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**UNITED KINGDOM  
OF GREAT  
BRITAIN AND  
NORTHERN  
IRELAND**

**BY THE GOVERNMENT OF  
THE UNITED KINGDOM**

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**United Kingdom 2018 Overview:**

Resettlement programme since: <b>1995</b>	Selection Missions: <b>No</b>	Dossier Submissions: <b>Yes</b>
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**Resettlement Admission Targets:**

<b>Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS)</b>	20,000 by 2020
<b>Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS)</b>	Up to 3,000 by 2020
<b>Gateway</b>	750 per annum
<b>Mandate</b>	No annual commitment for this scheme
<b>Total:</b>	Up to 23,000 by 2020 plus a further 750 p.a.

**Individual scheme features:**

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launched January 2014 without a target but intended to provide sanctuary to several hundred vulnerable Syrians over three years.</li> <li>• Expanded September 15 to resettle an additional 20,000 of the most vulnerable Syrians fleeing the conflict by 2020.</li> <li>• Scope expanded in July 2017 to make it accessible, regardless of nationality, to the most vulnerable refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey who have fled the Syrian conflict.</li> </ul>
<b>Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launched April 2016 to resettle up to 3,000 at-risk children and their families in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey by 2020.</li> </ul>
<b>Gateway Protection Programme (GPP)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Gateway programme was launched in 2004 and aims to resettle 750 individuals a year, generally those in protracted refugee situations.</li> </ul>
<b>Mandate Refugee Scheme (MRS)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launched in 1995 to resettle refugees with a close family member living in the UK.</li> </ul>

Designated sub-quota / acceptance details for:	2018 Description, additional comments:
Emergency resettlement procedures	No emergency resettlement mechanism but we will consider a small number of urgent cases on request.
Medical cases	No specific sub-quota but eligibility for Gateway, VPRS and VCRS is assessed against UNHCR's vulnerability criteria, of which medical needs is one.
Women at risk cases	No specific sub-quota but eligibility for Gateway and VPRS is assessed against UNHCR's vulnerability criteria, of which women at risk is one.
Unaccompanied children	Unaccompanied children may be resettled through VCRS. Minor children with a parent in the UK may be resettled through the Mandate scheme.
Family Reunion (within programme)	No specific sub-quota but the Mandate scheme resettles refugees from around the world who have a close family tie in the UK who can accommodate them.

## 1. Resettlement Policy

### 1.1 Description of the country's resettlement policy

The UK operates four resettlement schemes: Gateway, Mandate, the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) and the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS).

The UK's resettlement schemes offer a safe and legal route to the UK for the most vulnerable refugees, and purposefully target those in greatest need of assistance, including people requiring urgent medical treatment, survivors of violence and torture, and women and children at risk. The UK works closely with UNHCR to identify those living in formal refugee camps, informal settlements and host communities who would benefit most from resettlement to the UK. Apart from the criteria set for each scheme, the UK does not seek to influence which cases are referred by UNHCR.

The UK's approach is to take refugees direct from non-European countries where resettlement may be the only durable solution, often from the region bordering countries with conflicts. In the case of the VPRS and VCRS, this means those currently in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. This provides refugees with a more direct and safe route to the UK.

### 1.2 Ministries and Departments responsible for resettlement policy

UNHCR has responsibility for all out-of-country casework activity relating to our resettlement schemes. If UNHCR consider that an individual should be referred to the UK for resettlement, they will refer the case to Resettlement Operations in UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), based in the Home Office. Resettlement Operations will determine

1<sup>st</sup> version August 2011, revised July 2014, this revision March 2018

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whether the case should be accepted for resettlement to the UK. Applications cannot be made directly to the Home Office, to British diplomatic posts abroad or through other international organisations. All applications are assessed individually on their merits.

The VPRS and VCRS are tri-departmental schemes, with individuals from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Department for International Development (DFID) forming part of a joint team within the Home Office.

### 1.3 Process for deciding the annual resettlement quota and its composition

**VPRS:** The VPRS was launched in January 2014 without a target, but intended to provide sanctuary to several hundred vulnerable Syrians over three years. It was subsequently expanded in September 2015 with the aim of resettling 20,000 Syrians in need of protection by 2020. In July 2017 the scope of the scheme was amended to enable UNHCR to refer to the UK for acceptance the most vulnerable refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan Lebanon and Turkey who have fled the Syrian conflict, regardless of their nationality. The scheme now brings within its scope vulnerable persons of other nationalities, such as Iraqi nationals. This change will also mean that mixed family groups are eligible for resettlement under the Scheme.

