Minister for Equalities & International Development
Simita Kumar MSP

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Patrick Harvie MSP
Convener
Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee

Email: EEAC.committee@parliament.scot

17 November 2026

Dear Patrick,

I am writing to update the committee on the publication of the review of Scotland's Ukraine response, the Scottish Super Sponsor Scheme and wider humanitarian protection schemes in Scotland, led by the Chief Social Policy Adviser, Professor Linda Bauld.

I am grateful to Professor Bauld and all those who contributed to the review. It provides a comprehensive assessment of one of the most ambitious humanitarian responses ever delivered in Scotland and offers valuable insights to inform future humanitarian action.

Review Findings

The review highlights the significant achievements of Scotland's domestic response to Russia's illegal war against Ukraine. It recognises the extraordinary efforts of national and local government, communities, third sector organisations, public services, sponsors and volunteers across the country. It also identifies important lessons that can help strengthen Scotland's preparedness to support people seeking safety and sanctuary in response to future humanitarian crises.

Since its launch in March 2022, the Scottish Super Sponsor Scheme has supported more than 21,000 people to come to the UK, while a further 8,000 displaced Ukrainians have arrived sponsored by an individual host in Scotland. Together, this is more per head of population than any other nation in the UK, demonstrating Scotland's commitment to providing refuge, safety and opportunity for those fleeing conflict.

Professor Bauld's review concludes that Scotland successfully delivered a safe and warm welcome to tens of thousands of people at unprecedented pace and scale. It identifies a number of key strengths, including effective multi-agency collaboration, strong community mobilisation, rapid access to public services and a commitment to supporting integration from the earliest stages of arrival. The review also acknowledges the challenges associated with responding to an international humanitarian emergency of this scale.

Recommendations

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

The Scottish Super Sponsor Scheme was paused in July 2022 following a sharp rise in applications, helping to ensure that those who had already arrived in Scotland, as well as visa-holders yet to travel, could continue to be accommodated safely. The review recommends that the Super Sponsor Scheme is now permanently closed to new applications. I can confirm that the Scottish Government has accepted this recommendation.

I would like to reassure the Committee that this decision does not diminish Scotland's commitment to the people of Ukraine. We will continue to ensure that Ukrainians who are rebuilding their lives in Scotland, finding work, supporting their families and becoming part of our communities have the support that they need. This is a key part of Scotland's enduring commitment to Ukraine in the face of Russia's ongoing illegal war. It is important to note that the wider Homes for Ukraine scheme remains open as a route to sanctuary in the UK.

Drawing on wider evidence from humanitarian protection schemes in Scotland, the review reinforces the central role of housing in enabling access to employment, education, wellbeing and community participation. Its recommendations, which align closely with the principles of the New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy, emphasise integration from day one, a rights-based and trauma-informed approach, and the importance of partnership working. The review recognises that Scotland has developed significant expertise, capacity and experience which provide strong foundations for future humanitarian responses.

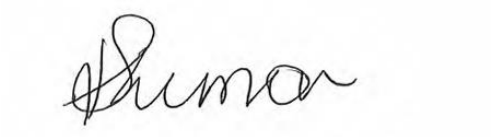
The Scottish Government welcomes the review's recommendations and will take these forward in collaboration with partners as part of the ongoing programme of work being delivered through the New Scots Delivery Plan. We believe they provide an important opportunity to build on the successes of Scotland's Ukraine response, strengthen preparedness for future international crises, promote integration and support people fleeing conflict to rebuild their lives in Scotland.

Ongoing Support for Ukrainians in Scotland

The review has been conducted through engagement with community stakeholders, not least the Ukrainian community groups who represent those most directly impacted by the response to the crisis. Officials are providing reassurance through these groups that the decision to close the Super Sponsor Scheme to new applications will have no impact on visas already issued or the immigration status of displaced Ukrainians who have already come to the UK under the scheme. Scottish Government guidance for Ukrainians and organisations supporting them has been updated to provide clarity and reassurance.

The Scottish Government remains committed to working with partners to provide safety and sanctuary for displaced Ukrainians and all refugees in Scotland for as long as they need it. We stand with Ukraine and hope for a swift victory and a resolution which restores peace and ensures Ukrainian sovereignty, democracy, independence and territorial integrity.

I hope you have found this information useful.
Yours sincerely,



SIMITA KUMAR

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot