MPs*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mps) in Parliament this week for the first time since his controversial jungle jaunt as he returns to [*Westminster*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/westminster) for the second reading of his Dyslexia Bill.

The MP is facing questions over his political future following his third-place finish on ITV’s I’m A Celebrity… Get Me Out Of Here!, with his stint down under drawing criticism from colleagues including [*Prime Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prime-minister) Rishi Sunak.

Speculation has been mounting over whether he will have the Conservative whip restored and seek to stand again at the next election.

He appears to be up against a tight time frame, as Tory MPs have been given until December 5 – next Monday – to declare their intention to re-run at the next vote, expected to be in 2024.

Mr Hancock is currently sitting as the independent MP for West Suffolk, having been suspended from the Conservative parliamentary party for flying 10,000 miles to Australia at a time when the Commons was sitting.

He has “no intention of standing down or stepping away from politics”, according to his team.

A source close to the MP indicated he would continue to side with the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) , stressing his support for the Prime Minister.

Mr Hancock was offered a job with Liz Truss if he jumped ship during the first Tory leadership campaign of 2022, they said, but turned it down as he felt Mr Sunak was the right person for the job.

The PA news agency has been told the former health secretary will attend the second reading of his Dyslexia Screening and Teacher Training Bill in the Commons on Friday.

Mr Hancock, who was diagnosed with dyslexia at university, had vowed to use the “incredible platform” offered by I’m A Celebrity to raise awareness of the learning difficulty.

Reflecting on his school days from the jungle, he said he “desperately wanted to learn” but struggled with English.

He said the moment his dyslexia was identified he realised his “brain works differently” and he can “work on that”.

Mr Hancock is also expected to spend time in his constituency this week.

He had insisted the people of West Suffolk were his “first priority” when entering the Australian camp, claiming the reality TV show would be an “honest and unfiltered” way to communicate with voters.

It is understood he plans to raise funds for the ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have been staying with him in the New Year.

A spokesman for Mr Hancock said: “The second reading of Matt’s Dyslexia Screening and Teacher Training Bill will be read in Parliament on Friday, 2nd December – just days after the final of I’m A Celebrity.

“By going on the show, Matt has raised the profile of his dyslexia campaign and has used the platform to talk about an issue he really cares about in front of millions of people.

“Matt is determined that no child should leave primary school not knowing if they have dyslexia.

“Matt will be making a donation to St Nicholas Hospice in Suffolk and causes supporting dyslexia – including the British Dyslexia Association, off the back of his appearance.”

**Load-Date:** November 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Last Eurovision tickets to go on sale next week*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:682G-PND1-JBNF-W3BM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 21, 2023 Friday 3:17 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 594 words

**Byline:** Charlotte McLaughlin

**Highlight:** When tickets were released earlier for the grand final they sold out in just over half an hour.

**Body**

The last remaining tickets for the Eurovision Song Contest in Liverpool will go on sale next week.

The final passes for the nine live shows at ACC Liverpool are set to be released on April 24 at midday, the [*BBC*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/bbc) has announced.

Prices for the international music event range from £30 to £380 and depend on the type of show and seat being chosen.

[*#Eurovision*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Eurovision?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) fans, you're not going to want to miss this...The last remaining [*#Eurovision2023*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Eurovision2023?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) tickets will be on sale again on Monday 24th April from midday GMT Make sure you've signed up to [*https://t.co/l8XgbDE5dw*](https://t.co/l8XgbDE5dw) before then! [*pic.twitter.com/DAEEErCwet*](https://t.co/DAEEErCwet) — BBC Eurovision (@bbceurovision) [*April 21, 2023*](https://twitter.com/bbceurovision/status/1649352322584047617?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Fans need a [*Ticketmaster*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ticketmaster) UK account to buy tickets, and they are encouraged to create an account in advance.When the rest of the Eurovision tickets were released in March, tickets to the grand final sold out in just over half an hour.Tickets to the remaining shows had gone by 1.32pm following a 12pm release.***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** living in the UK have also been able to apply for cheaper tickets.The event is being held in Liverpool after the UK was chosen to host the competition on behalf of war-torn 2022 winner Ukraine.A series of evaluation studies have also been announced that will determine the social impact of Eurovision 2023 on wellbeing, cultural legacy and the economy.Different organisations – such as Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, the BBC, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the [*British Council*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british-council) – will look at issues such as addressing risk related night-life behaviour and sense of community separately.[*#News*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/News?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) : A series of studies are to investigate the social impact of [*#Eurovision2023*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Eurovision2023?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) on wellbeing, cultural legacy & the economy.The research will help shape the funding, planning & delivery of future large scale events & cultural activity in the UK.️ [*https://t.co/MbltJBRvtN*](https://t.co/MbltJBRvtN) [*pic.twitter.com/o7LMGw7Aap*](https://t.co/o7LMGw7Aap) — Liverpool City Council (@lpoolcouncil) [*April 21, 2023*](https://twitter.com/lpoolcouncil/status/1649365212816867329?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Steve Rotheram, mayor of the Liverpool City Region, said: “The chance to host a global spectacle like the Eurovision Song Contest is an opportunity that doesn’t come around very often – especially for a city in the UK – that’s why so many cities bid for the accolade.

“As an international event that attracts guests, media and attention from around the world, we’re expecting thousands upon thousands of visitors to descend on the Liverpool City Region next month for a week-long celebration of music, dance, fun and frivolity.

“The £2 million that the combined authority is contributing towards the staging of Eurovision is just a fraction of the economic return we expect to see from the event, which is predicted to inject £25 million into the city region economy in May alone.

“But the intangible contribution of broadcasting our brand to an international audience could be invaluable.

“With a visitor economy that’s worth nearly £5 billion and which supports more than 55,000 jobs, I’m looking forward to seeing the impact that hosting Eurovision will have on our residents, our economy and our culture for years to come.”

Alongside Eurovision, a two-week series of mostly free events will run around the same time as the song contest in Liverpool.

EuroFestival will see a performance by Ukrainian Eurovision Song Contest winner Jamala, collaborations between British artists and Ukrainian artists along with a parade featuring a glitterball jellyfish.

The semi-finals are broadcast on the BBC on May 9 and May 11 with the grand final on May 13 also being shown in cinemas in addition to the corporation’s airing.

**Load-Date:** April 21, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Further £800m cut in UK overseas aid spending ‘snuck out’ by ministers*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66XR-CR41-JBNF-W0P9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

November 22, 2022 Tuesday 9:28 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK NEWS,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:1

**Length:** 494 words

**Byline:** Rob Merrick

**Highlight:** Reduction comes days after Jeremy Hunt pledged to remain world leader ‘in tackling global poverty’

**Body**

A further £800m is being slashed from the UK’s [*overseas aid*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/overseas-aid) spending, days after [*Jeremy Hunt*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jeremy-hunt) pledged that the country would remain a world leader “in tackling global poverty”.

The 30 per cent cut in direct aid to needy countries – for the next two years – follows those projects being hit by a steep budget cut last year, a senior MP warned.

[*Sarah Champion*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sarah-champion) , chair of the Commons international development committee, also accused the foreign secretary [*James Cleverly*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/james-cleverly) of burying the bad news as he announced that a “pause” on non-essential spending was being lifted.

The Labour MP said it was an attempt to disguise the £800m cut from spending in 2021-22, which would “balance the books on the backs of its bilateral partners, the projects which have already seen the harshest cuts”.

“The devastation the world’s poorest people face without assistance will be profound,” Ms Champion added, referring to warnings of famine in Somalia and neighbouring countries.

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office refused to answer any questions from The Independent about the fresh cuts.

Mr Cleverly’s statement said only: “We are now able to lift the pause on ODA [official development assistance] spending and activity and will act swiftly to manage our bilateral programmes this financial year.”

The Independent revealed in August [*that billions of pounds’ worth of additional cuts were looming*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/overseas-aid-truss-ukraine-0-5-b2153445.html) unless ministers abandoned rules diverting a quarter of funds to cover the cost of hosting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in the UK.

The alarm was raised over a controversial decision to include spending on the 118,000 Ukrainians welcomed to Britain within a budget reduced to only 0.5 per cent of GDP and then capped.

Under pressure, Mr Hunt announced an extra £1bn in this financial year and £1.5bn in 2023-24 to help meet those costs – but not enough to avoid the further cuts. He told MPs in his autumn statement that the UK remained “the third-highest donor in the G7 last year” and would “continue to play a leadership role in tackling global poverty”.

The government has broken a pledge to restore aid funding to 0.7 per cent of national income in 2024, as the country heads into recession. But it is expected to spend around 0.55 per cent – not the 0.5 per cent intended – over the next two years, as the “pause” on non-essential spending failed to find all the sought-after cuts.

Ms Champion added: “The foreign secretary commits to being more transparent about the government’s spend, but, without warning, his department has snuck out a statement on the UK’s spending on foreign aid, with no meaningful figures attached.

“Unlike the previous Department for International Development, we see no substantial detail, no impact assessment or predictability of funding to give the poorest in the world hope that we will honour our development pledges. What we can glean from the statement is the ODA allocation is down by £0.8bn compared to the last financial year.”

**Load-Date:** November 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Special nativity on display at church to remind Scots of Ukrainians’ plight*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:69Y2-WK61-JBNF-W33D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

December 24, 2023 Sunday 12:01 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 752 words

**Byline:** Ryan McDougall

**Highlight:** The Edinburgh Spiders have made camouflage nets for Ukraine since the Russian invasion began, and have created a special net for a nativity display.

**Body**

“Life-saving” camouflage nets made by ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in [*Scotland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scotland) are playing a starring role in a special nativity display.

Shortly after Russia invaded [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) last year, St Cuthbert’s Church of Scotland in [*Edinburgh*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/edinburgh) hosted the Edinburgh Spiders, a team of volunteers who make camouflage nets that are sent to Ukraine to help protect Ukrainian soldiers.

Despite limited numbers and resources, the group has now created more than 100 nets.

And this year, St Cuthbert’s nativity scene is centred around the plight of Ukrainians who have been affected by the war.

The nativity scene is shrouded with camouflage netting created by the spiders, and Hanna Tekliuk, co-organiser for the Edinburgh Spiders, encouraged people of all faiths and none to visit the display as a reminder that, like many Ukrainians today, Jesus, [*Mary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mary) and Joseph were also displaced and persecuted during their lives.

She said: “When people celebrate Christmas they remember Jesus and his mother, how they were travelling and that they themselves were refugees and needed shelter.

“So when people come and see the nativity covered with camouflage nets, it symbolises shelter.”

The Spiders also operate from the Morningside United Church and the Heart of Newhaven Community, both of which are also in Edinburgh.

Ms Tekliuk says the idea to make the nets came from her daughter, Sofia.

Having fled Ukraine themselves following the invasion, the pair and the team of dedicated volunteers wanted to do anything they could to help Ukraine in any way possible.

The nets provide cover from planes, drones, and infantry, and are often used to cover vehicles, people, medical shelters and more.

Ms Tekliuk said: “Even civilians are using them now because they’re often targeted, so they use the nets for camouflage and they are saving a lot of lives.

“It’s a very important thing for us to make them, and we are taking orders from lots of different people.”

She added: “We are looking for more volunteers. We are more or less fine at the Morningside location, but we need more people at the other locations and need some more funding to buy materials to make the netting.”

The Spiders have members from many countries, Ms Tekliuk said, including Poland, Georgia, the UK, America and more.

If people don't help us around the world, I don't think Ukrainians will cope

Hanna Tekliuk, Edinburgh Spiders

She encouraged anyone who wants to help to get involved, stating they are now receiving so many orders they cannot fulfil them all as they need more bodies on board.

She also said the situation in Ukraine, from what she has seen, is worsening.

“It’s definitely not getting any better because hundreds of people are being killed every day,” she said.

“Unfortunately we lack weapons and people, and Russia is way too powerful to be defeated quickly and easily because it’s one of the biggest countries in the world.

“They have limitless resources and over 140 million people so they have many soldiers and could continue this war forever.

“If people don’t help us around the world, I don’t think Ukrainians will cope.”

Ms Tekluik also helps run a Saturday school for Ukrainian children who have fled with their families to Scotland.

Held at George Heriot’s [*School*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/school) in Edinburgh, it offers the children a place “not to feel isolated and to remember their language, traditions, culture and heritage”, she said.

Reverend Peter Sutton, parish minister for St Cuthbert’s, is no stranger to the horrors of war.

If you want to see Christmas from the perspective of vulnerable people, this service allows us to come together around the Holy Family

Reverend Peter Sutton, St Cuthbert's

Before serving as a clergyman in the Church of Scotland, the reverend was in the Black Watch in the British Army.

He has worked closely with Edinburgh’s community of Ukrainians who have fled the war since they first began coming to the city.

Reverend Sutton is to host a service at 10.30am on Christmas Eve at St Cuthbert’s, centred on the plight of the Ukrainians who have suffered due to the war.

He said: “What they are doing is unreal and they also have a deep appreciation for this time of year.

“If you want to see Christmas from the perspective of vulnerable people, this service allows us to come together around the Holy Family.

“Ukrainian people need protecting and this service will talk about protecting them.”

People of all faiths and none are welcome to attend the service or view the nativity display.

To donate or volunteer for the Edinburgh Spiders, contact St Cuthbert’s on 0131 229 1142.

**Load-Date:** December 23, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Further £800m cut in UK overseas aid spending ‘snuck out’ by ministers*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66XH-JR01-DY4H-K2D7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

November 22, 2022 Tuesday 7:26 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 494 words

**Byline:** Rob Merrick

**Highlight:** Reduction comes days after Jeremy Hunt pledged to remain world leader ‘in tackling global poverty’

**Body**

A further £800m is being slashed from the UK’s [*overseas aid*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/overseas-aid) spending – days after [*Jeremy Hunt*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jeremy-hunt) pledged that the country would remain a world leader “in tackling global poverty”.

The 30 per cent cut in direct aid to needy countries – for the next two years – follows those projects being hit by a steep budget cut last year, a senior MP warned.

[*Sarah Champion*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sarah-champion) , chair of the Commons international development committee, also accused the foreign secretary [*James Cleverly*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/james-cleverly) of burying the bad news as he announced that a “pause” on non-essential spending was being lifted.

The Labour MP said it was an attempt to disguise the £800m cut from spending in 2021-22, which would “balance the books on the backs of its bilateral partners, the projects which have already seen the harshest cuts”.

“The devastation the world’s poorest people face without assistance will be profound,” Ms Champion added, referring to warnings of famine in Somalia and neighbouring countries.

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office refused to answer any questions from The Independent about the fresh cuts.

Mr Cleverly’s statement said only: “We are now able to lift the pause on ODA [official development assistance] spending and activity and will act swiftly to manage our bilateral programmes this financial year.”

The Independent revealed in August [*that billions of pounds’ worth of additional cuts were looming*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/overseas-aid-truss-ukraine-0-5-b2153445.html) unless ministers abandoned rules diverting a quarter of funds to cover the cost of hosting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in the UK.

The alarm was raised over a controversial decision to include spending on the 118,000 Ukrainians welcomed to Britain within a budget reduced to only 0.5 per cent of GDP and then capped.

Under pressure, Mr Hunt announced an extra £1bn in this financial year and £1.5bn in 2023-24 to help meet those costs – but not enough to avoid the further cuts. He told MPs in his autumn statement that the UK remained “the third-highest donor in the G7 last year” and would “continue to play a leadership role in tackling global poverty”.

The government has broken a pledge to restore aid funding to 0.7 per cent of national income in 2024, as the country heads into recession. But it is expected to spend around 0.55 per cent – not the 0.5 per cent intended – over the next two years, as the “pause” on non-essential spending failed to find all the sought-after cuts.

Ms Champion added: “The foreign secretary commits to being more transparent about the government’s spend, but, without warning, his department has snuck out a statement on the UK’s spending on foreign aid, with no meaningful figures attached.

“Unlike the previous Department for International Development, we see no substantial detail, no impact assessment or predictability of funding to give the poorest in the world hope that we will honour our development pledges. What we can glean from the statement is the ODA allocation is down by £0.8bn compared to the last financial year.”

**Load-Date:** November 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Charles uses Easter message to pay tribute to those helping refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657P-P6X1-DY4H-K086-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 17, 2022 Sunday 12:01 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 423 words

**Byline:** Tony Jones

**Highlight:** The prince also remembered the role his father the Duke of Edinburgh played during the many Maundy services he attended.

**Body**

The [*Prince of Wales*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prince-wales) has remembered the millions of displaced people "wounded by the past, fearful of the future" in his Easter message.

[*Charles*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/charles) highlighted their plight as thousands of Ukrainians continue to seek sanctuary from fighting in their homeland, following in the footsteps of millions of refugees who have already fled the Russian invasion.

He said meeting the "innocent victims of conflict" over the years, he had found it "profoundly moving" to see the numbers of people ready to invite those in need into their homes.

Charles also said it was an "enormous privilege" to perform the ancient ceremony of distributing Maundy money to community stalwarts at Thursday's Royal Maundy service, on behalf of the Queen who was unable to attend.

The prince poignantly remembered the role his father the Duke of [*Edinburgh*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/edinburgh) played during the many Maundy services he attended, when he would "read the Gospel which tells how on the night of the Last Supper, Jesus knelt before his disciples and washed their travel-weary feet".

Charles said in his message: "Today, millions of people find themselves displaced, wearied by their journey from troubled places, wounded by the past, fearful of the future - and in need of a welcome, of rest and of kindness.

"Over the past years, I have found myself heartbroken at the sufferings of the innocent victims of conflict, or persecution, some of whom I have met and who have told me stories of unutterable tragedy as they have been forced to flee their country and seek shelter far from home.

"But amidst all this sadness and inhumanity, it has been profoundly moving to see how so many people are ready to open their homes to those in need, and how they have offered their time and their resources to help those facing such soul-destroying sorrow and hardship."

More than 200,000 people have expressed an interest in opening their homes to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** under the Government's [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine sponsorship scheme.

Charles and wife [*Camilla*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/camilla) showed their solidarity with Ukraine by lighting a candle for the nation and sympathising with its London community in March, during a visit to the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral in central London.

The prince concluded his message by saying: "This Easter, as always, we are reminded of Our Lord's timeless example of goodness in the face of suffering, of courage in the face of fear, of faith in the face of despair. His light triumphed in that dark time.

"I pray with all my heart that his inspiring example might help us all dispel the darkness of the world."

**Load-Date:** April 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*16,400 people have arrived in UK under Ukraine visa schemes*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6574-D6C1-JBNF-W2GV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 14, 2022 Thursday 10:05 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:4

**Length:** 462 words

**Byline:** Jemma Crew

**Highlight:** About 13,200 have arrived under the Ukraine family scheme and 3,200 under the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme.

**Body**

Around 16,400 people had arrived in the UK under [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) visa schemes by Monday, according to Government figures.

About 13,200 had arrived under the Ukraine family scheme and 3,200 under the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine sponsorship scheme, provisional data shows.

Some 94,700 applications have been received for both schemes and 56,500 visas had been granted by Thursday, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Home Office said.

With more than 3,500 visas processed per day in the last few days, we are on our way to achieving my ambition of processing cases in 48 hours

Lord Harrington

Less than half (45.1%) of visa applications made under the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme have been granted, the figures show.

There has been widespread concern about the length of time it has taken for visas to be issued to refugees under this route, with Home Secretary [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) apologising "with frustration" last week.

In comparison, 80.3% of applications under the family scheme have resulted in visas being issued.

There were 55,600 applications for the sponsorship scheme and 25,100 visas issued.

Out of 39,100 applications for family visas, 31,400 have been granted.

Under the sponsorship scheme, 1,620 visas have been issued to people with a sponsor in Scotland, 640 for Wales and 200 for Northern Ireland.

The [*Scottish Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scottish-government) is the overall sponsor for 570 refugees with visas granted, while the [*Welsh Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/welsh-government) has sponsored 60.

In an email sent to those registered for the Homes for Ukraine scheme on Thursday, the Government acknowledged that some ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have been waiting almost three weeks for their visa applications to be progressed or for a decision, calling this "unacceptable".

It said: "We are speeding up the processing of visas and, having prioritised family visas in the first instance, we are now working to accelerate the award of visas under Homes for Ukraine."

Refugees minister Lord Harrington praised the "incredible" generosity of the UK public and said the figures demonstrate "great progress".

He said: "With more than 3,500 visas processed per day in the last few days, we are on our way to achieving my ambition of processing cases in 48 hours.

"However we are not complacent, we have already made a raft of changes and will be making more to simplify the visa process even further, helping thousands more Ukrainians come to the UK through these safe and legal routes and away from the atrocities being committed in their homeland."

Government officials believe some people have applied for visas so they have the option of coming to the UK, but are staying in countries bordering Ukraine so they can return home sooner.

Others may have applied but then changed their minds, deciding to stay where they are or travel elsewhere

**Load-Date:** April 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Irish Teaching Council reviewing fees for Ukrainian teachers following concerns*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6546-4NP1-JBNF-W209-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 31, 2022 Thursday 6:22 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 496 words

**Byline:** Dominic McGrath

**Highlight:** The council is the professional standards body for Irish teachers.

**Body**

The Teaching Council is reviewing registration fees for Ukrainian teachers, amid concerns that refugees were being charged 390 euro to work in [*Irish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/irish) schools.

Concerns were raised by [*Labour*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/labour) TD Aodhan O Riordain, who said he had received reports that Ukrainian refugee teachers were facing being charged 390 euro to register with the Teaching Council.

The council is the professional standards body for Irish teachers.

"They will not have 390 euro. And if they do have 390 euro, they should probably be spending it on something else," the Labour education spokesperson told the PA news agency.

Mr O Riordain said he had written to Minister for Education Norma Foley about it.

He said it was clearly a "barrier" for Ukrainian teachers hoping to work in Irish schools.

It has come to my notice that Ukrainian refugee teachers are being charged 390 to register with the [*@TeachingCouncil*](https://twitter.com/TeachingCouncil?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw). Given the urgent need for language support in our schools for Ukrainian children, I have written to the Education Minister asking for this fee to be waived.- Aodhn Ó Ríordin (@AodhanORiordain) [*March 31, 2022*](https://twitter.com/AodhanORiordain/status/1509499724302372869?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

The politician said it makes no sense, given that Ukrainian teachers are needed in Irish schools, which are currently preparing to take in thousands of Ukrainian children, many of whom will have little English.

"It is likely a lack of proactivity, rather than bad faith, from the Teaching Council," he said.

On Thursday evening, the Teaching Council confirmed that it was aware of the issue.

In a statement, a spokesperson said that a "streamlined process" for the registration and vetting of Ukrainian teachers in Ireland was being developed.

Ireland has taken in more than 15,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** since the war began over a month ago.

The spokesperson said that the process will "include guidance documentation and a tailored application process that provides reasonable accommodations to allow qualified Ukrainian teachers to apply for vetting and registration in Ireland".

The matter of fees is also under review, the spokesperson added.

The Teaching Council already has procedures in place for teachers who have arrived in Ireland after fleeing from war or political turmoil, the spokesperson confirmed.

They said the council would "engage with any Ukrainians who, due to the situation in their home country, do not have the necessary documentation to register".

"Where Ukrainian teachers have evidence of qualified teacher status, they can apply to be admitted to the register of teachers in Ireland in order to teach in schools," the spokesperson said.

"Each application for registration will be assessed under the Teaching Council Registration Regulations 2016.

"[*Teachers*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/teachers) who do not meet all the registration requirements may be registered subject to conditions. Once registered, Ukrainian teachers, irrespective of conditional status, are eligible to receive a state-funded salary to teach in recognised schools."

PA has contacted the Department of Education for comment.

**Load-Date:** March 31, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Orthodox patriarch denounces 'atrocious invasion' of Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:653R-R0N1-JBNF-W1CD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 29, 2022 Tuesday 2:50 PM GMT

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**Length:** 449 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** The spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians has denounced Russia's invasion of Ukraine as an "atrocious" act that is causing enormous suffering

**Body**

The spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians on Tuesday denounced [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) as an "atrocious" act that is causing enormous suffering.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I didn't mention Russia by name in comments made during a visit to Warsaw after meeting with ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. Poland has accepted the largest number of people fleeing the war in Ukraine.

"It is simply impossible to imagine how much devastation this atrocious invasion has caused for the Ukrainian people and the entire world," Bartholomew said at a news briefing. He added that solidarity with Ukrainians "is the only thing that can overcome evil and darkness in the world."

Bartholomew also met with Archbishop StanisÅaw GÄdecki, the head of the Polish Bishops' Conference, who went even further in his denunciation Russian actions which he said bore "the hallmarks of genocide." Unlike Bartholomew, GÄdecki mentioned Russia by name.

GÄdecki said Russia's invasion has resulted in the deaths of "thousands of innocent people" including "hundreds of children, elderly people, women, and men who had nothing to do with the hostilities."

"Many of the aggressor's actions bear the hallmarks of genocide," GÄdecki said.

The Polish church leader earlier this month urged the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Kirill, to use his influence with Russian President [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) to demand an end to the war and for Russian soldiers to stand down - going further than Pope Francis in his public statements to date.

Istanbul-based Bartholomew is considered "first among equals" among Orthodox patriarchs. Although the titular head of the Orthodox Church worldwide, other Orthodox leaders - including Kirill - are able to wield more power from their base in countries with larger Orthodox populations.

Ukraine's population is mostly Orthodox Christian, but is divided between an independent church based in Kyiv and another one loyal to Kirill in Moscow.

Kirill and the Russian Orthodox Church severed contact with Bartholomew after the Istanbul patriarch recognized the Orthodox Church of Ukraine as independent of the Moscow patriarch in 2019.

Even though Putin justified his invasion of Ukraine in part as a defense of the Moscow-oriented Orthodox church, leaders of both Ukrainian Orthodox factions are fiercely condemning the Russian invasion, as is Ukraine's significant Catholic minority.

Bartholomew said it was hard to find words to describe the suffering of the Ukrainians he met in Poland and referred to scripture instead, quoting prophet Jeremiah: "If my head was a spring of water, and if my eyes were a fountain of tears, I would weep all day and night for the slaying of my people."

**Load-Date:** March 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Boris Johnson's Downing Street record of U-turns*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654D-3VX1-DY4H-K065-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 1, 2022 Friday 5:50 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 476 words

**Byline:** Pa Political Staff

**Highlight:** Since entering Downing Street in 2019, the Prime Minister has been forced to stage numerous policy reversals.

**Body**

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) managed to stage two U-turns in the space of a few hours on the controversial issue of LGBT conversion therapy.

Since entering [*Downing Street*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/downing-street) in 2019, the [*Prime Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prime-minister) has been forced to stage numerous policy reversals and climbdowns despite a healthy Tory majority since his general election victory in December 2019.

This is a list of more than 40 issues over which he and his ministers have been accused of making a U-turn.

2020

- May

Visa surcharge for overseas [*NHS*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nhs) staff

- June

Ending remote voting in Parliament

Reopening of primary schools before the summer break

Provision of free school meals over the summer

Plans for a centralised NHS Covid contract tracing app

Air bridges to end blanket quarantine for travellers from safe countries

- July

Allowing Huawei access to the UK 5G network

- August

Ending the ban on evictions during Covid

Awarding A-level grades by algorithm

Wearing face masks in schools

- September

Ending the badger cull

Ending work from home advice

Exempting Parliament bars from a curfew on alcohol sales

- November

Closing the furlough scheme

Suspending the commitment to spend 0.7% of national income on foreign aid

Provision of free school meals over the Christmas holidays

Family gatherings over Christmas

2021

- January

Reopening of schools just one day after they were allowed back

Review of workers' rights following Brexit

- March

Public inquiry into a proposed new coal mine in Cumbria

- April

Immunity from prosecution for troops accused of war crimes overseas

Inquiry into the leak of Boris Johnson's texts with Sir James Dyson

- June

Resignation of Matt Hancock as health secretary after breaking Covid rules

- July

Blocking [*MPs*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mps) from voting on cut to foreign aid

Boris Johnson and Rishi Sunak refusing to self-isolate

- August

Plans for an international travel "amber" list

- September

Vaccine passports for nightclubs

Raising national insurance in breach of Conservative manifesto commitments

Suspending the pensions triple lock in breach of Conservative manifesto commitments

- October

Proposed reform of the planning system

Emergency visas for workers in key sectors

Discharge of raw sewage into rivers by water companies

Overhaul of Commons standards system after Owen Paterson found to have breached the rules on paid lobbying

- November

Plans to go ahead with the eastern leg of HS2

- December

Reintroduction of pre-departure Covid tests for travellers

2022

- January

Making the housing industry pay to remove dangerous cladding scandal

Mandatory Covid vaccination for NHS staff

- February

Banning mobile phones in schools

Scrutiny of trade deals by MPs

Ban on imports of fur and foie gras

- March

Visas for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***

MPs earnings from second jobs

Closure of fracking sites

LGBT conversion therapy

LGBT conversion therapy (again)

**Load-Date:** April 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Oscars live: Producer promises upbeat, respectful ceremony*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:653C-2W41-JBNF-W2D7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 27, 2022 Sunday 10:37 PM GMT

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**Length:** 411 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** The producer of the Academy Awards says Sunday's show will strike a balance between being upbeat and fun, while also acknowledging the war in Ukraine

**Body**

The Latest on the [*Oscars*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/oscars) (all times local):

2:30 p.m.

The producer of the Academy Awards says Sunday's show will strike a balance between being upbeat and fun, while also acknowledging the war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Producer Will Packer says it's difficult to put on a show while serious world events are unfolding, but he's also trying to give people a diversion.

"In the midst of the revelry and the fun, we will acknowledge it and then we're going to try to make sure that we give people who are in tough situations there and around the world something to look at, a release, something that's upbeat and fun," Packer told The Associated Press ahead of Sunday's ceremony.

Packer also addressed the film academy's controversial decision to award eight Oscars ahead of the live telecast and weave them into the broadcast.

"We're going to treat all the honorees with an amazing amount of respect. That's what we do," Packer said.

Dozens of nominees are already on the Oscars red carpet ahead of the ceremony, which begins at 4 p.m. [*Pacific*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/pacific) with an hourlong ceremony bestowing eight awards.

Best original song nominee [*Diane Warren*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/diane-warren) wore a ribbon supporting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** as part of her outfit.

\_\_\_

THE BACK-TO-NORMAL ACADEMY AWARDS

- Here's how to watch or stream the Oscars this year

- Lin-Manuel Miranda misses show after COVID scare

- List of nominees for the 94th Academy Awards

For complete coverage of this year's Oscars, visit: [*https://apnews.com/hub/academy-awards*](https://apnews.com/hub/academy-awards)

\_\_\_

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS [*HAPPENIN*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) G:

3 a.m.

For the first time in two years, the Academy Awards are rolling out the red carpet at Los Angeles' Dolby Theatre for what the film academy hopes will be a back-to-normal Oscars. Except for all the stuff that's changed.

The telecast for the 94th Academy Awards will begin, as usual, at 8 p.m. EDT on ABC. But little else about how this year's Oscars will get underway is traditional. An hour before the broadcast begins, attendees will assemble in the Dolby for the presentation of eight awards and acceptance speeches that will be edited into a broadcast that producer Will Packer has promised will be a tight three hours.

It's one of many shifts, both slight and tectonic, around this year's ceremony. After two years of pandemic - and a socially distanced 2021 edition with record-low ratings - the Academy Awards will try to recapture their exalted place in pop culture with a revamped telecast that's expected to see a streaming service win best picture for the first time.

**Load-Date:** March 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine first lady Olena Zelenska says husband Volodymyr Zelensky has always been 'determined and calm'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:652N-GXJ1-DY4H-K0FS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 24, 2022 Thursday 12:23 PM GMT

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**Section:** WOMEN,LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 459 words

**Byline:** Saman Javed

**Highlight:** 'I want to thank all Europeans who are now helping our people,' she says

**Body**

[*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) 's First Lady, Olena Zelenska, has praised her husband Volodymyr Zelensky's "determined and calm" response to the war.

She has also thanked other first ladies for helping Ukrainian children reach safety.

Speaking to French newspaper [*Le Parisien*](https://www.leparisien.fr/international/olena-zelenska-premiere-dame-dukraine-nos-enfants-noublieront-jamais-ce-que-vous-faites-pour-nous-21-03-2022-SX6Y4NVJBVGC3MPA4HSNJ7GP5E.php) this week, Zelenska said her husband will "never abandon" Ukraine.

"Do I admire this man? Every single day. Am I surprised? No. Volodymyr has always been like this: determined and calm," she said, according to [*The Guardian*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/22/olena-zelenska-thanks-first-ladies-supporting-ukraine).

"In a time of war, all Ukrainians and the whole world have clearly seen the principles he holds and have felt the strength in him. He will never abandon what is in Ukraine's interest."

Zelenska said those who have housed and helped ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) deserve a Nobel Peace Prize.

After Russian President Vladimir Putin began an invasion of Ukraine on 24 February, Zelenska issued an appeal for support from other first ladies. She said France's Brigitte Macron was first to respond, and was "warm and friendly".

"My appeal was heard. I want to thank all Europeans who are now helping our people, giving them homes, feeding them, encouraging them...like us, you weren't prepared for having so many traumatised people in your country," Zelenska said.

"But the way you have reacted is worth of a collective Nobel Peace prize. Ukrainians are marvellous people and very grateful. Our children will never forget what you have done for us."

In a post to Instagram earlier this month, Zelenska said she had been working to help children suffering from cancer continue to receive treatment as they cross the border into Poland.

View this post on Instagram [*A post shared by Olena Zelenska (@olenazelenska\_official)*](https://www.instagram.com/p/Ca4HUsEO8_T/?utm_source=ig_embed&utm_campaign=loading)

After receiving an initial medical examination in the city of Lviv, they are being relocated to a hub in Poland where the necessary diagnostic care is being given.

The children are then assigned permanent treatment, with some staying in Poland and others being moved to France, Italy or German.

"No aggressor in the world can prevent them from winning the battle against the disease!" Zelenska said.

When asked about Ukrainian women's role in the war, Zelenska told Le Parisein: "Our resistance, as our future victory, has taken on a particularly feminine face.

"Women are fighting in the army, they are signed up to territorial defence [units], they are the foundation of a powerful volunteer movement to supply, deliver, feed...they give birth in shelters, save their children and look after others' children, they keep the economy going, they go abroad to seek help.

"Others are simply doing their jobs, in hospitals, pharmacies, shops, transport, public services...so that life continues."

**Load-Date:** March 24, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Massive Attack's Robert Del Naja sells artwork to raise funds for Ukraine victims*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650R-SCD1-JBNF-W0KF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 15, 2022 Tuesday 12:16 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,MUSIC,CULTURE; Version:3

**Length:** 476 words

**Byline:** Roisin O'Connor

**Highlight:** Musician and activist is helping raise funds for victims of the ongoing crisis

**Body**

[*Massive Attack*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/massive-attack) 's [*Robert Del Naja*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/robert-del-naja) is offering fans another chance to purchase limited-edition prints, which will help raise funds for victims of the [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) conflict.

"War in Ukraine. [*International Rescue Committee*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/international-rescue-committee) second print release. Due to the overwhelming support we are launching a second edition," Del Naja wrote on Instagram.

Last week, the musician unveiled the artwork featured in a 14-day print sale, with all proceeds going towards the Disasters Emergency Committee's (DEC) Ukrainian humanitarian appeal.

Both prints are signed by Del Naja and come with 10 randomly selected hand-finished editions. Each one is priced at £150 plus VAT and will be available until 22 March.

Del Naja recently called out the UK government's response to the growing number of refugees seeking help as they flee their war-torn home.

"DON'T WAVE FLAGS / WAVE VISAS," he wrote in multiple messages to the Home Office last week.

View this post on Instagram [*A post shared by Robert Del Naja (@robert3delnaja)*](https://www.instagram.com/p/CbHtipRgCOn/?utm_source=ig_embed&utm_campaign=loading)

Home secretary Priti Patel has come under heavy criticism in recent days, [*after it emerged that just 300 visas were issued out of a total of 17,700 family scheme applications for* ***Ukrainian******refugees*** *to come to the UK*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-refugees-poland-uk-visa-home-office-b2031118.html). By 14 March, 4,600 visas had been issued.

The crisis had earlier been labelled Europe's worst since the Second World War.

Patel [*was called out during Sunday's (13 March) Bafta ceremony by actor and director Andy Serkis.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/andy-serkis-priti-patel-ukraine-refugees-b2035072.html)

"A world-class director is a visionary empowered to change the world with a story that they are burning to tell," he said, [*while introducing the award for Best Director.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/andy-serkis-priti-patel-ukraine-refugees-b2035072.html)

"Bringing together and leading a huge family of supremely talented strangers on a difficult and chaotic journey, whilst hopefully creating an atmosphere that inspires inclusivity and values every single member of that family equally.

"So it is no surprise that Priti Patel on her debut feature 'Hostile Environment' found enormous problems."

He added: "And that her follow-up movie 'All refugees are welcome but some are more welcome than others' is a complete nightmare."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Three EU leaders in surprise journey to Kyiv to show solidarity with Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650R-Y2V1-JBNF-W16T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 15, 2022 Tuesday 1:38 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 468 words

**Byline:** Rory Sullivan

**Highlight:** Prime ministers of Czech Republic, Poland and Slovenia to meet Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky

**Body**

Three European leaders are travelling to [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) on Tuesday to express the bloc's support for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , becoming the first foreign dignitaries to visit the capital since Vladimir Putin's war began.

The prime ministers of the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovenia will reach the city by train, before meeting Ukrainian president [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky). They crossed the border at 7am GMT, according to the Polish government.

