

# Ukrainians in the UK on the seasonal worker visa

**FOCUS ON  
LABOUR  
EXPLOITATION**

Kate Roberts, Head of Policy | 4 May 2022

[www.focusonlabour.org](http://www.focusonlabour.org) @FocusOnLabour

# Seasonal Worker visa

- The Seasonal Worker visa is a short term work visa which allows visa holders to enter the UK for 6 months in any 12-month period to work in agriculture or horticulture.
- 19,920 SW visas issued in 2021 (67% of the total) were to Ukrainian nationals.

# Initial response- short extension within the scheme

- Ukrainian workers on the SWV had their visas extended until 31 December 2022- no other changes to the visa terms.

## Concerns raised early March 2022:

- Dependency on employers
- No option to change sectors or work outside the scheme, no guarantee that there will be work within the scheme due to the work's seasonal nature.
- No recourse to public funds, brings with it the risk of destitution and debt.
- Workers on the scheme cannot bring family members from Ukraine to safety in the UK.

# Ukraine Extension Scheme

- Announced 29 March. Opened 3 May
- A Ukrainian national and their partner and children who had permission to stay in the UK on 18 March 2022 (or which has expired since 1 January 2022) can stay in the UK under the Ukraine Extension Scheme.
- Free to apply
- Successful applicants will be granted permission to stay in the UK with full access to work, study and public funds. 3 years

# Minding the gaps

- Delay before scheme opened 3 May & eligibility dates. Must have permission to stay in UK on 18 March 2022 (or expired since 1 January 2022)
- Information and specialist legal advice (Ukraine Advice Project) plus practical assistance – finding work accommodation
- No direct route to bring family members
- Need for integration support and certainty beyond 3 years

**FOCUS ON  
LABOUR  
EXPLOITATION**

## Contact

Kate Roberts, Head of Policy

[kate.roberts@labourexploitation.org](mailto:kate.roberts@labourexploitation.org)

Website: [www.labourexploitation.org](http://www.labourexploitation.org)

Twitter: @FocusOnLabour