

Benefits for resettled Ukrainians



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Child Poverty Action Group works on behalf of the one in four children in the UK growing up in poverty. It doesn't have to be like this. We use our understanding of what causes poverty and the impact it has on children's lives to campaign for policies that will prevent and solve poverty – for good.

We provide training, advice and information to make sure hard-up families get the financial support they need.

Introduction

This factsheet provides basic information about the rights to benefits for resettled Ukrainians escaping the war. It also provides basic information about the potential impact on the benefits and other entitlements of 'hosts' of resettled Ukrainians. See the end of this factsheet for where to get further and more detailed information and advice.

The visas granted by the UK government to Ukrainians escaping the war are not part of the normal asylum process where someone is either recognised as a refugee under the UN Convention, given Humanitarian Protection or granted discretionary leave. This factsheet provides basic information about the benefit rights of those admitted on these type of visas rather than those who applied for asylum. For the benefit rights for those entering the UK under the asylum route, see CPAG's [Benefits for new refugees](#) factsheet.

The visas granted to resettled Ukrainian nationals provide time limited leave to remain in the UK with no restrictions on accessing public funds, working, etc. As such, there should be no restrictions on claiming any benefits, although all the normal conditions of entitlement must be met including residence and presence rules. There is more information about this below.

The UK government launched a scheme to 'host' resettled Ukrainians. Hosts receive monthly 'thank you' payments. For how these payments and the presence of Ukrainians may impact the host's entitlements, see below. Note that family members 'sponsoring' Ukrainians to join them are not covered by the hosting scheme.

Claiming universal credit, pension credit and housing benefit

As there are no restrictions on access to public funds for resettled Ukrainians, you can claim universal credit (UC - if you are working age), pension credit (PC – if you and your partner are over state pension age) or housing benefit (HB - to help pay the rent in some if over

state pension age or if living in certain types of accommodation) straight away if you meet all the normal qualifying conditions. All claimants are subject to the habitual residence test (HRT), which if failed excludes you from entitlement to UC, PC or HB. However, Ukrainians resettled under the schemes covered by this factsheet are now exempt from the HRT. Note that if you are a full-time student you usually cannot get UC – see CPAG’s factsheet [UC and students](#).

To get UC, PC or HB, you need to have a low income and not too much ‘capital’. Only certain types of income, including earnings and some other benefits, are taken into account, and if they are may reduce the amount of benefit you get or mean you are not entitled at all. As long as the value of any capital you own (which includes savings, property and investments) is less than £16,000, it should not prevent entitlement to UC, but if it is valued between £6000 and £16,000 it will reduce the amount of UC you get. PC has no upper capital limits but if your capital is valued over £10,000 it will reduce your PC entitlement. How the value of capital may affect HB entitlement depends on whether you also get UC or PC and your age. Note that how any capital is valued should reflect its current market value for a quick sale and whether it is accessible to the claimant – as such, while resettled Ukrainians may have capital in Ukraine, it may not be accessible or have a low, or no, current market value.

Amounts for children and some young people under 20 still in further education (but not higher education), who are part of the family should be included in awards of UC or PC from the start. There is no requirement to get child benefit (see below) first. However, larger families getting UC may be subject to the ‘two-child limit’ and should get advice if they are.

The ‘benefit cap’ applies to UC and is most likely to affect larger families and/or those whose rent is high. There are exemptions if someone in the family gets disability or carers benefits (see below), or is working and earning a sufficient amount, but no exemptions based on immigration status. If the benefit cap is applied, in Scotland you should usually be entitled to a ‘discretionary housing payment’ from your local council to compensate you for any loss. If you need help with this, get advice.

If you have claimed UC or PC and need money to live on while waiting for your first payment, you may be able to get an ‘advance’. If you do get an advance, you will have to pay it back out of future benefits. Alternatively, you may be able to apply for a grant from the discretionary fund run by the local council, for example in Scotland the Scottish welfare fund, which does not need to be paid back.

Child benefit

As there are no public funds restrictions on resettled Ukrainians, there is no exclusion from child benefit on that basis. Usually, child benefit is paid for any child under 16 or young people under 20 still in further education (but not higher education) whom you are responsible for. However, there is a rule that excludes you from entitlement until you have been living in the UK for three months, but resettled Ukrainians covered by this factsheet are now exempt from this rule.