The surprise trip was agreed at an [*EU*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/eu) leader's meeting in France last week, Poland said.

"The purpose of the visit is to confirm the unequivocal support of the entire European Union for the sovereignty and independence of Ukraine," Czech prime minister Petr Fiala said.

"The aim of this visit is also to present a broad package of support for Ukraine and Ukrainians," he added.

[*Mateusz Morawiecki*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mateusz-morawiecki) , the prime minister of Poland, whose country has accepted 1.7 million ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** since the conflict broke out almost three weeks ago, also stressed the importance of the trip.

Writing on Facebook, he said the visit was taking place on the 20th day of [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's "criminal aggression" against Ukraine.

"At such breakthrough times for the world, it is our duty to be where history is forged. Because it's not about us, but about the future of our children who deserve to live in a world free from tyranny," he said.

Their journey to Kyiv come as Mr Zelensky continues to urge stronger action from the rest of Europe. The continent must protect its own security by helping his country against Russia, he said on Tuesday.

"We all are the targets of Russia and everything will go against Europe if Ukraine won't stand, so I would like to ask you to help yourself by helping us," the Ukrainian president said.

As a result of the "difficult and dangerous" situation in Kyiv, the city's mayor announced a 35-hour-long curfew, which is due to begin at 6pm GMT tonight. It will last until early on Thursday morning.

The announcement follows heavy Russia shelling in the capital overnight, which killed at least two civilians.

Additional reporting by agencies

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Patel justifies refugee visas on grounds of terror threat*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651T-JMN1-F072-41Y4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 20, 2022 Sunday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 7

**Length:** 463 words

**Byline:** ANDREW WOODCOCK

**Body**

Russia could smuggle female agents into the UK among ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to carry out biological or chemical terror attacks, home secretary Priti Patel has claimed.

Defending the UK's decision - alone among European nations - to demand visas from Ukrainians fleeing war, Ms Patel said yesterday that a handful of individuals infiltrated by Vladimir Putin into the flood of innocent refugees could "wreak utter havoc" in the UK.

And with the majority of refugees made up of women and children as men stay in Ukraine to fight, she warned it would be "naïve and misguided" to think that only men were capable of unleashing terror attacks on British soil.

In a speech to the Conservative spring conference in Blackpool yesterday, Ms Patel said the security checks conducted as part of the refugee visa application process would help avoid a repeat of the Novichok nerve agent attack in Salisbury, which killed British citizen Dawn Sturgess in 2018.

Ms Patel told activists that calls for the UK to follow the EU in offering visa-free access to Ukrainians seeking sanctuary had "grown louder in recent weeks".

But she said: "I've been asked why couldn't we suspend security checks on people escaping Putin's war? Times of conflict, my friends, emphasise our need to remain watchful."

Ms Patel said that she had been warned in security and intelligence service briefings that global instability brings with it greater threats to the UK from terrorism, serious organised crime and state threats.

"Only four years ago, the Russian military intelligence services used a chemical weapon on British soil," she said. "It happened in Salisbury, a beautiful city, whose inhabitants would have felt completely safe. Dawn Sturgess could never have imagined that she would lose her life to Novichok

"The truth is that a very small number of people can wreak utter havoc and Russia has a history of covert hostile activity."

And she added: "I'm afraid it is naive and misguided to think that only men can be covert operatives. Or that refugee flows would not be subject to some form of exploitation. There are those who would come to our country - to this country - who would mean us harm and would plot to strike at our very way of life.

"The processes that we have put in place closely follow the advice of our intelligence and security services. They mean we can help Ukrainians in need without making our country less safe.

"State threats and terrorism take many forms. They also thrive on indifference and on appeasement and now we are seeing them supplemented by new types of targeted biological, chemical, cyber warfare, ransomware and online threats.

"Our duty is to safeguard our country's interests and we will never take our eye off the ball when it comes to the safety and security of our country."

**Load-Date:** March 20, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Priti Patel apologises after Tory rebels fighting refugee crackdown accused of being 'on side of criminals'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6528-2X71-DY4H-K4NP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 22, 2022 Tuesday 3:58 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 435 words

**Byline:** Rob Merrick

**Highlight:** Anger as MPs who oppose sending asylum seekers abroad for processing said to be 'against vile people-trafficking'

**Body**

[*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) has been forced to apologise to Tory rebels opposing her new crackdown on [*asylum seekers*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/asylum-seekers-0) after they were accused of being "on the side of criminals."

"Allies" of the home secretary sparked anger when they briefed a friendly newspaper that Conservative MPs who vote with Labour are failing to "defend our national interest".

Ahead of [*votes on the nationality and borders bill*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/borders-bill-asylum-seekers-patel-b2038961.html) , one ally alleged: "Detractors of the Bill are taking the side of criminals in the fight against the vile people trafficking trade."

[*Damian Green*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/damian-green) , the former deputy prime minister, protested to Ms Patel about the briefing, given to The Sun, and obtained an apology, The Independent understands.

The Bill will send asylum seekers abroad for processing - with the distant [*Ascension Island*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ascension-island) the likely destination - and criminalise those who arrive by unauthorised routes.

It could also potentially lead to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who arrive in the UK without the correct visa jailed for four years.

Mr Davis declined to comment on the apology he sought from the [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) , but, speaking in the Commons, urged ministers to agree to resettle at least 10,000 refugees in the UK every year.

The idea is among a string of amendments passed in the [*House of Lords*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/house-lords) , which Tory MPs will be whipped to overturn in votes in the Commons later on Tuesday.

Mr Green said the Home Office's own figures showed that 87 per cent of asylum seekers on small boats are coming from countries - Iran, Iraq, Syria and Yemen - where there are no "legal and safe routes".

"The people coming across the Channel do not have these routes available to them," he told ministers.

The Tory rebels believe the outpouring of public sympathy that has seen 150,000 Britons sign up to host refugees from Ukraine shows the nation's mood is shifting on asylum seekers.

Their main target is the plan to "offshore" refugee applications by sending them to far-flung countries, although no country has yet agreed to accept them.

[*Andrew Mitchell*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/andrew-mitchell) , a former Cabinet minister, has branded the policy "a moral, financial and practical failure", arguing it would involve building a "British Guantanamo Bay" and cost £2m per asylum seeker.

[*David Davis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/david-davis) , a second cabinet veteran, has said: "I find it hard to imagine that in the current climate they are going to send Ukrainian asylum seekers offshore if they arrive here by boat.

"If you can't do it to a Ukrainian asylum seeker, how are you going to do it to anyone else?"

However, Ms Patel is standing firm, insisting the Australian-style offshore processing centres will be a deterrent to stem record Channel crossings by asylum seekers.

**Load-Date:** March 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Minority of Ukrainians able to continue healthcare since arriving in UK*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65XS-6RM1-DY4H-K3FR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 15, 2022 Friday 12:24 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 462 words

**Byline:** Jemma Crew

**Highlight:** Around a fifth of those who had been receiving regular treatment before they left Ukraine said it has continued in the UK, the ONS said.

**Body**

A minority of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who were receiving regular healthcare treatment or prescriptions in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) have been able to access them since arriving in the UK, figures suggest.

Some 32% of people who arrived in the UK under Ukraine visa schemes said they had been receiving regular treatment before they left Ukraine, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said.

Of these, 22% said their treatment, such as hospital visits or physiotherapy, had continued since arriving in the UK.

Around a fifth (21%) of those questioned said they had been receiving regular medication prescriptions in Ukraine, with 37% of these saying they had been able to access the drugs in the UK.

We’ve published new survey results on the experiences, characteristics and service needs of visa holders entering the UK under humanitarian schemes.Covering responses from Ukrainian nationals, data was collected between 16 and 24 June 2022 [*https://t.co/VAFjPOAxdr*](https://t.co/VAFjPOAxdr) — Office for National Statistics (ONS) (@ONS) [*July 15, 2022*](https://twitter.com/ONS/status/1547861289820557313?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

It is the second time the [*ONS*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ons) has published findings from its experimental UK Humanitarian Response Insight survey.

The latest research ran between June 16 and 24 and involved 9,601 people.

In March the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) launched two visa schemes so those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine could come to the UK for up to three years.

The family scheme allows Ukrainian nationals and their relatives to join other family already living in the UK, while the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine sponsorship scheme allows Ukrainian nationals and their relatives to come to the UK if they have a sponsor who can provide accommodation.

The ONS carried out its research to “understand the experiences and intentions of those arriving in the UK” under the schemes but said “care needs to be taken” when interpreting the findings.

The most recent survey showed that most respondents had been in the UK for more than four weeks and had arrived under the sponsorship scheme (80%).

The majority of arrivals were living in [*England*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/england) (83%) and 20% were in London, while 81% were female and more than half (55%) were aged 30 to 49.

It also found that almost four in 10 arrivals (38%) plan to stay in the UK for at least three years, up from 33% when the survey was first carried out in April.

Some 29% said they intend to stay for up to three years and 30% were not sure.

More than a third (37%) said they have enough money to support themselves and their dependents for the next three months – up from 26% in April.

Some 41% said they do not have enough funds for themselves or their dependents over the next three months, down from 55%.

More than eight in 10 respondents (83%) aged 18 to 65 said they were either currently working, or were very likely or likely to look for work in the UK in the next month.

**Load-Date:** July 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Protesters urge Nato to 'close the skies' over Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6505-BF91-DY4H-K4HT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 12, 2022 Saturday 9:56 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 420 words

**Byline:** Luke Oreilly

**Highlight:** Hundreds of protesters carrying Ukrainian flags attended the event outside Downing Street.

**Body**

Hundreds of protesters have called for [*Nato*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nato) to "close the skies" over [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) at a demonstration outside [*Downing Street*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/downing-street).

The protest, organised by Ukrainian campaign group London Euromaidan, began at 2pm and finished at around 5pm on Saturday.

Hundreds of protesters carrying Ukrainian flags attended the event.

The crowd chanted "Close the skies" and "Hands off Ukraine, Putin".

We are demanding that they close the skies, we need more sanctions

Markiyan

There were also songs and speeches in Ukrainian.

Attendees carried signs saying "Only military force will stop a madman" and "Sanctions do not stop bombs".

Speaking to the PA news agency, Markiyan, a 23-year-old British-Ukrainian, called on the [*UK Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/uk-government) and Nato to "close the skies".

"I am here to show solidarity with the Ukrainian people and to demand that the UK and Nato as a whole do more to help Ukrainian people," he said.

"We are demanding that they close the skies, we need more sanctions."

He also called on the UK Government to speed up the visa process for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Markiyan said: "My aunt is trying to get into the UK now and the whole visa process is very long and it's quite inconsiderate compared to other European countries.

"I think that it needs to be a lot quicker."

I was worried at the start, crying quite a lot, but you've got to stay strong and keep the faith

Markiyan

He compared the UK's refugee response to that of [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) , which has more than one million Ukrainians in it.

"We have accepted several hundred people," Markiyan said.

"Whereas Poland are dealing with 1.3 million Ukrainians and they can't handle it."

He said he was worried about his family in Ukraine, who struggle to find food and water.

Markiyan added that he had cried a lot at the start of the war, but that he was being strong for his family now.

He said: "I was worried at the start, crying quite a lot, but you've got to stay strong and keep the faith.

"In the long term Ukraine will be free, we will win."

Markiyan's worries about his family were echoed by Olesya, 32, who said she constantly checks her phone for updates about her family in Ukraine.

They had to escape under shelling, they have seen people be shot in front of them. They are lucky that they made it out alive

Olesya

"Every 15 minutes we are checking our phones, we are checking to see that they are OK," she said.

Olesya said that her relatives are "super stressed".

She added: "They had to escape under shelling, they have seen people be shot in front of them.

"They are lucky that they made it out alive."

**Load-Date:** March 12, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'Growing view' in Northern Ireland that protocol works*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6508-FG51-JCS0-D4NG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 13, 2022 Sunday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 12

**Length:** 459 words

**Byline:** ADAM FORREST

**Body**

There is a "growing view" in Northern Ireland that the Brexit protocol is now working, Irish premier Micheal Martin has claimedas he met Boris Johnson for talks. The Republic of Ireland's taoiseach said "everyone he has met" in Northern Ireland wants continued access to the EU single market.

Mr Martin's comments come after Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) leader Sir Jeffrey Donaldson said his party would not resume the power-sharing arrangement until the UK-EU protocol row is resolved.

But the Taoiseach suggested the hotly contested issue of the Northern Ireland protocol would not be resolved by the time of the province's May elections - saying London and Brussels would strike a deal "in the fullness of time".

Speaking to reporters ahead of talks with the prime minister in London, Mr Martin said business leaders north of the border thought the Northern Irish economy was benefiting from current arrangements.

"What's very interesting from our perspective, though, is that what's increasing and growing is a view within Northern Ireland, particularly in Northern Ireland business and industry, that the protocol is working in terms of inward investment into Northern Ireland, and in terms of access to the EU single market," he said.

Mr Martin told reporters: "So anybody I've met in Northern Ireland all want to continue access to the EU single market. It's a good basic principle to start off on." He added: "And my view, given the improved relationship between the UK and the EU as a result of the partnership on Ukraine, I would like to think that in the fullness of time we will be able to resolve this issue."

Mr Martin said both Brussels and London would "take it step by step" during ongoing talks over a deal to ease some of the checks between Northern Ireland and Great Britain imposed by the arrangements struck during the Brexit deal.

The Irish leader - who attended yesterday's England v Ireland rugby match at Twickenham - defended his decision not to consult the UK before deciding to waive visa requirements for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. "It was never on that we would be acting outside of the European Union approach to this," he said. "I think the UK would have been well aware of the direction of travel of the European Union in respect of this measure."

The meeting in London follows the latest remarks by the DUPs leader, who was applauded at Crossgar Orange Hall on Friday night for saying his party would not re-enter the Stormont Executive until Mr Johnson's government acts to "protect Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom".

Paul Givan resigned as first minister earlier this year as part of the DUP's action against the protocol, in a move which also removed Sinn Fein's deputy first minister Michelle O'Neill from the joint office.

**Load-Date:** March 12, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ocado signs deal in Poland as High Court patents hearing begins*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650R-F6J1-DY4H-K2KG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 15, 2022 Tuesday 10:12 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 440 words

**Byline:** Simon Neville

**Highlight:** The online grocer has signed an exclusive deal with Auchan on the same day it goes to court with AutoStore over a patent infringement dispute.

**Body**

Online grocery business [*Ocado*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ocado) has signed a deal with supermarket giant Auchan to build a warehouse in [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) to serve customers in the [*Warsaw*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/warsaw) region.

The deal is the second signed with the retailer, having agreed to partner with Auchan in Spain last year.

Ocado's exclusive deal will see a customer fulfilment centre built in 2024, with further sites in the pipeline, covering food and non-food products.

The announcement comes as Ocado goes to the [*High Court*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/high-court) in London in a battle against rival AutoStore over claims of patent infringement.

AutoStore is claiming Ocado breached three of its patents for parts of its robot pickers in a dispute that has already seen hearings take place.in the US and Germany.

The four-week trial will start on Tuesday, with Ocado aiming to prove that the patents AutoStore says have been breached were already in the public domain before they were filed.

Bosses will tell the court that the designs were shared with a Russian bank in 2010 as part of plans to offer the robots to transfer money around its vaults, making the patents invalid.

They will also argue that the patents have not been breached in any case because the designs are different and its robots are designed for picking food, rather than cash.

The disputes have already cost both companies tens of millions of pounds in legal fees but Ocado is hopeful that a recent US ruling in its favour can help secure victory in court in London.

We are pleased to bring a second Auchan business to our global platform, and to welcome Auchan Poland to the club of innovative and forward-looking retailers who are using the Ocado Smart Platform to power their online grocery business

Tim Steiner, Ocado

Speaking about the deal in Poland, Ocado boss [*Tim Steiner*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/tim-steiner) said: "We are pleased to bring a second Auchan business to our global platform, and to welcome Auchan Poland to the club of innovative and forward-looking retailers who are using the Ocado Smart Platform to power their online grocery business.

"Today though we recognise that this announcement comes at a very difficult time for everyone in Poland, including many cherished colleagues working in our technology development centres in WrocÅaw, Krakow and elsewhere.

"The human tragedy unfolding in Ukraine, and the refugee crisis along its borders, has shocked the world."

Auchan Retail Poland chief executive Gerard Gallet said: "In the current very difficult context we are faced with, our teams are very committed to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** with the support of NGOs like Caritas and Red Cross.

"We strongly call for peace in Ukraine. At the same time, we would like to prepare our company for the future."

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*What exactly does Gavin Williamson know?*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XD-Y121-DY4H-K104-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 4, 2022 Friday 5:52 PM GMT

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**Section:** LETTERS,VOICES; Version:2

**Length:** 531 words

**Highlight:** Letters to the editor: our readers share their views. Please send your letters to [*letters@independent.co.uk*](mailto:letters@independent.co.uk)

**Body**

When I first heard that our former, unlamented [*education secretary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/education-secretary) [*had been awarded a knighthood*](https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/sir-gavin-williamson-knighted-loyalty-to-boris-johnson-b2028592.html) , I honestly thought that somebody was pulling my leg. Surely even this useless prime minister could not be so stupid as to so honour a man whose incompetence made Boris Johnson's cabinet of dolts and charlatans look effective?

Then the penny dropped. Courtesy of his former role as chief whip and master of the dark arts, Gavin Williamson knows where the Tory bodies are buried. Even this useless minister had his value, if only in helping to save his master's political skin.

Yet again we see the values at work in this government. Johnson's political survival comes before the country every time.

Patrick Moore

Norwich

Arise, Sir Gavin Williamson, [*knighted for serial incompetence*](https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/sir-gavin-williamson-knighted-loyalty-to-boris-johnson-b2028592.html) and loyal service to the prime minister. Since, we are told, rather distastefully, that "he knows where the bodies are buried", the honour will guarantee his compliance so that, rather than exposing Boris Johnson for what he is, he will simply shut up and go away. The question remains: what exactly does he know?

Graham Powell

Cirencester

There is much [*derision about Gavin Williamson's knighthood*](https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/sir-gavin-williamson-knighted-loyalty-to-boris-johnson-b2028592.html) among those of us with any sense of decency left in this country.

That our political elite sees justification in such an honour for Mr Williamson, or should I say Sir Gavin, rewarding incompetence, not only reflects badly on them, but dishonours the monarchy as well. The Queen should never have allowed herself to be manipulated into putting her signature on such a recommendation. It puts her position, not to say validity, into serious doubt.

What this country needs urgently is proportional representation so we can, finally, call ourselves a democracy and to wheel the monarchy into oblivion.

Gunter Straub

London NW3

Russian invasion of Ukraine

The Russian Football Union has protested against its exclusion from international competitions, saying that it believes that Fifa and Uefa did not have a legal basis when deciding on the removal of Russian teams. Someone should explain to these blinkered fools that Vladimir Putin and his Kremlin thugs did not have a legal basis when deciding to attack an independent peaceful democratic sovereign nation that was no threat to them.

Sam Boote

Nottingham

Given that the Conservative Party has received £2m in donations from Russian sources, surely the only decent thing for it to do is to donate £2m to relief for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***?

Felicity Pollard

Isle of Mull

I remember the reply of a gunner when asked how could he shell such a beautiful city as Sarajevo: "If we can't have it, then neither can they." Goodbye, beautiful Kyiv.

Vincent Ryan

Edinburgh

**Load-Date:** March 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Watchdog bans adverts for dating site offering chance to meet 'lonely' Ukrainians*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65XG-PMW1-JCS0-D2D9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

July 14, 2022 Thursday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 16

**Length:** 508 words

**Byline:** MAY BULMAN SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

Online dating adverts offering the chance to meet "lonely" Ukrainian women have been banned for causing serious offence. The UK's advertising watchdog said that adverts for SofiaDate, seen online in May when the government was promoting its scheme for the public to house ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, connected the women's vulnerability to their sex appeal, and in doing so breached regulations.

The first ad, seen on the Dorset Echo's website, featured an image of a woman on a balcony with text that stated "Ukranian [sic] Women. Meet Thousands of Lonely Ukrainian Women. Forget About Loneliness. Let Yourself be Happy". The second, seen on Scottish newspaper The National's website, featured the same image with text that stated "Ukranian [sic] Women. Connecting Singles Across the World to Their Ideal Partner???", while the third, on the same website, featured an image of a woman and stated "Ukranian [sic] Women ??? Sofiadate.com".

The complainants, who felt the ads were inappropriate in the context of the ongoing war in Ukraine, challenged whether they were offensive. The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) said that it understood that due to the ongoing war in Ukraine there was "heightened sensitivity" about references to the country, and the vulnerability of Ukrainian women had become an "area of public concern".

At the time, there was already mounting concern about the risks of exploitation to Ukrainian women and their children coming to Britain under the Homes for Ukraine scheme after fleeing Vladimir Putin's war. Under the scheme, Ukrainians are able to come to Britain and be hosted by members of the public.

In April, the UN urged the UK government to do more to prevent this cohort from being matched with single British men following reports that refugee women had been targeted on social media by predatory men offering them rooms in their homes. The ASA concluded: "We considered that the women depicted in the ads were shown in a way that was, at least partly, designed to titillate readers - the model in ads (a) and (b) wore a low-cut kimono-style robe, and the model in ad (c) wore a body-hugging midi dress."

We considered the ads' focus on Ukrainian women dressed in the aforementioned manner, as well as references to their loneliness, had the effect of highlighting their vulnerability and connecting it to their sexual appeal. For that reason, we concluded the ads were likely to cause serious offence." Astrasoft Projects, trading as SofiaDate, said it had removed the ads.

Newsquest Media Group, owner of The National and Dorset Echo, said the ads were "ostensibly conventional dating ads, although potentially clumsily sexist in their portrayal of women from a male perspective". They argued the ads did not refer to the war in Ukraine, were not partisan, and were also not unsympathetic towards Ukrainian women or the Ukrainian people in general.

However, they said that on reflection they could be inconsistent with their policy of refusing ads for prostitution and trafficking, and confirmed they had since been removed.

**Load-Date:** July 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Minister writes to head of civil service over helping refugees fleeing Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y3-10S1-JBNF-W3G4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 7, 2022 Monday 6:06 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 419 words

**Byline:** Jonathan McCambridge

**Highlight:** Deirdre Hargey says she hopes to establish a refugee scheme despite NI not having a functioning Executive.

**Body**

[*Stormont*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/stormont) Communities [*Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/minister) Deirdre Hargey has said her department "stands ready" to provide sanctuary to refugees fleeing [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

Ms Hargey said that in the absence of a functioning Executive, she had written to the head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service, Jayne Brady, about establishing a scheme to accept refugees in Northern Ireland.

During ministerial question time, she was asked by [*Sinn Fein*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sinn-fein) party colleague Pat Sheehan what she could do to provide support for refugees fleeing from the war zone.

Ms Hargey said: "They are distressing images that we are all seeing on our [*TVs*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/tvs) in terms of those who are fleeing their own homes because of violence that has been happening in their streets and communities.

"Our thoughts are with all of those almost 2m people who have been forced to flee and become refugees as a result of what is happening within Ukraine at the minute.

"My department has a long-standing history of welcoming people from war-torn countries into our communities. The community here has been very open in welcoming refugees and asylum seekers.

"We have run the Syrian resettlement scheme in terms of addressing some of those issues."

She added: "I know there are obviously difficulties at the moment because we don't have a functioning Executive where normally these issues would be highlighted around that table.

"Despite that and the barriers that may create, I have written to the head of the Civil Service to ensure that my department stands ready to get a refugee scheme to make sure that we are up and running to assist in any way that we can in terms of the humanitarian crisis that are faced by many Ukrainians.

The Ukrainian people should have not just our solidarity but our proactive support in meeting them in their greatest time of need

Deirdre Hargey

"I hope that we can roll out a similar scheme to what we have done with the Syrian refugees. My department stands ready and able if we can find a proactive way around no functioning Executive, of starting to receive ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** then we are ready and waiting for that to happen.

"We need to do all that we can to provide support and sanctuary."

The minister continued: "I am going to work to provide solutions, that is why I have written to the head of the civil service that we can actually start to get the work done even in the absence of a functioning Executive due to a party walking away.

"The Ukrainian people should have not just our solidarity but our proactive support in meeting them in their greatest time of need."

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[*A fall in house prices can only be a good thing*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68N4-DTG1-JBNF-W4RH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 8, 2023 Saturday 3:39 PM GMT

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**Section:** LETTERS,VOICES; Version:2

**Length:** 644 words

**Byline:** Letters

**Highlight:** YOUR VIEW: Letters to the editor: our readers share their views. Please send your letters to [*letters@independent.co.uk*](mailto:letters@independent.co.uk)

**Body**

“[*A fall in house prices is a bad thing*](https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/editorials/house-prices-conservative-party-rishi-sunak-b2371299.html). ’’

What a load of nonsense!

When the price of anything is lower it is deemed a good thing for [*consumers*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/consumers). And it is no different for [*housing*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/housing). There will be different reasons why prices are lower, but the end result of a lower price is good for consumers. That some have to borrow and pay higher borrowing costs to pay for housing is an entirely different article.

I long for the days when the cost of a house reflected a much lower multiple of average earnings. And so should everyone else. Everyone should be able to afford to live in decent housing.

I know no-one who does not want housing to become more attainable.

All political parties want that. The real secret is to build more houses and provide more council houses. Over decades all political parties have talked a good talk. We all know the reality.

Philip Pound

London

The only winner of the mortgage crisis is the banks

As the hand-wringing over our [*surging interest rates*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/interest-rates-mortgage-house-prices-inflation-b2370741.html) continues unabated, and gleeful pundits predict a tanking of the housing market, you’d assume it was all bad news for borrowers. But conversely, you’d also assume savers would be coining it in, wouldn’t you? “A rising tide lifts all boats” is one of those truisms we hold dear, but sadly when it comes to the banks it seems it isn’t quite so true.

Mortgage rates follow the upward trajectory with immediate effect, and you’ll find your bank won’t be dragging its feet in advising you of the new rate. But when it comes to my meagre savings it’s a different story. No announcements emails or letters in the post announcing an immediate upward lurch in my savings rate, and a call to one of their calls centres was countered with blank incomprehension when I asked about it.

Bank profits will lurch upwards again on the strength of the Bank of England’s ineffectual measures to curb inflation. While we dupes just take it on the chin, our chancellor offers nothing more than a hapless shrug and allows another uncontrolled sector of our economy to fleece us with impunity.

Steve Mackinder

Denver

When it comes to our politicians, we aren’t sending our best

They say that the cream always rises to the top.

What happens, though, when politicians who are in charge of the entire assets of the state, start appointing [*the incompetent and the corrupt*](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/joan-collins-boris-johnson-women-b2371701.html) into all the top positions, and then slip in the odd bad apple to catalyse this witches brew?

The only thing left that can possibly appear on the top at that stage is scum.

Of course, the same thing can be said of the electorate when they make the same choice when appointing politicians, which results in where we are now – a feedback loop that makes sense of runaway capitalism and supercharged climate change.

Liam Power

Dundalk

Once again, the elderly and non-English speakers are left behind

I read [*Claire Pike’s letter*](https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/letters/rishi-sunak-cricket-england-australia-row-nhs-b2370455.html) in praise of the unappreciated ticket office, soon to be killed off by managers who seem to only see the bottom line, in absolute agreement. Like Claire, I usually don’t need the ticket office as I just buy on those machines.

However, I was so grateful we [*have one at our station*](https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/train-station-ticket-office-closures-train-passengers-b2369823.html) because they could give my ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** a family rail pass immediately instead of having to wait for an online one, which they would have found hard to fill in. They help disabled people, tourists, the elderly and confused. Oh, but I forgot, the rail companies don’t care about them do they?

Eleanor Holloway

Berks

**Load-Date:** July 8, 2023

**End of Document**



[*DWTS's Maksim Chmerkovskiy's wife describes emotional reunion upon his return from Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y6-C2D1-JBNF-W20F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 7, 2022 Monday 11:01 PM GMT

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**Section:** LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 439 words

**Byline:** Amber Raiken

**Highlight:** 'I have never hugged him so tight'

**Body**

Peta Murgatroyd has opened up about her husband and Dancing With the Stars (DWTS) pro, [*Maksim Chmerkovskiy*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/maksim-chmerkovskiy) , returning home from [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , amid Russia's attack on the country.

On 1 March, Chmerkovskiy, 42, made his way back to the United States, as [*he first stopped*](https://www.instagram.com/p/Cakxk3Oopoi/%22%20title=%22Instagram) at Warsaw, Poland in the process. The following day, he landed in Los Angeles, California and was greeted by his wife, Murgatroyd, 35, at the airport.

Murgatroyd discussed her reunion with her husband in a recent post [*shared to Instagram*](https://www.instagram.com/p/Cau8wm_vzCC/%22%20title=%22Instagram) , emphasising how she's "forever grateful" for Chmerkovskiy to be home.

"I never thought our family would be directly affected by this in our lifetime, I never thought what we are seeing on our TV's was a reality in 2022," she wrote in the caption. "I have never hugged him so tight. Shaking and forever grateful. Now it's time to heal."

"We cannot go back to our normal," she added. "Our lives are forever changed. We have a new normal, and that's ok."

Murgatroyd noted that although Chmerkovskiy made it back to Los Angeles, they're going to continue "their efforts to provide assistance to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***".

"We have big plans in store and our sole focus is on this war," she explained. "A smaller plan is going up on my stories soon!"

The former DWTS pro went on to express that the "one good thing" to come out of attacks on Ukraine would be that the world is "united against" Russia's president, Vladimir Putin.

"If there is one good thing to come of Putin's War (and yes I am specifying this as HIS war, because I know he doesn't represent the entire russian nation as a whole)...it's that the world has united against this piece of s\*\* Putin," she wrote.

View this post on Instagram [*A post shared by Peta Murgatroyd (@petamurgatroyd)*](https://www.instagram.com/p/Cau8wm_vzCC/?utm_source=ig_embed&utm_campaign=loading)

She concluded the caption by thanking her followers for their "support and constant outpouring love".

"I see everything and I am forever thankful. Xo," she wrote. "GLORY TO UKRAINE."

Recently, Chmerkovskiy has discussed how he's felt since returning to his wife and five-year-old son, Shai. And while he's grateful to be with his family, he's said that he's still been struggling mentally.

"I feel guilty. I feel bad, I feel ashamed. I feel upset," he explained during an interview on 4 March on Good Morning America.

"I'm a big boy," he added. "I know for a fact that I'm going through something mentally. I get into these crying moments. I can't control it. I cried on the way from the airport. I felt embarrassed the entire ride back because I was the only man on the train amongst all women and children."

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Anger as Priti Patel says Labour MPs cannot be trusted with security briefings about Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WS-P8S1-DY4H-K38B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 1, 2022 Tuesday 3:36 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 457 words

**Byline:** Rob Merrick

**Highlight:** Home secretary was defending claim that 'security advice' rules out more generous offer to refugees

**Body**

[*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) has sparked anger by suggesting Labour MPs cannot be trusted to receive security briefings about threats to the UK from the crisis in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

The home secretary made the comment in defending her claim that the UK cannot be more generous to [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) fleeing the Russian invasion because of the "strongest security advice".

"I'm sure if the party opposite wanted a security briefing from our colleagues, we'd happily provide one," she told Labour, during a Commons statement.

"But, at the same time, I'm very sceptical of how they treat and respect security advice."

The allegation came despite Ms Patel, infamously, being sacked from [*Theresa May*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/theresa-may) 's government for [*holding secret meetings with the Israeli government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/priti-patel-israel-live-updates-latest-flight-fired-sacked-minister-flies-back-uk-secret-a8043816.html).

[*Angela Eagle*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/angela-eagle) , a Labour MP and former minister, called the comment "disgraceful" - as Ms Patel failed to explain why security concerns rule out welcoming more refugees from war-torn Ukraine

[*Jacqui Smith*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jacqui-smith) , a former Labour home secretary, tweeted: "That's an unwarranted slur on the current opposition and unworthy of a home secretary."

Ms Patel hit out as she [*was forced to backtrack partially*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/russia-ukraine-uk-sponsor-refugees-b2025654.html) on her refusal to open the door to more ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, apparently under pressure from Downing Street.

More family members of Ukrainians in the UK - parents of adults, grandparents, adult offspring and siblings - will be eligible, instead of just spouses and children.

And individuals, charities, businesses and community groups will be able to sponsor Ukrainians to work in the UK, outside of normal rules on salaries and language spoken.

However, Ms Patel is still refusing to waive visa rules - as the EU is doing - and she admitted she had no idea how many people would take up the UK's schemes, or how quickly.

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) has claimed up to 200,000 Ukrainians could come as family members, but the Home Office has been unable to say how the estimate has been reached.

Ms Patel told MPs: "We should be very honest and level with everyone...we do not know the numbers of people that would seek to come to the UK."

The home secretary again insisted security fears stand in the way of a more generous policy, pointing to the chemical weapons attack in Salisbury in 2018.

"Russian troops are seeking to infiltrate and merge with Ukrainian forces," she told MPs, adding there are "extremists on the ground" in Ukraine.

"Given this and also Putin's willingness to do violence on British soil, and in keeping with our approach which we have retained consistently throughout all emergency evacuations including in Afghanistan, we cannot suspend any security or biometric checks on people we welcome to our country.

"We have collective duty to keep the British people safe and this approach is based on the strongest security advice."

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Police hit back in row over handling of Ukraine mansion protest*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650S-3WK1-DY4H-K158-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 15, 2022 Tuesday 2:53 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 451 words

**Byline:** Margaret Davis

**Highlight:** Mayor questioned whether the Met police response to protesters entering the Belgravia home of a Russian oligarch was proportionate.

**Body**

[*Police*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/police) have hit back at criticism of the way they handled protesters who broke into a Russian oligarch's empty mansion over the invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

[*Mayor*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mayor) of London [*Sadiq Khan*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sadiq-khan) , who holds the Metropolitan Police to account, questioned whether the force's response to protesters breaking in to the [*Belgravia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/belgravia) home of Oleg Deripaska was "proportionate".

On Monday a series of Tweets was sent from the Met's @MPSWestminster account defending the action, saying: "Officers were initially called to reports of people breaking into a house just after 1am. This led to an immediate response and would do so anywhere in London.

"Once at the property officers were told the intrusion was for the purposes of a protest. However, squatting in a residential property is a criminal offence.

A short statement on the incident in Belgrave Square yesterday: Officers were initially called to reports of people breaking into a house just after 1am. This led to an immediate response and would do so anywhere in London.- MPS Westminster (@MPSWestminster) [*March 15, 2022*](https://twitter.com/MPSWestminster/status/1503718457124212739?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

"In addition, officers faced difficult decisions as they had not independently verified what was taking place inside the property, who was present and whether there were other risks.

"Over the following hours we deployed the resources necessary to resolve the situation swiftly but safely, both for our officers and the protesters."

The protesters broke into the property in Belgrave Square, west London, at around 1am on Monday and declared that it "belongs to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***".

Police wearing riot gear used a drill to break open the front door and enter the house, with Scotland Yard declaring no protesters were inside in the afternoon.

Footage posted on social media showed some of the protesters shouting abuse at the officers as they made their way to the building.

The squatters called themselves the London Makhnovists, after Nestor Makhno, who led an anarchist force that attempted to form a stateless society in Ukraine during the Russian Revolution of 1917-23.

They hung a Ukrainian flag and two signs which read "This property has been liberated" and "Putin go f\*\*\* yourself".

Speaking to LBC's Tonight With Andrew Marr programme on Monday, Mr Khan said the police response - which included deploying a JCB crane to gain access to the mansion and cordoning off the street - "does raise questions".

"I'm unclear what the police were responding to because we know no-one's living there," he said.

"But I'm not sure if there were concerns about any crimes being done to any neighbouring properties, so those are the questions."

He said he would raise the issue with the outgoing Commissioner Dame Cressida Dick or another senior officer.

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Immediate family members will be able to join Ukrainians in UK, PM announces*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WC-XD31-DY4H-K1RC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 27, 2022 Sunday 10:13 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 439 words

**Byline:** Rebecca Speare-Cole

**Highlight:** The move comes after the Government faced intense criticism over failing to relax the visa requirements for Ukrainian nationals.

**Body**

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) has announced that immediate family members will be able to join Ukrainians settled in the UK as they flee the Russian invasion.

The move comes after the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) faced intense criticism over failing to relax the visa requirements for Ukrainian nationals earlier this week.

In a statement on Sunday, [*Downing Street*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/downing-street) said the measure will "benefit many thousands of people who at this moment are making desperate choices about their future".

The UK will send £40m more in aid to provide vital medical supplies and assistance to Ukraine, widening economic and military support to bolster the Ukrainian resistance to the Russian invasion. [*pic.twitter.com/9QziIeokdf*](https://t.co/9QziIeokdf) - UK Prime Minister (@10DowningStreet) [*February 27, 2022*](https://twitter.com/10DowningStreet/status/1498035048414650373?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Number 10 also announced that a further £40m of humanitarian aid will be sent to Ukraine to help aid agencies provide necessities and medical supplies in Ukraine and Government humanitarian experts will be deployed to the region to support refugees fleeing the violence.

The [*Prime Minister*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prime-minister) said: "In the last days the world has witnessed awe-inspiring displays of bravery and heroism from the Ukrainian people in response to those who seek to obliterate their freedom by force.

We will be very generous to the Ukrainians.

Boris Johnson

"The UK will not turn our backs in Ukraine's hour of need. We are providing all the economic and military support we can to help those Ukrainians risking everything to protect their country."

The announcement followed a call between Mr Johnson and Volodymyr Zelenskyy earlier on Sunday, in which the Ukrainian President said the need for humanitarian assistance was critical.

