

Kemi Bandenoch MP
Rt Hon Penny Mourdant MP
Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Rt Hon Liz Truss MP
Tom Tugendhat MP
By email:

15 July 2022

Dear Candidate,

As you set out your priorities for the future, it is vital to have the situation in Ukraine front of mind.

With Homes for Ukraine's first six months coming to the end of its first six months over the summer, it is critical to have in place other routes for Ukrainian and refuge nationals arriving in the UK looking for employment.

Now is the moment to push forward with a business sponsorship route to support refugees who want to come to the UK, so that they can be matched with jobs and supported with accommodation.

We were pleased to be part of the scoping of a series of pilots to test out different variations of a business sponsorship route, which was convened by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. With the end of the war far from in sight, we would urge you to:

1. Recommit to these pilots;
2. Speed them up; and
3. Set a target date to have a new route in place.

This is critical to ensuring that there are appropriate routes ready to support refugees over a longer timeframe, and which can provide jobs and accommodation at scale. This is also important for refugees fleeing other conflicts, and those that will sadly need to do so in future.

Future-proofing the system to make employing refugees simpler and faster can only be a good thing for those impacted and for the UK economy. Safety of course comes first, but soon after comes the need to re-establish a life, and having a job is a huge part of that. We know from our members that many have available roles and the ability to support refugees and their families, yet this is not yet being called upon at scale. Making this simpler would also support recovery and help several impacted sectors to get back on their feet post-pandemic. Between us, we have pledges from members that run into the thousands of jobs, as do our colleagues in the northern business groups.

We would urge you to test and build this route at the earliest opportunity, so that there are alternative entry options early in autumn. We would also urge you to standardise the support available under both existing routes, so that those entering under the family route can access the support they need.

Yours sincerely,

John Dickie, CEO BusinessLDN

Alexander Jan, Chairman, Central District Alliance

Geeta Nanda, CEO, MTVH

Simon Pitkeathley, CEO, Camden Town Unlimited

Mark Reynolds, Group Chairman CEO, Mace Group

Emma Degg, CEO, NWBLT

Dyan Crowther, CEO, HS1

Henri Murrison, Director, Northern Powerhouse Partnership

Caroline Marias, Group Director of HR, Edwardian Hotels

Robin Mills, Managing Director, Compass Group UK & Ireland

Huan Japes, Membership Director, English UK

Andrea Als, Director, Vialto Partners

Greg Reed, Group CEO, Places for People

Mark Allan, CEO, Landsec