



Home Office

# **UK Resettlement Scheme**

## **Note for Local Authorities**

August 2019

## Introduction

Resettlement continues to be a critical protection tool, providing a pathway to safety for refugees who can no longer remain in their host-countries. With the support of local government, the UK's existing schemes have provided safe and legal routes for tens of thousands of people to start new lives. However, the global need for resettlement continues to grow; the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimate that in 2020 more than 1.4 million refugees will need to be resettled.

The UK Government confirmed on 17 June 2019 its ongoing commitment to resettlement, announcing plans for a new UK Resettlement Scheme which will see thousands more refugees provided with a route to protection when it begins in 2020. This briefing note sets out further information for local authorities about the new scheme.

## Overview

The UK Resettlement Scheme will consolidate the existing Vulnerable Persons' Resettlement Scheme (VPRS), Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS) and Gateway Protection Programme which will all naturally come to an end in 2020. This new scheme will be open to refugees identified by UNHCR to be in need of resettlement to the UK because of their vulnerability and does not have a specific geographical focus. Those resettled through our Community Sponsorship and Mandate routes will be in addition to our yearly, global commitment.<sup>1</sup>

We are looking for the ongoing support and participation of local government across the UK and encourage local authorities to submit their offer of places for the new scheme as soon as possible. We continue to warmly welcome interest from those authorities who have yet to take part in resettlement.

We are planning a smooth transition, with arrivals under the new scheme expected to start once arrivals under the VPRS are completed; this is estimated to be in Spring 2020. We expect there to be a seamless continuation of arrivals between the current and the new scheme. This is in line with feedback from regional Strategic Migration Partnerships (SMPs) on what local authorities would find most helpful in transition.

We would also welcome conversations with local authorities who are able to offer additional places under the current schemes. This would enable authorities to maintain momentum with their arrivals and ensure consistency in provision of services as we move towards the start of the new scheme.

## Eligibility

The new UK Resettlement Scheme will continue to be based on vulnerability, with refugees assessed for resettlement by UNHCR against their [resettlement submission categories](#). We will work closely with UNHCR to identify vulnerable refugees from around the world where resettlement to the UK offers the best durable solution.

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<sup>1</sup> More information on all current resettlement schemes can be found [here](#)

## **Who we will resettle**

In the first year of the new scheme it is anticipated that the caseloads of refugees we resettle will continue to look broadly similar to those we see under our existing schemes, with the majority coming from the MENA region. We already operate in line with UNHCRs global priorities and will continue to do so, however over time the nationalities of refugees resettled may change in response to world events and the global context.

As the profiles of those we resettle change, the Home Office will continue to work closely with SMPs and local authorities to match refugees to housing availability in areas that can provide appropriate support to those we resettle.

## **How many people we will resettle**

In the first year of operation of the new scheme, the UK will aim to resettle in the region of 5000 refugees with those arriving through our Mandate and Community Sponsorship routes additional to this number. The Government remains committed to resettlement, and decisions on the number of refugees to be resettled in subsequent years will be determined through future spending rounds.

Year on year, resettlement volumes are likely to fluctuate according to the flow of referrals from overseas and the availability of suitable accommodation and support in the UK.

## **Role of local authorities**

Local authority participation in the new scheme will continue to be voluntary, with refugees allocated in the same way as currently under VPRS and VCRS. We will continue to work closely with local authorities across the UK to ensure they are able to support those who are allocated to them for resettlement under the new scheme.

Local authorities will retain the same role in the community sponsorship process and we would ask they continue to engage positively with groups that come forward to participate in community sponsorship.

## **Role of regional Strategic Migration Partnerships**

SMPs will continue to provide support to local authorities to help deliver resettlement, including coordinating offers of places and planning for the arrival of refugees, together with sharing of expertise and knowledge to enable councils to resettle successfully.

## **Funding package**

The funding package available under the new scheme will mirror that currently paid under VPRS and VCRS; a local authority will receive a five-year tariff of £20,520<sup>2</sup> for each refugee with an additional education tariff (for year one) for children aged 3-18 years. Additional funding will continue to be made available, on a case by case basis, for exceptional costs incurred by local authorities, including; property adaptations, void costs for larger (4 bed) properties, special educational needs, and adult social care.

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<sup>2</sup> £20,000 in Northern Ireland as social care element paid directly to Department of Health

The post-arrival resettlement support requirements of local authorities will mirror those issued under the VPRS and VCRS.

### **Healthcare**

All refugees referred for potential resettlement undergo a health assessment through International Organization for Migration as part of the resettlement process. The findings of these assessments will continue to be passed to local authorities considering resettlement of that individual to ensure suitable treatment/support can be provided upon arrival.

As with existing schemes, resettled refugees under the new scheme will be able to access healthcare via the NHS free of charge. The £2600 per refugee for health costs made available to healthcare providers under the VPRS and VCRS will continue to be available under the new scheme.

### **Access to benefits and work**

Refugees resettled under the new scheme will have access to mainstream benefits and services to enable their integration; work continues across Government to ensure services meet the needs of refugees. They will also have immediate and unrestricted access to the labour market.

### **English language**

Refugees will continue to be able to access English language tuition that is fully funded through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) if they are unemployed and in receipt of certain benefits; or if they are in an area that is part of the AEB low wage trial and they earn less than £16,009.50. Children in full time education will receive English language support in schools.

Additional language funding of £850pp will continue to be available in year one. This is intended to boost local capacity and supplement mainstream AEB provision. As with the current scheme, Home Office will include outcomes associated with this additional funding in the annual funding instruction. Local authorities will also continue to be able to use the tariff to further top up costs of language provision. Funding will also be available to help with child care costs in relation to attendance at ESOL classes.

### **Community Sponsorship**

The community sponsorship scheme has been a real success and is established now, with a broad range of experience, training and support available to community groups, through Reset, the organisation established to build capacity amongst potential community sponsors. Reset currently provides services including in-person training, a range of online material to support groups in preparing their application and supporting a family <https://training-resetuk.org/> an application checking service and a post-arrival advice line. Reset are also developing resources for local authorities about the process of providing consent.

***Please get in touch with your Resettlement Contact Officer and regional SMP lead if you require further information, and to discuss your offer of new resettlement places under the current or future scheme.***