

# Ukrainian refugee crisis

**Press statement, 16 March 2022**

Following on from [the statement calling for the cessation of the war in Ukraine](#), the CTE Forum delegates renewed appeals to the UK government to support the churches offering welcome and sanctuary to Ukrainian refugees.

## **The statement**

Gathered at Churches Together in England's Forum on 16 March, delegates from its 52 national member churches, Christian organisations and ecumenical bodies recognise the enormity of the Ukrainian refugee crisis and call upon Her Majesty's Government to do all it can to develop programmes of refuge for those fleeing Ukraine that are both just and effective. We welcome changes recently announced to a complex and slow visa application system, thus easing the ways in which Ukrainian refugees can be given sanctuary, and urge the swiftest implementation of this system.

We embrace the role churches can play as communities of faith offering welcome, homes and compassion to those who have fled war, and encourage churches to take up opportunities to sponsor refugee families.

While we recognise the huge challenges facing those countries bordering Ukraine, in which refugees first arrive, and call for a fair sharing of this burden throughout Europe, we deplore the discrimination against African and Asian people and those of religious minorities fleeing Ukraine, and call for every nation receiving refugees to treat all with equal care and dignity. We also recognise, with shame, the slowness to welcome Afghan refugees who are already in Britain, often remaining housed in bed and breakfast accommodation.

Refugees come from many nations in conflict, and we pray that Britain might become a society where strangers find a welcome, whatever their origin. We urge Her Majesty's Government to consider amendments to the UK Borders and Nationality Bill.

Jesus himself was a child refugee, and in the stranger we can recognise Christ coming amongst us. The churches should act with compassion, but they can also pray, and just as we have committed ourselves to pray for peace and for the victims of war, we also pray for those who are refugees and for those housing and caring for them.

ENDS

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**Notes to editors:**

Churches Together in England (CTE) is the national ecumenical instrument supporting and encouraging churches from a wide range of traditions to work together in unity. CTE brings together [52 national Member Churches](#). With churches drawn from the Anglican, Catholic, Pentecostal, Charismatic, Orthodox and Lutheran traditions, as well as Free Churches, Quakers and others. CTE unites one of the broadest range of churches in the whole of Europe. [Read more about CTE](#).

[CTE Forum](#) takes place every three years. It was postponed from 2021 due the Coronavirus pandemic.