Review of International Studies (2024), page 1 of 19
doi:10.1017/S0260210524000470

RIS

RESEARCH ARTICLE

'Homes for Ukraine' and the politics of private humanitarian hospitality

Gabrielle Daoust[1] and Synne Dyvik[2]

[1]Department of Global and International Studies, University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George, BC, Canada and [2]Department of International Relations, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK
Corresponding author: Synne Dyvik; Email: s.dyvik@sussex.ac.uk

(Received 30 November 2023; revised 14 May 2024; accepted 29 May 2024)

Abstract
Within weeks of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, millions of people had fled to neighbouring countries and across Europe. People throughout Europe were mobilised into action, and from the outset, the response to the unfolding humanitarian emergency in Ukraine was a complex and often messy web of private and public initiatives. In this article, we focus on the unique British humanitarian response to the greatest movement of refugees in Europe since the Second World War, known as 'Homes for Ukraine' (HfU). We develop our argument in three steps. First, we situate HfU within existing scholarship on 'everyday humanitarianism' and private refugee hosting in Europe, locating these within longer histories of private humanitarian action. Secondly, we show how HfU shifts the humanitarian space into the private and domestic sphere, a move reliant on particular conceptions of the 'home' as a space of sanctuary and safety. Finally, we unpack the gendered and racialised conceptions of the home and humanitarian hospitality more broadly, and how HfU sits within and outside of the broader bordering practices of the United Kingdom's refugee response.

Keywords: everyday humanitarianism; Homes for Ukraine; humanitarian hospitality; humanitarianism; refugee hosting; Ukraine; refugees

Introduction

Since February 2022, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has resulted in a massive humanitarian and displacement crisis.[1] There are currently over 5 million internally displaced Ukrainians and over 6 million refugees recorded globally, the vast majority of whom remain in Europe.[2] So far, Ukrainian refugees have been welcomed with more or less open arms across Europe, in stark contrast to the experience of other refugees.[3] From the outset, the response to the humanitarian emergency in Ukraine has been a complex web of private and public initiatives. As people fled across borders to Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania, networks of volunteers descended to offer shelter, food, medical supplies, clothing, transport, and other necessities. As humanitarian emergency responses go, this was one initially driven as much by 'ordinary people' as by international non-governmental

[1]Human Rights Watch, 'Ukraine: Russian invasion causing widespread suffering for civilians', available at: {https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/01/12/ukraine-russian-invasion-causing-widespread-suffering-civilians}.
[2]UNHCR, 'Ukraine situation flash update #54', available at: {https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/103134}.
[3]David De Coninck, 'The refugee paradox during wartime in Europe: How Ukrainian and Afghan refugees are (not) alike', *International Migration Review*, 57:2 (2023), pp. 578–86; Lena Näre, Dalia Abdelhady, and Nahikari Irastorza, 'What can we learn from the reception of Ukrainian refugees?', *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, 12:3 (2022), pp. 255–8.

© The Author(s), 2024. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of The British International Studies Association. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution licence (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution and reproduction, provided the original article is properly cited.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

organisations (INGOs) and United Nations (UN) agencies, reflecting a practice variously described by scholars as 'private humanitarianism', 'grassroots humanitarianism', 'everyday humanitarianism', or 'citizen aid'.[4]

In the United Kingdom, the government launched its 'Homes for Ukraine' (HfU) scheme in March 2022 – an extraordinary, institutionalised expansion of the role that private individuals play in responding to a humanitarian emergency. The scheme encourages 'ordinary' people (as well as charities, churches, communities, and businesses) to host Ukrainian refugees, the vast majority of whom are women and children. As of November 2023, more than 137,000 Ukrainians had arrived in the UK through the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (as it is formally known), and over 240,000 people had expressed interest in sponsoring Ukrainian refugees under the scheme as of May 2023.[5] While temporary refugee host or 'homestay' initiatives exist in other countries, these have been organised mainly on a relatively small-scale basis via community networks and charities.[6] By contrast, the UK's HfU hosting scheme is unique in its scale and structure: it represents *the* official response of the UK government to displacement from Ukraine, is implemented on a national scale and characterised by an especially significant degree of government involvement and formalisation, and is the only visa route for Ukrainians that involves housing.[7]

This paper is based on an analysis of policy materials, official statements, promotional materials, and media reports focused on the HfU scheme, as well as engagement with existing research. We conceptualise private refugee hosting as a form of humanitarian practice. This conceptualisation contributes to existing work on 'everyday humanitarianism'[8] or 'citizen aid',[9] a trend that describes private individuals participating substantially in actions which can be defined as 'humanitarian' without being or becoming professional humanitarians. However, in this case the beneficiary is not geographically distant, but lodging in people's homes.