Disability and carer's benefits

As there are no public funds restrictions on resettled Ukrainians, there is no exclusion from disability or carer's benefits on that basis. Adult disability payment (ADP), attendance allowance (AA), child disability payment (CDP), disability living allowance (DLA) or personal independent payment (PIP), can be paid to those needing personal care or who have mobility problems. If you are caring for someone getting ADP, AA, CDP, DLA, or PIP you may be able to claim carer's allowance. All these benefits are subject to both a habitual residence requirement and a 'past presence test' (PPT). However, resettled Ukrainians covered by this factsheet are now exempt from the habitual residence requirement and PPT.

Other benefits

As there are no public funds restrictions on resettled Ukrainians, there is no exclusion from other benefits on that basis. Ukrainians, however, will not be initially entitled to many of the other benefits that are available. That is because entitlement may be based on periods of paying national insurance or employment.

However, some benefits rely on 'passporting' of the claimant to entitlement from other benefits such as UC. For example, those getting UC in Scotland who are responsible for a child under 16 years old are passported to Scottish child payment if they also claim it. Therefore, if you are awarded any of the benefits described above it is worth getting advice to check whether you are passported to other benefits or help.

The residence and presence rules for most other benefits have been amended to exempt resettled Ukrainians. In Scotland, this includes the rules for best start grants, council tax reduction and young carers grant. Resettled Ukrainians have also been added for council tax discount purposes in Scotland. For more information about Scottish benefits see the [Scottish Benefits](#) section of the CPAG website.

The benefits and entitlements of hosts

The monthly 'thank you' payments received by 'hosts' who take resettled Ukrainians into their homes do not count as income for universal credit, pension credit or tax credits. The payments also do not count as income for council tax reduction (other than working age council tax reduction in Wales which does not specifically disregard them).

If the host is getting other means-tested benefits, eg income-related employment and support allowance (ESA) or housing benefit, there is no specific disregard of the 'thank you' payments as the rules have not been amended. However, [the Government's policy](#) is that the payment should not affect the host's benefits, and CPAG has been told that the payments are 'local welfare provision' (eg the Scottish Welfare Fund) and so are disregarded. If the payments are taken into account, get advice – see below.

Having another person living with you can affect your benefits and other entitlement in various ways. For example, if you are normally a single occupier you may lose your 25 per cent council tax discount, or have a 'non-dependant deduction' made from your benefit, or

you may no longer qualify for a 'severe disability premium'. The rules have been amended so resettled Ukrainians are 'discounted' for council tax purposes and therefore will not usually effect entitlement to a council tax discount, and do not count as non-dependants for council tax reduction in Wales and Scotland. While no changes have been made to the specific rules for other benefits, the Government's policy is that the presence of resettled Ukrainians should have no impact on you as the host's entitlements as they are not normally living with you. However, that also means that the presence of resettled Ukrainians in your home as a host does not affect application of the bedroom tax. See the link above and also Government information about the host scheme: [Homes for Ukraine: sponsor guides](#). If a host loses out, get advice – see below.

Note that if you 'sponsor' a visa for Ukrainian family members and they come and stay with you, this is not part of the hosting scheme and as such their presence may affect your benefits.

Where to get advice and help

Independent benefits advice is available from agencies such as a local Citizen Advice bureau or law centre. Housing association tenants often have access to their own support staff and specialist welfare rights officers who can help. You can also search the [Advice Local](#) website for other agencies who can offer advice in your area.

Support with both benefits and other issues is provided by organisations that specialise in working with refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. They should be able to provide advice to resettled Ukrainians and their hosts. These include Scottish Refugee Council, the Refugee Council and the British Red Cross but also many other smaller agencies.

If you are an adviser and need help with any benefits issues affecting those you support, you can contact CPAG. **Advisers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland** can call 020 7812 5231 Monday to Friday between 10am and 12 midday and 2pm and 4pm, or (if about UC, child benefit or tax credits) email advice@cpag.org.uk. **Scottish based advisers** can call 0141 552 0552 Monday to Thursday 10am to 4pm and Fridays 10am to 12 midday, or email advice@cpagscotland.org.uk. **If your questions are about your own benefit entitlement, we cannot help you but see above for the other agencies who may be able to.**

More detailed information about benefits and how immigration and residence conditions affect entitlement, see CPAG's [Welfare Benefits and Tax Credits Handbook](#) and [Benefits for Migrants Handbook](#). For other CPAG resources about benefits for migrants, see the [Benefits for Migrants](#) topic page on AskCPAG.

Warning! The information in this factsheet is correct at the date produced. However, benefit law changes often and so will need updating after some time.

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