Mr Johnson also met Ukrainian community leaders at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Mayfair, [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) , in the evening where he was asked if the UK was going to make it easier for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to move here.

He said: "We want to be as generous as we possibly can, and certainly we want people who have relatives in Ukraine to be able to bring them over as fast as possible.

"We want to make sure that we have routes for people fleeing disaster, war, persecution in Ukraine to come here and we're setting aside more to help with the humanitarian crisis in the countries bordering Ukraine, putting another £40 million for medical supplies and immediate help."

"We will be very generous to the Ukrainians," he later added.

Pressed on what he means by "very generous" and asked how many people would be accepted, Mr Johnson said: "Well, we will have a system that lets people come when they're in fear of persecution when they need to... for family reunion or other purposes."

**Load-Date:** February 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine war: Refugees Welcome campaign raises more than £60,000 in first 24 hours*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64X1-NCR1-DY4H-K1XT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 2, 2022 Wednesday 9:33 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:3

**Length:** 458 words

**Byline:** Jane Dalton

**Highlight:** Refugees Welcome: The Independent is raising money to help Ukrainians fleeing the Russian invasion

**Body**

[*The Independent*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/independent) 's campaign to raise funds for ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) has exceeded £60,000 in less than 24 hours - money that will buy life-saving and vital support for many of the hundreds of thousands of innocent people forced to flee their homes.

Working with the [*Red Cross*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/red-cross) and [*Save The Children*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/save-children) , we will be giving aid to Ukrainians crossing the border in freezing temperatures into Poland, Romania, Hungary, Moldova and Slovakia, as well as people displaced from their homes within [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

The fundraiser, part of our [*Refugees Welcome appeal*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) , will deliver accommodation, clothing, food, sanitary goods, medicines, toys and other necessities.

It will allow people escaping the war to phone loved ones left behind and follow developments on the internet.

Save the Children, a beneficiary of the appeal and a charity that has worked in Ukraine since 2014, will provide cash and vouchers, as well as shelter, warm clothes and blankets, hygiene packs and psychological support to refugees.

With more than half a million Ukrainians having to leave behind homes, schools and normal lives, together with nearly everything they own, the need is urgent. So please give generously through our [*GoFundMe page*](https://www.gofundme.com/f/refugeeswelcome).

Save the Children says £10 will buy a family hygiene kit, £50 will feed a mother and her children for a fortnight and £100 will provide a displaced family with emergency shelter.

The Independent has also launched a [*petition*](https://www.change.org/p/uk-government-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) calling on the UK government to be at the forefront of the international community offering aid and support to a nation in need.

Thousands of Ukrainian children have lost parents, brothers, sisters and friends in the Russian attacks or have had to say a heartbreaking goodbye to fathers who stayed behind to fight.

Gwen Hines, chief executive of Save the Children UK, said: "Millions of children are at grave risk of physical harm and emotional distress. Any family forced from their home needs shelter, food, water - the absolute basics.

"We're also in mid-winter with temperatures below zero, which makes displacement even more dangerous. We're providing life-saving assistance in the form of food, water, cash. Please help."

To donate, please [*click here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gofundme.com%2Frefugeeswelcome&data=04%7C01%7CJane.Dalton%40independent.co.uk%7Cbab62006a6c34094ed2108d9fc7a213b%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637818423752504197%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=YT37s6vhoOvthHgHYZgHItl7SHYAGnpAgbf0xwAMNiQ%3D&reserved=0) for our GoFundMe page.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our [*Refugees Welcome*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here.*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Ftopic%2Frefugees-welcome-0&data=04%7C01%7CJane.Dalton%40independent.co.uk%7Cbab62006a6c34094ed2108d9fc7a213b%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637818423752504197%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=3HVRie%2FnbAGDsAl%2BsP9drMHRZ5gRMbZLyAqTOAffYWA%3D&reserved=0)

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian Catholic bishop warns British people to avoid disinformation about war*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64X1-GVM1-DY4H-K19M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 2, 2022 Wednesday 8:19 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 424 words

**Byline:** Luke O'Reilly

**Highlight:** He added that donations could be made to reputable aid organisations.

**Body**

[*British*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british) peoples can help the people of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) by avoiding disinformation, the Ukrainian Catholic Bishop of [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) has said.

At a press conference at the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral in London, Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski said that [*Britons*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/britons) should speak to their neighbours about the conflict.

"[*One*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/one) of the big things is that the people of the United Kingdom can make sure that they are listening to the truth and make a distinction between truth and disinformation," he said.

"They can speak to their neighbours and speak to each other about what is going."

He added that British people can also donate to reputable aid organisations.

"They can donate to reputable organisations assisting the humanitarian aid efforts both now and when refugees will be coming in," he said.

Olesya Khromeychuk, director of the Ukrainian Institute London, told the press conference that ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** were not a threat to the UK's national security.

Instead she said that the influence of Russian oligarchs was the real threat to the UK.

"In this country we have a lot of individuals who spend a lot of money, especially in London, on property, and invest it in banks knowing that it will be safe because this is a country that respects the rule of law while they themselves do not.

"I am talking about Russian oligarchs.

"Aren't they a security threat?

"Shouldn't we be thinking of them?

"Some of them have been sanctioned, but not all.

"Surely that is the real security threat, and not just to Ukrainians but to the people of the UK.

"These people are influential in our politics here."

Earlier, The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall lit a candle and left floral tributes at the cathedral.

They met with Bishop Nowakowski, as well as the Ukrainian ambassador to the UK.

The prince told those invited: "I must say my wife and I have been deeply moved by everything we've heard today during our visit and above all by the extraordinary bravery, generosity and fortitude of the Ukrainian community in the face of such truly terrible aggression."

It is the second time in the past two days that the prince has spoken out about the conflict.

At the press conference, the bishop said the prince and the duchess had come to the cathedral to express their solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

"They came this morning to express their solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

"They had an opportunity to be in the cathedral and light candles and say a prayer.

"They met with Ukrainian volunteers who have been working very hard since the beginning of the war eight years ago."

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Huge traffic jams in Kiev as thousands try to flee Ukraine after Russian invasion*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64VR-1D71-JBNF-W2NN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 24, 2022 Thursday 4:47 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 463 words

**Byline:** Eleanor Sly

**Highlight:** Ukrainian citizens are trying to leave the capital for other parts of the country and abroad

**Body**

Miles of traffic jams have formed in the capital of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) as citizens try to flee to safety from Russian forces invading the country.

Explosions were heard in Kiev on Thursday after Russian president Vladimir Putin declared [*war*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/war) on Ukraine and sent troops and tanks across the border.

The capital's mayor Vitali Klitschko advised residents to stay home and remain calm, but said to pack a bag with necessities and documents in case they need to evacuate.

Long lines of cars soon blocked roads leading out of Kiev as people tried to leave for other parts of Ukraine and abroad, while others descended on the train station.

Countries across [*Europe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) , including [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) and Germany, have said that they [*will offer support to* ***Ukrainian******refugees*** *fleeing the conflict*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/germany-refugee-help-ukraine-war-b2022227.html).

Poland has been preparing for [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) from Ukraine for weeks the country's interior minister Mariusz Kaminski said on Thursday the government will do everything possible to ensure that they find a safe shelter.

[*Follow all the latest updates on the Russian invasion on our live blog*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-putin-war-invasion-today-b2022101.html)

[*Poland announced that it would open nine reception points near*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-putin-war-invasion-today-b2022101.html) [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) 's border to provide food, medical assistance and information to potential refugees.

Germany will also offer support to countries in eastern Europe facing an influx of refugees, said interior minister Nancy Faeser.

German media has cited estimates that between 200,000 and 1m people could flee Ukraine to the European Union as war breaks out in the country.

"We will offer massive support to the affected states - especially our neighbour Poland - in the event of large refugee movements," Ms Faeser said in a statement.

Tom Tugendhat, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, described the scenes of people leaving their homes in Ukraine as "a human tragedy".

He told BBC Breakfast: "The lines of people you're seeing fleeing their home, each person making a decision to abandon something, somewhere ... in order to seek safety elsewhere.

"To see these columns of people forced out by naked aggression by Russia and by Vladimir Putin is horrific and extremely painful, and we should be thinking very clearly about the families torn apart, the lives separated."

Martial law has been declared in the country, which means that there is temporary military control of Ukraine, instead of regular civil functions and civil law.

[*Russian troops have entered Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-war-pictures-photos-b2022210.html) from all sides, following an announcement made by Mr Putin in the early hours of Thursday morning.

In the televised speech, Mr Putin tried to justify the invasion, saying that Russia wished to "demilitarise" and "denazify" Ukraine.

Western leaders have reacted with dismay to the news and countries including the UK, Germany and the United States have all said that harsh sanctions will be imposed on Russia.

**Load-Date:** February 24, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Government 'prioritising getting Britons out of Ukraine' says minister*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64TD-NSN1-DY4H-K24S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 18, 2022 Friday 1:01 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 428 words

**Byline:** David Lynch

**Highlight:** Home Office minister Damian Hinds said a 'relatively small' number of UK nationals and their Ukrainian families had begun applying for visas.

**Body**

The [*UK Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/uk-government) is prioritising British nationals and their families leaving [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) as people flee the threat of war, a minister has said.

[*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) minister [*Damian Hinds*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/damian-hinds) said a "relatively small" number of UK nationals and their Ukrainian families had begun applying for special visas after he was asked if the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) had a plan to help refugees from the Eastern European country.

Mr Hinds told LBC: "There are relatively small numbers of British nationals in Ukraine. Some of those will wish to stay. They have deep family and other ties.

First of all we hope the war doesn't take place, doesn't have to take place, that is with Vladimir Putin. It is very clear there is a diplomatic route available

Home Office minister Damian Hinds

"There are relatively small numbers who have been applying so far for family visas for family members.

"But there are appointments available in the visa application centre, we have got a help centre up and running and, of course, we are prioritising those applications and turning them around quickly."

Asked about whether the Government had a plan to help ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, Mr Hinds said: "First of all we hope the war doesn't take place, doesn't have to take place, that is with Vladimir Putin. It is very clear there is a diplomatic route available.

"I am very much focused that British nationals who are in Ukraine and their immediate families, husbands, wives, their children, they are able to leave if that is what they wish to do."

The Government updated its travel advice on support for the families of British nationals in Ukraine on Thursday.

The Gov.uk website now lists information for the families of British nationals resident in Ukraine on how to claim free family migration visas and the requirements to do so.

The Foreign Office continues to advise against all travel to Ukraine, and says "British nationals in Ukraine should leave now while commercial means are still available".

Mr Hinds also confirmed that the Government is committed to tackling the flow of "dirty" Russian money through the City of London.

He told BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "We don't want that money here. It is bad for the reputation of the City, for our financial institutions, and it is just morally wrong."

On "golden visas" for wealthy Russians, he added: "We are indeed reforming the visa regime to make sure it is not just about having a lot of money.

"We do want people to come and invest in this country, but we want them to come and they will have to come with a plan to actually create jobs, create positive impact on the economy."

**Load-Date:** February 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*People gather in Belfast to condemn Russian action in Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XN-CHY1-JBNF-W4FD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 5, 2022 Saturday 8:20 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 424 words

**Byline:** David Young

**Highlight:** After the event, protesters marched through the city to gather for a vigil outside City Hall.

**Body**

Clerics from both sides of a [*Belfast*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/belfast) community interface came together to urge peace in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) at an anti-war rally in the city.

Colin Duncan, from Shankill Methodist Church, and Fr Martin Magill, from St John's Parish church on the Falls Road, were among those who addressed the event at Custom House Square on Saturday afternoon.

Ukrainians living in [*Northern Ireland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/northern-ireland) also gave emotional testimony at the demonstration.

After the event, protesters marched through the city to gather for a vigil outside City Hall.

Mr Duncan and Fr Magill stood side by side to address the rally.

"We stand together here in unity with the people of Ukraine," said Mr Duncan.

"What we see happening and unfolding in front of our TV sets I can't come up with a word for it, there isn't a strong enough word that I can think of for the horror that's happening in Ukraine."

Fr Magill added: "How on earth have we found ourselves in this situation, bearing in mind this world of ours has gone through two world wars, how has this been allowed to happen?"

Kateryna Kozlova, from the Ukrainian city of Kherson, told the crowds of the anxiety trying to reach relatives on the phone.

"It's the worst feeling ever when you do not know whether your family is still alive," she said.

She condemned the attack on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in south-east Ukraine and warned that the world could face nuclear disaster if [*Nato*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nato) fails to impose a no-fly zone.

"I don't understand why Nato doesn't close the skies, close the skies at least over the nuclear power plant," she said.

"We are all in danger, all the people here, all the people in Europe, all the people in Asia, so please hear us."

Patrick Corrigan, Northern Ireland director of Amnesty International, also addressed the rally.

He urged the Stormont authorities to prepare to accommodate ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

"More than a million people have now been forced to flee from Ukraine, and they need refuge," he said.

"Protection for refugees must be offered without fear or favour, without obstacles, without discrimination and without delay.

"The European Union has rightly waived any requirement for visas and other unnecessary paperwork. The Irish government is already accepting arrivals from Ukraine. The Scottish and Welsh governments have started preparations to receive refugees.

"In Northern Ireland we must be ready to play our part too in offering sanctuary.

"The Executive needs to move on this issue urgently. We cannot simply sit and wait for the [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) to get their act together. Preparations must start now."

**Load-Date:** March 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Watch live as Ukrainian refugees cross into Romania after Russia's invasion*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64W3-S5P1-JBNF-W47H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 26, 2022 Saturday 9:57 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,INDY TV; Version:1

**Length:** 97 words

**Byline:** Ross Martin-Pavitt

**Body**

Ukrainians flee to the northeastern Romanian border checkpoint of Sighetu MarmaÈiei, after [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) launched an all-out invasion of Ukraine.

Heavy street fighting against Russian troops is underway in Ukraine's capital city [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) as officials urged locals to take immediate shelter.

Reuters has reported that Kyiv has been struck by two missiles in the southwest areas of the city centre.

One of the missiles hit a site close to Zhulyany airport, while the other is believed to have hit the area near the Sevastopol square, said a witness.

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**Load-Date:** February 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Moldova faces multiple threats from Russia as it turns toward EU membership, foreign minister says*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BHJ-F2T1-DY4H-K0N5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 10, 2024 Sunday 11:17 AM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 928 words

**Byline:** Stephen McGrath and Aurel Obreja

**Highlight:** Moldova's foreign minister says the past two years for his country have been the hardest and most tumultuous for European Union candidate Moldova in more than three decades as it faces threats from Russia in multiple spheres of public life

**Body**

The past two years have been the hardest and most tumultuous for [*European Union*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/european-union) candidate Moldova in more than three decades as it faces threats from [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) in multiple spheres of public life, the country's foreign minister says.

Since Russia invaded [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) in 2022, its neighbor Moldova has faced a litany of crises that have at times raised fears the country is also in Russia’s crosshairs. These included errant missiles landing on its territory; a severe energy crisis after Moscow dramatically reduced gas supplies; rampant inflation; and protests by pro-Russia parties against the pro-Western government. Moldova has also taken in the highest number of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** per capita of any country.

“This past two years without exaggeration have been by far the most difficult in the past 30 years,” Mihai Popsoi, appointed foreign minister in late January, told The Associated Press in an interview.

Moldova gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, but Russia continues to see the country — sandwiched between Ukraine and EU member Romania — as within its sphere of influence.

Moldovan officials have repeatedly accused Russia of conducting a “hybrid war” against the country — funding anti-government protests, meddling in local elections and running vast disinformation campaigns to try to topple the government and derail Moldova from its path toward full EU membership. Russia has denied the accusations.

Last week, Moldova’s national Intelligence and Security Services agency said it has gathered data indicating “unprecedented” plans by Moscow to launch a fresh and sprawling destabilization campaign as Moldova gears up for a referendum on EU membership and a presidential election later in the year.

“We know that the Kremlin is going to invest a lot of energy and financial resources through their proxies to try to get their way," said Popsoi, a lawmaker from the governing Party of Action and Solidarity who also serves as deputy prime minister.

“They’re trying to bribe voters and use citizens to bribe them,” he added. “The Russians are learning and adapting, and they’re trying to use the democratic process against us … to topple a democratic government in Moldova.”

Tensions have also periodically soared in Moldova’s Russia-backed breakaway region of Transnistria — a thin strip of land bordering Ukraine that isn’t recognized by any U.N. member countries but where Russia maintains about 1,500 troops as so-called peacekeepers, guarding huge Soviet-era weapons and ammunition stockpiles.

Shortly after the war started, a string of explosions struck the region; an opposition leader was found fatally shot in his home last July; and anxieties soared last month when some feared the region would ask to be annexed by Russia. Instead, the region appealed to Russia for diplomatic “protection” amid what it said was increasing pressure from Chisinau.

Popsoi acknowledged that the situation with Transnistria is tense, and he worries that the speculation could adversely impact investment. “The situation will remain tense as long as the front line is 200 miles away," he said.

The 37-year-old minister noted the testing period Moldova has been through has nevertheless also been transformative for his country, which has a population of about 2.5 million people.

“When we look at the energy security of Moldova, two years ago there was very little,” he said. “Now Moldova is quite independent or has alternatives and can choose where to buy gas and electricity.”

The same can be said, he added, for his country’s defense capabilities, the resilience of key institutions such as intelligence, police force, and justice reform. “Moldova is moving in the right direction despite enormous challenges.”

Cristian Cantir, a Moldovan associate professor of international relations at Oakland University, says Moldova has faced a “constant onslaught” of Russian tests to probe weaknesses that might undermine its EU trajectory.

“It feels like a geopolitical race in which Russia is trying to stop Moldova from moving toward the EU, while Moldova tries to fend off Russian influence until it joins the EU,” he said, adding that the authorities “have been much more open about acknowledging the danger Russia presents to the country’s democracy.”

In the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Moldova applied to join the EU and was granted candidate status in June 2022. In December, Brussels said it would open accession negotiations for both Moldova and Ukraine.

Although militarily neutral, non-NATO Moldova has boosted defense spending over the past year and recently approved a new national security strategy that identified Russia as a main threat and aims to raise defense spending to 1% of GDP.

“A significant number of Moldovans still live under the spell of Russian propaganda which has made a boogeyman out of NATO,” Popsoi said. “But that doesn’t stop us from cooperating with our NATO partners and building resilience in our armed forces."

Since the war started, Moldova has received critical financial and diplomatic support from its Western partners but needs long-term investments, Popsoi said. The referendum later this year on EU membership aims to gauge where Moldovans see their future. Officials have an ambitious target of gaining full accession by 2030.

“We will do our utmost to make sure we get this message across that there is a better tomorrow and that is within the European Union,” Popsoi added. “No matter how hard Russian propaganda tries to convince our citizens of the opposite.”

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McGrath reported from Sighisoara, Romania.

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2024

**End of Document**



[*Czechs relaunch checks at Slovak border amid migration wave*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66GY-TWR1-JBNF-W183-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

September 29, 2022 Thursday 12:11 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 543 words

**Byline:** Karel Janicek

**Highlight:** Czech police have fired warning shots in the air before detaining a driver of a van carrying 15 migrants after the Czech Republic and Austria renewed checks at their borders with Slovakia amid a renewed wave of migration

**Body**

Czech police fired warning shots in the air before detaining the driver of a van carrying 15 migrants Thursday morning after the Czech Republic and [*Austria*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/austria) renewed checks at the border with Slovakia amid a new wave of migration.

Czech police reported traffic delays, especially for trucks, after the measure became effective on Thursday at 27 border crossings, while the Austrian authorities enforced it at 11 crossings.

The checks will be initially in place for 10 days.

Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia all belong to the European Union’s visa-free [*Schengen*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/schengen) zone, where residents of member nations typically can cross borders without presenting passports or visas. Schengen countries have adopted temporary border controls in the past for various reasons, including to curb illegal migration and to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

In the first eight hours of the checks, the Czech police said some 120 illegal migrants, including the 15 in the van, were detained on Czech territory, together with nine human smugglers.

“The goal isn’t to complicate the lives of the Czech and Slovak citizens,” Czech Interior Minister Vit Rakusan said after midnight at a border crossing. “The goal is only to make it clear to the groups of smugglers, who are the real criminals … that they have a barrier at the border.”

He spoke after Slovakia’s Prime Minister Eduard Heger criticized the move of its neighbor. Until 1992, they were one country, [*Czechoslovakia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/czechoslovakia).

Rakusan said Czech officials will negotiate further steps with the authorities from other European countries. He said the Czech Republic, which currently holds the rotating EU presidency “will do the maximum to find a Europe-wide solution.”

Slovakia wants to help enforce the outer Schengen border between Hungary and Serbia to curb the flow of migrants. Interior Minister Roman Mikulec said if the talks with neighboring countries don’t result in a solution, his country will also launch border checks.

After Russia invaded Ukraine, the Czech Republic accepted some 430,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** but Rakusan said the latest measure is dealing with illegal migration.

The Interior Ministry said the checks were necessary after authorities detained almost 12,000 migrants on Czech territory this year, most of them from Syria. That is more than the 8,500 seen during the previous massive migration wave in Europe in 2015, when the Czech Republic was not on the main route. Some 125 human smugglers have been arrested this year, a significant increase compared with the previous years.

The ministry said that the migrants have been using the Czech Republic as a transit country on their way mostly from Turkey to the West and don’t apply for asylum in the country.

Rakusan said that after his talks with German officials, “there’s, of course a threat” that neighboring Germany, a key trade partner for his country, will also start checks on the border with the Czech Republic.

“We do all we can to prevent that,” he said.

The Czech Republic, together with Hungary and Poland, refused to comply with a refugee quota program launched by the EU after well over a million migrants entered the bloc in 2015, most fleeing war in Syria and Iraq.

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Follow all [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) stories on migration at [*https://apnews.com/hub/migration*](https://apnews.com/hub/migration)

**Load-Date:** September 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[*US drops bid to extradite British businessman linked to Russian oligarch*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67P1-99P1-DY4H-K4S3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 3, 2023 Friday 10:45 AM GMT

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**Section:** CRIME,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 572 words

**Byline:** Henry Vaughan

**Highlight:** Graham Bonham-Carter, 62, had been arrested by the National Crime Agency and accused of conspiring to swerve US sanctions on Oleg Deripaska.

**Body**

The US has dropped a bid to extradite a [*British*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british) businessman accused of conspiring to violate sanctions imposed by the US government on a Russian oligarch.

Graham Bonham-Carter, 62, was arrested by the [*National Crime Agency*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/national-crime-agency) (NCA) last October, accused of funding properties bought by [*Oleg Deripaska*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/oleg-deripaska) and expatriating his artwork.

Mr Deripaska, an industrialist who founded the Rusal aluminium company and is considered an ally of Russian President [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) , has an estimated wealth of more than £2 billion.

The US Department of Justice (DoJ) said Mr Bonham-Carter was wanted to face three charges – conspiring to violate and evade US sanctions in violation of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), violating IEEPA, and wire fraud – each of which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison.

The court received an email from the Home Office on behalf of the US authorities requesting the extradition order be withdrawn

Westminster Magistrates' Court

Mr Bonham-Carter appeared at Westminster Magistrates’ Court on December 12 last year, when the court heard he would argue he should not be extradited because Mr Deripaska was not subject to UK sanctions at the time.

His barrister Gavin Irwin said one of the issues in the case was “whether the breaches of sanctions properly constitute extradition offences because the individual to whom alleged assistance was supplied was not designated in the UK at the time”.

District Judge Sarah Turnock set a two-day hearing for May 22 and said Mr Bonham-Carter would next appear for a case management hearing on March 3.

However, the court on Friday told the PA news agency the case was concluded on February 9.

“The court received an email from the [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) on behalf of the US authorities requesting the extradition order be withdrawn,” a spokeswoman said.

Mr Deripaska was initially sanctioned by the US for “having acted or purported to act on behalf of, directly or indirectly, a senior official of the government of the Russian Federation, and for operating in the energy sector of the Russian Federation economy”.

We do not routinely comment on individual cases

Home Office

After an investigation conducted with “substantial assistance” from the NCA, Mr Bonham-Carter was accused of engaging in more than one million dollars (£900,000) of illicit transactions to fund real estate properties in the US for Mr Deripaska’s benefit.

It was alleged the businessman was instructed by Mr Deripaska to set up a company, GBCM Limited, to manage his properties, including two in New York City and one in Washington DC.

The DoJ said money was sent from a GBCM Limited account in Russia to pay for staff salaries and property taxes and to maintain the oligarch’s properties.

Mr Deripaska was one of seven oligarchs hit with sanctions by the UK on March 10 last year. He was described as being “closely associated” with the Russian government and its leader and “involved in destabilising and threatening” Ukraine.

Four days after the sanctions were imposed, four protesters broke into one of Mr Deripaska’s properties in Belgravia Square, London, before declaring it “belongs to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***”.

Mr Bonham-Carter had his bank accounts frozen at Westminster Magistrates’ Court last March after it was alleged they contained money linked to Mr Deripaska.

A Home Office spokesman said: “We do not routinely comment on individual cases.”

The DoJ and NCA have been contacted for comment.

**Load-Date:** March 3, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine confident of UK support regardless of who is in No 10 – ambassador*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67M7-W3C1-DY4H-K44P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 23, 2023 Thursday 12:01 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 582 words

**Byline:** Dominic McGrath

**Highlight:** Ukrainian Ambassador to the UK Vadym Prystaiko praised the “bipartisan” support across British politics for his country.

**Body**

[*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) is confident of retaining UK support in the war effort against Russia regardless of who is in Downing Street, the country’s ambassador has indicated.

Ukrainian [*Ambassador*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ambassador) to the UK Vadym Prystaiko praised the “bipartisan” support across British politics for his country, as it prepares to mark one year since the Russian invasion.

Mr Prystaiko, who met Sir Keir Starmer and other Labour figures this week, told the PA news agency that Ukrainians understood that governments change and prime ministers can come and go.

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) retains the affections of many in Ukraine for his wholehearted support for Ukraine since the outbreak of war, with his exit from office last year prompting some concerns that British backing could soften.

We are quite happy by this bipartisan, multi-partisan support we have here

Vadym Prystaiko

But in his visit to London earlier this month, Ukrainian President [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) met Rishi Sunak and heaped praise on the British response since last February.

In an interview, Mr Prystaiko praised on the united front shown by British politicians.

It comes with Labour currently polling far ahead of the [*Conservatives*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/conservatives). A Labour victory at the next general election, in around 18 months time, would see Sir Keir leading the country’s response on Ukraine.

“We are quite happy by this bipartisan, multi-partisan support we have here.”

Discussing his meeting with Labour, he said: “Even they told me that it is quite unusual for the internal politics when the parties are united around anything,” Mr Prystaiko said.

“That doesn’t mean we don’t have to explain our position, the position might be different in some things. But the core of the understanding is here.”

Referencing Mr Johnson, he said: “People do appreciate what he was doing, but at the same time people in the same intensity appreciate what has been done by the whole UK and they understand that now all decisions are taken in No 10 and there is a new Prime Minister there.

“So they do understand, they are not naive, and they will appreciate whoever comes, the Conservatives, the Labour.

“We might also change our system, that is the beauty of democracy, we’re OK with that.”

Mr Prystaiko also praised the Government’s welcome for Ukrainians fleeing the war, one year on.

Around 160,000 Ukrainians have arrived in the UK as of February 13 under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme – where people are sponsored by a UK household for six months – and the Ukraine Family Scheme, for those with family already settled in the UK.

But concerns have emerged that some ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in the UK are facing homelessness or destitution.

Mr Prystaiko said he was “happy” with the scheme.

“Your colleagues, Ukrainian journalists, are formulating this question differently. How come that a nation which has not much in common with us is supporting at such a level – why?

“And you know most of the nations around the globe are supporting us through taxpayers’ money … Here it is different, people opening up their houses. The Ukrainians are asking – why? What is that? How can we repay?”

In the same interview, the Ukrainian ambassador looked ahead to beyond the war and the place of his country in the world.

“What we are telling Russians – let us write the new chapter here. Let’s draw the line, we will live our lives, you will live whatever you want to do.

“We don’t want to isolate ourselves, North Korean style – which very unfortunately Russia is moving towards – we would like to be open and do the same as many nations.”

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Mediterranean nations criticize EU solidarity on migrants*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65M1-R521-DY4H-K3MV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 4, 2022 Saturday 3:11 PM GMT

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**Length:** 492 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Five European Union countries on the Mediterranean Sea say voluntary solidarity from fellow EU nations on caring for migrants isn't enough

**Body**

Five [*European*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/europe) Union nations on the Mediterranean who fear possible waves of refugees driven by hunger out of [*Africa*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/africa) called Saturday for an end to the EU's "voluntary" solidarity on migrants and a better way to redistribute the burden of caring for them.

The Interior ministers from [*Italy*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/italy) , Cyprus, Greece, Malta and Spain wrapped up two days of talks in Venice amid worries that the blockade of Ukraine grain exports due to Russia's invasion could see huge numbers of refugees from Africa flooding southern Europe.

Cypriot Interior Minister Nicos Nouris told reporters that robust, common EU policy is needed on migration. "[*Solidarity*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/solidarity) is not a slogan, nor can it be void of substance," Nouris said.

Past EU policies in which member countries could offer to receive some of the hundreds of thousands of migrants landing in Italy, Greece and other southern shores proved grossly inadequate.

Many EU countries didn't step forward. Others, even with they did pledge to receive modest numbers of some of the hundreds of thousands of migrants rescued from smugglers' unseaworthy boats, didn't follow through.

"Solidarity in our mind cannot be voluntary,'' Nouris said.

He noted that after several years of Cyprus taking in migrants, now 5% of the eastern Mediterranean island nation's population consists of asylum-seekers.

The meeting did not address the millions of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who recently flooded into northern EU nations like Poland, Hungary and Romania.

How Europe handles large numbers of migrants takes on particular urgency now, amid fears that drought in Africa and surging food prices even before the war made shipping Ukrainian grain to Somalia, Egypt and other poor nations impossible could drive up the already alarmingly numbers of hungry people.

In the Sahel, the part of Africa just below the Sahara desert, an estimated 18 million people are facing severe hunger as farmers endure their worst production season in more than a decade.

Italian Interior Minister Luciana Lamorgese cited the blocking of grain in Ukraine as just another reason for the EU to develop a "adequate mechanism of distributing migrants" among its members.

She also pressed for more repatriation agreements with countries whose people are seeking a better life in Europe but had their asylum bids rejected since they are fleeing poverty, not war or persecution.

Italy has an effective repatriation agreement with Tunisia, but not with most other countries in Africa or in Asia whose citizens take to smugglers' boats to try to reach southern European shores. As a result, even though their asylum applications fail, many migrants remain in Italy, often taking illegal jobs or resorting to begging.

Greece's interior minister expressed support for more legal paths for migration.

"We cannot let smugglers decide who comes to live in Europe,'' minister Notis Mitarachi told reporters.

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Follow all [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) developments on global migration at [*https://apnews.com/migration*](https://apnews.com/migration).

**Load-Date:** June 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian family hosted by Matt Hancock to sell NFT paintings for aid charity*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67MJ-BM81-JBNF-W3P8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 24, 2023 Friday 4:14 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 568 words

**Byline:** Ellie Iorizzo

**Highlight:** The former health secretary has hosted the family since April last year.

**Body**

A Ukrainian refugee family who are being hosted by former health secretary [*Matt Hancock*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/matt-hancock) are putting a collection of [*NFT*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nft) paintings up for a charity sale.

The West [*Suffolk*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/suffolk) MP has announced that the money raised would go to relief and aid agency [*Care*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/care) International UK’s Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal.

Mr Hancock, who began hosting the family in April, said he was “incredibly proud” to support Iryna Korobkina and her artist husband Oleg Mischenko, who are selling the 15-piece NFT collection.

On Monday, Iryna & Oleg, two Ukrainians who have been living with me in Suffolk due to Putin's barbaric war, will be selling Oleg's art at [*@TheNFTGallery4*](https://twitter.com/TheNFTGallery4?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) on the [*@Coinbase\_NFT*](https://twitter.com/Coinbase_NFT?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Marketplace to raise money for [*@careintuk*](https://twitter.com/careintuk?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Thank you for all your support[*https://t.co/6si4XuTxO7*](https://t.co/6si4XuTxO7) [*pic.twitter.com/pDNXPNpCQx*](https://t.co/pDNXPNpCQx) — Matt Hancock (@MattHancock) [*February 24, 2023*](https://twitter.com/MattHancock/status/1629143210273505285?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The former I’m A Celebrity … Get Me Out of Here contestant added: “Their spirit and bravery in the face of adversity – like so many Ukrainians – is inspiring and I urge people to help in any way they can.“Oleg is an incredibly talented artist and his From Ukraine, With Love collection is truly stunning.”Mr Mischenko’s works were painted before the war, and later turned into digital items called non-fungible tokens (NFT) – a type of certificate of ownership for virtual assets such as memes or tweets.After escaping Russian forces in March, he stayed behind while his family found refuge in the UK.Selling off my works as part of this NFT collection is a way of serving my country and its people. It’s also my way of defending our cultural values, our philosophy and our European way of lifeOleg MischenkoMr Mischenko joined the army, but due to his health he was not sent to fight and in December was reunited with his family in Suffolk.The member of the National Union of Artists in Ukraine said: “Selling off my works as part of this NFT collection is a way of serving my country and its people.“It’s also my way of defending our cultural values, our philosophy and our European way of life.”He also had his works, which were on display in the Ukrainian port city of Odesa, shipped to West Suffolk.Ms Korobkina said: “My husband has captured Ukraine’s beauty. Tragically, some of these places are now unrecognisable following the war.”Almost a year after the escalation of the conflict in [*#Ukraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Ukraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) , we thank you for your support. Together with local partners, CARE has assisted a total of nearly one million Ukrainians since the escalation of the conflict and continues to expand its assistance. [*pic.twitter.com/QyG5iUZF6T*](https://t.co/QyG5iUZF6T) — CARE International UK (@careintuk) [*February 23, 2023*](https://twitter.com/careintuk/status/1628764509258018816?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

She also “thanked” Mr Hancock and the UK for welcoming refugees into their homes.

“People have been very kind here in England. We want to thank you all from the bottom of our hearts,” she added.

In February this year, Mr Hancock announced that the Ukrainian family had found jobs, a school for their five-year-old daughter Mariana and a new home.

[*Coinbase*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/coinbase) , which is conducting the NFT sale, is not taking a fee and 90% of all money raised is going to Care International UK’s Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal, with 10% going to Ms Korobkina’s family.

Care International UK have been supporting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** with basic needs and psychological support in the UK and abroad.

The NFTs will be sold at The NFT Gallery, on Dover Street, in London’s Mayfair on Monday February 27.

**Load-Date:** February 24, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Nearly 1m people apply for asylum across EU in 2022, up 50 per cent from 2021*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67M4-SWV1-JBNF-W4K4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 22, 2023 Wednesday 5:44 PM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 649 words

**Byline:** Lucy Skoulding

**Highlight:** The EU Agency for Asylum said 966,000 asylum applications were made in the 27 EU countries as well as in Norway and Switzerland last year

**Body**

Nearly one million people applied for international protection in the [*European Union*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/european-union) in 2022, marking a 50 per cent increase on the year before.

It brings the number of [*asylum*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/asylum-seekers-0) requests to a level not seen since 2015-2016 and the caseloads of applications pending decision is at its highest since 2017, according to data published today.

And after more than a decade of war and economic collapse in their country, [*Syrian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/syria) people continued to be the top nationality of [*asylum*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/asylum) -seekers in Europe with more than 130,000 applications.

The [*EU*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/eu) Agency for Asylum (EUAA) said 966,000 asylum applications were made in the 27 EU countries as well as in Norway and Switzerland last year, which is up 50 per cent from 2021.

That doesn’t include more than four million[***Ukrainian***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) who were granted temporary protection in the EU through the Temporary Protection Directive, a special mechanism activated to avoid collapsing already backlogged asylum systems.

The European agency linked the increase to the continuing easing of COVID-19 travel restrictions, increasing food insecurity and conflicts in many parts of the world.

Although most asylum-seekers enter the EU legally, mainly by plane with travel visas, some also crossed the EU’s land and sea borders without permission, mainly through the Western Balkans and the Mediterranean.

With Syrian people submitting the highest number of applications, people from Afghanistan were second, fleeing the spiraling security, humanitarian and financial troubles that followed the Taliban takeover in August 2021, with 129,000 requests.

Applicants from Turkey were the third top nationality for asylum seekers. They doubled in numbers last year with 55,000 requests.

Soaring inflation and “democratic backsliding” were among the factors believed to have caused the increase, the agency said.

In many places, reception centers are overwhelmed, leaving asylum-seekers in the streets.

It is thought the recent earthquake that killed nearly 46,000 people and left hundreds of thousands homeless in Turkey and Syria may lead to a surge in irregular border crossings into Greece.

Germany offered earlier this month to temporarily ease visa restrictions to some earthquake survivors while Spain promised to resettle a small group of 100 vulnerable Syrian refugees from Turkey, which is home to four million refugees.

Venezuelans, Colombians, Bangladeshis and Georgians also applied for asylum in record numbers last year, as did Moroccans, Tunisians and Egyptians.

Some four per cent of asylum-seekers in 2022 defined themselves as unaccompanied minors.

The EUAA increased its technical and operational support last year, with the number of countries benefitting from that support quadrupling since 2019.

A total of 13 member states benefitted from the EUAA Operational Support including Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Lithuania, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain. This involved deploying over 1,500 personnel.