Our analysis and arguments are informed by a range of literatures, including scholarship on the politics and trajectories of humanitarianism, 'private' or 'everyday' humanitarianism, private refugee hosting, and the politics of the 'home'. The significance and need for critical consideration of the HfU initiative is highlighted in recent papers on the scheme, which examine shifting responsibilities for and lived experiences of accommodating and supporting refugees[10] and gendered and racialised logics and conditions of hospitality[11] and draw on some similar bodies of literature.

[4] Anne-Meike Fechter and Anke Schwittay, 'Citizen aid: Grassroots interventions in development and humanitarianism', *Third World Quarterly*, 40:10 (2019), pp. 1769–80; Lisa Ann Richey, 'Conceptualizing "everyday humanitarianism": Ethics, affects, and practices of contemporary global helping', *New Political Science*, 40:4 (2018), pp. 625–39.

[5] Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 'Individuals who have submitted an expression of interest to sponsor under the Homes for Ukraine scheme via gov.uk', available at: {https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homes-for-ukraine-sponsorship-scheme-individuals-who-have-submitted-an-expression-of-interest-to-sponsor-via-govuk}; Home Office and UK Visas and Immigration, 'Ukraine Family Scheme, Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine) and Ukraine Extension Scheme visa data', available at: {https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ukraine-family-scheme-application-data/ukraine-family-scheme-and-ukraine-sponsorship-scheme-homes-for-ukraine-visa-data–2}.

[6] Yasmin Gunaratnam, '"Not in my name": Empathy and intimacy in volunteer refugee hosting', *Journal of Sociology*, 57:3 (2021), pp. 707–24; Gaja Maestri and Pierre Monforte, 'Who deserves compassion? The moral and emotional dilemmas of volunteering in the "refugee crisis"', *Sociology*, 54:5 (2020), pp. 920–35; Paula Merikoski, '"At least they are welcome in my home!" Contentious hospitality in home accommodation of asylum seekers in Finland', *Citizenship Studies*, 25:1 (2021), pp. 90–105; Pierre Monforte, Gaja Maestri, and Estelle d'Halluin, '"It's like having one more family member": Private hospitality, affective responsibility and intimate boundaries within refugee hosting networks', *Journal of Sociology*, 57:3 (2021), pp. 674–89.

[7] Two other visa schemes exist for Ukrainians: the Ukrainian Family Scheme (intended for family members of Ukrainian nationals to join them in the UK) and the Ukraine Extension Scheme (allowing Ukrainians under certain conditions to extend existing or lapsed visas), though neither provides housing.

[8] Richey, 'Conceptualizing "everyday humanitarianism"'.

[9] Fechter and Schwittay, 'Citizen aid'.

[10] Kathy Burrell, 'Domesticating responsibility: Refugee hosting and the Homes for Ukraine Scheme', *Antipode*, 56:4 (2024), pp. 1191–2111.

[11] Megan Crossley, '"Homes for Ukraine": Gendered refugee hosting, differential inclusion, and domopolitics in the United Kingdom', *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 25:8 (2023), pp. 1–13.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

We contribute to this emerging body of scholarship by specifically framing the HfU – and private refugee hosting more broadly – as a form of humanitarianism, extending existing research that has largely addressed private refugee hosting and hospitality, and private or 'everyday' humanitarianism separately. By bringing them together we are not only explicitly decentring what counts as humanitarianism, but also centring private homes as a key site for humanitarian practice.

