

30 August 2022

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OIA 28214

Personal details removed for proactive release

I refer to your email of 3 August 2022 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

** all departmental advice to the Minister of Foreign Affairs between August 1, 2021 and July 22, 2022 on New Zealand's Refugee Resettlement Quota.*

** all departmental advice to the Minister of Foreign Affairs between January 1, 2022 and July 22, 2022 on the 2022 Special Ukraine Visa*

** all departmental advice to the Minister of Foreign Affairs between January 1, 2016 and July 22, 2022 on the use or potential use of the large scale refugee crisis situation emergency subcategory within New Zealand's Refugee Resettlement Quota.'*

I have been advised that the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment (MBIE) has also received this request for information. To avoid duplication, we have not provided documents that MBIE is currently preparing for release to you.

Please find information relevant to your request attached. We have withheld some information under the following sections of the OIA:

- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments;

Where the information has been withheld under section 9 of the OIA, we have identified no public interest in releasing the information that would override the reasons for withholding it.

Please note that we may publish this letter (with your personal details redacted) and enclosed documents on the Ministry's website.

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

AIDE MEMOIRE: SPECIAL IMMIGRATION POLICY FOR UKRAINE

- This paper lodged by the Minister of Immigration proposes establishment of a new, time-limited, sponsored temporary entry visa category for family members of Ukrainian-born New Zealand citizens and residents.
- The policy will contribute to Aotearoa New Zealand's kete of responses to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and the rapidly evolving humanitarian consequences of President Putin's outrageous, illegal aggression there.
- The special category will allow Ukrainian-born New Zealand citizens and residence class visa holders who are ordinarily resident in Aotearoa New Zealand to apply to sponsor **one** eligible family member, **and their immediate family** (partner and dependent children). Eligible family members of Ukrainian-born New Zealand citizens and residents include either a parent or a wider family member (grandparent, adult sibling, adult child).
- The policy will offer two-year visas with open work rights to adults, and two-year domestic student visas to children up to the age of 19. It will open as soon as possible and remain open for 12 months.
- Officials estimate that around 1,600 people in New Zealand could be eligible to be sponsors. The cap on sponsorship (one application per eligible sponsor) is intended to help manage pressures on our infrastructure, especially housing.

MFAT views and risks

- MFAT supports the paper's recommendations. The proposed policy is in line with Aotearoa New Zealand's overall response to Russia's aggression in Ukraine, and in particular the priority placed on providing tangible support for Ukraine and Ukrainians.
- Our most critical interest relates to the risk highlighted at recommendation 8.3 in the paper, namely that there could be an expectation the Government will provide material and financial support or other facilitation (e.g. help securing travel documentation or meeting any border entry requirements) to those visa holders seeking to leave Ukraine and while they are travelling to New Zealand.
- There is no scope under current MFAT resourcing to provide such assistance to Ukrainian (or other) nationals seeking to leave Ukraine and/or travel onwards to New Zealand. ^{s9(2)(g)(i)}
- In addition to the resourcing realities, ^{s9(2)(g)(i)}
- In this context, the paper makes it clear that New Zealand sponsors will be responsible for arranging and funding exit from Ukraine and travel to New Zealand (as well as for accommodation and living costs both while travelling and once in New Zealand).
- To mitigate the risk identified above, careful public communications will need to accompany the announcement of this policy, to ensure this aspect is made clear.

*Ukraine Task Force
MFAT
March 2022*