**VCRS:** The scheme was launched in April 2016, to resettle up to 3,000 at-risk children and their families in the MENA region by 2020. The UK expects the majority of the 3000 resettled under this scheme to be children. However, following recommendations from UNHCR, the scheme will encompass:

- accompanied children (i.e. those travelling with their families);
- unaccompanied (i.e. lone) children; and
- separated children (i.e. children travelling with carers or family members other than their parents).

The 3,000 figure includes any adults resettled with the children.

**Gateway:** Gateway aims to resettle 750 refugees each year from a small number of targeted locations, generally those in protracted refugee situations. The caseload for Gateway is agreed each year at ministerial level following discussions with UNHCR, and in agreement with internal and cross government partners.

**Mandate:** The Mandate scheme has no quota, and will resettle refugees from anywhere in the world if they have been referred to the UK by UNHCR.

## 2. Criteria for Recognition of Refugee Status Eligibility: Asylum and Resettlement

### 2.1 National legislation defining refugee status eligibility

The UK works in accordance with the resettlement criteria as laid out in UNHCR's Resettlement Handbook. The UK will only resettle those determined by UNHCR to be refugees in accordance with the definition in the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol.

### 2.2 Refugee status criteria -asylum-seekers and resettled refugees

The four schemes are distinct from, and managed separately to, the standard procedure for claiming asylum in the UK but the criteria for determining whether a person qualifies for refugee status are the same. Both asylum seekers and refugees being resettled are assessed against the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol to determine

whether they qualify for refugee status. In the case of an asylum seeker in the UK, the assessment is done by Home Office caseworkers whereas a person being considered for resettlement under any of these four schemes would already have been recognised as a refugee by UNHCR.

Resettlement Operations will usually accept UNHCR's determination of refugee status unless there are concerns regarding the credibility of the claim or new evidence comes to light e.g. security concerns.

### 3. Criteria for Resettlement

#### 3.1 Resettlement Eligibility Criteria

**VPRS:** The scheme is accessible to refugees, regardless of nationality, who have fled the Syrian conflict and who have been referred to the UK by UNHCR.

The scheme is only for refugees still in the region (i.e. in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey), not those who have travelled to Europe. Refugees must have fled Syria because of the current conflict (i.e. after March 2011).

Refugees are assessed for resettlement by UNHCR against their resettlement submission categories:

- Legal and or Physical Protection Needs;
- Survivors of Torture and/or Violence;
- Medical Needs;
- Women and Girls at Risk;
- Family Reunification;
- Children and Adolescents at Risk; and
- Lack of Foreseeable Alternative Durable Solutions.

**VCRS:** The VCRS is open to vulnerable children and their families in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, where UNHCR deem resettlement to be in the best interests of the child. The scheme is accessible to all 'children and adolescents at risk' as defined by UNHCR, which encompasses unaccompanied children as well as those in families or with care-givers.

Examples of the types of cases which UNHCR may consider for resettlement under the category of 'children and adolescents at risk' include:

- Children without legal documentation
- Children with specific medical needs
- Children with disabilities
- Child carers
- Children at risk of harmful traditional practices (including child marriage and female genital mutilation)
- Children at risk of being forced to work
- Children associated with armed forces or armed groups
- Children in detention
- Children at risk of refoulement (forcible return to a country where they are liable to be subjected to persecution)
- Child survivors of (or at risk of) violence, abuse or exploitation including sexual and gender based violence.

The scheme is open to refugees of all nationalities.

**Gateway:** Cases are accepted under UNHCR's resettlement submission categories. Individuals resettled through Gateway must have been living in a protracted refugee situation for over five years, unless there is an urgent need for resettlement (e.g. life endangerment). The Gateway caseload is determined annually using UNHCR's Projected Global Resettlement Needs and in discussion with other government departments. The caseload is then agreed at ministerial level.

**Mandate:** The Mandate resettlement scheme resettles recognised refugees who have a close family member in the UK who is willing to accommodate them. It is a global scheme and there is no annual quota.

Beneficiaries of the Mandate scheme must have been recognised as refugees by UNHCR, and judged by them to be in need of resettlement. The refugee must be a minor child, spouse, or parent or grandparent aged over 65 of someone settled in the UK, or who has limited leave to remain in a category leading to settlement, who is willing to accommodate and support them. The UK relative does not need to hold refugee status. Wider family members (e.g. adult siblings) will only be considered if there is an exceptional circumstance.