We approach HfU with a sense of ambivalence. On the one hand, the scheme captures the extraordinary generosity of individuals and communities towards people in need amid a cost-of-living crisis, following austerity, post-pandemic precarity, and in a political landscape rife with hostility and racism towards refugees.[12] On the other hand, the scheme signals a worrying outsourcing of humanitarian responses to private individuals, which brings its own risks. While there was a great deal of enthusiasm for the scheme initially, local and national governments now struggle to retain hosts, and the fluctuation of media attention leaves the scheme vulnerable to depletion, in turn putting refugees at risk of becoming reliant on transitory emotional attachments and hosts' changing life circumstances.[13] A very real risk for Ukrainians exiting the scheme for any reason is homelessness. In March 2024, over 9,400 Ukrainian refugee households had been reported as homeless in the UK, although figures are likely higher as it is not mandatory for local councils to report.[14] Finally, it is impossible to discuss this scheme outside the political environment of growing hostility towards other refugees and asylum seekers arriving in the UK.[15] The privileging of a certain kind of gendered and racialised 'guest' (a woman and/or a child, overwhelmingly white, European) over other groups speaks to the inherent racism and sexism of the humanitarian refugee system and how it is practised in the UK.[16]

We make our argument in three parts. Inspired by those who seek to rethink the spatial dimensions of humanitarian practice,[17] we argue that HfU shifts the geographical borders of the humanitarian space into the private setting of people's homes, complicating *what* and *who* is recognised as humanitarian. While the role of private individuals, churches, communities, and businesses is not new in humanitarianism,[18] private refugee hospitality as a central pillar of government response to an influx of refugees is. HfU and private refugee hosting therefore challenge

[12]Nadya Ali, *The Violence of Britishness* (London: Pluto Press, 2023); Gillian McFadyen, *Refugees in Britain: Practices of Hospitality and Labelling* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020).

[13]For many Homes for Ukraine hosts, rising costs of living hinder their ability to support refugees, and for some may mean they do not continue with the scheme. These pressures are compounded by a lack of any clear exit strategy for the scheme. The most recent ONS survey of hosts from November 2022 found that only 23 per cent were willing to extend their welcome beyond six months. See Nonhlanhla Dube, 'The UK's Homes for Ukraine scheme is failing both refugees and their hosts – here's why', *The Conversation* (11 October 2022), available at: {http://theconversation.com/the-uks-homes-for-ukraine-scheme-is-failing-both-refugees-and-their-hosts-heres-why-189897}; Amelia Gentleman, '"There's nowhere else for them to go": What next for 100,000 Ukrainians and the Britons who took them in?', *The Guardian* (29 November 2022), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/nov/29/homes-for-ukraine-refugees-ukrainian-britons-scheme}; ONS, 'Experiences of Homes for Ukraine scheme sponsors follow-up data, UK: 21–28 November dataset', Office for National Statistics, 2022; Tobi Thomas, 'UK cost of living crisis hampering efforts to host Ukrainian refugees', *The Guardian* (10 August 2022), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/business/2022/aug/10/ukrainian-refugees-uk-cost-of-living-crisis-ons}.

[14]Kwame Boakye, 'Over 9,300 Ukrainian refugee households have reported as homeless' (19 March 2024), available at: {https://www.lgcplus.com/services/housing/over-9300-ukrainian-refugee-households-have-reported-as-homeless-19-03-2024/}; Chartered Insti-tute of Housing, 'Housing rights information: Help for Ukrainian refugees' (29 May 2024), available at: {https://www.housing-rights.info/help-for-ukrainian-refugees.php}.

[15]McFadyen, *Refugees in Britain*.

[16]While some other refugee groups have special schemes supposedly enabling access to the UK, such as the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, neither compares with HfU in terms of numbers of people welcomed, political investment, entitlements afforded to refugees, or how they are housed.

[17]Dorothea Hilhorst and Bram J. Jansen, 'Humanitarian space as arena: A perspective on the everyday politics of aid', *Development and Change*, 41:6 (2010), pp. 1117–39; Liisa H. Malkki, *The Need to Help: The Domestic Arts of International Humanitarianism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015); Lisa Smirl, *Spaces of Aid: How Cars, Compounds and Hotels Shape Humanitarianism* (London: Zed Books, 2015).

[18]Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); Emily Baughan and Bronwen Everill, 'Empire and humanitarianism: A preface', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*,

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

which spaces are intelligible as humanitarian spaces, commonly thought of as public (e.g. refugee or internal displacement camps, food distribution centres, water and sanitation facilities) but in this context shifted to the intimate space of the home.