The agency is also providing support in Moldova.

Which countries in Europe have asylum seekers applied to?

An EU migration report has revealed the top five countries that received applications in 2022

The EUAA didn’t say which EU countries received the most applications last year.

But an internal EU migration report seen by the Associated Press lists Germany, France, Spain, Austria and Italy as the top five.

Asylum authorities issued decisions on more than 600,000 applications last year but they received even more new cases, adding to the existing backlog.

Of the applications analysed, 40 per cent were granted refugee status or subsidiary protection.

This was mostly for Syrian, Belarusian, Eritrean, Yemeni, and Malian applicants, as well as for most of the Ukrainians who chose to apply for asylum instead of temporary protection.

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Fifty migrants told they will be sent to Rwanda, Boris Johnson says*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65FK-5W91-JBNF-W0PB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 14, 2022 Saturday 8:05 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK NEWS,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:1

**Length:** 444 words

**Byline:** Thomas Kingsley

**Highlight:** The prime minister said the government is braced for legal battles with 'leftie lawyers' over the controversial policy

**Body**

Boris [*Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) has revealed that the first 50 migrants have been told they will be sent to [*Rwanda*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rwanda) within two weeks.

The policy has been widely criticised by human rights charities and even faced backlash from Tory backbenchers, former prime minister [*Theresa May*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/theresa-may) and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The government said it is braced for a flurry of legal claims as it prepares to send migrants to the east African nation within a fortnight. In the interview with the Daily Mail, Mr Johnson said the migrants have already been served "notices of intent," marking the start of the process.

"There's going to be a lot of legal opposition from the types of firms that for a long time have been taking taxpayers' money to mount these sorts of cases, and to thwart the will of the people, the will of parliament," Mr Johnson said.

"We're ready for that. We will dig in for the fight - we will make it work. We've got a huge flowchart of things we have to do to deal with it with the leftie lawyers."

The controversial policy has faced heavy scrutiny since it was announced with the latest reports claiming[*LGBT+ refugees sent to Rwanda could face persecution*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/home-office-rwanda-priti-patel-refugees-lgbt-b2075420.html) and [***Ukrainian******refugees*** *fleeing Russia's invasion*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/ukraine-rwanda-refugees-tom-pursglove-home-office-uk-b2076493.html) could also be sent to east Africa.

The Home Office's equality impact assessment for the policy, published this week, states that there are "concerns" over the treatment of some LGBTQ+ people, and that investigations point to "ill treatment" of this group being "more than a one-off".

The document also reveals that some asylum seekers in Rwanda are forced to wait years for a decision and two-thirds are ultimately rejected.

Meanwhile, immigration minister Tom Pursglove said that decisions to ship asylum seekers to the east African country would be considered on a "case by case basis" - and did not deny that people who have fled Ukraine could be among them.

During an evidence hearing with the Home Affairs Select Committee, he also declined to rule out that Afghan nationals who worked alongside the British Army could be deported under the policy.

Asked whether refugees who have escaped the Russian invasion could be among the cohort relocated, Mr Pursglove said: "There is absolutely no reason why any Ukrainian should be getting in a small boat, paying a smuggler to get to the UK.

"People should be using those safe and legal routes that are available. We look at cases on a case by cases basis, but it is crucial to get the message across that people should be using the safe and legal routes if they come from Ukraine. It would be absurd to do otherwise."

Home Office figures suggest 28,526 people cross the English Channel in 2021, up from 8,466 the year before.

**Load-Date:** May 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*What the papers say – August 29*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6689-X1X1-JBNF-W0WH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 29, 2022 Monday 6:36 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 555 words

**Byline:** PA Reporter

**Highlight:** Cost-of-living concerns and advice to ‘drink bog water’ are splashed across the mastheads.

**Body**

The front pages focus on “brutal” cuts in schools and hospitals, the possible end of cash and recycled water’s potential.

The i says Tory leadership frontrunner [*Liz Truss*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/liz-truss) is under pressure to offer “energy help for all”, while The Times reports half of [*Conservative*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/conservative) voters want the energy sector to be nationalised.

Monday’s i: Truss under pressure to offer energy help for all [*#tomorrowspaperstoday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/w8YfyWmBgM*](https://t.co/w8YfyWmBgM) — Helena Wilkinson (@BBCHelena) [*August 28, 2022*](https://twitter.com/BBCHelena/status/1563980482974466049?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Monday’s Times: Half of Tory voters want energy to be nationalised [*#tomorrowspaperstoday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/jqnVPa4ndT*](https://t.co/jqnVPa4ndT) — Helena Wilkinson (@BBCHelena) [*August 28, 2022*](https://twitter.com/BBCHelena/status/1564005430489227267?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*Schools*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/schools) and hospitals face making “brutal” cuts to pay energy bills due to rising costs, according to the Daily Mirror.Monday's front page: Schools and NHS bills emergency.[*https://t.co/1NTWgZaNKj*](https://t.co/1NTWgZaNKj) [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/fuI0G2MRrA*](https://t.co/fuI0G2MRrA) — The Mirror (@DailyMirror) [*August 28, 2022*](https://twitter.com/DailyMirror/status/1564004750386929665?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Meanwhile, the Daily Express covers fears by campaigners that millions of people will be cut adrift from the financial system due to a warning cash could be phased out by 2027.Front page: Millions facing hardship with 'end of cash in 5 years' [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Liz Truss -[*https://t.co/QjkvvwgBpt*](https://t.co/QjkvvwgBpt) [*pic.twitter.com/CZWvbfSTVO*](https://t.co/CZWvbfSTVO) — Daily Express (@Daily\_Express) [*August 28, 2022*](https://twitter.com/Daily_Express/status/1564000889572032512?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) The Daily Telegraph says [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) will use his farewell message to push the cause of green energy, and the Daily Star advises its readers to “drink bog water” after the head of the Environment Agency advocated using recycled water to combat shortages.The front page of tomorrow's Daily Telegraph:'PM: Don’t give up on green energy'[*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Sign up for the Front Page newsletter[*https://t.co/x8AV4Oomry*](https://t.co/x8AV4Oomry) [*pic.twitter.com/xXSC4uPnTx*](https://t.co/xXSC4uPnTx) — The Telegraph (@Telegraph) [*August 28, 2022*](https://twitter.com/Telegraph/status/1564012738619351040?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) Monday's front page: Drink bog water [*#TomorrowsPapersToday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*https://t.co/WKvgiXfNB5*](https://t.co/WKvgiXfNB5) [*pic.twitter.com/PoU9B2Dwbo*](https://t.co/PoU9B2Dwbo) — Daily Star (@dailystar) [*August 28, 2022*](https://twitter.com/dailystar/status/1564007367154585600?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) A gathering of leading economic authorities in the US has warned central bankers will find it harder to root out high inflation in the coming years, according to the Financial Times.Just published: front page of the Financial Times UK edition Monday August 29 [*https://t.co/Vsoz7mHwBq*](https://t.co/Vsoz7mHwBq) [*pic.twitter.com/YpQnEgCLJR*](https://t.co/YpQnEgCLJR) — Financial Times (@FinancialTimes) [*August 28, 2022*](https://twitter.com/FinancialTimes/status/1563981024790544384?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) New analysis of NHS data in The Guardian shows black and Asian people in England have to wait longer for a cancer diagnosis than white people.Guardian front page, Monday 29 August 2022 – Revealed: black and Asian cancer patients wait longer for diagnosis [*pic.twitter.com/uUuLjTGWL6*](https://t.co/uUuLjTGWL6) — Guardian news (@guardiannews) [*August 28, 2022*](https://twitter.com/guardiannews/status/1563999227822444544?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) NHS leaders have warned record bed-blocking is hampering efforts to battle the emergency care crisis, says the Daily Mail.Monday's [*@DailyMailUK*](https://twitter.com/DailyMailUK?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*#MailFrontPages*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/MailFrontPages?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*pic.twitter.com/Fng2P2HAtX*](https://t.co/Fng2P2HAtX) — Daily Mail U.K. (@DailyMailUK) [*August 28, 2022*](https://twitter.com/DailyMailUK/status/1564005864146616322?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) And The Independent cites charity Save the Children as saying billions will be cut from overseas aid projects unless the Government abandons rules diverting a quarter of funds to the costs of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in the UK.Tomorrow's [*@independent*](https://twitter.com/Independent?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) front page [*#tomorrowspaperstoday*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TomorrowsPapersToday?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) To subscribe to the Daily Edition [*https://t.co/koJc3LN1ax*](https://t.co/koJc3LN1ax) [*pic.twitter.com/1GoKIUkylD*](https://t.co/1GoKIUkylD) — Thair Shaikh (@ThairShaikh) [*August 28, 2022*](https://twitter.com/ThairShaikh/status/1563979727496527873?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

**Load-Date:** August 29, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Fifty migrants told they will be sent to Rwanda, Boris Johnson says*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65FH-BSF1-JBNF-W35D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 14, 2022 Saturday 8:47 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 444 words

**Byline:** Thomas Kingsley

**Highlight:** The prime minister said the government is braced for legal battles with 'leftie lawyers' over the controversial policy

**Body**

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) has revealed that the first 50 migrants have been told they will be sent to [*Rwanda*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rwanda) within two weeks.

The policy has been widely criticised by human rights charities and even faced backlash from Tory backbenchers, former prime minister [*Theresa May*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/theresa-may) and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The government said it is braced for a flurry of legal claims as it prepares to send migrants to the east African nation within a fortnight. In the interview with the Daily Mail, Mr Johnson said the migrants have already been served "notices of intent," marking the start of the process.

"There's going to be a lot of legal opposition from the types of firms that for a long time have been taking taxpayers' money to mount these sorts of cases, and to thwart the will of the people, the will of parliament," Mr Johnson said.

"We're ready for that. We will dig in for the fight - we will make it work. We've got a huge flowchart of things we have to do to deal with it with the leftie lawyers."

The controversial policy has faced heavy scrutiny since it was announced with the latest reports claiming[*LGBT+ refugees sent to Rwanda could face persecution*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/home-office-rwanda-priti-patel-refugees-lgbt-b2075420.html) and [***Ukrainian******refugees*** *fleeing Russia's invasion*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/ukraine-rwanda-refugees-tom-pursglove-home-office-uk-b2076493.html) could also be sent to east Africa.

The Home Office's equality impact assessment for the policy, published this week, states that there are "concerns" over the treatment of some LGBTQ+ people, and that investigations point to "ill treatment" of this group being "more than a one-off".

The document also reveals that some asylum seekers in Rwanda are forced to wait years for a decision and two-thirds are ultimately rejected.

Meanwhile, immigration minister Tom Pursglove said that decisions to ship asylum seekers to the east African country would be considered on a "case by case basis" - and did not deny that people who have fled Ukraine could be among them.

During an evidence hearing with the Home Affairs Select Committee, he also declined to rule out that Afghan nationals who worked alongside the British Army could be deported under the policy.

Asked whether refugees who have escaped the Russian invasion could be among the cohort relocated, Mr Pursglove said: "There is absolutely no reason why any Ukrainian should be getting in a small boat, paying a smuggler to get to the UK.

"People should be using those safe and legal routes that are available. We look at cases on a case by cases basis, but it is crucial to get the message across that people should be using the safe and legal routes if they come from Ukraine. It would be absurd to do otherwise."

Home Office figures suggest 28,526 people cross the English Channel in 2021, up from 8,466 the year before.

**Load-Date:** May 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Happy List 2022: The power of supporting each other*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:668H-WCK1-DY4H-K1YS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 30, 2022 Tuesday 7:01 AM GMT

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**Section:** HAPPY LIST; Version:3

**Length:** 451 words

**Highlight:** At GoFundMe someone donates to help every single second. Even in times of crises, there’s always a place for help and compassion, says Helen Whitehouse

**Body**

No one gets through life without needing a bit of help from time to time. That could be a small hand hold or a big leg up.

It can feel hard to reach out and ask for help – but it shouldn’t be.

We’re living through unprecedented times. The rising [*cost of living*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/cost-of-living) is pinching everyone’s purse strings. Whether it’s the price of energy or the cost of a pack of butter, it’s impossible not to feel it. And we’ve got challenging times to come, as the energy cap continues to rise in the coming months. It’s hard not to feel worried about how our own families, as well as the most vulnerable in society might cope.

At [*GoFundMe*](https://www.gofundme.com/en-gb) , we see hundreds of fundraisers started every day to lend help to those who need it. We’ve also seen the thousands of people willing to donate to help them.

We’ve seen fundraisers by parents helping families with the cost of living over the holidays. People are starting [*GoFundMe*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/gofundme) ’s to cover uniform costs, to help friends with rent or bills, and to cover expenses now everything feels so much tighter.

People are also raising money for strangers, for friends and for charities such as The Trussell Trust. And not just that – we’ve seen donations for not just the everyday, but also the inspiring. One example is former the former Arsenal and England player Anita Asante, who has raised thousands to give young fans who cannot afford them football shirts.

GoFundMe is the home of help and it’s these everyday heroes helping with the leg up so many need at the minute.

Now, [*The Independent has released their Happy List, shining a light on 50 extraordinary people*](https://www.independent.co.uk/happylist/happy-list-2022-inspirational-people-b2148029.html) who’ve done things to help others.

We’ve got Harriet Asher on the List who has helped over 500 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** resettle in the UK. Her GoFundMe raised £25,000 in just 48 hours. Or Iain Butterworth, who set up the Scarborough Sunflower Appeal to help Ukrainian families resettling in the area after feeling “helpless” over the war.

There’s Beryl Carr, the NHS’ oldest volunteer at 100 years old – and Oscar Jones, who has been inspired to raise money for defibrillators after seeing Denmark footballer Christian Eriksen’s heart attack last year.

It’s proof that people are willing to give out help in spades when it’s needed and turn their compassion into a superpower. Seeing something and doing something – and helping someone.

Help is hard to ask for but for many, it’s easy to give. Here at GoFundMe, we facilitate the want or need for help to be changed into a tangible action. We see how a fundraiser on the internet can get food on the table, or essential bills paid.

If you want to help or if you need help, you can do it with us. Whether it’s for yourself, for a friend, or for a charity, you can start a [*GoFundMe today.*](https://www.gofundme.com/create/fundraiser/category/2q0fw9ufq0)

**Load-Date:** August 30, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Aid cuts see UK fall out of top five in global development rankings*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:695B-GRK1-DY4H-K00R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

September 13, 2023 Wednesday 4:00 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 709 words

**Byline:** Christopher McKeon

**Highlight:** The UK had previously been the only G7 nation in the top five, but has now been overtaken by Germany and France.

**Body**

The UK’s commitment to international development has weakened thanks to aid cuts and less focus on poverty reduction, an international think tank has said.

The Centre for Global Development said that, while the UK had once been the leading G7 nation in its Commitment to Development Index (CDI), the decision to reduce the aid budget to 0.5% of [*GDP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/gdp) has seen Britain slip behind [*France*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/france) and [*Germany*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/germany) in the annual rankings.

The UK had previously been the only G7 country in the top five nations in the index, which measures commitment to international development across areas including finance, migration, climate change and security.

But the 2023 edition of the CDI, published on Wednesday, saw the UK fall to seventh place, with Germany rising to second, just behind Sweden. France is now in fifth place, falling from second in the previous edition in 2021.

Ian Mitchell, one of the senior figures behind the CDI, said: “Once lauded as a leader on international development, the UK has dropped out of the top five and been overtaken by both France and Germany on the Commitment to Development Index. Germany is now the G7 country doing the most to tackle the most important global challenges.

“Major cuts to the UK’s aid budget, and a reduced focus on poverty reduction, have outweighed improvements it has made, such as its trade-for-development policy.”

The UK’s fall in the rankings follows the decision in 2021 to reduce the aid budget from 0.7% of GDP to 0.5%. The [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) has promised to return aid spending to 0.7% when the fiscal situation allows.

The Centre for Global Development (CGD) said the quality of the UK’s development finance has fallen, with less of a focus on poverty reduction, even before the Government had started spending a large portion of the aid budget on housing asylum seekers in hotels.

The UK’s poverty reduction work, however, remains above average for wealthy countries, even as its position in the CDI’s ranking for this subject has fallen from 10th to 14th, behind both the US and Italy.

[*Sarah Champion*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sarah-champion) , a Labour MP and chair of the House of Commons International Development Committee, said: “The UK used to have a seat at any table as our development work was proof we did the right thing, for the right reasons, in the right way.

“In a spectacular error of judgement, by cutting the aid budget and then using a large proportion of the balance on our own soil, the Government has dramatically reduced our international credibility and presents us as a nation that doesn’t care – which is simply not true.”

Migration policy is the UK’s weakest area of the CDI, despite the influx of Afghan and ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, with the country taking 4.9 refugees per 1,000 people compared with an average of 9.7 across the world’s 40 richest countries.

The UK has also dropped down the rankings in terms of its commitment to the environment, falling from 10th to 12th, with the Centre for Global Development questioning the ambition of the UK’s carbon reduction targets.

The think tank said the UK could improve by reducing its production of fossil fuels, as well as fossil fuel-related subsidies.

But there was praise for the UK’s security policies, where it ranked second thanks to contributions to peacekeeping forces and efforts protecting sea lanes.

The UK’s health contribution has also improved, rising from 20th to 10th in the rankings since 2021.

Sweden, Germany and Norway topped the overall rankings, with Finland and France completing the top five and the Netherlands coming sixth, just ahead of the UK.

A Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office spokesperson said: “As this report demonstrates the UK remains a leader in overseas development, spending nearly £12.8 billion on aid in 2022. Our International Development Strategy sets out how we are using all the tools at our disposal to deliver on our development goals, such as through investment in global trade and security – and the CGD’s index recognises the value of this approach.

“We are due to nearly double the aid budget for lower income countries next year, including in Africa where aid will rise from £646 million to £1.364 billion, helping to reduce poverty, alleviate the devastating impacts of climate change and protect the world’s most vulnerable people.”

**Load-Date:** September 13, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Transport Secretary unveils deal to help rebuild war-torn Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:667H-5RY1-JBNF-W0SR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 25, 2022 Thursday 1:45 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 508 words

**Byline:** Ben Smith

**Highlight:** Grant Shapps said hosting a refugee family has made the war ‘real’ to him.

**Body**

[*Transport Secretary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/transport-secretary) [*Grant Shapps*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/grant-shapps) has unveiled a deal to help rebuild war-torn [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , adding that hosting a refugee family has made the war “real” to him.

As Ukraine’s infrastructure collapses six months into Russia’s invasion, the package will provide engineering expertise from companies including Rolls-Royce.

Along with providing advice on reconstructing airports, runways and ports, the deal also earmarks £10 million for repairing bridges and buying shipping containers to mobilise grain trains.

The [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) hopes this will boost Ukraine’s grain exports and ease the pressure on food prices, which have soared since Russia invaded a country known as “Europe’s breadbasket”.

Mr Shapps signed the pact on a call with his Ukrainian counterpart, Oleksandr Kubrakov, who reminded him they had spoken on February 24 – the day war broke out.

“He later told me he was in a field just outside Ukraine, just not knowing what would happen in the next few hours,” he told PA news agency.

“Six months in, it seems like the appropriate time to put an action plan in place, to think about the reconstruction of Ukraine.

“Since we know that nearly 100 billion US dollars damage has been done in Ukraine, there’s plenty of reconstruction work to be done.”

Within hours of registrations opening on Thursday morning, Rolls-Royce, Heathrow Airport and Manchester Airport Group had pledged to help rebuild Ukraine’s infrastructure.

[*Britain*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/britain) will also send five buses from the Go-Ahead Group, which the Transport Secretary said would “get… people moving again in the face of this brutal conflict”.

There is speculation that Mr Shapps, who is backing Rishi Sunak in the Tory leadership contest, may be pushed out of his post next month.

On his call with Mr Kubrakov, he said: “We have this leadership election as you know… in two weeks’ time we’ll know exactly where we’re up to.”

I think the whole country, the whole of our country, has found something in common with what’s happened in Ukraine

Grant Shapps

Mr Shapps said he was unsure how long he would remain at the Department for Transport but stressed that Britain’s support for Ukraine would not waver.

“I don’t know exactly what will happen, I’ll leave that to the next prime minister,” he said.

“What I do know is that support for the Ukrainian people will still be here next month, and that I can guarantee.”

The announcement came a day after Ukraine’s independence day, when Boris Johnson said Britain would have to endure higher energy bills to stand up to Russian aggression.

Mr Shapps took in a family of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in April, and said after signing the infrastructure deal that they had brought the conflict home to him.

“They’ve been with us for more than four months now, I think, so they’ve lived with us for a long time,” he said.

“Seeing how they’re settling in, the child’s gone to school and learning English, and all of those different things – you know, of course makes it very real.

“I think the whole country, the whole of our country, has found something in common with what’s happened in Ukraine.”

**Load-Date:** August 25, 2022

**End of Document**



[*British student coordinating distribution of period products to Ukraine refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6596-GM21-JBNF-W4DX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 24, 2022 Sunday 12:01 AM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 459 words

**Byline:** Laura Parnaby

**Highlight:** Ella Lambert, who founded the non-profit Pachamama Project, spoke with the PA news agency about her efforts from Warsaw, Poland.

**Body**

A [*British*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british) university student is among volunteers tackling period poverty among ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Ella Lambert, 22, is coordinating the distribution of thousands of disposable pads to hospitals in the war-torn nation and to women in refugee camps.

The University of Bristol student founded the non-profit Pachamama Project - which provides period products to camps in Lebanon, [*Afghanistan*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/afghanistan) and Uganda - after learning how to sew reusable pads over lockdown.

It has since snowballed into a global network of more than 1,000 volunteers.

This week, Ms Lambert distributed 1,000 pads at the Global Expo centre and Ptak Expo centre, both in [*Warsaw*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/warsaw) , before coordinating efforts to secure a larger supply alongside Florida-based non-profit, Pads4Refugees, run by Melissa Robel, 42.

Speaking from [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) , Ms Lambert told the PA news agency: "The need for sanitary products is huge.

"Talking to the women and hearing their stories first hand, we know exactly how much people need them.

"You could say it's the least of their worries, but if you've got people in the Metro station without products who are on their period, that's a huge additional challenge to deal with when they are just trying to reach safety.

"They don't have proper washing facilities so we are handing out disposable products.

"They also have a minimum amount of clothes, and if they bleed through them, that's a terrible situation to be in."

Ms Lambert said organisations with a focus on feminine hygiene are needed alongside general aid charities because the stigma surrounding periods prevents some women from accessing the products.

The languages student, from Chelmsford in Essex, told PA: "We were speaking to an organisation today who were in the Metro station and someone saw a pack of pads in their bag, and they whispered: 'Do you mind if I have one?'

"They asked all her friends if they had pads, and none of them had any.

"It's quite easy to go up to someone and say: 'I could do with some food', or: 'I need a place to sleep', but people don't feel comfortable asking for sanitary products, especially if they've already bled through their clothes.

"It's very dehumanising.

"I think it helps that we are a period poverty organisation, so I will introduce myself as that."

The Pachamama Project and Pads4Refugees have also distributed 3,000 reusable pads to hospitals in Lviv, western [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , which were transported by Polish charity the Yorghas Foundation this week.

Miss Lambert said many women have lived in the camps for several weeks, because they plan to return to Ukraine when it is safer, so a constant supply of essentials is needed in the border countries.

The women are paying for the pads through donations to a fundraiser, which can be accessed here - [*https://pads4refugees.org*](https://pads4refugees.org)/

**Load-Date:** April 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[*More stars back our appeal*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:658K-51W1-F072-40KJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 21, 2022 Thursday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 19

**Length:** 491 words

**Byline:** DAVID COHEN

**Body**

Rob Rinder and Jerome Flynn have become the latest stars to back our Refugees Welcome appeal, which is providing support for the millions of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have fled their homes

Broadcaster and barrister Rob Rinder visited a train station close to the Polish-Ukrainian border and saw the scale of the disaster firsthand, including how the Red Cross, one of the charities backed by our appeal, was making a critical difference.

He said: "I met mums with children, the elderly and the disabled arriving from Ukraine at a train station in Przemysl. Just a month ago, this was a train station like any other but now it is a refugee centre. The Red Cross have been providing round-the-clock health care and psychological support to people who fled the conflict.

"I saw Red Cross teams handing out food and essentials like blankets, hygiene kits and sleeping mats. Marta, a doctor for the Red Cross, explained that the organisation has given medical help to 6,000 people since the crisis began. Marta works from a makeshift medical centre set up in a primary school.

"She told me about a woman who had given birth in a bomb shelter in Ukraine, who arrived at the centre with her two-week-old baby. It was the first time the new mum was able to sleep on a proper bed, use a normal toilet and eat a proper meal since she'd given birth."

Actor Flynn, known for his roles in Game of Thrones and Soldier Soldier, backed our support for World Vision, one of 13 charities that make up the Disasters Emergency Committee, which is being funded by our appeal.

He said: "More than half the children in Ukraine have been forced to flee their homes and the chaotic environment of life on the move means many are in extremely vulnerable situations. World Vision has been reaching people in Ukraine with emergency supplies since the conflict started, as well as getting medical supplies and equipment to hospitals.

"They also provide emergency shelter, food assistance and hygiene kits, and are rolling out child protection training. The immediate needs of those whose lives have been uprooted are huge, but it's heartening to see people's mental wellbeing also being addressed."

So far we have raised more than £400k along with our sister title, the Evening Standard. Together we are part of a much larger effort supporting the Disasters Emergency Committee Ukrainian Humanitarian Appeal, which is bringing together leading UK aid charities.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign,click here. To sign the petitionclick here. If you would like to donate then pleaseclick herefor our GoFundMe page

**Load-Date:** April 20, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Hungary's Orban meets pope with Ukraine war as backdrop*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:658M-CHP1-JBNF-W0GG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 21, 2022 Thursday 11:32 AM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 462 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban has met with Pope Francis at the Vatican as the war in Ukraine cast a shadow over two leaders who have long sought closer ties with Russia

**Body**

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor [*Orban*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/orban) met with [*Pope Francis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/pope-francis) at the Vatican on Thursday as the war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) cast a shadow over two leaders who have long sought closer ties with Russia.

The meeting was the second between Francis and Orban in less than a year. The pope made a brief stop in Budapest to close out a church congress in September. At the time, Francis pledged to return to [*Hungary*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hungary) for a proper pastoral visit even though he and Orban differ greatly on Europe's response to migration.

Orban's visit to the Vatican was his first foreign trip since he and his right-wing Fidesz party won Hungary's April 3 national election, and the destination represented a departure from what has become his tradition following past elections.

Soon to begin his fourth consecutive term, Orban -the longest-serving leader in the European Union -traveled to Poland's capital, Warsaw, to visit allies after the 2010, 2014 and 2018 Hungarian elections.

Poland is Hungary's strongest ally in the EU, and the government's of the two countries have supported each other in their respective battles with the bloc over allegations that their populist governments have eroded judicial independence, media freedom and the rule of law.

But the war in Ukraine has put the warm relations between Budapest and Warsaw to the test, revealing fault lines caused by differing approaches to Moscow.

Poland, which has traditionally seen Russia as a major security threat, has been among Europe's most active players in pushing for sanctions against Moscow and providing military aid to Ukraine.

Orban has long pursued close ties with Russian President Vladimir Putin, and in recent weeks refused to supply Ukraine with weapons or allow their transfer across the Hungary-Ukraine border. The Hungarian government also has lobbied heavily against expanding EU sanctions to include a ban on Russian energy imports, on which Hungary is dependent.

Francis, for his part, has long sought to improve relations with the Russian Orthodox Church. In 2016, he became the first pope in a millennium to meet with the church's leader, Russian Patriarch Kirill.

Francis initially offered restrained criticism of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, maintaining the Vatican's diplomatic tradition. But he has increasingly expressed outrage over what he called a "sacrilegious" war and the creation of millions of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, while still refraining from calling out Russia or Putin by name.

Francis is still seeking to keep open a path of dialogue with Kirill, however. They spoke by video call last month, and there have been reports they might meet face-to-face in Jerusalem in June.

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Spike reported from Budapest, Hungary.

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Follow [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) 's coverage of the war in Ukraine: [*https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine*](https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine)

**Load-Date:** April 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Desperate refugee families forced to share single rooms*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65C4-T5N1-JCS0-D0WG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

May 3, 2022 Tuesday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 3

**Length:** 1249 words

**Byline:** MAY BULMAN SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

Thousands of Ukrainians seeking refuge in the UK have been forced to live in overcrowded accommodation, with whole families sharing single rooms, charities have warned.

Many of the refugees who have come to Britain to join relatives after fleeing the war are affected, organisations working to help them say, with hundreds having registered as homeless due to poor living conditions.

It comes amid claims the Home Office's Ukraine family scheme is "half-baked", with a senior MP branding the situation a "dysfunctional disaster".

Charities warn the majority of those arriving under the route are experiencing overcrowding because their relatives in the UK do not have spare rooms and no checks are carried out on these properties pre-arrival.

The Independent's Refugees Welcome campaign is calling for the government to go further and faster to help Ukrainians fleeing the war.

A survey carried out by the Greater London Authority of nine charities in the capital found that of 83 Ukrainian clients on the family scheme seeking support, more than half (58 per cent) were in unsuitable accommodation and nearly one in five (17 per cent) were at immediate risk of homelessness.

Meanwhile, the government is refusing to publish national data it holds on the number of Ukrainians presenting to councils as homeless.

Andrei Savitski, service provider at the Work Rights Centre, said more than half of the ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** the charity supports are in overcrowded conditions, and that there would be thousands nationally given family sponsors often live in housing that is "already only just about suitable".

He described one case of a Ukrainian family of five, with one disabled child, all living in one sublet bedroom in Nottinghamshire after the wife and children arrived at the start of April to join the husband, who was already living in precarious conditions as a night-shift delivery driver.

"They've approached the council and said they need housing. Someone from the council has come to the flat and seen the conditions and said it's not suitable, but their appointments for new housing have been postponed a number of times and they're still there," he said.

Government data shows that 16,000 have arrived under the Ukraine Family scheme, which allows refugees to join UK-based relatives, while 11,100 have arrived under the Homes for Ukraine scheme - a separate route which allows refugees to live with volunteer hosts in the UK.

Local authorities are given £10,500 in central government funding for each refugee under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, but receive no money for those arriving under the family route.

Calls are mounting for councils to be given funding to support those arriving under the family scheme, and for the government to allow refugees on this scheme to be able to switch to the Homes for Ukraine route.

Tatiana Miller, 44, who lives Wokingham, said her mother, sister and her sister's two children arrived under the family route in mid-April. But they returned to Poland - where they had fled after the invasion - two weeks later because the living conditions were too overcrowded in the UK.

"We made it work for a short period of time. We did what we could, but on arrival it became obvious that it wasn't sustainable. They went back to Poland even though they know no one there," she told The Independent.

"The family scheme is unfair. We got no financial support, as sponsors do under the other scheme. The government seems to be on another planet. There is a desire to help, but they give with one hand and take away with the other. It's half-baked. It's heartless and not thought through."

Svitlana Opanasenko, a volunteer at Ukraine Social Club, said that of the approximately 200 households on the family scheme that the charity has supported since the start of March, between 90-95 per cent have been living in overcrowded conditions.

She said that at least a dozen of the families they support had been forced to move out of their relatives' home and register as homeless with the local council because the situation was unsustainable, or because landlords had ordered them to leave due to the overcrowding.

"The families are desperate to get their relatives out of Ukraine, and they're not looking at the square footage of their apartments. They just try to bring everyone in. People have nowhere else to go," she said.

Ms Opanasenko added that refugees were also struggling to access financial support and were having to rely on food banks, adding: "We refer most of them for universal credit, but it takes time. You need to register, prove the address, get a bank card, then wait a month.

"People are desperate. The majority of families have little kids, so they need baby food, nappies. These are expensive, as is food in general. They don't get information on how to get support."

A survey of councils by the Local Government Associationlast month revealed that 144 Ukrainian households had presented as homeless across 190 local authorities since the start of the war.

The government has since carried out its own survey, but it is refusing to publish the resulting data.

A spokesperson said it was "gathering this information for monitoring purposes and to help us establish if any local authority needs additional support".

Clive Betts, Labour MP and chair of the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee, said the scheme was a "dysfunctional disaster", adding: "Local authorities need to know how many refugees are here, what services they need. It's information that should be in the public domain."

He added that it was "ridiculous" that councils weren't receiving funding for refugees on the family scheme, and said that in cases where families need to present as homeless they should be allowed to switch onto the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Jon Featonby, policy and advocacy manager at the British Red Cross, said it was wrong that there wasn't the same amount of wraparound support being provided through the family scheme compared to the other route.

"We would like to see families getting the support they need regardless of the scheme they arrived under, including giving sponsors and refugees the same level of financial support and providing local authorities with the funding they need to make sure suitable housing is available," he said.

The criticism came as Priti Patel, the home secretary, reportedly faces legal action over delays which have left ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in limbo. Charities including Save the Children and the Refugee Council are preparing a class action lawsuit on behalf of hundreds of refugees who applied to travel to the UK weeks ago but have been caught up in a visa backlog, according toThe Guardian.

A government spokesperson said: "These schemes are designed to ensure people who are coming to the UK fleeing the Russian invasion of Ukraine are provided with accommodation by their family or sponsor. Under both schemes councils have a duty to provide support where someone is left without accommodation."

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, click here. To sign the petition click here. If you would like to donate then please click here for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** May 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Desperate refugee families forced to share single rooms*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65C4-T5N1-JCS0-D0WJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

May 3, 2022 Tuesday

Second Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 3

**Length:** 1249 words

**Byline:** MAY BULMAN SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

**Body**

Thousands of Ukrainians seeking refuge in the UK have been forced to live in overcrowded accommodation, with whole families sharing single rooms, charities have warned.

Many of the refugees who have come to Britain to join relatives after fleeing the war are affected, organisations working to help them say, with hundreds having registered as homeless due to poor living conditions.

It comes amid claims the Home Office's Ukraine Family scheme is "half-baked", with a senior MP branding the situation a "dysfunctional disaster".

Charities warn the majority of those arriving under the route are experiencing overcrowding because their relatives in the UK do not have spare rooms and no checks are carried out on these properties pre-arrival.

The Independent's Refugees Welcome campaign is calling for the government to go further and faster to help Ukrainians fleeing the war.

A survey carried out by the Greater London Authority of nine charities in the capital found that of 83 Ukrainian clients on the family scheme seeking support, more than half (58 per cent) were in unsuitable accommodation and nearly one in five (17 per cent) were at immediate risk of homelessness.

Meanwhile, the government is refusing to publish national data it holds on the number of Ukrainians presenting to councils as homeless.

Andrei Savitski, service provider at the Work Rights Centre, said more than half of the ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** the charity supports are in overcrowded conditions, and that there would be thousands nationally given family sponsors often live in housing that is "already only just about suitable".

He described one case of a Ukrainian family of five, with one disabled child, all living in one sublet bedroom in Nottinghamshire after the wife and children arrived at the start of April to join the husband, who was already living in precarious conditions as a night-shift delivery driver.

"They've approached the council and said they need housing. Someone from the council has come to the flat and seen the conditions and said it's not suitable, but their appointments for new housing have been postponed a number of times and they're still there," he said.

Government data shows that 16,000 have arrived under the Ukraine Family scheme, which allows refugees to join UK-based relatives, while 11,100 have arrived under the Homes for Ukraine scheme - a separate route which allows refugees to live with volunteer hosts in the UK.

Local authorities are given £10,500 in central government funding for each refugee under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, but receive no money for those arriving under the family route.

Calls are mounting for councils to be given funding to support those arriving under the family scheme, and for the government to allow refugees on this scheme to be able to switch to the Homes for Ukraine route.

Tatiana Miller, 44, who lives Wokingham, said her mother, sister and her sister's two children arrived under the family route in mid-April. But they returned to Poland - where they had fled after the invasion - two weeks later because the living conditions were too overcrowded in the UK.

"We made it work for a short period of time. We did what we could, but on arrival it became obvious that it wasn't sustainable. They went back to Poland even though they know no one there," she told The Independent.

"The family scheme is unfair. We got no financial support, as sponsors do under the other scheme. The government seems to be on another planet. There is a desire to help, but they give with one hand and take away with the other. It's half-baked. It's heartless and not thought through."

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**Load-Date:** May 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Live updates | UK: Russia will push to capture 2 more cities*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65CC-5H21-DY4H-K2RN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 4, 2022 Wednesday 6:27 AM GMT

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**Length:** 1187 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** The British military believes Russia will make a push to try to seize the cities of Kramatorsk and Severodonetsk in eastern Ukraine

**Body**

LVIV, [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) - The British military believes [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) will make a push to try to seize the cities of Kramatorsk and Severodonetsk in eastern Ukraine.

The British made the comment Wednesday in a daily briefing it posts on Twitter about the war.

The Defense Ministry said Russia had some 22 battalion tactical groups near Izium in its attempt to advance in the area. Russia uses so-called battalion tactical groups - units of infantry typically reinforced with tanks, air defenses and artillery - in its operations. Each group typically has around 800 troops.

The British said: "Despite struggling to break through Ukrainian defenses and build momentum, Russia highly likely intends to proceed beyond Izium to capture the cities of Kramatorsk and Severodonetsk."

It added: "Capturing these locations would consolidate Russian military control of the northeastern Donbas and provide a staging point for their efforts to cut off Ukrainian forces in the region."

Analysts have been watching eastern Ukraine, now the site of the country's heaviest fighting, expecting Russia to try to encircle Ukrainian forces. However, the going has been slow as Ukrainian fighters dig in and use long-range weapons, like howitzers, to target the Russians.