### 3.2 Admissibility criteria

The applicant (and his/her dependants) must co-operate with UK officials and any other body involved in the resettlement scheme for which they are being assessed. The UK also looks at whether that particular resettlement scheme is able to meet the resettlement needs of the applicant and their dependants. A further consideration to be applied is whether there are reasons why resettlement of the applicant and their dependants in the UK would not be conducive to the public good. The UK process also considers whether there are identifiable reasons to the effect that resettlement in the UK would be contrary to the best interests of the applicant, or their dependants.

## 4. Resettlement Allocations/Processing Priorities

The numbers resettled in a particular period will depend on a range of factors including the flow of referrals from UNHCR in the field and the availability of suitable accommodation and support packages in the UK.

## 5. Submissions and Processing via Dossier Selection

### 5.1. Dossier (Resettlement Refugee Form) submission policies

UNHCR will conduct a full Refugee Status Determination (RSD) and resettlement consideration. Having determined that the individual is a refugee, UNHCR will then consider whether resettlement is the right long-term solution for them, and then to which country or resettlement scheme they should be referred. If UNHCR consider that an individual should be referred to the UK for resettlement, they will send Resettlement Operations a Resettlement Registration Form (RRF) which confirms, in Section 4, that the individual has been determined by UNHCR to be a refugee according to the terms of the 1951 Convention. The RRF is a summary of both the RSD and the resettlement consideration. This is processed by Resettlement Operations, who determine whether the case should be accepted for resettlement to the UK.

All UK resettlement cases are dealt with on a dossier basis.

### 5.2. Routing of Submissions

RRFs are referred to Resettlement Operations only by UNHCR. Resettlement applications cannot be made direct to UK embassies or high commissions abroad. Submissions should be sent to the following in-boxes:

Gateway & Mandate referrals – [resettlementprogramme@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:resettlementprogramme@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

VPRS referrals – [SyrianVPRUNHCRreferrals@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SyrianVPRUNHCRreferrals@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

VCRS referrals - [RVCUNHCR@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:RVCUNHCR@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

### 5.3. Processing Times – decision making process

The time required to process a resettlement application is dependent upon a number of factors e.g. urgency, complexity, accommodation requirements, requests for additional information and health assessments results.

#### Acceptance of an application

Once a case has been accepted UNHCR will be informed via email. This is subject to suitable accommodation being identified and further security checks. Once accommodation has been agreed, Resettlement Operations will request the issuing of a visa from the relevant British Diplomatic post. A request will also be sent to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to make travel arrangements including pre departure medical checks and arrange cultural orientation, if it has not already been provided.

#### Refusal of an application

If the applicant has been refused, Resettlement Operations will inform UNHCR via email, briefly outlining the reasons for refusal.

### 5.4. Recourses, appeals

There is no right of appeal against a decision to refuse an application for resettlement. However, if an applicant's circumstances change or if additional information comes to light that was not previously available; UNHCR may approach Resettlement Operations and request a review.

## 6. Submissions and Processing via In Country Selection

### 6.1 Gateway missions

The UK may conduct biometrics missions, under the Gateway programme, where the refugees live in remote locations, or where there is no UK Visa Application Centre (VAC) in the country of asylum. Using a mobile biometrics kit, the team will enrol the biometrics, in person, of all the refugees being considered for resettlement. This does not indicate acceptance. The UK team will also deliver Cultural Orientation, during biometrics missions to all refugees being considered for resettlement in the UK. This again, is not an indication of acceptance.

### 6.2 Routing of Submissions

Gateway & Mandate referrals – [resettlementprogramme@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:resettlementprogramme@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

### 6.3 Processing times - decision making process

Resettlement Operations determine whether cases should be accepted for resettlement to the UK.

Decisions are communicated in the same way as all other UK resettlement schemes. (See section 5.3)

### 6.4 Recourses, appeals

See section 5.4



## 7. Emergency Cases/Urgent Cases

The UK does not have an emergency resettlement quota, but in certain circumstances is able to prioritise urgent cases.

