

Literature Roundup — Sponsorship, Resettlement, and Pathways to Protection

Theme: Using Sponsorship as an Emergency Response Tool

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Description: Literature roundups are a compilation of recent publications on specific themes related to sponsorship, resettlement, and pathways to protection. Below is a collation of abstracts or excerpts prepared by the Refugee Hub to provide a summary overview of the latest research.

Salazar, Daniel (2023, February). [*Private refugee sponsorship: Lessons and questions from Canada, Uniting for Ukraine, and Afghan resettlement as Welcome Corps pilot program launches*](#). US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, available online.

The United States (U.S.) has launched a pilot program for private sponsorship of refugees, a significant development in how the country welcomes displaced people through its refugee admissions. Private refugee sponsorship models already exist in other countries—and in recent months the U.S. has increasingly asked individuals and communities to help sponsor people displaced from nations in turmoil such as Afghanistan, Ukraine, Venezuela, and Haiti.

This report will analyze private refugee sponsorship in the U.S. context and make recommendations for its implementation within the United States. The new Welcome Corps program and any subsequent iteration of private sponsorship must draw substantive lessons from recent experiences in community sponsorship of Afghan and Ukrainian parolees, as well as the experiences of other national sponsorship programs in neighboring Canada and elsewhere. Private refugee sponsorship in the U.S. could serve as an effective complement to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program to help people displaced from their countries of origin and in need of protection under international humanitarian law. But it must have adequate guardrails to protect against exploitation and abuse, as well as appropriate support for sponsorship arrangements to succeed and effective support for refugees when sponsorship arrangements fall apart.

Grzymala-Kazłowska, Aleksandra, Stefańska, Renata and Ziółkowska, Patrycja. (2022, May). [*Learning from refugee sponsorship: How to host refugees fleeing from Ukraine to Poland?*](#) CMR Spotlight Newsletter, available online.

As over 5 million refugees have fled Ukraine, the authors reflect on the potential of refugee sponsorship (RS), which is an effective way to admit and integrate newcomers, based on public-private partnership. RS, which originated in Canada, has recently been implemented in some European countries, including – on a small scale – Poland. Now, however, it seems that hundreds of thousands of people and organisations in the country are spontaneously undertaking RS-like activities.

Machin, Richard (2023, March 16). [*The UK – a home for Ukrainians? An analysis of social security and housing policy*](#). *Journal of Poverty and Social Justice*, 31(2), 298-305.

This commentary discusses the ways in which the welfare system has responded to the financial and housing needs of Ukrainian citizens coming to the UK since the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022. The focus is on two key areas of policy: social security and housing. The article

considers the revised eligibility criteria for welfare benefits and two policies which can provide accommodation: the Ukraine Family Scheme, which allows applicants to join family members in the UK, and the Ukrainian Sponsorship Scheme (known as ‘Homes for Ukraine’) which allows Ukrainian nationals to come to the UK if they have a sponsor who can provide accommodation for at least six months. It provides a comparison of the provision for Ukrainian refugees and the standard asylum system in the UK.

This article concludes that although the UK government quickly introduced emergency provisions for newly arrived Ukrainians which go beyond the scope of support for many other groups moving to the UK, significant areas of concern are evident, with risks that these will increase in future months and years. These concerns centre on discrepancies between the two policies which provide accommodation, risk of exploitation, homelessness caused by the breakdown in provision, and complexity in the welfare benefit system.

Tryl, Luke and Surmon, Tyron (2023, March). [Welcoming Ukrainians: The hosts' perspective. More in Common.](#)

A new report by More in Common finds that one year on from its launch, the Homes for Ukraine scheme has been a broad success that should be celebrated and learned from. Drawing on public opinion research and a survey of over 1200 Homes for Ukraine hosts, More in Common finds: support for the UK taking in refugees from Ukraine is strong and consistently so. Polling from March 2023 found that 71 per cent of Britons believed that the fact that the UK had taken in more than 150,000 refugees is a good thing and only 16 per cent thought it was a bad thing. Polling from November 2022 found that most of the public think that the UK should continue taking in refugees and that these refugees should be able to stay for as long as they need to.

Local Government Association (2023). [Homes for Ukraine: Lessons learned.](#) Available online.

The newly launched Homes for Ukraine scheme will allow Ukrainians (and their immediate family members) with no family ties to the UK to be sponsored by individuals or organisations who can offer them a home, such as a spare room or unoccupied residential self-contained unit. [Sponsor guidance](#) and [council guidance](#), along with [updated FAQs](#), can be found on the Government website. Councils will be required to carry out housing and safeguarding checks to ensure accommodation is of a suitable standard and that guests arriving in the UK are safe.

To support councils in this role, the Local Government Association (LGA) will be sharing examples of good practice and approaches taken by councils which could be of interest to others across the country. We are continuing to build on a range of resources to help councils as they navigate their response to the Ukraine crisis, while showcasing some of the important work being carried out by the sector.

Garbers, Kate and Lumley-Sapanski, Audrey (2023, August 16). [Homes for Ukraine was a shining example of public generosity - but it might not work for other populations.](#) The Conversation, available online.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has forced [at least 12 million](#) Ukrainians to flee their homes. Many of these refugees have moved elsewhere in Europe, including to the UK, where the government offered specialised visa routes and programmes. One was the ‘Homes for Ukraine’ scheme, which

matched Ukrainian refugees with British host families. [Over 100,000 Britons](#) registered their interest in hosting within a day of the scheme launching. The [latest figures](#) show that over 165,000 visas have been granted and 127,000 Ukrainians have now arrived via the scheme.