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KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR:

- Russia storms Mariupol steel plant as some evacuees reach safety

- Debt drama far from over for Russia even though it dodges default

- Biden visit highlights strain on US weapons stockpile

- Pope Francis offers to meet Putin, but hasn't heard back

- German opposition leader visits Ukraine; chancellor refuses to go

Follow all [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) stories on Russia's war on Ukraine at [*https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine*](https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine)

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OTHER DEVELOPMENTS:

MEXICO CITY - Hundreds of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** are camping out in Mexico City and waiting for the U.S. government to allow them into the country.

About 500 evacuees were waiting Tuesday in large tents under a searing sun on a dusty field on the east side of Mexico's sprawling capital. The camp has been open only a week and from 50 to 100 people are arriving every day.

Some refugees have already been to the U.S. border in Tijuana where they were told they would no longer be admitted. Others arrived at airports in Mexico City or Cancun.

The U.S. government announced in late March that it would accept up to 100,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. Hundreds entered Mexico daily as tourists in Mexico City or Cancun and flew to Tijuana to wait for a few days to be admitted to the U.S. at a San Diego border crossing on humanitarian parole.

Giorgi Mikaberidze, 19, arrived in Tijuana April 25 and found the U.S. border closed. He went from being just yards from the United States to some 600 miles (966 kilometers) away in the Mexico City area. He said he traveled to Mexico alone.

"It's very difficult to wait. We don't know how the program will work," he said.

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WASHINGTON - President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/joe-biden) 's national security adviser met Tuesday with a Swedish foreign affairs officials and committed to continuing "close coordination" on security issues, a U.S. National Security Council spokesperson said.

NSC spokesperson Adrienne Watson said National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan and Oscar Stenström, state secretary for foreign affairs to Sweden's prime minister, discussed the security situation in Europe in light of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The topics included ongoing efforts to support Ukraine and impose costs on Russia, Watson said.

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WASHINGTON - U.S. Secretary of State [*Antony Blinken*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/antony-blinken) says the war in Ukraine has worsened problems in the Western Hemisphere caused by the coronavirus pandemic, such as rising poverty.

Concerns about the war decreasing the availability of food and increasing prices have sparked fears of increasing hunger and starvation in other nations. Blinken told the annual Conference of the Americas Luncheon on Tuesday that the effects of the war are being felt after the pandemic inflicted "massive economic harm throughout the region."

Giving the luncheon's keynote address in Washington, Blinken said: "Now, with the Russian government's brutal war of aggression on Ukraine, many of these preexisting problems, these preexisting conditions, have been made worse, raising the price of essential commodities throughout the Americas, from fertilizer to wheat to petroleum, cutting off key export markets for many industries in the Americas, and forcing households across the region to make very wrenching choices as the cost of living skyrockets."

Blinken plans to chair two United Nations meetings later this month aimed at spotlighting how the war in Ukraine and other conflicts is affecting the availability of food and prices.

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KYIV, Ukraine - Ukrainian officials say the Russian military has struck railroad infrastructure across the country.

Oleksandr Kamyshin, the head of the Ukrainian railways, said the Russian strikes on Tuesday hit six railway stations in the country's central and western regions, inflicting heavy damage.

Kamyshin said at least 14 trains were delayed because of the attacks.

Dnipro region Gov. Valentyn Reznichenko said Russian missiles struck railway infrastructure in the area, leaving one person wounded and disrupting train movement.

The Ukrainian military also reported strikes on railways in the Kirovohrad region, saying there were unspecified casualties.

Ukraine's railroads have played an important role in moving people, goods and military supplies during the war as roads and bridges have been damaged.

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TROY, Ala. - President Joe Biden on Tuesday credited the assembly line workers at a Javelin missile plant for doing life-saving work in building the antitank weapons that are being sent to Ukraine to stifle Russia's invasion as he made a pitch for Congress to approve $33 billion so the U.S. can continue hustle aid to the front lines.

"You're allowing the Ukrainians to defend themselves," Biden told the workers, his podium flanked by Javelin missile launchers and shipping containers. "And, quite frankly, they're making fools of the Russian military in many instances."

The president's visit to the Lockheed Martin factory in Alabama also drew attention to a growing concern as the war drags on: Can the U.S. sustain the cadence in shipping vast amounts of arms to Ukraine while maintaining a healthy stockpile it may need if conflict erupts with North Korea, Iran or elsewhere?

The U.S. has provided at least 7,000 Javelins, including some transferred during the Trump administration, or about one-third of its stockpile, to Ukraine in recent years, according to an analysis by Mark Cancian, a senior adviser with the Center for Strategic and International Studies international security program. The Biden administration says it has committed to sending 5,500 Javelins to Ukraine since the Feb. 24 invasion.

Analysts also estimate that the United States has sent about one-quarter of its stockpile of shoulder-fired Stinger missiles to Ukraine. Raytheon Technologies CEO Greg Hayes told investors last week during a quarterly call that his company, which makes the weapons system, wouldn't be able to ramp up production until next year, due to parts shortages.

**Load-Date:** May 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[*The British have shown their solidarity with the Ukrainian people*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657R-88P1-F072-42XH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

April 17, 2022 Sunday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 2

**Length:** 500 words

**Body**

People power can make a difference. The outpouring of sympathy for the Ukrainian people has pushed the British government to act - too slowly, but gradually in the right direction. Our Refugees Welcome campaign, revived seven years ago during the Syrian crisis, has mobilised once again to help express the British people's sense of practical solidarity with the Ukrainians in their fight for the right to self-determination.

Now that our petition calling on the government to go further and faster to support refugees has reached a quarter of a million signatures, we are asking our readers to keep up their efforts on behalf of the Ukrainian people.

The resistance of Ukraine's armed forces has been inspiring. But their success in repelling the first wave of Vladimir Putin's invasion may be only the first stage of a long and difficult war. Every setback endured by Mr Putin's forces on the battlefield, however welcome, only increases the chances that Russian forces will intensify their attacks on civilian populations.

So far, the UK government has led the way in supplying the Ukrainians with the defensive weapons they need - a record of which we can be proud. But the Ukrainian people need practical solidarity on the civilian front as well, in the form of protection for the millions displaced by the horrors of war.

Here, Boris Johnson has lagged behind the generosity of the British people, appearing to be happy to allow other countries - Poland, in particular - to play the leading role. On Thursday, as the prime minister set out his unworkable and cruel plan to send some non-***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to Rwanda, he boasted that his government had "continued the great British tradition of providing sanctuary to those in need", including to "around 50,000 Ukrainians".

Let us file that 50,000 figure as a target to be met and exceeded in short order, because the government's own statistics suggest that only 12,000 Ukrainians fleeing the war had arrived in the UK as of the previous week. And only 1,200 of those had come as part of the Homes for Ukraine scheme, which was set up to match refugees with volunteer hosts. Meanwhile, Ireland, with a population one-tenth that of the UK, has already taken in nearly twice as many refugees from the war in Ukraine.

The Homes for Ukraine scheme has been obstructed by bureaucracy, as the government appears to want to hold back the generosity of the British people and in effect privatise the management of refugees, instead of providing the leadership that is needed. However, as a young, compassionate and optimistic news organisation, The Independent is determined to focus on the positive side of the story, and to celebrate the pressure brought to bear on the government by active and concerned citizens across the country.

We hope that the first 250,000 signatures on our petition will spur the government to further action, and encourage people to do more to offer practical expressions of support to the Ukrainian people in their long hour of need.

**Load-Date:** April 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*UN agency warns UK not to match Ukrainian women and children with single men*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:656Y-KR01-DY4H-K2H8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 13, 2022 Wednesday 4:53 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 497 words

**Byline:** Jemma Crew

**Highlight:** The UNHCR has called for a 'more appropriate' process where refugees are matched with families or couples under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

**Body**

The UN refugee agency has called on the [*UK Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/uk-government) to ensure that Ukrainian women and children are not matched with single men amid concerns that refugees are at risk and could be exploited.

The UNHCR said it is aware of "increasing reports" of female refugees feeling at risk from people who have sponsored them to come to the UK under the [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for Ukraine matching scheme.

The agency called for a "more appropriate" process, and said there need to be adequate safeguards and vetting in place to protect vulnerable refugees from exploitation.

In a statement, first reported by the Guardian, a spokesman said: "UNHCR believes that a more appropriate matching process could be put in place by ensuring that women and women with children are matched with families or couples, rather than with single men.

"Matching done without the appropriate oversight may lead to increasing the risks women may face, in addition to the trauma of displacement, family separation and violence already experienced."

The Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme allows individuals, charities, community groups and businesses to bring people escaping the war to safety - even if they have no ties to the UK.

Anyone with a room or home available for at least six months can offer it to a Ukrainian individual or a family, though those offering to host will be vetted and Ukrainian applicants will undergo security checks.

Two weeks after the scheme opened, a Government-backed matching programme was launched amid concerns that people have been turning to strangers on social media, and were vulnerable to being exploited by potential human traffickers.

Reset Communities and Refugees has received £300,000 from the [*Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/government) to pair sponsors and refugees, provide training and carry out initial eligibility and safeguarding checks.

Last week councils sounded the alarm over a "concerning increase" in ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** arriving in the UK and becoming homeless due to relationship breakdowns with their sponsors and problems accessing accommodation.

Dozens of matches under the Homes for Ukraine scheme are understood to have broken down, with local authorities having to put families in emergency accommodation while they wait to find a new sponsor.

There are also refugees whose relatives sponsored them to come to the UK but who cannot accommodate them.

Councils have been calling for a way to get refugees whose matches have not worked out back on the database so they can be matched quickly with sponsors in the local area who have homes ready and waiting.

A Government spokeswoman said: "Attempts to exploit vulnerable people are truly despicable - this is why we have designed the Homes for Ukraine scheme to have specific safeguards in place, including robust security and background checks on all sponsors by the [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) and local authorities.

"Councils must make at least one in-person visit to a sponsor's property and they have a duty to make sure the guest is safe and well once they've arrived."

**Load-Date:** April 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Scottish Government brands Homes for Ukraine scheme 'unacceptable' on visa count*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655W-S0H1-JBNF-W2RT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 8, 2022 Friday 5:20 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 485 words

**Byline:** Hannah Carmichael

**Highlight:** Data published on Friday showed just 570 visas relating to Scottish sponsors have been issued out of 43,600 applications.

**Body**

The UK Government's [*Homes*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/homes) for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme has been branded "unacceptable" and "inadequate" after it emerged just 570 visas relating to [*Scottish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scottish) sponsors have been issued.

Data published on Friday showed that 43,600 applications have been made by Ukrainians seeking safety from the ongoing war in their home country.

Of those, the Home Office has issued 570 visas for refugees to stay in Scotland - and just 40 were under Scotland's "super sponsor" arrangements.

Neil Gray, the Scottish Government's minister with special responsibility for refugees and Ukraine, said the situation was "simply unacceptable" and reflected the UK Government's delay in processing applications.

The slow progress is not just deeply frustrating to the Scottish Government but also to the many thousands of generous and kind volunteers who are ready to offer a warm Scots welcome to Ukrainians

Neil Gray

Mr Gray said: "Scotland stands ready to provide immediate safety and sanctuary to Ukrainians displaced as a result of this illegal war, but these latest figures lay bare the glacial pace at which the UK Government is moving to approve visas.

"To grant just 40 visas through the Scottish super sponsor route - a tiny fraction of those Ukrainians who have applied under the scheme - is simply unacceptable, and is wholly inadequate in providing immediate help to displaced people from Ukraine in need of safety.

"The slow progress is not just deeply frustrating to the [*Scottish Government*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scottish-government) but also to the many thousands of generous and kind volunteers who are ready to offer a warm Scots welcome to Ukrainians.

"The Scottish Government has long expressed concerns the UK Government's approach would be too slow, which is why we offered to act as 'super sponsor', removing the need for applicants to be matched prior to travelling to the UK.

"We continue to strongly press the UK Government to do all it can to urgently and significantly speed up their approval processes."

A UK Government spokesperson said: "In response to Putin's barbaric invasion we have launched one of the fastest and biggest visa schemes in UK history.

"In just four weeks, over 40,000 visas have been issued so people can rebuild their lives in the UK through the Ukraine Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine.

"We are continuing to speed up visa processing across both schemes, including boosting caseworkers and simplifying the forms and we expect thousands more to come through these uncapped routes."

It comes as the Home Secretary apologised on Friday after coming under fire over delays in the time it is taking for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to arrive in the UK.

[*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) denied visa requirements and checks are slowing the process and causing delays, insisting the UK will "absolutely see changes in numbers" as work continues.

In a pre-recorded interview with the BBC, Ms Patel said: "I apologise with frustration myself... it takes time to start up a new route."

**Load-Date:** April 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Poland sees rise of African migrants coming through Russia*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6632-FX61-DY4H-K47B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

August 4, 2022 Thursday 5:51 PM GMT

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**Length:** 536 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Polish officials say they’re seeing a change in migration across the country’s border with Belarus

**Body**

Polish officials on Thursday reported a change in migration patterns across the country’s border with [*Belarus*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/belarus) , with [*Africans*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/african) who first traveled to Russia making up most of those seeking to enter Poland illegally by that route instead of people from the Mideast.

The government said the African migrants include individuals passing through Russia, a close ally and another neighbor of Belarus, as well as people who were in Russia for a longer period.

In an emailed statement to The Associated Press, the Polish government described the migration as part of a “hybrid operation aimed at destabilizing the NATO eastern flank.”

Migrants and asylum-seekers have tried to cross from Belarus into Poland and Lithuania, and to a lesser extent Latvia, since last summer. The three nations are in the east of both [*European Union*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/european-union) and NATO territory.

The countries have sought to discourage the attempted crossings, detaining migrants and pushing them back into Belarus. Poland recently completed a tall steel wall along 186 kilometers (115 miles) of its land frontier with Belarus.

Human rights organizations have criticized Poland and Lithuania, saying the migrants include people fleeing persecution who have the right under international law to request asylum.

European leaders accuse Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko of creating a new and artificial migration route in order to destabilize the EU. The government of Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki has said it believes Russia bears some responsibility too, given its alliance with Lukashenko.

Early on, most of the people who tried to enter the EU from Belarus were Afghans, Syrians, Kurds from Iraq and others from the Middle East. After the arrival of large numbers last summer, the EU intervened, including by getting Iraq to stop the flights, and the migration flow slowed.

It never stopped altogether, but the situation became overshadowed by the far larger numbers of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who were welcomed in Poland after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February.

The National Security Department within the prime minister's office told the [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) that current Border Guard statistics show that the vast majority of migrants who seek to illegally cross at the Poland-Belarus border now come from Sub-Saharan Africa.

They “possess Russian visas and it is via Russia that they reach Belarus,” it said.

“(They) have visas issued for studies or work, but according to testimonies acquired by the Border Guard, they have never had such plans and they used visas only to get through the migratory route. Simultaneously, the Russian administration facilitates the procedure of obtaining the visas,” the government said. “Among migrants, there are also people who have been in Russia for a longer period of time.”

“The actions undertaken by Russia and Belarus confirm that the artificially created migratory route is controlled and coordinated by these two regimes and in future we should expect that the hybrid operation aimed at destabilizing NATO’s eastern flank will only intensify,” it added.

Border Guard data shows that there were 914 attempts to cross illegally from Belarus into Poland in July.

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Follow AP’s global migration coverage at [*https://apnews.com/hub/migration*](https://apnews.com/hub/migration)

**Load-Date:** August 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Jewish refugees from Israel find comfort and companionship in a countryside camp in Hungary*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:69KR-01S1-JBNF-W235-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

November 10, 2023 Friday 5:24 AM GMT

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**Length:** 713 words

**Byline:** Justin Spike

**Highlight:** Jewish refugees from the war between Israel and Hamas are finding safety in an unused lakeside resort in the Hungarian countryside

**Body**

Zusha Pletnyov left his home in the eastern Ukrainian city of Luhansk in 2014, when Russian-backed rebels seized large swaths of eastern Ukraine. After living some years in the capital, Kyiv, he fled again to [*Israel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/israel) when [*Moscow*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/moscow) launched its full-scale invasion in February of last year.

An observant Jew, Pletnyov moved with his wife and five children to Ashkelon, just miles from the Gaza Strip, in the hopes of building a new life. But when Hamas militants from Gaza launched their attacks last month, a new war forced him to take flight for a third time, now to a camp for [*Jewish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jewish) refugees in rural Hungary.

“Coming here for me and for my wife is such unimaginable relief,” said Pletnyov, whose apartment building in Ashkelon was hit by a Hamas rocket as the attacks began. “It’s a comforting place to be.”

The 34-year-old and his family are now living in a state-owned resort, disused for nearly two decades, on the shores of the sprawling Lake Balaton in western Hungary.

First opened for Jewish ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** following Russia's invasion last year, it is now housing around 250 people including some 100 children, most of whom have arrived from Israel in the weeks since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack.

The camp is equipped with detached housing units and a central building where three kosher meals are served per day. The residents are provided with shelter and camaraderie, and can also engage in activities like sports and dancing, and may attend yeshiva for religious studies.

“We make sure people are eating well, make sure they’re healthy, psychologically healthy, mentally healthy,” said Mandel Moscowitz, the rabbi of the camp, adding that the facility is open to all Jews, whether they be Orthodox, secular or non-observing.

“They find their place here because we all share that we’re Jewish and we all share the refugee status that also brings everybody together,” he said.

Eva Kopolovich, 50, a psychotherapist from Shlomi on Israel's Lebanese border, was one of around 160,000 people evacuated from their homes in the north and south by Israeli Defense Forces after the Hamas attacks began. Born in Hungary where she spent the first four years of her life, she fled with her parents and 11-year-old son to Budapest before making their way to the camp.

Two weeks after arriving at the lakeside refuge, Kopolovich said she has taken comfort in being among other Jews who have shared her experiences in being uprooted from their lives.

“We are in the same boat so we understand each other (regarding) stuff that people who are not in our position can never understand,” she said. “All of us went through a lot of stuff. I’m not even talking about the Ukrainians, who went from one war to another to another.”

Indeed, many current residents of the camp arrived there after having earlier fled to Israel from Ukraine in the wake of Russia's war. Moscowitz, the rabbi, left his hometown of Kharkiv in eastern Ukraine when Russia launched its full-scale invasion.

He said his prior experiences of being displaced have helped him to better serve those who have sought refuge in the camp.

“I know their needs, I feel their needs. I know what it’s like to run away from war,” he said. “Unfortunately, we’re having to experience a second war for our families. And thank God, thank God that there is a place where we could go to.”

Slomo Koves, the chief rabbi for the Association of Hungarian Jewish Communities, said that more than 3,000 people have resided in the camp since the war in Ukraine began nearly 21 months ago.

While he said he is “proud” of Hungary for providing a place of refuge for Jews who have been forced from their homes, the very need to do so has been hard to digest.

“It’s a very sad situation that it has become a famous Jewish refugee camp," he said. “I would never have thought that such a thing would be needed in 21st-century Europe.”

While some families that have stayed at the camp have already returned to Israel, many plan to stay for the next few months while waiting for the war to come to an end, Moscowitz said.

“We’re hopeful that there will be peace in Ukraine and Israel and the world,” he said. “People want to live. People want to live in peace. Nobody’s interested in war.”

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Find [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) 's war coverage at [*https://apnews.com/hub/israel-hamas-war*](https://apnews.com/hub/israel-hamas-war)

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2023

**End of Document**



[*PM wants migration cut to the level that he 'inherited'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:688K-NDB1-F072-4405-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

May 20, 2023 Saturday

First Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 7

**Length:** 673 words

**Byline:** JON STONE

**Body**

Rishi Sunakbelieves immigration into the UK is "too high" and has said he wants to bring it down to below the level he "inherited".

The prime minister insisted he would not "put a number" on it but suggested he may cut immigration to below the level it had reached when he entered No 10 - around 500,000 net arrivals a year.

But Downing Street dismissed speculation the half-a-million figure would be set in stone and said the PM was not committed to a specific target. Mr Sunak also declined to commit to cutting numbers by the general election, which is expected next year.

The PM is under pressure after apparently abandoning a Tory manifesto commitment to reduce net migration to 2019 levels, of around 226,000. The net figure exceeded 500,000 in the year to June 2022, roughly doubling, and new figures due in the coming weeks are widely expected to show a further increase. Experts put the figure at between 600,000 and 1 million.

Home secretarySuella Bravermanhas publicly pushed for lower immigration, but Mr Sunak has taken a more pragmatic approach and said more people are required to fill labour shortages in industries such as fruit picking.

"I'm not going to put a precise figure on it but I do want to bring [immigration numbers] down," the prime minister told BBC News. "The numbers are too high and we want to bring them down. Now, the numbers last year were impacted by the fact that we welcomed ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** to the UK. Again, that's something I think we are proud of."

During a round of interviews at Hiroshima's Seifukan tea house before attending the G7 summit, Mr Sunak said he is "crystal clear" he wants to reduce net migration.

Pressed by Sky News about whether he would bring numbers below 500,000 by the next election, he said: "I'm committed to bringing down the levels of migration that I inherited, and I'm relentlessly focused on stopping the boats, that's one of my five priorities, and we're doing absolutely everything we can to do that."

Asked about the 500,000 figure a No 10 spokesperson said Mr Sunak would "take stock" of figures in the coming months but noted that the PM specifically said he would not set a target.

"[The prime minister] said specifically 'I won't put a number on it'. We don't know what the numbers will be next week and it's right we take stock of those," Downing Street said. "But of course, the prime minister speaks to his cabinet colleagues and the home secretary specifically, they've worked incredibly closely on the 'stop the boats' bill and the work the government's taking forward to try and tackle illegal immigration."

The 2019 Conservative manifesto promised that "overall numbers will come down" as thegovernmentends freedom of movement in the wake of Brexit. But the reduction in immigration, a key issue in the 2016 Brexit referendum, has not materialised.

Despite some polls showing softening public attitudes to immigration compared to previous years, the issue has also moved up the political agenda following an increase in small boats arriving on British shores.

Mr Sunak raised migration with allies at a Council of Europe meeting in Iceland on Tuesday and said he believes he made "another big step forward" with Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission, over the UK potentially working with the bloc's border force, Frontex.

Labour, meanwhile, said immigration could need to increase in the "short term" to fill skills gaps in the UK economy. "What we would see if we had an immigration system that was working properly would be potentially in some areas where there's a short-term need for skills, you could see in the short term actually people who are coming in increasing in number," party chair Anneliese Dodds told Sky News yesterday.

"But in the medium and long-term, a reduction, because we would be training people up in our own country. We've not had that unfortunately under the Conservatives. We've got skills shortages and those shortages are not being filled because there's not the domestic upskilling that needs to be taking place."

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Pope prays for kindness to refugees as he wraps Malta visit*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654T-2GD1-JBNF-W28G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 3, 2022 Sunday 7:49 AM GMT

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**Length:** 448 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Pope Francis is praying for the world to show more kindness to refugees as he pays tribute in Malta to the shipwrecked St. Paul and meets with migrants who, like the apostle, arrived on the Mediterranean island and were welcomed

**Body**

Pope Francis prayed for the world to show more kindness and compassion to refugees as he paid tribute Sunday in Malta to the shipwrecked St. [*Paul*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/paul) and meets with migrants who, like the apostle, arrived on the [*Mediterranean*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mediterranean) island and were welcomed.

Francis opened his second and final day in Malta by visiting the Grotto of St. Paul in Rabat, where the disciple stayed after being shipwrecked en route to Rome in AD 60. According to the biblical account of the period, Maltese people showed Paul unusual kindness, and he responded by preaching and healing, bringing Christianity to the islands.

"No one knew their names, their place of birth or their social status; they knew only one thing: that these were people in need of help," Francis said in a prayer in the cavernous grotto. "Help us to recognize from afar those in need, struggling amidst the waves of the sea, dashed against the reefs of unknown shores."

Francis has used his two-day visit to Malta to drive home his call for Europe to show the same welcome to migrants and refugees as the Maltese showed St. Paul. Francis has expanded that message to express his gratitude for the welcome Europe has shown ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** fleeing the Russian war and his hope that same generosity could be extended to others.

Current-day Malta has long been at the heart of the European debate over refugee policy. The country of a half-million is frequently criticized by humanitarian aid groups for refusing to let rescue ships dock at its ports; The government argues it has one of the EU's highest rates in processing first-time asylum applications relative to the population, and says other, bigger European countries should do more to shoulder the burden.

Just this week, a German aid group urged Malta to take in 106 migrants rescued off Libya; Malta demurred and on Saturday the mayor of Palermo, Sicily, said the city was ready to welcome them.

Francis is wrapping up his trip with an outdoor Mass in [*Valletta*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/valletta) and an afternoon visit to a shelter run by volunteers that can house around 50 migrants and provide them with educational and medical services. Most of its current occupants hail from Somalia, Eritrea and Sudan and made the perilous Mediterranean crossing from Libya.

The trip, though short, has been particularly taxing for the 85-year-old pontiff, who is suffering from painful strained right knee ligaments. He had to use an elevator to get on and off the plane and his limping gait from sciatica has appeared more pronounced.

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Associated Press religion coverage receives support through the AP's collaboration with The Conversation US, with funding from Lilly Endowment Inc. The [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) is solely responsible for this content.

**Load-Date:** April 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*OLD Protesters march in solidarity with people of Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6534-3T91-DY4H-K186-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 26, 2022 Saturday 4:52 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:3

**Length:** 454 words

**Byline:** Ted Hennessey

**Highlight:** Many to take to the streets in London had links with Ukraine.

**Body**

Thousands have gathered and marched in central [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) in support of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

The huge sea of protesters, draped in blue and yellow colours, started near [*Hyde Park*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hyde-park) , before snaking through the roads towards Trafalgar Square.

They chanted "stand with Ukraine" and "stop the war", with roads being closed off and traffic stopped.

The crowd, many from Ukraine, also marched beneath Yoko Ono's Imagine Peace message on an electronic billboard in Piccadilly.

Cheers rang out at Trafalgar Square as a message from Ukraine president [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) was played on a huge screen in front of Nelson's Column.

Speaking ahead of the demonstration, Mr Khan said he was there to condemn Russia's "barbaric aggression".

The London Mayor told the PA news agency: "Londoners over the last few weeks have shown that we're opening our arms to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, whether it's by donating money to those charities doing a brilliant job in Ukraine or by opening our homes to those fleeing Ukraine."

Asked on Sky News if he will be taking in a Ukrainian family, Mr Khan said: "We personally won't be for a variety of reasons not least protections, security reasons and lack of space."

He continued: "It is important throughout the next few days, weeks to make it far, far easier, and much more easier for those who are fleeing Ukraine to come here.

"You compare our Government's actions versus the actions of Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Poland, it's embarrassing.

"We've got be doing much more."

Crowds held banners reading "stop (Vladimir) Putin's war", "no fly zone" and "solidarity with Ukraine" and sang as police officers followed.

The London leader also urged those in the capital to continue their "generosity" towards refugees.

He added: "I'm full of admiration for anybody who has the space to provide a room for those who have fled Ukraine.

"It's really important families are not left to their own devices, the Government has to step up and support them."

It comes as Mr Khan announced more than £1.1m in funding to support migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum in London.

Labour's shadow foreign secretary [*David Lammy*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/david-lammy) , who was also in attendance, led a chant of "stand with Ukraine".

He said: "We come here to send a message to the beautiful people of Ukraine that we are with you in this fight."

Mr Lammy also called for "dirty Russian money" that has "polluted" the UK economy to "end".

Ukrainian politicians and European leaders will also speak to the crowd.

Protester Zenadin Tkalenko, 43, of Croydon, south-east London, originally from Kyiv, said: "My country is under attack, the UK I hope can help.

"Putin is a monster who needs to be stopped, people are dying and homes are being destroyed.

"This is a big country and it needs to help."

**Load-Date:** March 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[*AP News Digest 5:50 a.m.*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6568-VF31-DY4H-K3M8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 10, 2022 Sunday 10:52 AM GMT

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**Section:** US POLITICS,AMERICAS,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 1312 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Body**

Here are the AP's latest coverage plans, top stories and promotable content. All times EDT. For up-to-the minute information on AP's coverage, visit Coverage Plan at [*https://newsroom.ap.org*](https://newsroom.ap.org).

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ONLY ON AP

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THE [*AP*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ap) INTERVIEW-RUSSIA-UKRAINE-ZELENSKYY - Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Saturday he remains committed to seeking peace despite [*Russian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) attacks on civilians that have stunned the world, and he renewed his plea for more weapons ahead of an expected surge in fighting in the country's east. The embattled leader made the comments in an interview with The Associated Press a day after at least 52 people were killed in a strike on a train station in the eastern city of Kramatorsk, and as evidence of atrocities committed by Russian troops has come to light following their failed attempt to seize the capital. By Adam Schreck and Mstyslav Chernov. SENT: 840 words, photos, video.

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TOP STORIES

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RUSSIA-UKRAINE-WAR - Russia is targeting all of Europe with its invasion of Ukraine, and stopping Moscow's aggression is essential for the security of all democracies, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said as Russian forces prepared for battle in the east of his country. By Adam Schreck and Cara Anna. SENT: 1,210 words, photos, videos. WITH: RUSSIA-UKRAINE-WAR-THE-LATES; RUSSIA-UKRAINE-WAR-DAY IN PHOTOS (both sent).

RUSSIA-PUTIN-ANALYSIS - With the Russian military in retreat from around Kyiv and facing condemnation for brutal tactics, harsh political repression at home and the economy buffeted by Western sanctions, some people are speculating whether President Vladimir Putin's position at the helm of the Russian state is endangered. The answer: Not yet, but maybe not never. By John Daniszewski. UPCOMING: 1,100 words, photos.

RUSSIA-UKRAINE-POLAND-DISINFORMATION - Polish and Ukrainian authorities have for years accused Russia of trying to provoke hostility between their neighboring nations as part of a broader effort to divide and destabilize the West. The concerns have gained greater urgency since Russia invaded Ukraine. Poland and Ukraine are neighbors and allies but they share a difficult history of oppression and bloodshed, and those historical traumas sometimes rise to the surface. Poland has also accepted large numbers of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, creating fears that could become another wedge issue that Russia could exploit. Poland's government has issued warnings about Russian provocations and disinformation, hoping to prevent them from succeeding in causing discord. By Vanessa Gera. SENT: 1,150 words, photos.

VIRUS OUTBREAK - For many in the U.K., the pandemic may as well be over. Mask requirements have been dropped. Free mass testing is a thing of the past. And for the first time since spring 2020, people can go abroad for holidays without ordering tests or filling out lengthy forms. That sense of freedom is widespread even as infections soared in Britain in March, driven by the milder but more transmissible omicron BA.2 variant that's rapidly spreading around Europe, the U.S. and elsewhere. By Sylvia Hui. SENT: 890 words, photos.

FRANCE-ELECTION - Polls opened across France Sunday for the first round of the country's presidential election, where up to 48 million eligible voters will be choosing between 12 candidates. President Emmanuel Macron is seeking a second five-year term, with a strong challenge from the far right. By Thomas Adamson. SENT: 590 words, photosl. With FRANCE-ELECTION-HOW IT WORKS - Voting in France: Paper ballots, in person, hand-counted; FRANCE-ELECTION-CANDIDATES - France's top presidential contenders: Who's proposing what (both sent).

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MORE ON RUSSIA UKRAINE

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RUSSIA-UKRAINE-WAR-POLAND-SIRENS - Anxious about the wellbeing of their ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, city mayors across Poland are refusing the government's instructions to sound air raid alarm sirens Sunday as part of memorial observances for Poland's 2010 presidential plane crash. SENT: 360 words, photos.

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MORE ON VIRUS OUTBREAK

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VIRUS OUTBREAKK-INDIA-BOOSTERS - India began offering booster doses of COVID-19 vaccine to all adults on Sunday but limited free shots at government centers to front-line workers and people over age 60. SENT: 240 words, photos.

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TRENDING NEWS

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JORDAN-KING-SURGERY - Jordan's monarch is traveling to Germany Sunday for a spine surgery, Jordan's palace announces. SENT: 190 words, photo.

JACK-WHITE-WEDDNG - [*Jack White*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jack-white) surprised fans by marrying musician Olivia Jean on stage during his Detroit homecoming show. SENT: 170 words, photos.

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WASHINGTON/POLITICS

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ELECTION-2022-SENATE-PENNSYLVANIA-TRUMP-OZ - Former President [*Donald Trump*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/donald-trump) endorsed Mehmet Oz in Pennsylvania's crowded Republican Senate primary, ending months of jockeying for his support. SENT: 840 words, photos.

ELECTION 2022-SENATE-COLORADO - Colorado Republicans on Saturday voted to place on their U.S. Senate primary ballot a state representative who attended the Jan. 6 rally that preceded the attack on the U.S. Capitol and is a supporter of former President Donald Trump's lies about the 2020 presidential election. SENT: 540 words, photos.

FEDERAL PRISONS - A government watchdog has found a "substantial likelihood" that the federal Bureau of Prisons committed wrongdoing when it ignored complaints and failed to address asbestos and mold contamination at a federal women's prison in California. SENT: 520 words, photos.

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NATIONAL

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TEENS SHOT - A suspect was charged in the fatal shooting of a teen girl who was walking home from school when she was hit by a stray bullet during a street dispute in New York City. SENT: 430 words, photo.

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INTERNATIONAL

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PAKISTAN-POLITICS - Pakistan's political opposition toppled Prime Minister [*Imran Khan*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/imran-khan) in a no-confidence vote in Parliament after several political allies and a key party in his ruling coalition deserted him. SENT: 900 words, photos.

AUSTRALIA-ELECTION - Australia's prime minister has called for a May 21 election that will be fought on issues including Chinese economic coercion, climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. SENT: 640 words, photos. With AUSTRALIA-ELECTION-INCUMBENT - Australia PM Morrison first to serve full term in 15 years; AUSTRALIA-ELECTION-CHALLENGER - Australia PM hopeful Albanese had humble start to life (both sent).

ISRAEL-PALESTINIANS - Palestinians set fire to a West Bank shrine revered by Jews as Israeli forces operated in the occupied territory following a spate of recent Palestinian attacks in Israel, the Israeli military say. SENT: 510 words.

MEXICO-RECALL VOTE - Mexicans vote on whether their popular president should end his six-year term barely midway through or continue to the end. SENT: 290 words, photos.

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SPORTS

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GLF-MASTERS - The harsh cold and relentless wind. The lead late Saturday afternoon at the Masters. All the elements were there for Scottie Scheffler to start feeling the pressure of trying to win his first major at Augusta National. Scheffler never looked worried until the final hole, and then only briefly. His lead at four shots, his confidence level high, Scheffler's wild drive to the left of the 18th fairway into the trees didn't bother him nearly as much as the sight of the spotter poking around in the leaves in a desperate search for the golf ball. By Golf Writer Doug Ferguson. SENT: 1,000 words, photos.

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HOW TO REACH US

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At the Nerve Center, Vincent K. Willis can be reached at 800-845-8450 (ext. 1600). For photos, (ext. 1900). For graphics and interactives, ext. 7636. Expanded AP content can be obtained from [*http://newsroom.ap.org*](http://newsroom.ap.org). For access to AP Newsroom and other technical issues, contact [*apcustomersupport@ap.org*](mailto:apcustomersupport@ap.org) or call 844-777-2006.

**Load-Date:** April 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Baftas 2022: Five key talking points, from The Power of the Dog's triumph to JK Rowling put-downs*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650F-NY01-JBNF-W189-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 13, 2022 Sunday 11:35 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,FILM,CULTURE; Version:1

**Length:** 489 words

**Byline:** Ellie Harrison

**Highlight:** Jane Campion's western took home the biggest awards on a night where Rebel Wilson joked about JK Rowling, Leonardo DiCaprio and Vladimir Putin

**Body**

The 2022 Bafta Film Awards were a sparkling return to form, with the starriest names in cinema walking the red carpet and attending the ceremony in person for the first time since the start of the pandemic.

Comedian [*Rebel Wilson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rebel-wilson) hosted proceedings, on a night where [*Denis Villeneuve*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/denis-villeneuve) 's sci-fi epic [*Dune*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dune) led the pack with 11 nominations, closely followed by [*Jane Campion*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jane-campion) 's western The Power of the Dog, which amassed a total of eight.

Here are the biggest talking points of the night, from the best jokes to the biggest winners and the most graceful losers...

Dune and The Power of the Dog were the biggest winners of the night

Jane Campion's gothic western The Power of the Dog, starring Benedict Cumberbatch as a repressed rancher, took the top two prizes at this year's Baftas: Best Film and Best Director. But it was Dune that won the most awards. The sci-fi movie triumphed in five categories: Best Cinematography, Best Special Visual Effects, Best Sound, Best Score, and Best Production Design. Read the full winners list [*here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/bafta-winners-list-2022-baftas-b2034760.html).

Benedict Cumberbatch lost - gracefully

The Power of the Dog star lost out on the Best Actor award to King Richard actor Will Smith. Later in the night, when accepting an award for director Jane Campion, Cumberbatch pretended to accidentally start reading his own prepared winning speech. "Hold on a second...," he said. "Bafta, I'd like to ... Damn it, that's my speech, whoops." He added: "You don't lose to Will Smith, you win being in his company."