## 8. Special Categories/ Specific Needs

### 8.1 Refugees with Medical Needs

Migration Health Assessments (MHAs) are conducted by IOM and provided to local authorities in order that appropriate care can be arranged for the refugees concerned on arrival; they may also inform where an individual is resettled, for example if they have mobility issues or have a health condition which requires specialist treatment. Refugees who have TB will not be resettled until their condition is assessed as being latent. Certain medical conditions are given special consideration and a decision is made on a case by case basis after reference to Ministers.

### 8.2 Survivors of violence or torture

Assessments of individuals who are survivors of violence or torture are conducted as part of the normal process. It is important that RRFs are as explicit as possible in respect of the refugees' mental health issues as a result of violence and / or torture, so that preparations for potential treatment can be made.

Mandate: no special arrangements, aside from the usual mainstream social services and those provided by the voluntary sector available to all refugees in the UK.

### 8.3 Women at Risk

Assessments of special needs are made pre-departure to ensure that women at risk are housed appropriately and given suitable support, including counselling.

Mandate: no special arrangements, aside from the usual mainstream social services and those provided by the voluntary sector available to all refugees in the UK.

### 8.4 Children

Unaccompanied children who are resettled to the UK under the VCRS will be placed with a local authority via the National Transfer Scheme. To reassure unaccompanied minors about the arrangements that are being made to support and accommodate them in the UK, calls over SKYPE are arranged with Local Authorities

The UK does not consider unaccompanied children as part of VPRS or Gateway.

Mandate: Minors can be considered only where the child will be joining their parent in the UK. In these cases DNA testing is carried out under the scheme to confirm biological connections.

### 8.5 Elderly

Referrals of elderly persons will be considered on a case by case basis, taking into account special needs relevant to their integration needs if accepted.

Mandate: no special arrangements, aside from the usual mainstream social services and those provided by the voluntary sector available to all refugees in the UK.

## 9. Medical Requirements

All cases, under all UK resettlement programmes, are health screened before the UK makes a decision and IOM is contracted to conduct this screening. IOM conduct the screening in accordance with a health protocol agreed by Home Office and UK's public health authorities. IOM prepare a Migration Health Assessment (MHA) which informs the

consideration decision. IOM also carry out pre-departure health checks shortly before the flight and IOM will provide a medical escort to accompany refugees from the country of departure to the UK as necessary.

## 10. Cultural Orientation

Refugees resettled under the VPRS, VCRS and Gateway are invited to attend a pre-departure cultural orientation session delivered by either IOM or resettlement staff which gives them the opportunity to acquire information they will need when they arrive in the UK. Under VPRS and VCRS, cultural orientation sessions last 10 hours, over 2 days, 2-4 weeks prior to departure to the UK. This is complemented by further briefing at a local level on arrival in the UK.

Mandate: No cultural orientation is provided as the scheme relies on the refugees' relative(s) to confirm that they will facilitate integration.

## 11. Travel

IOM are commissioned to provide refugees with the assistance they need in order that they can depart for the UK on the agreed resettlement date. This includes applying for the UK visa; accompanying refugees to UK visa application centres in order that biometrics can be enrolled; booking flights; arranging exit permits from the host country in liaison with UNHCR; and confirming that refugees are fit to travel.

Resettlement Operations will arrange for families resettled through VPRS, VCRS or Gateway to travel to the UK six to eight weeks after they have been allocated accommodation (depending on the host country exit permit process). This can be on a scheduled or chartered flight. IOM will send an escort to accompany families to the UK and they will be greeted by representatives from the local authority or community sponsorship group on arrival.

For those on the Mandate scheme, UKVI will cover the cost of flights to the UK where the individual cannot afford to do so and IOM will provide an escort for particularly vulnerable individuals or families. They will be greeted by their relatives at the airport on arrival.

## 12. Status on Arrival and Pathways to Citizenship

### 12.1 Immigration status on arrival

Individuals resettled through the VPRS and VCRS since July 2017 have been granted refugee status with five years' leave to remain on arrival. Those resettled before July 2017 were granted five years' Humanitarian Protection (HP). Those who arrived before July 2017 can request to change their status.

Once individuals resettled through the VPRS and VCRS have been in the UK for five years, they may apply for settlement (Indefinite Leave to Remain) as a refugee free of charge.

Individuals resettled through the Gateway and Mandate schemes are granted Indefinite Leave to Remain as a refugee.

Resettled individuals are not subject to the Knowledge of Language and Life requirement when applying for settlement.