Second, we suggest that HfU represents a unique case of refugee hospitality and private humanitarian action, reliant on inherent notions of the 'home' as a safe space. HfU incorporates the home as a site of patriotic and humanitarian practice, and a place of sanctuary, refuge, support, and intimacy – capturing the blurring of the personal and the international in specific gendered and racialised ways.[19] Finally, we show how HfU's bordering practices cannot be understood outside of often hypocritical, violent, gendered, and racialised humanitarian and refugee regimes. Hospitality is never a simple offering of goods, services, or space; rather, it entails 'the right and power of the host over the guest, thereby implying a form of dominance'.[20] This tension is embedded in HfU – a scheme of inclusion and exclusion, generosity and violence, solidarity and conflict.[21]

Before proceeding, a brief note on terminology. Despite the fact that Ukrainians do not legally hold the status of 'asylum seeker' or 'refugee' in the UK (they receive specific visas granting them the right to stay for three years, work, study, access public services, and claim benefits),[22] we use the term 'refugee' and 'refugees' to describe those hosted under the HfU scheme as well as other refugees. We do this for two reasons. First, it simplifies a complicated set of legal and political categories such as 'visa holder', 'asylum seeker', 'refugee', or 'migrant'. While these are hugely significant for people and hold materially real consequences, they are not the main focus of this paper. Secondly, we have chosen to include Ukrainians discursively alongside others who have 'fled war, persecution or national disasters'[23] also to make a political point. While the UK government has chosen to treat refugees from, for example, Syria, Sudan, Afghanistan, and Iraq fundamentally differently from those from Ukraine, often pointing to how they arrived in the country (via 'legal' or 'regular' versus 'illegal' or 'irregular' routes), we want to highlight their similarities. This emphasises how differential forms of humanitarian hospitality are determined less by 'need' or 'right' and more by political choices. Finally, we understand humanitarianism as 'an array of embodied, situated practices emanating from the humanitarian desire to alleviate the suffering of others', rather than in a narrow institutional sense.[24]

Homes for Ukraine: 'Britain at its best'[25]

The international response to Ukraine's humanitarian crisis reflects several emerging or intensifying trends in humanitarian response, including challenges to principles of neutrality and impartiality, as well as responses to the 'middle-class' needs of many displaced Ukrainians in contrast to standard 'minimum humanitarian packages'.[26] The widespread private and informal networks

40:5 (2012), pp. 727–8; Alan Lester and Fae Dussart, *Colonization and the Origins of Humanitarian Governance: Protecting Aborigines across the Nineteenth-Century British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

[19]Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

[20]Hannah Bradby, Suruchi Thapar-Björkert, Sarah Hamed, and Beth Maina Ahlberg, '"You are still a guest in this country!": Understanding racism through the concepts of hospitality and hostility in healthcare encounters in Sweden', *Sociology*, 57:4 (2023), pp. 957–74 (p. 960).

[21]Monforte et al., 'Private hospitality', p. 674.

[22]Department for Levelling Up, '"Homes for Ukraine" scheme launches', available at: {https://www.gov.uk/government/news/homes-for-ukraine-scheme-launches}.

[23]UNHCR, 'What is a refugee?', available at: {https://www.unhcr.org/what-refugee}.

[24]Luděk Stavinoha and Kavita Ramakrishnan, 'Beyond humanitarian logics: Volunteer-refugee encounters in Chios and Paris', *Humanity*, 11:2 (2020), pp. 165–86 (p. 166).

[25]Aine Fox, 'Gove's "Britain at its best" message for those hosting Ukrainians branded "hollow"', *The Independent* (14 March 2023), available at: {https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/michael-gove-homes-for-ukraine-scheme-b2300223.html}.

[26]Jessica Alexander, 'Is Ukraine the next tipping point for humanitarian aid reform?', *The New Humanitarian* (25 July 2022), available at: {https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2022/07/25/Ukraine-aid-reform-local-donors-neutrality};

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of volunteer groups, community groups, and individuals – providing food, transport, housing, and more to those displaced – is another such trend visible in the international responses to the Ukrainian crisis.[27] This 'wave of grassroots humanitarianism',[28] characterised by the expanding role of non-traditional aid providers, challenges 'narrow assumptions of what makes a humanitarian'.[29]