JK Rowling got a few digs

Not only did [*the host, Wilson, make a joke*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/baftas-2022-rebel-wilson-jk-rowling-b2034932.html) at the Harry Potter author's expense, but Emma Watson - who starred in the film adaptations - also appeared to throw shade at Rowling with a remark about being "here for all the witches". Get the context and what Twitter had to say about it all, [*here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/baftas-2022-emma-watson-jk-rowling-b2034969.html). She wasn't the only one to be the butt of a joke, though, with [*Leonardo DiCaprio also getting roasted by Wilson.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/baftas-2022-rebel-wilson-leonardo-dicaprio-b2034946.html%22%20title=%22Baftas%202022:%20Rebel%20Wilson%20makes%20joke%20about%20Leonardo%20DiCaprio%20'liking%20women%20young')

Support for Ukraine

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine was at the forefront of many people's minds during the ceremony. On the red carpet before the awards began, Cumberbatch said [*he hopes to take some* ***Ukrainian******refugees*** *into his own home*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/benedict-cumberbatch-ukraine-refugees-b2034904.html). Wilson, meanwhile, delighted the audience with [*a derogatory joke about Vladimir Putin.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/baftas-2022-rebel-wilson-putin-b2034937.html)

Singing from Shirley Bassey and Emilia Jones

The awards speeches were broken up by beautiful performances from Shirley Bassey, who sang James Bond theme "Diamonds are Forever", and [*CODA star Emilia Jones*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/features/coda-emilia-jones-deaf-apple-sundance-b1896813.html) , who performed the film's track "Both Sides Now". It was a great night for CODA, with the film about a child of deaf adults winning Best Adapted Screenplay and a Best Supporting Actor award for Troy Kotsur.

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'We are with you in this fight': Tens of thousands march in London in solidarity with Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6534-KTF1-JBNF-W4HY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 26, 2022 Saturday 7:50 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 452 words

**Byline:** Ted Hennessey

**Highlight:** Streets of capital turned to sea of blue and yellow as mayor Sadiq Khan calls UK government response 'embarrassing'

**Body**

Thousands have gathered and marched in central [*London*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london) in support of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

The huge sea of protesters, draped in blue and yellow colours, started near [*Hyde Park*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hyde-park) , before snaking through the roads towards Trafalgar Square.

They chanted "stand with Ukraine" and "stop the war", with roads being closed off and traffic stopped.

The crowd, many from Ukraine, also marched beneath Yoko Ono's Imagine Peace message on an electronic billboard in Piccadilly.

Cheers rang out at Trafalgar Square as a message from Ukraine president [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) was played on a huge screen in front of Nelson's Column.

Speaking ahead of the demonstration, Mr Khan said he was there to condemn Russia's "barbaric aggression".

The London Mayor told the PA news agency: "Londoners over the last few weeks have shown that we're opening our arms to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, whether it's by donating money to those charities doing a brilliant job in Ukraine or by opening our homes to those fleeing Ukraine."

Asked on Sky News if he will be taking in a Ukrainian family, Mr Khan said: "We personally won't be for a variety of reasons not least protections, security reasons and lack of space."

He continued: "It is important throughout the next few days, weeks to make it far, far easier, and much more easier for those who are fleeing Ukraine to come here.

"You compare our government's actions versus the actions of Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Poland, it's embarrassing.

"We've got be doing much more."

Crowds held banners reading "stop Putin's war", "no fly zone" and "solidarity with Ukraine" and sang as police officers followed.

The London leader also urged those in the capital to continue their "generosity" towards refugees.

He added: "I'm full of admiration for anybody who has the space to provide a room for those who have fled Ukraine.

"It's really important families are not left to their own devices, the government has to step up and support them."

It comes as Mr Khan announced more than £1.1m in funding to support migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum in London.

Labour's shadow foreign secretary [*David Lammy*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/david-lammy) , who was also in attendance, led a chant of "stand with Ukraine".

He said: "We come here to send a message to the beautiful people of Ukraine that we are with you in this fight."

Mr Lammy also called for "dirty Russian money" that has "polluted" the UK economy to "end".

Ukrainian politicians and European leaders will also speak to the crowd.

Protester Zenadin Tkalenko, 43, of Croydon, south-east London, originally from Kyiv, said: "My country is under attack, the UK I hope can help.

"Putin is a monster who needs to be stopped, people are dying and homes are being destroyed.

"This is a big country and it needs to help."

**Load-Date:** March 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Putin could use women refugees from Ukraine to launch terror attack on UK, Priti Patel warns*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651K-N0H1-JBNF-W0DN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 19, 2022 Saturday 12:17 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 460 words

**Byline:** Andrew Woodcock

**Highlight:** 'A very small number of people can wreak utter havoc': Home secretary insists security checks needed on those seeking sanctuary

**Body**

[*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) could smuggle female agents into the UK among ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) to carry out biological or chemical terror attacks, home secretary [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) has claimed.

Defending the UK's decision - alone among European nations - to demand visas from Ukrainians fleeing war, Ms Patel said that a handful of individuals infiltrated by [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) into the flood of innocent refugees could "wreak utter havoc" in the UK.

And with the majority of refugees made up of women and children as men stay in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) to fight, she warned it would be "naïve and misguided" to think that only men were capable of unleashing terror attacks on British soil.

In a speech to the Conservative spring conference in Blackpool, Ms Patel said the security checks conducted as part of the refugee visa application process would help avoid a repeat of the Novichok nerve agent attack in Salisbury, which killed British citizen Dawn Sturgess in 2018.

Ms Patel told activists that calls for the UK to follow the EU in offering visa-free access to Ukrainians seeking sanctuary had "grown louder in recent weeks".

But she said: "I've been asked why couldn't we suspend security checks on people escaping Putin's war?

"Times of conflict, my friends, emphasise our need to remain watchful."

Ms Patel said that she had been warned in security and intelligence service briefings that global instability brings with it greater threats to the UK from terrorism, serious organised crime and state threats.

"Only four years ago, the Russian military intelligence services used a chemical weapon on British soil," she said. "It happened in Salisbury, a beautiful city, whose inhabitants would have felt completely safe. Dawn Sturgess could never have imagined that she would lose her life to Novichok

"The truth is that a very small number of people can wreak utter havoc and Russia has a history of covert hostile activity."

And she added: "I'm afraid it is naive and misguided to think that only men can be covert operatives. Or that refugee flows would not be subject to some form of exploitation.

"There are those who would come to our country - to this country - who would mean us harm and would plot to strike at our very way of life.

"The processes that we have put in place closely follow the advice of our intelligence and security services. They mean we can help Ukrainians in need without making our country less safe.

"State threats and terrorism take many forms. They also thrive on indifference and on appeasement and now we are seeing them supplemented by new types of targeted biological, chemical, cyber warfare, ransomware and online threats.

"Our duty is to safeguard our country's interests and we will never take our eye off the ball when it comes to the safety and security of our country."

**Load-Date:** March 19, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Baftas 2022: 5 biggest talking points, from Putin jokes to swipes at JK Rowling*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650G-TC31-DY4H-K0HM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 14, 2022 Monday 6:13 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,FILM,CULTURE; Version:3

**Length:** 495 words

**Byline:** Ellie Harrison

**Highlight:** Jane Campion's western took home the biggest awards on a night where Rebel Wilson joked about JK Rowling, Leonardo DiCaprio and Vladimir Putin

**Body**

The 2022 Bafta Film Awards were a sparkling return to form, with the starriest names in cinema walking the red carpet and attending the ceremony in person for the first time since the start of the pandemic.

Comedian [*Rebel Wilson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rebel-wilson) hosted proceedings, on a night where [*Denis Villeneuve*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/denis-villeneuve) 's sci-fi epic [*Dune*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/dune) led the pack with 11 nominations, closely followed by [*Jane Campion*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jane-campion) 's western The Power of the Dog, which amassed a total of eight.

Here are the biggest talking points of the night, from the best jokes to the biggest winners and the most graceful losers...

Dune and The Power of the Dog were the biggest winners of the night

Jane Campion's gothic western The Power of the Dog, starring Benedict Cumberbatch as a repressed rancher, took the top two prizes at this year's Baftas: Best Film and Best Director. But it was Dune that won the most awards. The sci-fi movie triumphed in five categories: Best Cinematography, Best Special Visual Effects, Best Sound, Best Score, and Best Production Design. Read the full winners list [*here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/bafta-winners-list-2022-baftas-b2034760.html).

Benedict Cumberbatch lost - gracefully

The Power of the Dog star lost out on the Best Actor award to King Richard actor Will Smith. Later in the night, when accepting the Best Director award for The Power of the Dog filmmaker Jane Campion, Cumberbatch pretended to accidentally start reading his own prepared winning speech. "Hold on a second...," he said. "Bafta, I'd like to ... Damn it, that's my speech, whoops." He added: "You don't lose to Will Smith, you win being in his company."

JK Rowling got a few digs

Not only did [*the host, Wilson, make a joke*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/baftas-2022-rebel-wilson-jk-rowling-b2034932.html) at the Harry Potter author's expense, but Emma Watson - who starred in the film adaptations - also appeared to throw shade at Rowling with a remark about being "here for all the witches". Get the context and what Twitter had to say about it all, [*here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/baftas-2022-emma-watson-jk-rowling-b2034969.html). She wasn't the only one to be the butt of a joke, though, with [*Leonardo DiCaprio also getting roasted by Wilson.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/baftas-2022-rebel-wilson-leonardo-dicaprio-b2034946.html%22%20title=%22Baftas%202022:%20Rebel%20Wilson%20makes%20joke%20about%20Leonardo%20DiCaprio%20'liking%20women%20young')

Support for Ukraine

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine was at the forefront of many people's minds during the ceremony. On the red carpet before the awards began, Cumberbatch said [*he hopes to take some* ***Ukrainian******refugees*** *into his own home*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/benedict-cumberbatch-ukraine-refugees-b2034904.html). Wilson, meanwhile, delighted the audience with [*a derogatory joke about Vladimir Putin.*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/baftas-2022-rebel-wilson-putin-b2034937.html)

Singing from Shirley Bassey and Emilia Jones

The awards speeches were broken up by beautiful performances from Shirley Bassey, who sang James Bond theme "Diamonds are Forever", and [*CODA star Emilia Jones*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/features/coda-emilia-jones-deaf-apple-sundance-b1896813.html) , who performed the film's track "Both Sides Now". It was a great night for CODA, with the film about a child of deaf adults winning Best Adapted Screenplay and a Best Supporting Actor award for Troy Kotsur.

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Edinburgh council makes Volodymyr Zelensky a freeman of the capital*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6517-29C1-DY4H-K4GM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 17, 2022 Thursday 8:56 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 481 words

**Byline:** Dan Barker

**Highlight:** Councillors unanimously awarded freedom of the city to the Ukrainian leader, as well as to Vitali Klitschko, the mayor of Edinburgh's twin city Kyiv.

**Body**

Ukrainian President [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) has been made a freeman of [*Edinburgh*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/edinburgh) , joining an exclusive club which includes the Queen and Olympic cyclist Sir Chris Hoy.

Councillors in the capital unanimously awarded freedom of the city to Mr Zelensky and [*Vitali Klitschko*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vitali-klitschko) , the mayor of Edinburgh's twin city [*Kyiv*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kyiv) , on Thursday in honour of their "leadership and heroism".

Adam McVey, leader of City of Edinburgh Council, said the authority was "standing firm in friendship with the people of Ukraine, committing to doing whatever we can to help".

"I hope this decision demonstrates our absolute solidarity and admiration of the people of Kyiv and Ukraine, who have literally taken up arms in defence of their country against this illegal and murderous invasion by Putin's forces, and I very much hope that, one day, they'll be able to receive this honour in person," he said.

The freedom of the city is Edinburgh's most prestigious honour, and dates back more than 560 years to 1459.

The president and mayor join an exclusive club of freemen of the capital, with others including the Duke of Edinburgh, Sir [*Sean Connery*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sean-connery) and Nelson Mandela.

Councillors backed a motion which commended "the outstanding leadership of the mayor of our twin city, Kyiv, and the president of Ukraine, who has remained in Kyiv to fight against the Russian invasion".

It applauds "the heroism of the Ukrainian people, led by their president, members of parliament and mayors from across the country in fighting side-by-side to defend their nation" and "agrees to confer the freedom of the city of Edinburgh on Kyiv mayor Vitali Klitschko and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in recognition of their leadership and heroism".

Cammy Day, depute leader of the council, said the honour "is very rarely conferred in Edinburgh so the unanimous decision at council speaks volumes about the strength of Edinburgh's solidarity".

Members of the council agreed to ban Russian cultural events and performances at venues it owns, and councillors have demanded Russian diplomatic staff are expelled from the city until troops leave Ukraine.

The authority also agreed to spend £100,000 to help humanitarian aid efforts, and urged the Home Office to lift visa requirements for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Mr McVey said the money would make a "huge difference" and pledged to "continue to look at further actions in the weeks and months ahead to do everything within our power to help people who are arriving in our city to escape Ukraine".

"There's no doubting the enormity of the task to make this happen and I know the Ukrainian community are immensely grateful for the support they've had so far," he added.

Late last week the road where the Ukrainian consulate is based in Edinburgh was unofficially renamed in honour of Mr Zelensky.

A sign saying "Volodymyr Zelenskyy Street" was attached to railings outside the consulate in Windsor Street.

**Load-Date:** March 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Democracies should unite in opposition to Russia's 'immoral war' - Taoiseach*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651D-P4M1-JBNF-W4Y8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 18, 2022 Friday 6:41 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 494 words

**Byline:** Dominic McGrath

**Highlight:** Micheal Martin made the comments following a phone call with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

**Body**

Irish Premier Micheal Martin has said that democracies across the world should unite in opposition to the "immoral war" on Ukraine.

Mr Martin made the comments following a phone call with Canadian Prime Minister [*Justin Trudeau*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/justin-trudeau) about Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

The two leaders spoke by phone for around 30 minutes, a government spokesman said.

Mr Martin remains in [*Washington DC*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/washington-dc) where he is isolating following a positive Covid-19 test.

Just spoke with Canadian PM [*@JustinTrudeau*](https://twitter.com/JustinTrudeau?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw). We agreed like-minded democracies everywhere should unite in opposition to this immoral war on [*#Ukraine*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Ukraine?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw). We discussed need to accelerate transition to renewable energy.And we agreed there has to be consequences for Putin's Russia.- Michel Martin (@MichealMartinTD) [*March 18, 2022*](https://twitter.com/MichealMartinTD/status/1504848522994196488?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) "We agreed like-minded democracies everywhere should unite in opposition to this immoral war on Ukraine," Mr Martin said."We discussed the need to accelerate transition to renewable energy and we agreed there has to be consequences for Putin's [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia). "The two leaders discussed the push in Europe to reduce dependence on Russian gas, as well as climate change and a transition to renewablesMr Trudeau also wished the Taoiseach a happy St Patrick's Day.A spokesman for the Taoiseach said he is feeling well and continuing with his work in Washington.I'm in [*#Poland*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Poland?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) to meet my counterpart to hear what more [*#Ireland*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Ireland?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) and EU can do to help refugees. Already I have seen the extraordinary lengths Poland has gone to in receiving more than 2 million people in 3 weeks from Ukraine. Incredible solidarity here. [*pic.twitter.com/Xkt9WDXn8C*](https://t.co/Xkt9WDXn8C) - Simon Coveney (@simoncoveney) [*March 18, 2022*](https://twitter.com/simoncoveney/status/1504778180544114704?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

It comes as the Irish Foreign Affairs Minister visited [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) , a country that is hosting a significant proportion of the many Ukrainians who have fled the war.

During his visit to the capital Warsaw, [*Simon Coveney*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/simon-coveney) met Polish counterpart Zbigniew Rau to discuss the crisis at the country's border.

Mr Coveney also held a meeting with a representative of the UN refugee agency and members of the Irish community in Poland supporting refugees.

Nearly two million people have crossed into Poland from Ukraine since the Russian invasion began three weeks ago.

Mr Coveney said: "I'm in Poland to meet my counterpart to hear what more Ireland and the EU can do to help refugees.

"Already I have seen the extraordinary lengths Poland has gone to in receiving more than two million people in three weeks from Ukraine. Incredible solidarity here.

"As this devastating conflict enters its fourth week I am glad to have this opportunity to visit Poland to discuss perspectives on the crisis with Minister Rau."

The visit to Poland comes after US President Joe Biden used St Patrick's Day events to praise Irish efforts to take in ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

The Republic of Ireland has taken in more than 7,000 refugees from Ukraine, with those arriving offered PPS numbers to allow them to work and claim social welfare.

**Load-Date:** March 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Dating ads offering chance to meet ‘lonely’ Ukrainian women banned*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65X9-M211-JBNF-W44K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 13, 2022 Wednesday 9:29 AM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 507 words

**Byline:** May Bulman

**Highlight:** Advertising watchdog says adverts connected women’s vulnerability to their sex appeal in breach of law

**Body**

Online dating adverts offering the chance to meet “lonely” [*Ukrainian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) women have been banned for causing serious offence.

The UK’s advertising watchdog said that adverts for SofiaDate, seen online in May when the government was promoting its scheme for the public to house ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) , connected the women’s vulnerability to their sex appeal, and in doing so breached regulations.

The first ad, seen on the Dorset Echo’s website, featured an image of a woman on a balcony with text that stated “Ukranian [sic] Women. Meet Thousands of Lonely Ukrainian Women. Forget About Loneliness. Let Yourself be Happy”.

The second, seen on Scottish newspaper The National’s website, featured the same image with text that stated “Ukranian [sic] Women. Connecting Singles Across the World to Their Ideal Partner…”, while the third, on the same website, featured an image of a woman and stated “Ukranian [sic] Women … Sofiadate.com”.

The complainants, who felt the ads were inappropriate in the context of the ongoing war in Ukraine, challenged whether they were offensive.

The [*Advertising Standards Authority*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/advertising-standards-authority) (ASA) said that it understood that due to the ongoing war in Ukraine there was “heightened sensitivity” about references to the country, and the vulnerability of Ukrainian women had become an “area of public concern”.

At the time, there was already mounting concern about the risks of exploitation to Ukrainian women and their children coming to Britain under the Homes for Ukraine scheme after fleeing Vladimir Putin’s war. Under the scheme, Ukrainians are able to come to Britain and be hosted by members of the public.

In April, [*the UN urged*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugees-women-men-matching-uk-b2057100.html) the UK government to do more to prevent this cohort from being matched with single British men following reports that refugee women had been targeted on social media by predatory men offering them rooms in their homes.

The ASA concluded: “We considered that the women depicted in the ads were shown in a way that was, at least partly, designed to titillate readers – the model in ads (a) and (b) wore a low-cut kimono-style robe, and the model in ad (c) wore a body-hugging midi dress.”

We considered the ads’ focus on Ukrainian women dressed in the aforementioned manner, as well as references to their loneliness, had the effect of highlighting their vulnerability and connecting it to their sexual appeal. For that reason, we concluded the ads were likely to cause serious offence.”

Astrasoft Projects, trading as SofiaDate, said it had removed the ads.

Newsquest Media Group, owner of The National and Dorset Echo, said the ads were “ostensibly conventional dating ads, although potentially clumsily sexist in their portrayal of women from a male perspective”.

They argued the ads did not refer to the war in Ukraine, were not partisan, and were also not unsympathetic towards Ukrainian women or the Ukrainian people in general.

However, they said that on reflection they could be inconsistent with their policy of refusing ads for prostitution and trafficking, and confirmed they had since been removed.

**Load-Date:** July 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Dating ads offering chance to meet ‘lonely’ Ukrainian women banned*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65XC-DNW1-DY4H-K081-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

July 13, 2022 Wednesday 7:45 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK NEWS,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:1

**Length:** 507 words

**Byline:** May Bulman

**Highlight:** Advertising watchdog says adverts connected women’s vulnerability to their sex appeal in breach of law

**Body**

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**Load-Date:** July 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukrainian caught while trying to flee to Moldova by hiding in pile of baby clothes*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6515-CH81-DY4H-K1T5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 17, 2022 Thursday 10:51 AM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 504 words

**Byline:** Arpan Rai

**Highlight:** Under martial law in Ukraine, men of conscription age are not allowed to leave country

**Body**

A Ukrainian man who was trying to flee to the bordering European country of [*Moldova*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/moldova) amid the Russian incursion was caught at the border by security officials.

The man, who was found at the Rososhany checkpoint, was hiding inside a box containing baby clothes in a car driven by a woman.

When the car reached the border, officials stopped it and checked the vehicle. Inside, they saw the woman's two children. The car's backseat was filled with soft toys, clothes and diaper packets, besides a huge colourful carton box.

"On the border with Moldova, border guards of the Chernivtsi detachment exposed an unusual 'passenger'. He was found at the Rososhany checkpoint in a Renault car driven by a woman with her two children," the State Border Guard Service of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) said in a tweet.

They also shared photographs of the incident, which show the man hiding inside the box as well as getting out of the car. His identity was not revealed.

Martial law was imposed in Ukraine after Russia launched its invasion on 24 February. Under this law, men of conscription age, between 18 and 60, have been banned from leaving Ukraine. Though they have not been forced to fight, there are fears that conscription would be enforced if the war rages on for a long time.

There have been several reports of men trying to flee Ukraine and enter neighbouring countries including Hungary and Poland. There is no clarity on how many have been allowed to pass.

The ongoing siege in Ukraine has led more than three million people to flee Ukraine, according to latest estimates by the United Nations on Europe's biggest refugee crisis since the second world war.

The United Nations has estimated that at least 636 civilians have died so far, though the real number is probably higher.

On Thursday, as the [*violence entered its fourth week*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-putin-war-criminal-death-latest-b2037754.html) , nearly 13 buses carrying around 300 refugees from Ukraine's Mariupol city reached Russia's Rostov region, indicating that people are trying to flee the conflict-marred country in all possible directions.

The United Nations refugee agency said it welcomed the response shown by advanced countries to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***. It urged these countries to act in the same manner towards other refugees from other war countries, irrespective of their nationality, race or religion.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered.

To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Mila Kunis explains why she used to tell people she was Russian and not Ukrainian*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650G-MKS1-DY4H-K3TH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 14, 2022 Monday 5:02 AM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,FILM,CULTURE; Version:1

**Length:** 457 words

**Byline:** Ellie Harrison

**Highlight:** Actor has raised millions of pounds for victims of the Russia-Ukraine conflict

**Body**

[*Mila Kunis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mila-kunis) , who was born in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , has said that she used to tell people she was Russian.

The Friends with Benefits star was born in the Ukrainian city of Chernivtsi. In 1991, when she was seven, her family fled from Soviet Ukraine to the [*United States*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/united-states).

In a new interview with Maria Shriver for [*Conversations Above the Noise*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XU_QQvMuhqQ) , Kunis said: "People were like, 'Oh, you're so Eastern European.' I was like, 'I'm so LA! What do you mean?' Like, my whole life I was like, 'I am LA through and through.'"

Kunis said that because she identified so strongly as an American, for a long time, being Ukrainian felt "irrelevant" to her, despite having close friends in the country and visiting it with her husband, the actor Ashton Kutcher.

She said that whenever people would ask her where she was from, she'd say she was Russian for "a multitude of reasons".

Kunis continued: "One of them being when I came to the States and I would tell people I'm from Ukraine, the first question I'd get was, 'Where is Ukraine?' And then I'd have to explain Ukraine and where it is on the map, and I was like, 'Ugh, that's exhausting.'"

She soon realised that if she said she was from [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) , people would know where she meant. "I was like, great, I'll just tell people from Russia," she said.

Kunis said everything changed for her when Russia invaded Ukraine last month. "This happens and I can't express or explain what came over me, but all of a sudden I was like, 'Oh my God, I feel like a part of my heart just got ripped out,'" she said. "It was the weirdest feeling."

She said she will no longer be telling people she's from Russia. "Hell no, I'm from Ukraine!" she said.

Kunis and Kutcher [*have raised over £13m*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/mila-kunis-ashton-kutcher-ukraine-b2031705.html) to aid victims of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Last week, the couple announced that they will match donations of up to $3m (£2.5m) to help supply humanitarian aid to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

In a video appeal, Kunis said there was "no place in this world for this kind of unjust attack on humanity".

Read The Independent's live updates on the conflict [*here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-news-russia-putin-war-b2034394.html).

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**Load-Date:** March 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Harris thanks Poland for helping 1 million Ukraine refugees*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YN-XBR1-JBNF-W0MX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 10, 2022 Thursday 12:46 PM GMT

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**Length:** 477 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Vice President Kamala Harris has praised the Polish people for their generosity for taking in more than 1 million refugees since Russia invaded Ukraine

**Body**

Vice President Kamala Harris on Thursday praised the Polish people for their generosity for taking in more than 1 million refugees since [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) invaded [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) last month.

Harris made the comments as she met with Polish Prime Minister [*Mateusz Morawiecki*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mateusz-morawiecki) hours after the U.S. House passed a massive spending bill that includes $13.6 billion in aid for Ukraine and its European allies. The legislation includes $6.8 billion to care for refugees and other economic aid to allies.

"I've been watching or reading about the work of ordinary people doing extraordinary things, and so I bring you thanks from the American people," Harris said.

Harris also met with Polish President Andrzej Duda, and the two were scheduled to hold an afternoon news conference. Later Thursday, the vice president was slated to meet with ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have fled to Poland since the Russian invasion began.

The vice president is also scheduled to meet with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau while in Warsaw. The Canadian leader has been in Europe in recent days meeting with allies about Ukraine.

Harris' whirlwind visit to Poland and Romania was billed by the [*White House*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/white-house) as a chance for the vice president to consult with two of the leaders from eastern flank NATO nations about the growing humanitarian crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Already, more than 2 million refugees have fled Ukraine - with more than half coming to Poland - and even more expected to arrive in the days ahead.

But differences between Warsaw and Washington over a Polish plan to send Soviet-made fighter jets to a base in Germany for Ukraine's use have cast a shadow over Harris' visit to Poland. Just as Harris arrived in Warsaw late Wednesday evening, the Pentagon definitively rejected the idea.

The proposal was publicly floated by Poland - without first consulting the U.S. - days after Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the Biden administration was "very, very actively" looking at a proposal under which Ukraine's neighbor Poland would supply Kyiv with Soviet-era fighters and in turn receive American F-16s to make up for their loss. Polish government officials, however, insisted any transfer of planes must be done within the NATO framework.

On Wednesday, the Pentagon shut the door on the prospect of NATO transferring jets to Ukraine, saying such a move with a U.S. and NATO connection would run a "high risk" of escalating the Russia-Ukraine war.

Gen. Tod D. Wolters, the commander of U.S. European Command, said in a statement Thursday that the "most effective way to support the Ukrainian military in their fight against Russia is to provide increased amounts of anti-tank weapons and air defense systems." That effort by the U.S. and allies is ongoing, Wolters added.

Harris will travel on Friday to Bucharest, where she's to meet Romanian President Klaus Iohannis.

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Mila Kunis explains why she used to tell people she was Russian and not Ukrainian*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6503-VMV1-DY4H-K23T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 12, 2022 Saturday 12:49 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,FILM,CULTURE; Version:1

**Length:** 457 words

**Byline:** Ellie Harrison

**Highlight:** Actor has raised millions of pounds for victims of the Russia-Ukraine conflict

**Body**

[*Mila Kunis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mila-kunis) , who was born in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , has said that she used to tell people she was Russian.

The Friends with Benefits star was born in the Ukrainian city of Chernivtsi. In 1991, when she was seven, her family fled from Soviet Ukraine to the [*United States*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/united-states).

In a new interview with Maria Shriver for [*Conversations Above the Noise*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XU_QQvMuhqQ) , Kunis said: "People were like, 'Oh, you're so Eastern European.' I was like, 'I'm so LA! What do you mean?' Like, my whole life I was like, 'I am LA through and through.'"

Kunis said that because she identified so strongly as an American, for a long time, being Ukrainian felt "irrelevant" to her, despite having close friends in the country and visiting it with her husband, the actor Ashton Kutcher.

She said that whenever people would ask her where she was from, she'd say she was Russian for "a multitude of reasons".

Kunis continued: "One of them being when I came to the States and I would tell people I'm from Ukraine, the first question I'd get was, 'Where is Ukraine?' And then I'd have to explain Ukraine and where it is on the map, and I was like, 'Ugh, that's exhausting.'"

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**Load-Date:** March 12, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Boris Johnson claims EU travel rules explain its more generous help for refugees from Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64X1-5G81-JBNF-W4XP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 2, 2022 Wednesday 5:22 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK POLITICS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 487 words

**Byline:** Rob Merrick

**Highlight:** Prime minister also claimed UK has welcomed more refugees than anywhere else in Europe - despite Germany allowing in one million

**Body**

[*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) is under fire after claiming EU travel rules explain its far more generous offer to [*refugees*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) from [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , as criticism grows over the UK's stance.

Under pressure in the Commons, the prime minister said the "[*Schengen*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/schengen) border-free zone" - allowing passport-free travel - explained why the EU is waiving visas for people fleeing the Russian invasion.

In fact, although an association agreement does allow Ukrainians to enter the EU without a visa, that's is only for 90 days and the rules will be tightened by the end of the year.

The EU has gone much further by allowing refugees to remain for up to three years, as up to 7 million are expected to escape [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) 's increasingly violent assault.

Furthermore, Ireland has dropped its requirement for Ukrainians to have a visa - despite not being a Schengen member - saying refugees must seek permission to stay after their arrival.

[*Paul Blomfield*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/paul-blomfield) , a Labour MP, accused Mr Johnson of "making it up to get out of a corner again", after he was put on the spot about the plight of ordinary Ukrainians.

At prime minister's questions, Mr Johnson also claimed the UK has welcomed more refugees than anywhere else in Europe - despite Germany allowing in one million, after the 2015 crisis.

"I think we have settled 25,000 vulnerable people since 2015, which is more than any other European country, so we should be proud of our record," MPs were told.

The Independent has set up a petition calling on the UK government to be at the forefront of the international community offering aid and support to those in Ukraine. To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees).

The UK government is [*continuing to resist a refugee programme*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/russia-ukraine-uk-sponsor-refugees-b2025654.html) , arguing waiving standard visa rules and biometric checks would put UK lives at risk from Putin's agents.

It has given ground on family reunions, so more relatives of Ukrainians in the UK - parents of adults, grandparents, adult offspring and siblings - will be eligible, instead of just spouses and children.

And individuals, charities, businesses and community groups will be able to sponsor Ukrainians to work in the UK, outside of normal rules on salaries and language spoken.

The Independent is also raising money for the people of Ukraine - if you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome&data=04%7C01%7CRob.Merrick@independent.co.uk%7C084b7695dc07497797f908d9fc2b1f1a%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637818084414192565%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0=%7C3000&sdata=hliYaUlj340luyu6jFFnGp5nqufPwIFWe482ucWBSlk=&reserved=0%22%20%5Co%20%22Original%20URL:https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcomeClick%20to%20follow%20link.) for our GoFundMe page.

The Home Office has claimed up to 200,000 Ukrainians are now eligible to come to the UK as family members, but has not explained how the figure has been reached.

A French government adviser has protested that UK visa rules have left ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who want to travel on to the UK being stranded in northern France.

"We have drawn the attention of the British authorities to the difficulties associated with the lack of information and the over-restrictive nature of this system," the adviser told Le Parisien newspaper on Tuesday.

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[*France accuses UK of 'lack of humanity' after 150 Ukraine refugees turned away at Calais*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XV-1RC1-JBNF-W2P8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 6, 2022 Sunday 7:29 AM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 518 words

**Byline:** Alisha Rahaman Sarkar

**Highlight:** French minister writes strongly-worded letter to Priti Patel saying UK's response 'completely unsuitable'

**Body**

[*France*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/france) has accused Britain of "lacking humanity" in helping fleeing Ukrainians join their families in the UK via the French port city of [*Calais*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/calais).

French interior minister [*Gerald Darmanin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/gerald-darmanin) , in a strongly-worded letter to his British counterpart [*Priti Patel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/priti-patel) , urged London to set up a proper consular presence in Calais to issue visas [*after 150 Ukrainians were turned away*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-refugees-visas-family-home-office-uk-b2025715.html) and asked to obtain visas at UK consulates in Paris or Brussels.

The French minister, in his letter, said the UK's response was "[*completely unsuitable*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-helpline-home-office-refugees-visas-uk-b2026695.html) " and showed a "lack of humanity" towards refugees "in distress", reported news agency AFP.

"It is imperative that your consular representation, exceptionally and for the duration of this crisis, is able to issue visas for family reunification on the spot in Calais," Mr Darmanin added.

France had announced last week that Britain would set up a pop-up visa centre in the port city after London announced a scheme to allow family members of Ukrainians settled in the UK to enter the country.

Following the announcement, hundreds of Ukrainians travelled to Calais in an attempt to reunite with their families in the UK.

"Our coasts have been the scene of too many human tragedies. Let's not add to that those [*Ukrainian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) families," Mr Darmamin added.

The number of refugees fleeing [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) is expected to reach 1.5 million as [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) 's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine entered the eleventh day on Sunday. The UN has warned that the war could displace nearly five million people.

Most refugees were seen moving to the west towards Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Moldova and Hungary. Poland, which has opened its doors to the lion's share of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, has reportedly absorbed over 650,000 people.

The [*European Union*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/european-union) has announced measures to accommodate the refugees for up to three years. British prime minister [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boris-johnson) last week promised to be "very generous" to refugees seeking safety.

Ms Patel on Friday formally launched [*the Ukraine family visa scheme*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/priti-patel-ukraine-polish-home-secretary-british-government-b2028286.html) during a visit to Madyka in eastern Poland on the border with the battered country.

"I have developed the Ukraine family scheme following discussions with the Ukrainian government and neighbouring countries and I am proud to have launched it within a matter of days, enabling Ukrainians with family in the United Kingdom to be welcomed safely, quickly and free of charge," she said ahead of her visit.

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**Load-Date:** March 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Mothers leave prams at train stations for Ukrainian refugee parents arriving with nothing*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y7-MTF1-DY4H-K3XB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 8, 2022 Tuesday 10:17 AM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:1

**Length:** 481 words

**Byline:** Maryam Zakir-Hussain

**Highlight:** "Is there a more powerful force than motherhood?"

**Body**

Generous mothers left prams at a train station in [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) for Ukrainian refugee parents to use when they arrive with their children.

The gesture of solidarity with ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) was made at Przemysl railway station, with a photograph showing more than half a dozen strollers waiting to be used.

One Twitter user wrote: "Is there a more powerful force than motherhood?" while another wrote: "The most beautiful way to welcome a mother and her child."

Amidst the bleakness of the war with Russia, people are holding onto small moments of hope.

Footage of a young girl singing 'Let it Go' from Disney's Frozen in a bomb shelter was widely shared after it was posted on Facebook this week.

Marta Smekhova, who posted the clip, said: "From the first word in the [bomb shelter] came complete silence... everyone put their business aside and listen[ed] to a song by this girl who was just beaming light."

Since [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) launched its invasion of [*Ukraine nearly two weeks ago*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) , there have been over 1.7 million refugees fleeing war-torn Ukraine and neighbouring country Poland has taken in over one million Ukrainians, according to the [*UN*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/un) Refugee Agency.

As the conflict intensifies, a wave of mothers and children have been leaving to seek refuge in other countries.

The desperation for safety was seen earlier this week when a [*Ukrainian mother sent her 11-year-old son on a 600 mile journey alone*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/zaporizhzhya-boy-slovakia-ukraine-border-b2030054.html%22%20title=%22Refugee%20boy,%2011,%20travels%20600%20miles%20alone%20from%20Ukraine%20to%20Slovakia%20with%20phone%20number%20written%20on%20hand) from Ukraine to the Slovakia border with just a phone number written on his hand.

Such are the scenes in devastated Ukraine where the UN have confirmed the deaths of 406 civilians and said a further 801 have been injured, though the real tolls are believed to be much higher.

Refugees face journeys full of uncertainty as eight civilians who were trying to evacuate died on Sunday including a family of two adults and two children in Irpin, a town near Kyiv, when relentless shelling fell.

In a video address on Sunday night, President Volodymyr Zelensky said: "They were just trying to get out of town. To escape. The whole family. How many such families have died in Ukraine.

"We will not forgive. We will not forget. We will punish everyone who committed atrocities in this war. On our land."

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**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ministers refuse to publish Homes for Ukraine application numbers amid concern there have been 'hardly any'*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6527-RBT1-DY4H-K264-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 22, 2022 Tuesday 1:18 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 1130 words

**Byline:** May Bulman

**Highlight:** Charities and lawyers warn it is 'nigh on impossible' for refugees to apply due to 'convoluted' process

**Body**

The government is refusing to publish figures on the number of ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) who have so far applied to the UK sponsorship scheme, amid concerns that there have been "hardly any" applications.

Charities and lawyers have warned that a "convoluted" application process requiring people who are still in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) or are currently homeless near the border to find someone in the UK able to house them, and then requiring the refugee or host to fill out "very difficult" online forms, is making it "nigh on impossible" for people to apply.

Prospective hosts themselves have told The Independent that when they have tried to submit applications to the sponsorship scheme they have found it to be an "impossible" process.

When asked how many refugees had applied to the scheme since it opened on Friday, the government said it would not be releasing any data as of yet. This is despite the fact that ministers released numbers on applications to the separate Ukraine family scheme within two days.

The Homes for Ukraine scheme was designed to allow Ukrainians with no family links to come to Britain and be hosted by members of the public, who will be paid £350 per month for doing so. More than 150,000 people have so far registered their interest in hosting.

The scheme requires refugees to have identified someone in the UK willing to host them before applying, which has led to a flood of Facebook pages being set up designed to "match" hosts with refugees - prompting concerns it leaves vulnerable people exposed to abuse.

Once a refugee and host have identified one another, one of them must submit an application to the Home Office website, which requires them to be in close contact with each other during the process so that they can fill in the relevant details.