In a [new report](#), the authors explore the motivations behind this reaction, and whether host enthusiasm is enough to declare the programme a success. Their findings suggest that parts of the scheme could be replicated for other vulnerable groups. But its potential as a long-term solution to displacement needs serious rethinking for future scenarios.

[University of Nottingham Rights Lab \(2023, March\). *Homes for Ukraine: Learnings to inform and shape future hosting schemes*. University of Nottingham, available online.](#)

The Russian invasion of Ukraine and the subsequent on-going conflict has created one of the largest human displacement crises in modern history, with nearly one-third of Ukrainians forced from their homes. In March 2022, the UK government announced its intention to assist those fleeing Ukraine and established three new visa routes, including the Ukraine sponsorship scheme, also known as the ‘Homes for Ukraine’ (HfU) scheme. Nearly 300,000 Ukrainians have applied for visas to come to the UK across the three schemes, with nearly 150,000 of these granted via the HfU scheme.

This research project aimed to understand hosts experiences of hosting and to gain an understanding of people’s motivations for volunteering to offer their homes as part of the HfU scheme. The questions we wanted to understand are: why do people host, what can make hosting better, and how can learning from this scheme be used to improve future hosting schemes?

The insights and experiences shared by hosts have enabled the development of key conclusions and considerations for a range of stakeholders in relation to the better running of existing and future hosting schemes.

[Hodgson, Ed and Surmon, Tyron. \(2023, May\). *Welcoming Ukrainians: Stories from Liverpool*. Available from More in Common.](#)

Welcoming Ukrainians: Stories from Liverpool traces the journeys of Luda, Alina, and Yuliia, three Ukrainians whose lives were all disrupted under the same circumstances, but have made very different lives for themselves in the UK. The stories reflect the enormous challenges that Ukrainian refugees have had to overcome in the last year, but also the gratitude that they have for the British people who have shown kindness and generosity to them as they settle into their new lives.

[Broadhead, Jacqui \(2022, December\). *Building an infrastructure for community led welcome in the UK: Learning from the mobilisation of the Homes for Ukraine scheme*. University of Oxford, 1-17.](#)

This briefing provides an overview of the challenges and opportunities for the development of infrastructure for community led welcome of newcomers in the UK. It uses the rapid mobilisation of Homes for Ukraine (HfU) and other schemes as a starting point to understand how the UK can build long-term infrastructure to support community led welcome across schemes and arrival routes. It should be noted that the approach outlined is very much intended to function across migration governance schemes and that the Home Office’s approach to ‘bespoke’ nationality-based routes sits in stark contrast to feedback from local authorities of the potential benefits, in particular for integration, from developing permanent resettlement and inclusion infrastructure which can function across schemes.

Child, Shannan et al. (2022, December 16). [*Experiences of Homes for Ukraine scheme sponsors - follow-up, UK: 21 to 28 November 2022*](#). Office for National Statistics.

Experiences of Homes for Ukraine scheme sponsors providing accommodation to those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine, from the Homes for Ukraine Sponsor Survey Follow-up. Includes information on hosting arrangements, sponsor characteristics, support provided, sponsor intentions and challenges, including how these experiences might have changed since July 2022. (Experimental Statistics.)

Parry, Bronwyn and Ansems de Vries, Leonie. (2022, June 4). [*Homes for Ukraine – laying the foundations for university refugee sponsorship*](#). Available on Wonkhe.

The invasion of Ukraine has mobilised the Higher Education (HE) sector to action, with many universities setting up donation schemes, offering scholarships and providing expert knowledge. While the circumstances are distressing, these responses have been a welcome reminder of our compassion and strength as a sector. The magnitude of the crisis has, however, also increased the demand for a scaled cross-sectoral HE response. King's College London has been working on a university led sponsorship scheme for refugees from Ukraine. Authors Parry and Ansems de Vries hope it could provide a model for the wider HE sector.

OECD (2022, July 27). [*Housing support for Ukrainian refugees in receiving countries*](#). Ukraine hub. Available online.

In many host countries, this new demand for housing is occurring in the context of pre-existing capacity constraints and affordability challenges. Policy makers acknowledge sustainable solutions need to be found to ensure safe and appropriate housing support for residents of Ukraine who had to flee their country, but they also seek to adapt these solutions to the uncertain duration of the displacement and the prospects for return or onward movement. Continuous monitoring of the situation and of existing housing capacity is therefore needed in all OECD and EU countries.

This brief presents an overview of specific policy decisions taken regarding the short-term housing of refugees from Ukraine and challenges identified to date. It seeks to identify relevant considerations for those countries that are beginning to adapt their thinking regarding Ukrainians' prospects for longer-term stays.

La Corte, Matthew. (2021, November 16). [*Sponsor Circles: How a Program Designed as an Emergency Response Can Transform the U.S. Resettlement System*](#). Niskanen Centre, available online.

Sponsor Circles, a new initiative led by a private-sector coalition in partnership with the U.S. government that seeks to connect community sponsor groups with Afghan refugees, launched last month to great fanfare. Cabinet secretaries, members of Congress, resettlement agencies like the International Rescue Committee, companies like Airbnb, and advocacy groups applauded the program, which was launched in a matter of weeks to support Afghan refugees arriving in the U.S. The Sponsor Circles program effectively capitalizes on the historic outpouring of support from the American people for the Afghan refugees who fled the Taliban in the last few months.