Since the beginning of the war, the UK has provided £347 million in humanitarian assistance, the vast majority via UN and Red Cross agencies,[30] plus an additional £127 million allocated in June 2023,[31] with a focus on the most vulnerable, including 'women and children'.[32] These are significant sums, and, while one should be cautious with historical comparisons, this is more than the UK spent over two decades in Afghanistan.[33] This differentiated response is echoed domestically in the UK, notably through HfU. HfU encourages members of the public to host Ukrainian refugees in their homes for a minimum of six months. In return, the UK government provides a payment of £350 a month for the first 12 months, increasing to £500 a month for a total of two years.[34] Some councils provide 'top up' payments to retain hosts, and while community groups and organisations can host as well, the scheme requires a named person as the sponsor.[35] In launching HfU, government representatives appealed directly to public compassion, a sense of civic responsibility, and a patriotic duty. HfU would function, according to Local Government Association chairman James Jamieson, 'to support communities who wish to offer assistance to those fleeing the devastating conflict'[36] and has been described as 'one of the fastest, biggest and most generous visa programmes in British history'.[37] At its launch, parallels were drawn to historical instances of private humanitarian responses in the UK, notably the 'Kinder Transport' response during the Second World War, hailed as an 'act of culture-defining hospitality'.[38]

The patriotic sentiments expressed at the launch of the scheme and the frequent calls to care and compassion bring into sharp relief just how differently Ukrainian refugees are treated compared to others arriving in the UK.[39] In particular, the scale of HfU can be contrasted with the

Zainab Moallin, Karen Hargrave, and Patrick Saez, 'Navigating narratives in Ukraine: Humanitarian response amid solidarity and resistance', Humanitarian Policy Group, ODI, 2023.

[27]Alexander, 'Is Ukraine the next tipping point'; Elizabeth Cullen Dunn, 'A wave of grassroots humanitarianism is supporting millions of Ukrainian refugees', *The Conversation* (March 10, 2022), available at: {http://theconversation.com/a-wave-of-grassroots-humanitarianism-is-supporting-millions-of-ukrainian-refugees-178584}; Abby Stoddard, Paul Harvey, Nigel Timmins, Varvara Pakhomenko, Meriah-Jo Breckenridge, and Monica Czwarno, 'Enabling the local response: Emerging humanitarian priorities in Ukraine March–May 2022', Humanitarian Outcomes, 2022.

[28]Dunn, 'A wave of grassroots humanitarianism'.

[29]Alexander, 'Is Ukraine the next tipping point'.

[30]FCDO, 'UK government's humanitarian response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine', available at: {https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-governments-humanitarian-response-to-russias-invasion-of-ukraine-facts-and-figures/}.

[31]Prime Minister's Office, 'Global businesses pledge to back Ukraine's recovery as PM sets out major financial package', available at: {https://www.gov.uk/government/news/global-businesses-pledge-to-back-ukraines-recovery-as-pm-sets-out-major-financial-package}.

[32]FCDO, 'UK government's humanitarian response'.

[33]'UK aid to Afghanistan: Country portfolio review', Independent Commission for Aid Impact, 2022.

[34]Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 'Becoming a sponsor: Homes for Ukraine', available at: {https://www.gov.uk/guidance/becoming-a-sponsor-homes-for-ukraine}.

[35]Mark Smulian, 'Councils topping up Homes for Ukraine payments amid homelessness fears' (14 November 2022), available at: {https://www.lgcplus.com/services/housing/councils-topping-up-homes-for-ukraine-payments-amid-homelessness-fears-14-11-2022/}.

[36]Department for Levelling Up, '"Homes for Ukraine" scheme'.

[37]Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 'New over £650 million support package for Ukrainians sees increased "thank you" payments for longer-term hosts', available at: {https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-over-650m-support-package-for-ukrainians-sees-increased-thank-you-payments-for-longer-term-hosts}.

[38]Department for Levelling Up, '"Homes for Ukraine" scheme'.

[39]McFadyen, *Refugees in Britain*; Leah Zamore, 'Europe's open door for Ukrainians reinforces a double standard on refugees', *World Politics Review* (3 March 2022), available at: {https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/for-europe-refugees-from-ukraine-are-welcome/}.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

UK's resettlement of Syrian refugees[40] and the widespread failure of resettlement initiatives for Afghan refugees after the withdrawal of Western forces from Afghanistan in 2021.[41] As noted by one refugee support charity, 'Ukrainians … lived in people's homes but Afghans were left in hotels for months.'[42] On the whole, the welcome offered to Ukrainians – racialised as white – contrasts sharply to the heavy-handed responses by European states in general to refugees from the 'Global South' (e.g. Syria, Afghanistan, Sudan), who are met with increasingly limited options for asylum, militarised border guards, detention centres, routine pushbacks, and forcible returns, reflecting 'a two-tiered system of robust protections for Europeans and closed-door policies for non-European refugees.'[43]