The Independent is raising money for the people of Ukraine - if you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

Katherine Klinger, 63, who lives in London, said it took her 12 hours of "complete concentration" over the weekend to complete the application process for a Ukrainian family of eight whom she is hoping to host.

"I can't believe how difficult they've been. It's a really difficult form. The system will not accept anything unless it's a PDF. It simply wont get uploaded. You have to have a fairly sophisticated computer to do this," she said.

"I'm sitting quietly at home in the warmth with a big computer. There's no way someone would be able to fill it out on a phone somewhere in the Ukraine or Poland or Slovakia."

Ms Klinger added: "There's just no way all the 150,000 people who have registered to host will go through this process. It will be very small numbers.

"It's a complete shambles. I think it's a sort of glorious smokescreen for the government to say 'oh, aren't we wonderful', but in fact they're making it impossible."

Robina Qureshi, executive officer at Positive Action in Housing, a charity that has been matching refugees and asylum seekers with hosts in the UK for decades, said 350 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** had contacted the charity, but that none had yet been able to successfully apply to the scheme.

"The reason ministers are refusing to release the figures is because there are likely to be hardly any. I don't know anyone who has completed the visa application process and been granted a visa via the sponsorship route. Refugees are being led down a dead end," she said.

"At Warsaw and the ports there are no UK representatives encouraging refugees to go to the UK. There's no guidance on the visa applications at all. There is no one to help people fill in forms.

"Our hosts are working with their guests via WhatsApp to complete the forms -both are tech savvy and speak perfect English but it's nigh on impossible. There are no timescales just confusion upon confusion."

A London-based lawyer who is currently at a humanitarian centre in Poland near the Ukrainian border, which is holding around 2,000 refugees, said there was "no information" there about the fact that there was an option to go to the UK.

The lawyer, who did not wish to be named, said a number of refugees had nonetheless become aware of the UK sponsorship scheme via the internet and had found hosts via social media -but that the application process was "not fit for a crisis situation".

"The visa application system itself is not fit for purpose. You need to upload copies of documents in PDF format, which means a refugee who's crossed the border with a shopping bag needs to have access to a PDF converter," she said.

"They then need to print a checklist - sign it, scan it, feed it back into the system, so you basically need to have an office."

The lawyer said that volunteers at the centre had assisted with about 15 applications to the sponsorship scheme over the past few days, while there were "busloads" of people leaving the facility every night to go to other European countries.

"People don't even know it's an option to go to the UK, and maybe that's deliberate from our government. Maybe they only want a trickle of people," she said.=

"And for those who have applied, we haven't been able to find any information on how long the processing time is. They're allowed to stay at this centre for two days. We have no idea how long they need to wait before they're going to get to the UK.

"In the meantime people are not safe here. There are huge trafficking risks. Bad things are happening to women and children."

A government spokesperson: "We are moving as quickly as possible to ensure that those fleeing horrific persecution in Ukraine can find safety in the UK, and our Homes for Ukraine scheme now allows those without family connections to come here.

"The Home Office has acted to streamline the visa application process so valid passport holders no longer have to attend in-person appointments before arriving, allowing us to welcome people faster. They have also increased capacity at Visa Application Centres to 13,000 appointments per week across Europe to help people without documentation."

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**Load-Date:** March 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine says more than 11,000 Russian troops killed since invasion began*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XV-1N81-JBNF-W4PJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 6, 2022 Sunday 8:27 AM GMT

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**Section:** EUROPE,WORLD; Version:3

**Length:** 519 words

**Byline:** Alisha Rahaman Sarkar

**Highlight:** Ukraine makes the claim on the eleventh day of the Russian invasion

**Body**

[*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) 's military command on Sunday alleged more than 11,000 Russian troops have been killed since [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) declared [*war on the eastern European country*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-news-ceasefire-appeal-b2029246.html) on 24 February.

It added that the Russian forces have suffered the loss of 2,000 units of enemy weapons and military equipment, including 285 tanks, 44 aircraft and 48 helicopters.

"In the Luhansk region, the entire front line is littered with corpses and lined equipment of the invaders," the ministry said in its statement on Sunday.

A day earlier, the [*Ukrainian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukrainian) military had put Russian casualties at over 10,000.

"[*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) has not suffered so many casualties during the fighting in any of its armed conflicts since its inception," the ministry had said.

It did not, however, report Ukrainian casualties.

The Russian defence ministry, [*in its first report of casualties last week*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russian-soldiers-ukraine-war-death-toll-b2026999.html) , had said 498 Russian troops were killed, while 1,597 more sustained wounds.

There has been no immediate Russian reaction to the claims made by Ukraine's military command.

The country said it has struck and destroyed Ukraine's Starokostiantyniv military air base with long-range, high-precision weapons.

World Health Organisation chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, meanwhile, has said there have been "several attacks" on health care centres across Ukraine, "causing multiple deaths and injuries".

"Attacks on healthcare facilities or workers breach medical neutrality and are violations of international humanitarian law," he said in a tweet.

According to British intelligence, Putin's forces are targeting populated areas across Ukraine, while facing tough resistance from the locals.

In the latest update, it said the Russian troops were beginning to employ tactics in Ukraine similar to those used in Chechnya in 1999 and Syria in 2016.

"The scale and strength of Ukrainian resistance continue to surprise Russia. It has responded by targeting populated areas in multiple locations, including Kharkiv, Chernihiv and Mariupol," it said.

The number of Ukrainians fleeing the war-torn country is likely to rise to 1.5 million as Russia's unprovoked invasion entered day 11 on Sunday. Most refugees were seen moving to the west towards Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Moldova and Hungary.

Poland, which has opened its doors to the lion's share of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, has reportedly absorbed over 650,000 people, while Moldova on Sunday said it had offered sanctuary to more than 96,000 people.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015. Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered. To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Sean Penn says he has walked 'miles' to Polish border after abandoning car in Ukraine*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WX-V821-JBNF-W0BY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 2, 2022 Wednesday 4:19 AM GMT

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**Section:** CULTURE,FILM,NEWS; Version:2

**Length:** 479 words

**Byline:** Ellie Harrison

**Highlight:** Actor had been filming a documentary on the Russian invasion of the country

**Body**

[*Sean Penn*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sean-penn) has recounted walking "miles" to the Polish border to flee [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine).

The actor, who is filming a Vice Studios documentary about Russia's invasion of the country, said he abandoned his car after seeing long queues of traffic as Ukrainian residents fled for safety.

Posting on Twitter on Monday (28 February), Penn, 61, shared a picture of himself dragging a battered suitcase, with the caption: "Myself & two colleagues walked miles to the Polish border after abandoning our car on the side of the road.

"Almost all the cars in this photo carry women & children only, most without any sign of luggage, and a car their only possession of value."

Penn was photographed at a press briefing by the Ukrainian government in Kyiv last Thursday (24 February) as Russia began a full-scale attack on its neighbour.

[*UK exclusive: The story behind the image that defined the Russian invasion of Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/features/ukraine-war-photo-olena-kurilo-b2026568.html)

The following day the actor [*released a statement*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/sean-penn-ukraine-russia-america-b2024064.html) condemning Russian president [*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) for making a "horrible mistake for all of humankind".

Myself & two colleagues walked miles to the Polish border after abandoning our car on the side of the road. Almost all the cars in this photo carry women & children only, most without any sign of luggage, and a car their only possession of value. [*pic.twitter.com/XSwCDgYVSH*](https://t.co/XSwCDgYVSH) - Sean Penn (@SeanPenn) [*February 28, 2022*](https://twitter.com/SeanPenn/status/1498390093375016965?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

"Already a brutal mistake of lives taken and hearts broken, and if he doesn't relent, I believe Mr Putin will have made a most horrible mistake for all of humankind," Penn said.

The I Am Sam actor had been on the ground filming a documentary, and had previously visited the country in November 2021 to begin preparing for the film.

Penn met with deputy prime minister Iryna Vereshchuk, as well as members of the military and local journalists.

The office of Ukrainian president [*Volodymyr Zelensky*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volodymyr-zelensky) issued a statement in praise of Penn's "bravery".

"Sean Penn is demonstrating bravery that many others have been lacking, in particular some Western politicians," reads a translation of the statement.

Penn previously directed the 2020 documentary Citizen Penn, about the process of founding his non-profit organisation Core (Community Organised Relief Effort) in the wake of the Haiti earthquake in 2010.

Core also deployed teams to help with Covid-19 testing and vaccinations during the pandemic.

You can follow along with updates at The Independent's Russia-Ukraine live blog [*here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-update-today-russia-putin-b2025978.html).

Read More

[*Sean Penn says the US has 'lost its soul' if it allows Ukraine to fight Russia alone*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/sean-penn-ukraine-russia-america-b2024064.html)

[*Sean Penn is on the ground in Ukraine to film a documentary about Russian invasion*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/sean-penn-ukraine-kiev-russia-documentary-b2023021.html)

[*Sean Penn's comments on masculinity smack of old-school misogyny*](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/features/sean-penn-flag-day-gender-b2003364.html)

[*One million* ***Ukrainian******refugees*** *flee as Kherson falls to Russia -live*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-latest-update-kyiv-explosion-putin-news-b2027373.html)

[*Why has Russia invaded Ukraine? The conflict explained*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/why-russia-ukraine-invasion-putin-b2026550.html)

[*Sign The Independent's petition to help the people of Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-refugees-russia-petition-help-b2025628.html)

**Load-Date:** March 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Mila Kunis is informing her children about their Ukrainian background amid Russia's invasion*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YY-CKB1-DY4H-K51D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 11, 2022 Friday 9:51 PM GMT

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**Section:** HEALTH & FAMILIES,LIFESTYLE; Version:1

**Length:** 446 words

**Byline:** Meredith Clark

**Highlight:** The actor was born in Ukraine before emigrating to the US when she was seven years old

**Body**

[*Mila Kunis*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/mila-kunis) shared how she is having conversations with her children about their Ukrainian heritage, while learning how to embrace her own Ukrainian roots too.

In a conversation with Maria Shriver for [*The Sunday Paper*](https://mariashriver.com/the-sundaypaper/) , the Bad Moms actor revealed that she sat her children down and had a conversation with them about their Ukrainian background amid Russia's invasion of her native country.

"I turned to my kids and I was like, 'You are half-Ukrainian, half-American!'" she said to Shriver in a [*clip*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XU_QQvMuhqQ) that was released on 11 March. "I literally was like, 'Look, you!' And my kids were like, 'Yeah, mom. I get it.'" Kunis shares two children with her husband [*Ashton Kutcher*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ashton-kutcher) - daughter Wyatt, 7, and son Dimitri, 5.

"I was like, 'You're half-Iowa, half-[*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) ,'" the actress said, referencing Kutcher's home state of Iowa. "And they were like, 'Okay, I get it.'"

The couple, who have been married since 2015, have [*raised over $20m*](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/culture/mila-kunis-ashton-kutcher-fundraising-ukraine-b2033954.html) to aid victims of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, they said in an Instagram post on Thursday. Last week, Kunis and Kutcher announced that they will match donations of up to $3m to help supply humanitarian aid to ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

"But we're not done," the former Punk'd host said in the Instagram video. "Our goal is 30 [million] and we're going to get there." The couple thanked the 56,000 people who have donated to their GoFundMe and provided an update on the work their fund has done on the ground in Ukraine.

View this post on Instagram [*A post shared by Ashton Kutcher (@aplusk)*](https://www.instagram.com/tv/Ca7s_XhJy7G/?utm_source=ig_embed&utm_campaign=loading)

Kunis was born in 1983 in [*Chernivtsi*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/mila-kunis-ukraine-nationality-family-russia-b2030504.html) , a city in southwestern Ukraine. She and her family moved to the US when she was seven, even though her native language was Russian and she didn't speak English when her family emigrated.

During her interview with Maria Shriver, the 38-year-old mom shared that she didn't embrace her Ukrainian heritage when she was younger and would tell people she was from Russia instead.

"It's been irrelevant to me that I come from Ukraine, it never mattered," she revealed. "So much so that I've always said I'm Russian, right? Like, I've always been like, 'I'm from Russia' for a multitude of reasons. One of them being when I came to the states and I would tell people I'm from Ukraine, the first question I would get is, 'Where is Ukraine?'"

"But if I was like, 'I'm from Russia,' people are like, 'Oh, we know that country,'" Kunis explained. "And so I was like, "Great, I'll just tell people I'm from Russia.'"

Now, Kunis is proud to inform people of her Ukrainian background. "Hell no! I am from Ukraine," she said. "I mean, everything's changed."

**Load-Date:** March 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[*'Big lunch' follows big coronation celebrating King Charles*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:685W-X621-DY4H-K0GK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

May 7, 2023 Sunday 2:03 PM GMT

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**Length:** 661 words

**Byline:** Brian Melley

**Highlight:** The long weekend to commemorate the coronation of King Charles III is continuing with picnics and street parties held across the U.K. in his honor

**Body**

After the gilded spectacle of King Charles III's crowning in an ancient religious ceremony, coronation festivities took a more down-to-earth turn Sunday with thousands of picnics and street parties held across the U.K. in his honor.

The community get-togethers, part of a British tradition known as the Big Lunch, were intended to bring neighbors together to celebrate the newly crowned king even as support for the monarchy wanes. Critics complained about the coronation's cost at a time of exorbitant living expenses amid double-digit inflation.

Thousands of luncheons were organized as part of the celebrations Sunday, along with a nighttime concert at Windsor Castle featuring Katy Perry, Lionel Richie and 1990's boy band Take That. Charles encouraged residents to engage in volunteer activities Monday, which was a holiday.

The king and Queen [*Camilla*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/camilla) were not expected at any of the luncheons but planned to attend the concert that will include a speech by his son, [*Prince William*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prince-william) , heir to the throne.

The king's siblings, Edward, the Duke of Edinburgh, and Anne, the Princess Royal, and their spouses took on lunch duty for the royal family. Edward was in Cranleigh and his sister hit an event in Swindon. The king's nieces, Princess Beatrice and Princess Eugenie, the daughters of Prince Andrew, were to join a lunch in Windsor.

Prime Minister [*Rishi Sunak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/rishi-sunak) hosted U.S. first lady [*Jill Biden*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/jill-biden) and her granddaughter Finnegan Biden at the Big Lunch party held in front of his office. Other guests included ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** and community activists.

As in other neighborhoods with street parties, Downing Street was decked out in Union Jack bunting for the occasion.

The lower-key events followed regalia-laden pageantry that saw the king and queen crowned together in Westminster Abbey. They were presented with centuries-old swords, scepters and a jewel-encrusted golden orb symbolizing the monarch's power in a medieval tradition celebrated with liturgy, song and hearty cheers of “God save the king.”

The couple then paraded through the streets in a gilded horse-drawn carriage led by the largest ceremonial military procession since the coronation of Charles' mother, Queen Elizabeth II, 70 years ago. Some 4,000 troops marched in formation through the streets, their scarlet sleeves and white gloves swinging in unison to the sound of drums and bugles from marching bands, including one group of musicians on horseback.

Hundreds of thousands of spectators lined the route in the rain to see it in person. Nearly 19 million more watched on television in the U.K., according to ratings released by Barb, a research organization. That's about 40% fewer viewers than had watched the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II in September.

Charles and Camilla said Sunday in a statement that they were “deeply touched” by the celebration and "profoundly grateful both to all those who helped to make it such a glorious occasion – and to the very many who turned out to show their support.”

Not everyone was there to celebrate, though, and criticism continued Sunday over arrests of more than 50 protesters, including members of a republican group shouting “Not my king" and environmentalists aiming to end the use of fossil fuels.

Graham Smith, leader of Republic, a group advocating for abolishing the monarchy, said he was arrested as he planned peaceful protest and spent 16 hours in police custody.

“These arrests are a direct attack on our democracy and the fundamental rights of every person in the country," Smith said. “Each and every police officer involved on the ground should hang their heads in shame."

The Metropolitan Police acknowledged concerns over the arrests, but defended the force’s actions.

“The coronation is a once-in-a-generation event and that is a key consideration in our assessment,” Commander Karen Findlay said.

In addition to the lunch celebrations, hundreds of troops marched through the center of Glasgow on Sunday to celebrate the coronation.

**Load-Date:** May 7, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Berlin train station turns into refugee town for Ukrainians*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6510-RN01-DY4H-K06P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 16, 2022 Wednesday 6:18 PM GMT

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**Length:** 1131 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** The Ukraine war has turned the basement of Berlin's glass-and-steel main train station into a sprawling refugee town where a small army of volunteers in yellow and orange vests offer everything from shampoo to cell phone chargers to exhausted refugees

**Body**

Every other hour, another packed train from [*Poland*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/poland) arrives at [*Berlin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/berlin) 's main train station filled with hundreds of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, mostly mothers and their children looking for a safe place away from the brutal war in their home country.

As they spilled out of the trains on Tuesday, loudspeakers blared in Ukrainian and English: "Dear refugees from Ukraine, welcome to [*Germany*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/germany) , please follow the instructions of the volunteers in the yellow and orange vests."

Spread across the platforms, a small army of volunteers in bright-colored vests appeared - yellow for those who speak German, [*English*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/english) and other languages, orange for Ukrainian and Russian speakers - ready to maneuver the exhausted masses through the maze of Berlin's sleek and shiny glass-and-steel railway station into the building's basement.

The operation runs so smoothly that the seemingly endless stream of refugees goes largely unnoticed to the city's tens of thousands of regular commuters making their way through the station's five levels. Most don't even know of the sprawling refugee town that has sprung up in the station basement.

Vadim, a 17-year-old teenager who came on his own from Kharkiv in eastern Ukraine, traveled for three days and nights before arriving in Berlin on Tuesday afternoon. "No sleep," is all he said, a tired, petrified look in his eyes.

When asked where his parents were, the teen, who gave only his first name, simply shrugged his shoulders, grabbed a dirty backpack and slowly walked away.

Like Vadim, most refugees were too exhausted and traumatized to say much. Their frightened looks seemed to reflect the horrors of war. They sat huddled on long rows of wooden beer benches and tables, tightly holding onto plastic bags, school backpacks or duffel bags containing the few belongings they packed before fleeing the wailing sirens, detonating missiles and hastily arranged funerals back home.

More than 3 million refugees have left Ukraine since Russia attacked the country three weeks ago. Most have fled to neighboring countries such as Poland, Moldova and Romania. But as the war continues and civilians are increasingly in the crosshairs of the Russian military, many are making their way further west.

Some 160,000 ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** have been officially registered in Germany, but their real numbers are thought to be much higher as Ukrainians can enter Germany without visas and there are no thorough controls along the Polish-German border.

Berlin has become the No. 1 gateway for tens of thousands of refugees, with around 7,500 arriving at the train station every day. Because city officials were initially slow to react to the massive influx, thousands of volunteers have stepped up to help cater to the refugees' every needs.

They take the new arrivals from station platforms to a waiting area in the basement next to a McDonald's. There, an entire refugee town opens up: Volunteers hand out food and hot drinks, stands offer free shampoo, diapers, tampons, sanitary napkins and other hygiene supplies. A nursing tent is set up for moms wanting to breastfeed their babies. There is a safe zone for children with toys and boxes full of second-hand clothes, as well as volunteers offering pet food for the many dogs and cats the refugees bring with them.

There's also a stand operated by German railway company Deutsche Bahn handing out free train tickets for those who want to continue their travels to another destination. More than 100,000 tickets have been issued so far.

Two groups catering specifically to the needs of LGBTQ refugees and people of color have set up tables next to a COVID-19 testing station, and there are volunteers handing out cell phone chargers, power banks and German SIM cards so the refugees can keep up their lifelines to the husbands, fathers and sons who stayed back home to defend their country against the Russian invasion.

"When the first thousands of refugees arrived here, it quickly became clear that up on the platforms, where the trains arrive from Poland, there was not enough space. That's why our station management very quickly decided to free up a protected area in the basement," Deutsche Bahn spokeswoman Anja Broeker told The Associated Press.

"There, together with the many volunteers who also very quickly organized themselves ... we have been creating an aid structure that's getting better with each passing day."

The operation runs efficiently: Volunteers know their place and task; they are friendly and patient, but the atmosphere is eerily quiet and subdued. There's no loud laughter or chatter, no shouting, not even babies crying, only the hum of the escalators and the shrieking sound of braking trains entering the station.

About a third of those who arrive plan to stay, but most have no family or friends to welcome and shelter them, no place to sleep. So the volunteers bring them to a big white tent outside the back entrance of the station, next to the Spree River and within sight of the Chancellery.

Here, a constant flotilla of busses stands ready to take the refugees to terminal 5 of Berlin's new BER airport, the city's former Tegel airport or a convention center on its outskirts. In recent days, those places were turned into huge makeshift shelters filled with rows of hundreds of cots. Earlier, volunteers had lined up inside the station holding up signs saying how many refugees they could house at their private homes.

Recently, however, reports of men pretending to offer shelter and then sexually harassing and exploiting women have led authorities to warn refugees not to accept private accommodation offers. On Wednesday, authorities in the western city of Duesseldorf confirmed that a young Ukrainian woman was allegedly sexually assaulted by two men earlier this month.

The many volunteers who spearheaded the initial help have mixed feelings about the city taking control now and some feel sidelined by the authorities.

Maya Grossman, 28, a baker from San Francisco who moved to Berlin three years ago and Alyse Conn-Powers, 30, from Bloomington, Indiana, have come to the train station every other day to drop off supplies they bought with donations raised back home in the U.S.

While they first brought leftover food from Grossman's bakery, the city now no longer wants private food donations or hygiene supplies, so instead the two friends have brought coloring books, pencils, sharpeners and soap bubbles for the kids.

"We're just going to keep working for as long as we can with the money that we have and keep doing as much good as we possibly can," Grossman said.

"It's a marathon, not a sprint, and whatever is happening here is going to be happening for a long time and people are going to need a lot of things."

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Follow the AP's coverage of Ukraine: [*https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine*](https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine)

**Load-Date:** March 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Be grateful you'll never have to call on Priti Patel and the UK Home Office for help*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YD-JPY1-JCS0-D12C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent - Daily Edition

March 9, 2022 Wednesday

First Edition

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**Section:** VOICES; Pg. 34

**Length:** 1052 words

**Byline:** TOM PECK

**Body**

He's a busy man, at the moment, Volodymyr Zelensky. When he made his historic address to the House of Commons yesterday, he probably wouldn't have gotten round to watching any of his warm-up acts - and that's just as well.

It's also just as well that he almost certainly hadn't heard of Kevin Foster, the junior Home Office minister sent to the despatch box to try - and fail - to explain away the rolling shambles (we'll come back to that) that is his department's attempts to sort out the visa scheme for the two million and counting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** of which, at time of typing, just 300 have been granted the right to come to the UK.

If he has heard of Kevin Foster at all, it will almost certainly because he had to delete a tweet in which he explained, rather impatiently, that, actually, it was wrong to say there was no route to the UK for Ukrainians fleeing the bombings of their homes, because, actually, there was the "seasonal worker" scheme, in which they could come here for a few months, just as long as they wanted to work as fruit pickers and then go home again.

Yes, we'll come back to that shambles to say that actually it's not a shambles. Well, it is, but it's deliberate. It's not a shambles because they don't know what they're doing. They do. This is how it's meant to be.

People seeking asylum in Britain are absolutely meant to meet a wall of bureaucratic pain. They're meant to have hope extinguished by dysfunctional processes that take months, in the hope that they'll decide not to come here at all. It's obviously stupid, because the people that flee here, the people that board unsafe boats, do so because they're already out of luck and out of options but not quite yet entirely out of hope. It's just that an old-fashioned and extremely brutal war in Ukraine seems to have been necessary to make some people understand that very basic point.

The stories of Ukrainian families trudging across Europe, desperate to reach the safety and security of Britain, only to get to Calais and be told to turn back, should profoundly shame us as a country. Of course, there are aspects of the crisis that the government has handled well, chiefly in donating weapons. The stuff that we find easy, in other words. In doing the easy thing, we have certainly "led the way". But the stuff that we find hard, that really should be easy, which includes basic human compassion, we understandably trail far behind.

Maybe it's wrong to seek to weave a thread of causation through the following, but the correlation is certainly there. This is not the first time in even remotely recent memory that terrified people have been running for their lives from Russian bombs. Russia began bombing Syria in 2015, turning to maximum intensity the Mediterranean refugee crisis in the months that followed.

It was in this rarefied moment of terror that came the Katie Hopkins "cockroaches" column in The Sun newspaper. Nigel Farage's "Breaking Point" poster. As it happens, I went knocking on doors in Somerset with Jacob Rees-Mogg around about that time, when a man came up to him in the street with The Sun newspaper under his arm, pointed at the front page, featuring an Italian naval ship in the middle of the Med and the latest horrifying death toll and said, "I probably shouldn't say this but I'm glad they're dying."

Rees-Mogg told him he was wrong, and that it was "an appalling thing to say". But it is not an unfair reading of history to say that the unimaginable suffering in the Med, and the cheap politics of immigration that could be made off the back of it, got their little Brexit voter over the line. (When Angela Merkel granted asylum to a million Syrian refugees, Nigel Farage waved his British passport in anger. "In three years' time, they'll all be EU citizens and they can all come here. Nothing we can do about it.")

But for all that, this government would probably have never come to pass. When Sir Edward Leigh stood up in the House of Commons last week and said that, actually, "Lincolnshire has already done its bit with regard to immigration from eastern Europe," the ugly fact is that, for a great many people, he spoke the truth.

In the Commons, backbench MPs took it in turns to stand up and read out angry letters from desperate constituents with families scattered across the continent, in varying states of fear and panic.

There was a certain sense of déjà vu. It is barely a few months since the same happened in Afghanistan. There is a slight twist, however. Back then, Dominic Raab had us believe that he had no choice but to stay put in his Corfu villa and run the evacuation effort from there, rather than waste precious hours travelling home again.

This time around, Priti Patel has found the time to go and stand near the Poland/Ukraine border, doing a sad face about the suffering all around her, but not quite able to do anything about the fact that, as of now, there are no appointments at the Home Office's emergency visa centre in Poland until the end of next month.

And what has she done about the horrorshow of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** arriving in Calais and being told to go back to Paris or Brussels to have their paperwork dealt with? Well, there is now another emergency visa centre, in Lille, which at noon yesterday Home Office officials were denying existed until Liz Truss accidentally announced it in the House of Commons while being asked a question about something else.

It's shocking, of course it is. It's a national humiliation. A few days ago, Fisher Price My First Atlas-botherer Dominic Raab was trying to explain that the UK is a long way from Ukraine so it's not surprising we haven't had many people come here. On Monday, John Redwood stood up in the House of Commons to explain that lots of Ukrainian people don't actually want "long-term settlement status, a long way from Ukraine" so it's better not to offer it, and also better to just ignore the fact that almost two full weeks ago, Ireland immediately waived all the paperwork requirements we are still struggling to demand.

It's shocking, but don't be shocked by it. It's absolutely how it's meant to be. Mainly, just be grateful. Doubly grateful. Grateful not only that it's we're not running for our lives, but also grateful that should we ever have to, we won't have to call on the UK Home Office for help.

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine war: Delays to £350 ‘thank you’ for UK refugee hosts, charity says*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65R1-BD51-JBNF-W2TS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 18, 2022 Saturday 3:36 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK NEWS,INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:2

**Length:** 575 words

**Byline:** Zoe Tidman

**Highlight:** ‘In some cases, Ukrainian guests have had to leave accommodation,’ Mums4Ukraine chair founder says

**Body**

Britons who have opened their homes to ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) are facing a postcode lottery over how quickly they get their monthly £350 “thank you” payment from the UK government, according to a charity.

Some delays have reportedly caused financial problems that ended with guests having to leave.

The [*Homes for Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ukraine-family-scheme-refugees-home-office-b2057957.html) scheme allows those [*fleeing the war with Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-war-putin-latest-news-weapons-b2104007.html) to come to the UK to stay in the homes of Britons sponsoring them.

The government is giving these hosts -who are committing to at least six months -[*£350 a month as a “thank you”*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/ukraine-refugees-uk-money-government-b2034654.html).

But a charity has claimed there are issues with the roll out of this money.

“In some places, payments are happening quickly and more efficiently, and others they’re being more delayed,” Rend Platings from Mums4Ukraine told Sky News.

“It is a postcode lottery. What we need to see happen is a more human side to the way in which we’re dealing with all of this.”

Ms Platings said there were some instances where delays were even causing problems between the host families and their guests.

“We have seen some more serious cases, where hosts have just not been able to make ends meet, have asked Ukrainian guests for money and the relationship has broken down -just due to the pressure of the situation,” she told Sky News.

“Unfortunately, in some of those cases, Ukrainian guests have had to leave that accommodation.”

Earlier this week, government figures showed around 51,800 Ukrainians have arrived in the UK after being “matched” with people offering rooms under the Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme.

A further 25,400 have come to Britain from Ukraine under the family scheme, which allows refugees to join relatives in the country.

But more than 660 families have been [*forced to register as homeless in the UK*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-children-refugees-homeless-councils-uk-b2102638.html) after arriving under the schemes, according to the data.

A Local Government Association spokesperson said: “The priority for councils has been putting in place quickly and at scale both the necessary checks to ensure that hosts and their guests are safe and supported.

“Councils are aware that another key task is to pay hosts the ‘thank you’ payment.

“Now the funding and guidance from government is in place, those hosting new arrivals will be receiving these payments as soon as possible if they haven’t already, including backdated payments.”

A government spokesperson said: “We are grateful to everyone all over the UK who has opened their homes to Ukrainians. Every household can receive an optional £350 thank you payment for each month they host a Ukrainian family.

“Ukrainians on the scheme have access to benefits and the right to work from the day they arrive, and receive an additional £200 interim payment.”

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015.

Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered.

To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** June 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Russia's war spurs corporate exodus, exposes business risks*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64X5-M9K1-DY4H-K15Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 3, 2022 Thursday 9:30 AM GMT

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**Length:** 1213 words

**Byline:** Via AP news wire

**Highlight:** Russia's invasion of Ukraine has thrown business plans into disarray and forced a growing number of the world's best known brands to pull out of a country that's become a global outcast

**Body**

Auto shipments stopped, beer stopped flowing, cargo ships dropped port calls and oil companies cut their pipelines.

Russia's invasion of [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) has thrown business plans into disarray and forced a growing number of the world's best known brands - from [*Apple*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/apple) to [*Ford*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ford) and BP - to pull out of a country that's become a global outcast as companies seek to maintain their reputations and live up to corporate responsibility standards.

Investors were drawn to [*Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/russia) in search of lucrative profits they thought were worth the geopolitical risks. That calculation has changed after Russian President Vladimir Putin launched war in Europe, triggering a wave of global sanctions and export restrictions that have thrown its economy into turmoil and disrupted the operations of multinational corporations there.

"You basically have Russia becoming a commercial pariah," said economist Mary Lovely, a senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington. "Pretty much no company, no multinational, wants to be caught on the wrong side of U.S. and Western sanctions."

They're also expressing concern about the plight of Ukrainians, showing how they want to be seen coming out on the right side of history.

Complicating the push to flee is an order from Moscow temporarily restricting foreign investors from selling Russian assets. Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin said Tuesday that it would help investors make "a considered decision" rather than succumb to the political pressure of sanctions. It's not clear how that may affect corporate efforts to exit Russia.

Oil and gas companies, already feeling the heat from climate activists to invest in renewable energy, were among companies to announce the most rapid and dramatic exits.

Energy firm BP said Sunday that it would abandon its $14 billion stake in state-owned oil and gas company Rosneft. Shell said the next day it was leaving its joint venture with state-owned Gazprom and its involvement in the now-suspended Nord Stream 2 pipeline built to carry natural gas to Western Europe.

ExxonMobil said it will pull out of a key oil and gas project and halt any new investment in Russia. All their chief executives said they were shocked and saddened by the increasingly bloody conflict. Smaller energy firms have followed suit.

Companies in other industries signaled they're staying out of the Russian market either out of concern for Ukraine or to comply with Western sanctions.

Swedish auto brand [*Volvo Cars*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/volvo-cars) said it's not delivering cars to Russia for the time being in light of "potential risks associated with trading material with Russia, including the sanctions imposed by the EU and U.S."

U.S. automaker Ford, which has been winding down its Russian operations and only has a minority stake in a commercial van joint venture, told its partners it was suspending operations.

Similarly, Harley-Davidson halted motorcycle shipments to Russia and said its thoughts "continue for the safety of the people of Ukraine." Putin famously rode a three-wheeled Harley on a visit to Ukraine in 2010.

Others with more entrenched Russian operations might find it harder to navigate the crisis.

Renault, one of the biggest players in Russia's auto market, said only that it's temporarily suspending production at its Moscow plant through Saturday "due to some logistics issues," without being more specific.

Czech brewer Budvar, which counts Russia as one of its five major markets, halted beer production for and stopped deliveries to the country, saying business is not the top priority and that it's looking for ways to help, including finding accommodations for ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

Copenhagen-based Danish brewery group Carlsberg suspended production at two breweries in Ukraine, saying it's "following the situation with great concern" but didn't comment on its extensive Russian operations, including St. Petersburg-based Baltika Breweries, which exports beer worldwide.

The world's biggest shipping company, A.P. Moller-Maersk, said it will stop making Russian port calls, saying it was "deeply concerned" by the escalating crisis.

Airplane makers Boeing and Airbus stopped supplying parts and service support for Russian carriers. Boeing said it suspended major operations in Moscow and temporarily closed its Kyiv office.

Hollywood studios are delaying the release of new films in Russia, which isn't a leading movie market but typically ranks in the top dozen countries for box office revenue. Warner Bros., the Walt Disney Co., Sony Pictures cited the "humanitarian crisis."

Tech companies also headed for the door.

Apple said Tuesday that it would stop selling its iPhone and other popular devices inside Russia.

Computer maker Dell Technologies said it has "suspended" sales in both Ukraine and Russia but a spokesperson didn't say why.

Google and TikTok blocked Russian state media channels from their platforms after a plea from the European Union. Apple also blocked downloads of the RT News and Sputnik News apps from its mobile App Store outside Russia.

Executives are realizing it makes more sense to pull out of Russia, business experts said.

"It's really tough to do business in Russia under the best of conditions. Now it's become just crazy. So getting out is a smart business proposal," said James O'Rourke, professor of management at the University of Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business, who specializes in reputation management and business communications.

Companies will have to chalk up any losses as the cost of doing business.

"This is like going into business with the Manson family," O'Rourke said, referring to the followers of cult leader Charles Manson. "You honestly do not want your name associated with those people, and it's probably not going to cost you that much to disinvest."

It's not just sanctions but public sentiment that companies have to respond to as the human costs of the war grow.

Company commitments to environmental, social and corporate governance, known as ESG, are being put to the test. ESG has become a buzzy acronym that's increasingly seen as an important way for corporations to tout responsible business credentials.

"But there can also be an element of greenwashing," where companies say things that make it seem like they hold certain values or are on the right side of ESG issues while their practices and behavior suggest otherwise, Columbia Business School associate professor Vanessa Burbano said.

"Stakeholders like employees and consumers will want to see if companies' actions and behaviors are consistent with the communicated support that companies are expressing for Ukrainians," she said.

Some companies were going beyond just making statements about halting deliveries or operations.

Lego, Ford, Volkswagen Group and its Czech-based Skoda brand said they would make millions of dollars in charitable donations to support ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

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Associated Press writers Matt O'Brien in Providence, Rhode Island; Danica Kirka in London; Ken Sweet in New York; Michael Liedtke in San Ramon, California; and Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen, Denmark, contributed to this report.

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Follow AP's coverage of the tensions between Russia and Ukraine at [*https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine*](https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine). Follow Kelvin Chan on Twitter at [*https://www.twitter.com/chanman*](https://www.twitter.com/chanman).

**Load-Date:** March 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Voices: Be grateful you'll never have to call on the UK Home Office for help*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y8-N6C1-JBNF-W1T2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 8, 2022 Tuesday 4:02 PM GMT

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**Section:** VOICES; Version:2

**Length:** 1084 words

**Byline:** Tom Peck

**Highlight:** People seeking asylum in Britain are absolutely meant to meet a wall of bureaucratic pain. They're meant to have hope extinguished by dysfunctional processes that take months, in the hope that they'll decide not to come here at all

**Body**

He's a busy man, at the moment, Volodymyr Zelensky. When he makes his historic address to the House of Commons on Tuesday evening, he probably won't have gotten round to watching any of his warm-up acts - and that's just as well.

It's also just as well that he almost certainly hasn't heard of Kevin Foster, the junior [*Home Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/home-office) minister sent to the despatch box to try - and fail - to explain away the rolling shambles (we'll come back to that) that is his department's attempts to sort out the visa scheme for the two million and counting ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) of which, at time of typing, just 300 have been granted the right to come to the UK.

If he has heard of Kevin Foster at all, it will almost certainly because he had to delete a tweet in which he explained, rather impatiently, that, actually, it was wrong to say there was no route to the UK for Ukrainians fleeing the bombings of their homes, because, actually, there was the "seasonal worker" scheme, in which they could come here for a few months, just as long as they wanted to work as fruit pickers and then go home again.

Yes, we'll come back to that shambles to say that actually it's not a shambles. Well, it is, but it's deliberate. It's not a shambles because they don't know what they're doing. They do. This is how it's meant to be.

People seeking asylum in Britain are absolutely meant to meet a wall of bureaucratic pain. They're meant to have hope extinguished by dysfunctional processes that take months, in the hope that they'll decide not to come here at all. It's obviously stupid, because the people that flee here, the people that board unsafe boats, do so because they're already out of luck and out of options but not quite yet entirely out of hope. It's just that an old-fashioned and extremely brutal war in [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) seems to have been necessary to make some people understand that very basic point.