Everyone resettled in the UK (including children) is issued with a biometric residence permit (BRP). These can be used to confirm identity, immigration status, and right to work or access to public funds. The card will include the holder's National Insurance number if they are over 16 on the day of arrival. Bio-metric enrolment (fingerprinting and photograph) takes place as part of the visa application process. The BRP is sent to the local authority or community sponsorship group for distribution shortly after arrival.

#### 12.2 Process for regularization of status and citizenship, including requirements and timeframes

Resettled refugees are eligible to apply for British Citizenship if they have had settlement (Indefinite Leave to Remain) in the UK for one year.

#### 12.3 Documents issued to children born after arrival but before naturalization of their parents

Any children born after arrival in the UK but before the parents have been naturalised will need to apply for a BRP

## 13. Domestic Settlement and Community Services

### 13.1 Overview of services and providers

#### Reception

Individuals who are resettled through Gateway, VPRS or VCRS are provided with initial reception arrangements, casework and orientation support including English language provision by their support provider, who will either be a local authority or community sponsor.

Upon arrival, local authority supported families will have a caseworker who maintains close contact with the family for the first 12 months to support their well-being and integration.

Some families resettled through the VPRS and VCRS will be placed with a community sponsor group instead of a local authority. Our community sponsorship scheme enables community groups to become directly involved in supporting resettlement by welcoming a family resettled through the VPRS or VCRS into their local community. Community sponsors have to apply to and be approved by the Home Office before they are allocated a family. Groups are usually made up of volunteers who work together to provide resettlement and integration support to a family living within their community.

Refugees resettled through Mandate will be met and supported by their family member(s) in the UK.

#### Resettlement Services

Individuals resettled under Gateway, VPRS and VCRS will be provided with support from a range of providers, including community sponsors, NGOs and the local authorities in which they are resettled. Support providers will appoint named individuals who will help the family to register with local schools or ESOL classes, attend Job Centre Plus appointments for benefit assessments, register with a local GP, provide advice around and referral to appropriate mental health services and to specialist services for victims of torture, and assist with access to employment.

#### Housing

Upon arrival in the UK, individuals resettled under Gateway, VPRS and VCRS are provided with furnished accommodation. They are required to pay rent through a tenancy agreement but are entitled to claim housing benefit under the same conditions as British citizens.

## Health

Refugees resettled under Gateway, VPRS and VCRS will be assisted to register with a local GP by their support provider.

## Language Training

Guidance and information on the English language courses available is offered for individuals resettled under Gateway, VPRS and VCRS as part of their long-term resettlement.

## Education

Education for those between the ages of 5 and 16 years is compulsory across the UK. Additionally in England, children aged 16-18 must be in full-time education or work with an educational component. Resettled refugee children are given the same access to education as British Citizens. Information is also given on facilities and services for pre-school and under five years. Resettled individuals have access to higher education in the UK but access to student finance differs depending on immigration status.

The Department for Education (DfE) supports ESOL as part of its wider strategy to improve adult literacy in England. Adults who are resettled in the UK are eligible for the same skills funding as any other UK resident and are not subject to the normal three-year qualifying period in England.

In addition, the government has pledged up to £10m over five years for a jointly funded DfE and Home Office programme to enable adults resettled through the VPRS and VCRS to access language tuition and integrate into British society. The additional funding for English language training will mean all adults arriving through the schemes anywhere in the UK will receive a minimum of eight hours' tuition a week in their first year.

## Vocational Training and Employment

Resettled refugees have the same access to vocational training and employment as British Citizens.

## Financial Assistance

Resettled individuals have an immediate right to work and access to mainstream welfare benefits, dependant on their circumstances and whether they meet the relevant Department for Work and Pensions criteria for the specific benefit for which they are applying.

## 14. Family Reunification of Refugees

The UK's Family Reunion policy is intended to allow those currently recognised as refugees or granted humanitarian protection in the UK to sponsor pre-flight, immediate family members to join them here. Immediate family members are defined in the Immigration Rules as a spouse or partner and children under the age of 18, who formed part of the family unit before their refugee sponsor fled their country of origin or former habitual residence to claim asylum in the UK. Further information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/family-reunion-instruction>

## 15. References, Resources

- Further information on the UK's Gateway Protection Programme can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gateway-protection-programme-information-for-organisations/gateway-protection-programme>
- Further information on our community sponsorship scheme can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-full-community-sponsorship>

- For information on Biometric Residence Permits: <https://www.gov.uk/biometric-residence-permits>