The matching of hosts and guests in the HfU scheme can happen in numerous ways, some more formalised than others. Immediately after the scheme was launched, charities warned that it could operate as 'Tinder for sex traffickers', and the UNHCR requested the UK stop women and children being matched with single men.[44] The scheme is primarily managed by local councils responsible for criminal checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service, accommodation checks, and supporting Ukrainians when hosting arrangements fall through, end, or they choose to leave. Pressures on local councils are therefore significant. As James Jamieson stated less than a year after the scheme was launched, 'We are deeply concerned at the growing number of Ukrainians presenting as homeless … and in particular the significant rise in the number of those who arrived through the [HfU] scheme.'[45] Worries persist after funding to local governments for each Ukrainian refugee hosted was nearly halved, from £10,500 per person to £5,900 in January 2023.[46]

Despite these challenges, it has been suggested that HfU 'should be a blueprint for the future.'[47] Reports by the refugee charity Sanctuary Foundation describe HfU as the UK's 'most successful refugee initiative', representing 'an innovative and highly effective shift in approach' to providing sanctuary and 'a model for the future.'[48] Other charities also point to the scheme as informing future

[40]Roughly 20,000 Syrians arrived in the UK under the 2014–21 Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, under which refugees were referred for resettlement by the UNHCR. See UNHCR, 'The UK's Syria Resettlement Programme: Looking back, and ahead', available at: {https://www.unhcr.org/uk/news/announcements/uks-syria-resettlement-progamme-looking-back-and-ahead}. See also Deena Dajani, 'Refuge under austerity: The UK's refugee settlement schemes and the multiplying practices of bordering', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 44:1 (2021), pp. 58–76.

[41]By June 2023, about 21,500 people had arrived in the UK from Afghanistan under the two main Afghan resettlement schemes: the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy and Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme. Many have been housed in 'temporary accommodation' (especially hotels) for years and now face eviction. Between 2022 and 2023, more Afghans reached the UK by small boat than via resettlement schemes. See Alex Forsyth, Brian Wheeler, and Becky Morton, 'Afghan refugees moved out of hotels facing homelessness', *BBC News* (14 August 2023), available at: {https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-66396052}; Peter W. Walsh and Madeleine Sumption, 'Afghan asylum seekers and refugees in the UK' (16 October 2023), available at: {https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/afghan-asylum-seekers-and-refugees-in-the-uk/}.

[42]'Refugees from Ukraine and Afghanistan treated differently, charity warns', *BBC News* (31 July 2022), available at: {https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-wiltshire-62334985}.

[43]Zamore, 'Europe's open door'. Other recent analyses of HfU also highlight these dynamics, e.g. Burrell, 'Domesticating responsibility'; Crossley, '"Homes for Ukraine"'.

[44]Rajeev Syal, 'Stop matching lone female Ukraine refugees with single men, UK told', *The Guardian* (13 April 2022), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/13/stop-matching-lone-female-ukraine-refugees-with-single-men-uk-told}; Mark Townsend, 'UK's Homes for Ukraine scheme risks operating as "Tinder for sex traffickers", say charities', *The Guardian* (26 March 2022), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/mar/26/uk-homes-for-ukraine-scheme-risks-operating-as-tinder-for-sex-traffickers-say-charities}.

[45]Adam Rasmi, 'Britain's effort to house Ukrainians isn't going to plan', *Time*, available at: {https://time.com/6237361/uk-homes-for-ukraine-refugees-homelessness/}. Matthew Weaver, 'Homes for Ukraine funding halt could put thousands on streets, says watchdog', *The Guardian* (17 October 2023), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/oct/17/homes-for-ukraine-funding-halt-could-put-thousands-on-streets-says-watchdog}.

[46]Lulu Meade, Maria Lalic, Georgina Sturge, and Cassie Barton, 'Anniversary of the Homes for Ukraine scheme', House of Commons Library, 2023.

[47]Camilla Cavendish, 'What happens next to Britain's Ukrainian refugees?', *The Financial Times* (10 November 2022), available at: {https://www.ft.com/content/405b22b2-3b1f-499d-a794-e3a9d4326740}.