The stories of Ukrainian families trudging across Europe, desperate to reach the safety and security of Britain, only to get to Calais and be told to turn back, should profoundly shame us as a country. Of course, there are aspects of the crisis that the government has handled well, chiefly in donating weapons. The stuff that we find easy, in other words. In doing the easy thing, we have certainly "led the way". But the stuff that we find hard, that really should be easy, which includes basic human compassion, we understandably trail far behind.

Maybe it's wrong to seek to weave a thread of causation through the following, but the correlation is certainly there. This is not the first time in even remotely recent memory that terrified people have been running for their lives from Russian bombs. Russia began bombing Syria in 2015, turning to maximum intensity the Mediterranean refugee crisis in the months that followed.

It was in this rarefied moment of terror that came the Katie Hopkins "cockroaches" column in The Sun newspaper. Nigel Farage's "Breaking Point" poster. As it happens, I went knocking on doors in Somerset with Jacob Rees-Mogg around about that time, when a man came up to him in the street with The Sun newspaper under his arm, pointed at the front page, featuring an Italian naval ship in the middle of the Med and the latest horrifying death toll and said, "I probably shouldn't say this but I'm glad they're dying."

Rees-Mogg told him he was wrong, and that it was "an appalling thing to say". But it is not an unfair reading of history to say that the unimaginable suffering in the Med, and the cheap politics of immigration that could be made off the back of it, got their little Brexit voter over the line. (When Angela Merkel granted asylum to a million Syrian refugees, Nigel Farage waved his British passport in anger. "In three years' time, they'll all be EU citizens and they can all come here. Nothing we can do about it.")

But for all that, this government would probably have never come to pass. When Sir Edward Leigh stood up in the House of Commons last week and said that, actually, "Lincolnshire has already done its bit with regard to immigration from Eastern europe," the ugly fact is that, for a great many people, he spoke the truth.

In the Commons, backbench MPs took it in turns to stand up and read out angry letters from desperate constituents with families scattered across the continent, in varying states of fear and panic.

To keep up to speed with all the latest opinions and comment, sign up to our free weekly Voices Dispatches newsletter by [*clicking here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.independent.co.uk%2Fnewsletters%3Fitm_channel%3Dnative%26itm_campaign%3Dfooter%26itm_audience%3Dprospecting%26itm_content%3Dnewsletters&data=04%7C01%7CVictoria.Richards%40independent.co.uk%7C062b3d811f2541e4220808d98fb59a11%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637698832400255119%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=cljURBTtBLaWfVwBrZv8UPgOVVFGM0rPoexRmk0aRHA%3D&reserved=0)

There was a certain sense of déjà vu. It is barely a few months since the same happened in Afghanistan. There is a slight twist, however. Back then, Dominic Raab had us believe that he had no choice but to stay put in his Corfu villa and run the evacuation effort from there, rather than waste precious hours travelling home again.

This time around, Priti Patel has found the time to go and stand near the Poland/Ukraine border, doing a sad face about the suffering all around her, but not quite able to do anything about the fact that, as of now, there are no appointments at the Home Office's emergency visa centre in Poland until the end of next month.

And what has she done about the horrorshow of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** arriving in Calais and being told to go back to Paris or Brussels to have their paperwork dealt with? Well, there is now another emergency visa centre, in Lille, which at noon on Tuesday Home Office officials were denying existed until Liz Truss accidentally announced it in the House of Commons while being asked a question about something else.

It's shocking, of course it is. It's a national humiliation. A few days ago, Fisher Price My First Atlas-botherer Dominic Raab was trying to explain that the UK is a long way from Ukraine so it's not surprising we haven't had many people come here. On Monday, John Redwood stood up in the House of Commons to explain that lots of Ukrainian people don't actually want "long-term settlement status, a long way from Ukraine" so it's better not to offer it, and also better to just ignore the fact that almost two full weeks ago, Ireland immediately waived all the paperwork requirements we are still struggling to demand.

It's shocking, but don't be shocked by it. It's absolutely how it's meant to be. Mainly, just be grateful. Doubly grateful. Grateful not only that it's we're not running for our lives, but also grateful that should we ever have to, we won't have to call on the UK Home Office for help.

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

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[*Inside Politics: 40-mile long Russian convoy with tanks and artillery advances on Kyiv*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WR-VDM1-JBNF-W296-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

March 1, 2022 Tuesday 9:59 AM GMT

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**Section:** INDEPENDENT PREMIUM; Version:1

**Length:** 1347 words

**Byline:** Matt Mathers

**Highlight:** Column of tanks, armoured vehicles and logistics cargo snakes its away to capital amid fears Putin could unleash overwhelming force after advance stalls, writes Matt Mathers

**Body**

As Putin's war with Ukraine enters day six, Boris Johnson travels to Nato countries sharing a border with Russia in a show of western unity as he vows to make the president "feel the consequences" of his invasion. The prime minister, whose government is coming under increasing pressure to waive visa requirements for Ukrainians fleeing the conflict, will meet his counterparts in Poland and Estonia - who experts fear could be targeted by Putin if his current invasion is successful - and will also pay a visit to UK troops. On the ground in Ukraine, the fighting is intensifying with claims of war crimes after reports Russia used cluster bombs and targeted civilians on Monday. A huge Russian convoy is advancing on the capital, Kyiv. Away from the war, the government's borders bill has suffered another series of defeats in the Lords.

Inside the bubble

Chief politics commentator John Rentoul on what to look out for:

The Commons sits from 11.30am with health and social care questions. After that Priti Patel, the home secretary, is expected to introduce emergency laws for "unexplained wealth orders". She may have more to say about UK plans to take in ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** beyond the "immediate family" of Ukrainians already here. Meanwhile Will Quince, minister for children and families, will give evidence to the Education Committee on children in care homes at 10am, while Michael Gove, the levelling-up secretary, will talk to the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee at 2pm.

Coming up:

- Shadow defence secretary John Healey on Sky News Breakfast at 8.05am

- Deputy PM Dominic Raab on ITV GMB at 8.30am

Daily Briefing

FEARS FOR KYIV: Menacing new satellite images show a 40-mile long Russian convoy consisting of armoured vehicles, tanks, artillery and logistical vehicles slowly snaking its way towards Kyiv, as fears grow that Putin is about to significantly escalate the use of force in the conflict after the first five days of his invasion did not go to plan. The chilling wail of air raid sirens are being heard near the capital again this morning following a reported Russian strike on the outskirts of the city. Ceasefire talks between the two sides took place yesterday in the worst day of bloodshed so far since the invasion began, with [*dozens killed in attacks on the city of Kharkiv, and more heavy missile attacks on Kyiv*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flink.e.independent.co.uk%2Fclick%2F26866627.35385%2FaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuaW5kZXBlbmRlbnQuY28udWsvbmV3cy93b3JsZC9ldXJvcGUvdWtyYWluZS1raGFya2l2LWtpbS1zZW5ndXB0YS1taXNzaWxlcy1iMjAyNTI2Ni5odG1s%2F60e43ebbdee86338952c5eb8B7ae13576&data=04%7C01%7Cmatt.mathers%40independent.co.uk%7C4aa4f926a5f44602d13f08d9fb5c7116%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817196734015253%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=yqBjJPkT2m1kXgfwylGg1nEJ22fQYfBCQKZdc1cGENo%3D&reserved=0) , in which a major military radar complex was destroyed. Western allies fear that the increasing use of rockets and tube artillery marks a shift in tactics, and will be stepped up in the coming days."I fear that the way in which Russia has been frustrated in achieving its aims on the ground is leading to more indiscriminate fire, and as a consequence we are going to see more civilian casualties," said one official.

WAR CRIMES: Human rights groups and Ukraine's ambassador to the United States accused Russia of attacking Ukrainians with cluster (illegal under international law) and vacuum bombs, weapons that have been condemned by a variety of international organisations.Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch both said that Russian forces appeared to have used widely banned cluster munitions, with Amnesty accusing them of attacking a preschool in northeastern Ukraine while civilians took shelter inside. Oksana Markarova, Ukraine's ambassador to the United States, told reporters after meeting with members of the US Congress that Russia had used a thermobaric weapon, known as a vacuum bomb, in its invasion of her country. "They used the vacuum bomb today," Markarova said after a meeting with lawmakers. "...The devastation that Russia is trying to inflict on Ukraine is large." A vacuum bomb, or thermobaric weapon, sucks in oxygen from the surrounding air to generate a high-temperature explosion, typically producing a blast wave of a significantly longer duration than that of a conventional explosive and is capable of vaporizing human bodies. We'll have all the [*latest developments on our liveblog.*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flink.e.independent.co.uk%2Fclick%2F26866627.35385%2FaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuaW5kZXBlbmRlbnQuY28udWsvbmV3cy93b3JsZC9ldXJvcGUvdWtyYWluZS1ydXNzaWEtbmV3cy1wdXRpbi1reWl2LWJlbGFydXMtYjIwMjUzOTcuaHRtbA%2F60e43ebbdee86338952c5eb8B9bcecb12&data=04%7C01%7Cmatt.mathers%40independent.co.uk%7C4aa4f926a5f44602d13f08d9fb5c7116%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817196734015253%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=dU5OU2IcDW3tGtn4MdDlKSKFiKRzmGJTxe5JpaZ1Jkw%3D&reserved=0)

VISA ROW: Priti Patel has said the government is "absolutely working on" the possibility of helping ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** come to the UK. Hours earlier the home secretary ruled out a visa waiver for those fleeing the conflict with Russia over security concerns. Speaking with ITV's Peston on Monday night, she reiterated statements made earlier in the day about the priority of safeguarding "our public and our people" from "Putin's Russia". She added that "further changes" would be announced in the "next few days to help the people of Ukraine, but the current situation was "very fluid and dynamic". Earlier on Monday, charities and opposition parties accused the government of taking a [*"heartless and mean-spirtied" approach to the crisis.*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flink.e.independent.co.uk%2Fclick%2F26866627.35385%2FaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuaW5kZXBlbmRlbnQuY28udWsvbmV3cy91ay9wb2xpdGljcy91a3JhaW4tcmVmdWdlZXMtaG9tZS1vZmZpY2UtcHJpdGktcGF0ZWwtdWstYjIwMjUxMDguaHRtbA%2F60e43ebbdee86338952c5eb8B1b7f778d&data=04%7C01%7Cmatt.mathers%40independent.co.uk%7C4aa4f926a5f44602d13f08d9fb5c7116%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817196734015253%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=suhlwCE5HvKYzfmXO4SmREcoRm2CHkakVkI6uDZxO5Y%3D&reserved=0) Yvette Cooper, the shadow home secretary, said: "How on earth is the home secretary so unprepared for something she's been warning about for weeks?" More than 500,000 people have already fled Ukraine since the beginning of the invasion, and the UN estimates that this figure could reach at least 4 million. Temporary visa concessions announced by the Home Office on Sunday mean that certain family members of British nationals who do not meet the usual eligibility criteria but pass security checks may be granted permission to enter the UK outside the rules for 12 months.

BORDERS BILL LATEST: Policy proposals that are central to Patel's controversial borders bill have been[*voted down in the House of Lords*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flink.e.independent.co.uk%2Fclick%2F26866627.35385%2FaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuaW5kZXBlbmRlbnQuY28udWsvbmV3cy91ay9wb2xpdGljcy9uYWl0b25hbGl0eS1ib3JkZXJzLWJpbGwtaG91c2UtbG9yZHMtaG9tZS1vZmZpY2UtdWstYjIwMjUzMTMuaHRtbA%2F60e43ebbdee86338952c5eb8B8fe4003f&data=04%7C01%7Cmatt.mathers%40independent.co.uk%7C4aa4f926a5f44602d13f08d9fb5c7116%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817196734015253%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=6SgTZV2ij%2Fbc9LQJl0%2BjtmTIsB8eBDxklvkl0PF3U7c%3D&reserved=0) , in what campaigners have described as a "victory for compassion". The Home Office has been urged to "take heed" after peers rejected plans in the Nationality and Borders Bill to penalise and criminalise refugees based on their method of arrival to the UK under clause 11, and to give ministers powers to strip British citizenship without notice under clause 9. Both measures have already drawn widespread criticism, including from prominent Tory MPs.

BREXIT RED TAPE: The government expects its newly signed New Zealand trade deal to damage the UK's farming industry, [*according to its own impact assessment.*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flink.e.independent.co.uk%2Fclick%2F26866627.35385%2FaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuaW5kZXBlbmRlbnQuY28udWsvbmV3cy91ay9wb2xpdGljcy9uZXctemVhbGFuZC10cmFkZS1kZWFsLWZhcm1lcnMtYnJleGl0LWIyMDI1MDI1LmhlbWw%2F60e43ebbdee86338952c5eb8Bdbcd50a4&data=04%7C01%7Cmatt.mathers%40independent.co.uk%7C4aa4f926a5f44602d13f08d9fb5c7116%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817196734015253%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=WsEEscZxB8O1spHF5mvu%2FjFpVouZJrzEbz0bi%2Bm%2FXW4%3D&reserved=0) Figures released on Monday show officials expect agriculture and other food related sectors to take a roughly £150 million hit from the new agreement. The official impact assessment describes the change sparked by the deal as a "reallocation of resources within the economy" and a "process of economic adjustment". Ministers were accused of "selling British farmers down the river" but the trade secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan said the deal, signed today, "will slash red tape".

On the record

"The approach we are taking is based on the strongest security advice."

Patel sets out why she is refusing to waive visa fuels for Ukrainians fleeing war.

From the Twitterati

"What is striking talking to Ukrainians choosing to go home to fight is that they say the same thing - that it isn't a choice at all. It's an existential conflict and that they simply must."

BBC Newsnight policy editor Lewis Goodall speaks to Ukrainians taking up arms.

Essential reading

Sean O'Grady, The Independent: [*Putin's nuclear threat shows just how badly things are going for him*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flink.e.independent.co.uk%2Fclick%2F26866627.35385%2FaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuaW5kZXBlbmRlbnQuY28udWsvdm9pY2VzL3B1dGluLW51Y2xlYXItd2VhcG9ucy11a3JhaW5lLXJ1c3NpYS1iMjAyNDg1MC5odG1s%2F60e43ebbdee86338952c5eb8B03829ebc&data=04%7C01%7Cmatt.mathers%40independent.co.uk%7C4aa4f926a5f44602d13f08d9fb5c7116%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817196734015253%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=CIUwjcwQsfa6EhhlTCY9TN2Op7AFQOqQuHAkNI7uJv0%3D&reserved=0) James Moore, The Independent: [*The west's economic sanctions against Russia have plenty of bite for once. Now what?*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flink.e.independent.co.uk%2Fclick%2F26866627.35385%2FaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuaW5kZXBlbmRlbnQuY28udWsvaW5kZXBlbmRlbnRwcmVtaXVtL2J1c2luZXNzL3J1c3NpYS11a3JhaW5lLXB1dGluLXVrLXNhbmN0aW9ucy1iMjAyNTAwOS5odG1s%2F60e43ebbdee86338952c5eb8B15879c6b&data=04%7C01%7Cmatt.mathers%40independent.co.uk%7C4aa4f926a5f44602d13f08d9fb5c7116%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817196734015253%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=zD%2Btr393Uze6NK%2FAOqlIqT%2BoIBEEsSoA4EvV9T5Kvks%3D&reserved=0) William Hague, The Independent: [*Ukraine's nightmare is only just beginning*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flink.e.independent.co.uk%2Fclick%2F26866627.35385%2FaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cudGhldGltZXMuY28udWsvYXJ0aWNsZS91a3JhaW5lcy1uaWdodG1hcmUtaXMtb25seS1qdXN0LWJlZ2lubmluZy12NzN4MndmNWQ%2F60e43ebbdee86338952c5eb8B82501bf4&data=04%7C01%7Cmatt.mathers%40independent.co.uk%7C4aa4f926a5f44602d13f08d9fb5c7116%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817196734015253%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=VuyfI29p%2FmRKBLUzyjKdFWaGT6U0xWdf3D2Iy67XfKk%3D&reserved=0) Tom McTague, The Atlantic: [*What Zelensky's courage says about the west*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flink.e.independent.co.uk%2Fclick%2F26866627.35385%2FaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cudGhlYXRsYW50aWMuY29tL2ludGVybmF0aW9uYWwvYXJjaGl2ZS8yMDIyLzAyL3ZvbG9keW15ci16ZWxlbnNreS1jb3VyYWdlLXVrcmFpbmUtcnVzc2lhLzYyMjk0OC8%2F60e43ebbdee86338952c5eb8B712b9ca4&data=04%7C01%7Cmatt.mathers%40independent.co.uk%7C4aa4f926a5f44602d13f08d9fb5c7116%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817196734015253%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=JQ2acVlP2cG5xIm7%2FA8iypPIIYmdvgu5lKPjET8CWpk%3D&reserved=0)

Sign up [*here*](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flink.e.independent.co.uk%2Fclick%2F26866627.35385%2FaHR0cHM6Ly9ldXIwMi5zYWZlbGlua3MucHJvdGVjdGlvbi5vdXRsb29rLmNvbS8_%2F60e43ebbdee86338952c5eb8B2193329e&data=04%7C01%7Cmatt.mathers%40independent.co.uk%7C4aa4f926a5f44602d13f08d9fb5c7116%7C0f3a4c644dc54a768d4152d85ca158a5%7C0%7C0%7C637817196734015253%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=nhifbOxq1boEZTA2tyMtVrMOuEQXquoPIxQs2fQrRCE%3D&reserved=0) to receive this free briefing in your email inbox each weekday

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Dedicated YouTube channel for Ukrainian refugee children to launch this summer*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65PM-21J1-DY4H-K3KD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 16, 2022 Thursday 6:32 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 523 words

**Byline:** Connie Evans

**Highlight:** Sunflower TV will launch in July with around 50 episodes of popular British children’s TV programmes dubbed into Ukrainian.

**Body**

A non-profit [*YouTube*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/youtube) channel created specifically for Ukrainian children displaced by the war is set to launch with more than 200 hours of content this summer.

Sunflower TV will launch on July 1 with around 50 episodes of popular [*British*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/british) children’s TV programmes dubbed into Ukrainian.

The channel, which will eventually feature up to 200 hours of Ukrainian and British content, has been designed to offer entertainment and respite for the children of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** who have been forced to flee their homes.

Organisations from across the broadcast industry have joined forces to set up a [*#YouTube*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/YouTube?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) channel for children from [*#Ukraine️*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Ukraine%EF%B8%8F?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw). Sunflower TV launches on 1 July.More details here [*https://t.co/sTfFtYQtAi*](https://t.co/sTfFtYQtAi) [*pic.twitter.com/tXvLsj3wGc*](https://t.co/tXvLsj3wGc) — Channel 4 Press (@C4Press) [*June 16, 2022*](https://twitter.com/C4Press/status/1537466139164479490?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Sunflower TV will feature British children’s programmes including Peppa Pig, Go Jetters, Ben & Holly’s Little Kingdom, Thomas & [*Friends*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/friends) , Mr Bean: The Animated Series, Jojo and Gran Gran, and Kit and Pup.

The YouTube channel will also feature shows by Ukrainian producers with titles such as Brave Bunnies and Eskimo Girl.

The channel, which will allow Ukrainian children free access to engaging and popular programming but in their native tongue, has been coordinated by Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television (Pact), the UK trade body representing the UK’s screen sector.

A range of organisations have participated in the initiative to set up the dedicated channel offering programmes for young Ukrainian children who now find themselves living in the UK and Europe as a result of the war, as well as children still in Ukraine.

Pact’s chief executive John McVay said: “It’s difficult to imagine the trauma Ukrainian children have suffered as a result of being cruelly uprooted from their homes and communities only to find themselves thousands of miles away living in a country where nothing is familiar.

“Hopefully Sunflower TV can go just a little way in providing them with some kind of light relief or distraction to take their minds off the terrible experiences they’ve been through, even if only momentarily.”

The Ukrainian Institute London is one of many Ukrainian organisations supporting the initiative and providing advice about how to support the needs of Ukrainian people arriving in the UK.

Director of the Ukrainian Institute London, Dr Olesya Khromeychuk, said: “Millions of Ukrainian families have been displaced as a result of Russia’s war against Ukraine.

“[*Children*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/children) who have lost their homes, friends, and relatives will certainly benefit from having at least some sense of familiarity by being able to access materials in their native language.”

She added: “And it is important that children don’t feel their own language is being drowned out as they start rebuilding their lives away from home.”

Organisations involved in the project include the BBC and BBC Studios, [*Channel*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/channel) 4, Channel 5’s Milkshake!, ITV and ITV Studios, Paramount and Nickelodeon, Sky, STV, YouTube and Starlight Media in Ukraine.

Further content will be added after the channel’s initial launch date.

Sunflower TV will launch on YouTube on July 1.

**Load-Date:** June 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[*‘World’s largest sing-along’ to show support for Ukraine ahead of Eurovision*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:684H-MCJ1-DY4H-K19F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

April 30, 2023 Sunday 11:01 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:1

**Length:** 610 words

**Byline:** Harry Stedman

**Highlight:** The campaign is in collaboration with United 24, Ukraine’s official fundraising platform launched by President Volodymyr Zelensky.

**Body**

A campaign to create the world’s biggest physical and digital sing-along in solidarity with [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) during the Eurovision Song Contest is “the perfect way to express support”, its creator has said.

HelpUkraineSong is aiming to bring together choirs, musicians and the general public ahead of the competition’s Grand Final by asking them to perform and upload a version of The Beatles song With A Little Help From My Friends.

The Museum of Liverpool will then hold a “flash mob” moment at midday on May 13, with famous UK attractions including the [*London Eye*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/london-eye) , [*Blackpool Tower*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/blackpool-tower) and [*Warwick Castle*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/warwick-castle) , and those around the world joining in simultaneously.

Eurovision 2023 will take place in Liverpool after the UK was chosen to host the competition on behalf of war-torn Ukraine.

Valerie Bounds, 47, who co-founded and runs a creative agency in Liverpool, thought of the idea whilst in London last year.

She told the PA news agency: “I came up with this idea while I was watching someone play the piano in Euston station at Christmas time, and thought ‘Wouldn’t it be wonderful to do an incredible moment in public spaces?’

“I’m a big fan of Eurovision, I also volunteer with the Red Cross and [I] have worked with ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***, so it kind of all melded together.”

Partners involved in the campaign include President Zelensky’s United 24 fundraising platform, the children’s charity War Child and the Ukraine Ministry of Culture.

“It’s going really broad here, but the really fantastic thing is that we have joined up with organizations and institutions in Ukraine and they are very enthusiastic about it,” Ms Bounds said.

“Having been told directly from Ukrainians themselves, music and singing is integral to their culture so this is the perfect way to express support.”

She said Eurovision seemed like the right opportunity to “create a platform [and] a moment of solidarity with Ukraine”, adding: “Obviously Eurovision is that anyway, but this was about taking it outside of Liverpool, taking it UK-wide and international and giving people an opportunity to join in.”

For Eurovision on Saturday 13 May the [*#HelpUkraineSong*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/HelpUkraineSong?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) will see people and organisations coming together to perform ‘With A Little Help From My Friends’ to create the world’s biggest ever physical and digital flash mob We were busy preparing something last night ️ [*pic.twitter.com/CyG7GkgBJB*](https://t.co/CyG7GkgBJB) — Hull City Council (@Hullccnews) [*April 27, 2023*](https://twitter.com/Hullccnews/status/1651604172821676032?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Ms Bounds said starting HelpUkraineSong felt like a good way of achieving more personal ambitions away from her business.

“My co-founder and I are very much attune to the same thing. We’re not getting any younger, we wanted to do some really purposeful stuff as well as our business.

“I think we just felt this was a really key moment for Ukraine.”

Coverage of the campaign has picked up in recent days, with Ukraine’s Eurovision 2023 act TVORCHI and British actress [*Hannah Waddingham*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/hannah-waddingham) among those sharing news of the event.

Members of the public have also began to show their interest by using the hashtag #HelpUkraineSong on social media.

“We’re getting all kinds of people now taking part,” Ms Bounds said.

“Most of the choirs that we’ve talked to all across the country are community, inclusive choirs that include Ukrainians, so it’s about seeing that integration and connection.

“I feel like it will continue beyond May 13 because we’re getting such momentum.”

Ms Bounds stressed that those interested can contribute to the campaign in whatever way they like.

“We don’t care how they do the song, that’s really important. This is about including everyone.

“We would love to see people signing it, [or] just breaking into song acapella!”

**Load-Date:** April 30, 2023

**End of Document**



[*Foreign Office must learn from 'chaos' of Kabul in assisting Ukraine - Labour*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64S8-H991-JBNF-W532-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

February 12, 2022 Saturday 11:30 PM GMT

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**Section:** NEWS,UK; Version:8

**Length:** 490 words

**Byline:** Sam Blewett

**Highlight:** David Lammy said the first duty of any government 'is to keep its people safe'.

**Body**

Ministers must learn lessons from the "chaos" of the Afghanistan evacuation to help people fleeing [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) in the event of a Russian invasion, Labour has said.

Britons have been told by the [*Foreign Office*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/foreign-office) to leave Ukraine immediately as fears grow that Russian President Vladimir Putin will order an attack in the coming days.

Foreign Secretary [*Liz Truss*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/liz-truss) has faced calls to ensure UK nationals can leave safely, but also to prepare for a vast number of ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** in the event of an invasion.

With memories still fresh of the challenges faced as MPs tried to help constituents leave [*Kabul*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/kabul) as the Taliban took over, her Labour shadow [*David Lammy*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/david-lammy) called for a series of assurances.

He asked whether phone lines will be staffed 24/7 so parliamentarians can help constituency cases, if extra resources are in place to process visas, and if embassy staff are being bolstered in neighbouring nations.

Mr Lammy also asked what conversations were being conducted with the UN refugee agency, the International Committee of the Red Cross and non-governmental organisations in the event of "large-scale movements of displaced people".

The first duty of any government is to keep its people safe. The Government must act now to ensure it is prepared to provide safety for British citizens in case of any incursion

David Lammy

"The opposition stands united with the Government in the face of Russian aggression and in support of Ukraine's sovereignty," he wrote.

"However, following the chaos of the evacuation from Afghanistan, we ask the Government for reassurance that the right lessons have been learned.

"The first duty of any government is to keep its people safe. The Government must act now to ensure it is prepared to provide safety for British citizens in case of any incursion."

Ministers have ruled out RAF airlifts out of Kyiv, as seen in Afghanistan, in part because of the nature of the aerial warfare that would be likely in Ukraine.

A Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) spokeswoman said: "The emerging situation in and around Ukraine is a top priority for the FCDO and we have robust contingency plans in place to respond to developments.

"Our support for Ukraine is unwavering. The safety and security of British nationals is our top priority, which is why we have updated our travel advice. We urge British nationals in Ukraine to leave now via commercial means while they remain available."

British nationals requiring assistance are urged to call +380444903660 from Ukraine or +441908516666 from the UK.

Read More

[*First person in UK dies from new Lassa fever outbreak*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/lassa-fever-death-uk-cases-b2013232.html)

[*Prince Andrew's massage therapist claims royal 'was constant sex pest'*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/prince-andrew-royal-massage-physiotherapist-b2012935.html)

[*Ukraine news: US to evacuate embassy and Britons told to leave*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-news-live-uk-troops-to-withdraw-b2012758.html)

[*Lord Frost leads Tory revolt against Government's fracking ban*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/zac-goldsmith-cuadrilla-government-mps-boris-johnson-b2014020.html)

[*Woman arrested at Sarah Everard vigil 'almost cried' at Cressida Dick departure*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/sarah-everard-cressida-dick-metropolitan-police-met-london-b2014006.html)

[*Mayor will oppose Met chief who does not understand force's 'cultural issues'*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/sadiq-khan-priti-patel-cressida-dick-mayor-met-b2013996.html)

**Load-Date:** February 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[*UK village names Putin ‘Bellend of the Year’ and unveils penis-headed statue*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:673F-D7N1-DY4H-K1BB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

December 15, 2022 Thursday 10:42 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:2

**Length:** 541 words

**Byline:** Emily Atkinson

**Highlight:** Villagers and passers-by were offered eggs to throw at the penis-headed Putin

**Body**

[*Vladimir Putin*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/vladimir-putin) has been hailed “Bellend of the Year” by a group of English [*villagers*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/villagers) – who marked his endowing by erecting a golden, penis-headed statue of the Russian president.

The effigy, put up in protest against Moscow’s nine-month invasion of Ukraine, appeared on Thursday morning alongside a street sign in the centre of the [*Worcestershire*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/worcestershire) village.

Eggs were provided to villagers and passers-by which could be thrown at the likeness of the Russian president.

The organiser of the protest, who wished to remain anonymous, told the PA news agency: “I needed to award somebody with the Bellend of the Year award and I thought there was one person who has universally been a bellend this year – and that’s Vladimir Putin.

“You could just throw eggs at the statue, which people did so willingly and quite happily.

“It’s been very well received. One person said, ‘I thought it was my boss for a second’.”

The co-ordinator said they plan to create and sell miniatures of the statue to raise money for a charity supporting ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees***.

“I’ve seen over the course of the year the devastation that has happened in Ukraine and that so many lives that have been displaced as a result of the war,” they said.

[*@TheLastLeg*](https://twitter.com/TheLastLeg?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) [*#isitok*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/isitok?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) is it OK that residents of Bell End in Rowley Regis have taken inspiration from dick of the year to name Putin Bellend of the year & even put this statue of him on Bell End. [*pic.twitter.com/Rvq3KInLzG*](https://t.co/Rvq3KInLzG) — Rob Knowles (@RobKnowles36) [*December 15, 2022*](https://twitter.com/RobKnowles36/status/1603484597722963968?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

“So I thought, ‘I really want to help out and I want to do my bit and I want to try and raise some money to help those individuals’.”

The organiser said they want to stay anonymous to keep the “mystique” around the statue, with a further explanation about how it came to be in the village just outside [*Birmingham*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/birmingham) to be revealed in the coming days.

Describing how the artwork was made, they said: “I don’t know what the material is but I gave to a couple of artists and they cut it out over two or three weeks.

“Then we painted it and made a plinth, which obviously had the sign Bellend of the Year just to make sure there was absolutely no way to deny what he actually was.

“The message is pretty simple – it’s exactly what it says on the tin.”

Just last month [*a nude effigy of Mr Putin perched on top of an ornate golden toilet was put up for auction*](https://www.independent.co.uk/independentpremium/world/vladimir-putin-sculpture-auction-ukraine-b2231679.html) by a group of Czech activists who plan to use the proceeds from the sale to buy and send a combat drone to Ukraine’s forces.

Parodying a monarch holding an orb and sceptre, the Russian leader was seen to be gripping a glided toilet brush and minature washing machine pouring with what appeared to be fake blood. The starting price was set at €10,000 (£8,600). The auction will close on 20 December.

Earlier on Thursday, Moscow said that it was not planning any ceasefires in Ukraine over the festive period.

When asked about the possibility of a New Year’s Ceasefire, Ukrainian Brigadier General Oleksiy Gromov told a news briefing: “There will be a total ceasefire only when not a single occupier remains on our land.”

The Kremlin’s top spokesperson Dmitry Peskov also said on Wednesday that there will be no “Christmas ceasefire” in Ukraine.

Additional reporting by Press Association.

**Load-Date:** December 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Ukraine war: Delays to £350 ‘thank you’ for UK refugee hosts, charity says*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65R1-13C1-DY4H-K3NC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 18, 2022 Saturday 1:16 PM GMT

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**Section:** HOME NEWS,UK; Version:1

**Length:** 528 words

**Byline:** Zoe Tidman

**Highlight:** ‘In some cases, Ukrainian guests have had to leave accommodation,’ Mums4Ukraine chair founder says

**Body**

Britons who have opened their homes to ***Ukrainian*** [***refugees***](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees) are facing a postcode lottery over how quickly they get their monthly £350 “thank you” payment from the UK government, according to charity.

Some delays have reportedly caused financial problems that ended with guests having to leave.

The [*Homes for Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/ukraine-family-scheme-refugees-home-office-b2057957.html) scheme allows those [*fleeing the war with Russia*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-war-putin-latest-news-weapons-b2104007.html) to come to the UK to stay in the homes of Britons sponsoring them.

The government is giving these hosts -who are committing to at least six months -[*£350 a month as a “thank you”*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/ukraine-refugees-uk-money-government-b2034654.html).

But a charity has claimed there are issues with the roll out of this money.

“In some places, payments are happening quickly and more efficiently, and others they’re being more delayed,” Rend Platings from Mums4Ukraine told Sky News.

“It is a postcode lottery. What we need to see happen is a more human side to the way in which we’re dealing with all of this.”

Ms Platings said there were some instances where delays were even causing problems between the host families and their guests.

“We have seen some more serious cases, where hosts have just not been able to make ends meet, have asked Ukrainian guests for money and the relationship has broken down -just due to the pressure of the situation,” she told Sky News.

“Unfortunately, in some of those cases, Ukrainian guests have had to leave that accommodation.”

Earlier this week, government figures showed around 51,800 Ukrainians have arrived in the UK after being “matched” with people offering rooms under the Homes for [*Ukraine*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ukraine) scheme.

A further 25,400 have come to Britain from Ukraine under the family scheme, which allows refugees to join relatives in the country.

But more than 660 families have been [*forced to register as homeless in the UK*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ukraine-children-refugees-homeless-councils-uk-b2102638.html) after arriving under the schemes, according to the data.

A Local Government Association spokesperson said: “The priority for councils has been putting in place quickly and at scale both the necessary checks to ensure that hosts and their guests are safe and supported.

“Councils are aware that another key task is to pay hosts the ‘thank you’ payment.

“Now the funding and guidance from government is in place, those hosting new arrivals will be receiving these payments as soon as possible if they haven’t already, including backdated payments.”

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has also been approached for comment.

The Independent has a proud history of campaigning for the rights of the most vulnerable, and we first ran our Refugees Welcome campaign during the war in Syria in 2015.

Now, as we renew our campaign and launch this petition in the wake of the unfolding Ukrainian crisis, we are calling on the government to go further and faster to ensure help is delivered.

To find out more about our Refugees Welcome campaign, [*click here*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/refugees-welcome-0) . To sign the petition [*click here*](https://www.change.org/p/10downingstreet-urgent-support-for-ukrainian-refugees) . If you would like to donate then please [*click here*](https://www.gofundme.com/refugeeswelcome) for our GoFundMe page.

**Load-Date:** June 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[*Princess Royal feeds penguins on visit to zoo*](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65KT-Y3D1-DY4H-K1FY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The Independent (United Kingdom)

June 3, 2022 Friday 4:06 PM GMT

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**Section:** UK; Version:2

**Length:** 514 words

**Byline:** Lucinda Cameron

**Highlight:** Anne and her husband were visiting the Scottish capital on Friday.

**Body**

The Princess Royal has fed penguins and met young ***Ukrainian*** ***refugees*** on a visit to [*Edinburgh Zoo*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/edinburgh-zoo).

She and her husband Vice Admiral Sir Tim Laurence are in the [*Scottish*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/scottish) capital as members of the royal family visit the nations of the UK over the long weekend to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

The couple visited the Penguins' Rock enclosure - which is home to gentoo, rockhopper and king penguins - including Sir Nils Olav, a Brigadier in the [*Norwegian*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/norwegian) King's Guard.

They met staff including animal keeper Lisa Girot and fed the penguins with blue whiting from a bucket.

Earlier, the princess met children from Ukrainian orphanages who were taking part in an animal handling session with a snake and an armadillo in the Rainforest Room at the zoo.

The children were rescued from the war-torn country and brought to Scotland with the help of the charity Dnipro Kids, formed by supporters of Edinburgh's Hibernian FC.

Their visit on Friday was organised by the zoo's community team.

[*Anne*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/anne) was shown around by Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS) chief executive David Fields.

Alison Amivisca, community and discovery programme manager at RZSS, said: "We were delighted to welcome HRH The Princess Royal to Edinburgh Zoo today as part of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

"As our wildlife conservation charity's royal patron, it was exciting to show The Princess Royal the work we are doing to help more communities connect with nature and inspire change.

"It was also fantastic to see her feeding some of our cheekiest residents, our gentoos at Penguins' Rock."

While in Edinburgh, the princess will also visit HMS Albion and inspect a Guard of Honour before boarding the ship.

On the flight deck of the amphibious assault vessel, the princess will meet members of the ship's company and representatives from charities across Scotland supported by the Queen and Anne as patrons, before cutting a commemorative cake.

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and the Earl and Countess of Wessex will visit Wales and Northern Ireland respectively.

William and Kate will travel to Cardiff on Saturday to meet some of Wales's best-known performers before a Platinum Jubilee celebration concert.

They will meet the crew behind the event at Cardiff Castle, learning about the lighting, sound and visual effects for the show before helping with the final preparations.

The couple will also watch rehearsals and meet Aled Jones and Shan Cothi, both hosting the show which will feature Mike Peters from The Alarm, singer [*Bonnie Tyler*](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/bonnie-tyler) , West End star John Owen Jones, drumming weatherman Owain Wyn Evans and the Pendyrus Male Voice Choir.

The performances will finish at 7pm and the crowds can then watch the Platinum Party at the Palace on giant screens in the castle grounds.

Over the extended Jubilee bank holiday weekend the Earl and Countess of Wessex will carry out two engagements in Northern Ireland.

Sophie and Edward will meet children taking part in multicultural street performances, join in with art and craft sessions, and speak to people sharing their personal memories of meeting the Queen.

**Load-Date:** June 3, 2022

**End of Document**