[48]The scheme's 'success' and potential is attributed in part to its 'cost effectiveness' and 'better value for money' compared to other refugee accommodation options. See Krish Kandiah, 'The UK's Homes for Ukraine scheme: A model for the future?',

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

crisis-response initiatives.[49] According to one prominent academic, HfU 'is a chance to think about the UK contributing to best practice globally',[50] while another report suggests that the success of the scheme 'provides the foundations of a model that can be considered for the future'.[51] Charities have also presented HfU as reflecting 'longstanding government policy to provide sanctuary and asylum to those in need',[52] suggesting that 'providing sanctuary for refugees at home has put to bed once and for all the notion that post-Brexit Britain is in danger of retreating to become a little England'.[53] While we do not dispute the positive outcomes of this scheme, nor the potentials for expansion, we argue that it needs to be understood within a wider landscape and history of humanitarian response and situated in relation to the UK's increasingly restrictive and violent wider response to refugees.

Private refugee hosting as humanitarian practice

Humanitarian activities – and the humanitarian field more broadly – have long been shaped by a distinction between 'private' and 'public' spheres and roles, responsibilities, and forms of action.[54] In the Global North, humanitarian action has tended to be understood as something explicitly public, led by large international NGOs and funded by states. However, the history of humanitarian action, and the development of an international humanitarian system, is one of complex and overlapping relationships between public and private action, where the 'traditional' model of the Global North is by no means the only one.[55] Humanitarianism has 'always been a spatially extensive and ambivalent discourse and practice, exerted through different agencies and expressed in different registers',[56] and HfU reflects a continuation of this reality.

In recent years, scholars have paid increasing attention to what is variously called 'grassroots humanitarianism',[57] 'volunteer humanitarianism',[58] 'everyday humanitarianism',[59] 'citizen aid',[60] or

Forced Migration Review, 72 (2023), pp. 13–17; 'Waves of compassion: The Homes for Ukraine scheme one year on', Sanctuary Foundation, 2023.

[49] Luke Tryl and Tyron Surmon, 'Welcoming Ukrainians: The hosts' perspective', More in Common, 2023.

[50] Kandiah, 'Waves of compassion', p. 14.

[51] Kate Garbers, Audrey Lumley-Sapanski, and Rebecca Brown, 'Homes for Ukraine: Learnings to inform and shape future hosting schemes', University of Nottingham Rights Lab, 2023, p. 55.

[52] Kandiah, 'Waves of compassion', p. 11.

[53] Tryl and Surmon, 'Welcoming Ukrainians', p. 31.

[54] Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*; Eleanor Davey, John Borton, and Matthew Foley, 'A history of the humanitarian system: Western origins and foundations', ODI, 2013; Mark Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War: Governing the World of Peoples* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007).

[55] Despite a general shift in the 20th century towards public humanitarianism led by multilateral institutions and state agencies, private contributions have continued to represent an important source of humanitarian funding. Private humanitarian donations have increased in recent decades, especially in response to crises or disasters with high media coverage. See Gilles Carbonnier, *Humanitarian Economics: War, Disaster, and the Global Aid Market* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[56] Lester and Dussart, *Colonization*, p. 3.

[57] Fechter and Schwittay, 'Citizen aid'; Darragh McGee and Juliette Pelham, 'Politics at play: Locating human rights, refugees and grassroots humanitarianism in the Calais Jungle', *Leisure Studies*, 37:1 (2018), pp. 22–32; Elisa Sandri, '"Volunteer humanitarianism": Volunteers and humanitarian aid in the Jungle refugee camp of Calais', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44:1 (2018), pp. 65–80.

[58] Sandri, '"Volunteer humanitarianism"'; Elisa Sandri and Fosco Bugoni, 'Makeshift humanitarians: Informal humanitarian aid across European close(d) borders', in Ayesha Ahmad and James Smith (eds), *Humanitarian Action and Ethics* (London: Zed Books, 2018), pp. 79–93.

[59] Nefissa Naguib, 'Middle East encounters 69 degrees north latitude: Syrian refugees and everyday humanitarianism in the Arctic', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 49:4 (2017), pp. 645–60; Louise Olliff, 'From resettled refugees to humanitarian actors: Refugee diaspora organizations and everyday humanitarianism', *New Political Science*, 40:4 (2018), pp. 658–74; Richey, 'Conceptualizing "everyday humanitarianism"'; Consolata Raphael Sulley and Lisa Ann Richey, 'The messy practice of decolonising a concept: Everyday humanitarianism in Tanzania', *Review of International Studies*, 49:3 (2023), pp. 390–403.

[60] Fechter and Schwittay, 'Citizen aid'; Deirdre McKay and Padmapani Perez, 'Citizen aid, social media and brokerage after disaster', *Third World Quarterly*, 40:10 (2019), pp. 1903–20.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

'alternative humanitarianism'.[61] This trend describes private individuals participating substantially in actions which can be defined as 'humanitarian' without being or becoming professional humanitarians, outside the boundaries and structures of formal, professional humanitarian activity.[62] This usually involves informal, small-scale, privately funded forms of aid, often provided outside the framework of international aid agencies, NGOs, or governments, by 'ordinary people making ethical decisions about providing assistance to others'[63] – that is, 'the everyday humanitarian actions of ordinary citizens' responding to suffering in times of crisis.[64] This includes, for example, private individuals, grassroots organisations, and volunteer networks providing food, clothing, shelter materials, first aid, and language and legal support to refugees in places of first arrival, in countries of passage, and in places of destination, including in camps and settlements, often due to a lack of wider humanitarian and government supports.[65]

This 'everyday humanitarianism' has also extended into people's homes and coincided with the emergence of private refugee-hosting initiatives, where 'ordinary citizens' (private individuals or households) host refugees in their homes.[66] This practice is alternately termed 'volunteer refugee hosting',[67] 'family hosting',[68] 'domestic hospitality',[69] 'private hospitality',[70] 'intimate solidarity',[71] 'home accommodation',[72] or 'homestay accommodation'.[73] In Europe, this practice grew in response to the so-called refugee crisis from 2015 onwards, increasing sharply following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, initiated by grassroots volunteer networks, private organisations (e.g. churches, charities), or government authorities.[74] In the UK, charities such Refugees at Home, founded in 2016, and Reset UK, founded in 2018, have been established to offer alternative accommodation for refugees and to enable individuals and communities to house refugees in a more streamlined manner – including under HfU.[75]

While on the increase, these private and volunteer forms of refugee support are not new.[76] Nor is this everyday humanitarianism by any stretch primarily European or British – quite the

[61] Armine Ishkanian and Isabel Shutes, 'Who needs the experts? The politics and practices of alternative humanitarianism and its relationship to NGOs', *Voluntas*, 33:2 (2022), pp. 397–407.

[62] Richey, 'Conceptualizing "everyday humanitarianism"'.

[63] Fechter and Schwittay, 'Citizen aid', p. 1770.

[64] Sulley and Richey, 'The messy practice', p. 390.

[65] Hanne Haaland and Hege Wallevik, 'Beyond crisis management? The role of citizen initiatives for global solidarity in humanitarian aid: The case of Lesvos', *Third World Quarterly*, 40:10 (2019), pp. 1869–83; McGee and Pelham, 'Politics at play'; Naguib, 'Middle East encounters'; Donatella della Porta (ed.), *Solidarity Mobilizations in the 'Refugee Crisis': Contentious Moves* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); Sandri, '"Volunteer humanitarianism"'; Stavinoha and Ramakrishnan, 'Beyond humanitarian logics'.

[66] Gunaratnam, 'Empathy and intimacy'; Maestri and Monforte, 'Who deserves compassion'; Merikoski, 'Contentious hospitality'; Monforte et al., 'Private hospitality'; Ann-Christin Wagner, 'Giving aid inside the home: Humanitarian house visits, performative refugeehood, and social control of Syrians in Jordan', *Migration and Society*, 1:1 (2018), pp. 36–50.

[67] Gunaratnam, 'Empathy and intimacy'.

[68] Guanyu Jason Ran and Hélène Join-Lambert, 'Influence of family hosting on refugee integration and its implication on social work practice: The French case', *European Journal of Social Work*, 23:3 (2020), pp. 461–74.

[69] Paolo Boccagni and Daniela Giudici, 'Entering into domestic hospitality for refugees: A critical inquiry through a multi-scalar view of home', *Identities*, 29:6 (2022), pp. 787–806.

[70] Monforte et al., 'Private hospitality'.

[71] Ashley Witcher and Victoria Fumado, 'Informal citizen volunteering with border crossers in Greece: The informality double-bind and intimate solidarity', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 48:17 (2022), pp. 4049–65.

[72] Merikoski, 'Contentious hospitality'.

[73] Matteo Bassoli and Clément Luccioni, 'Homestay accommodation for refugees (in Europe): A literature review', *International Migration Review*, 58:3 (2023), pp. 1532–67.

[74] Bassoli and Luccioni, 'Homestay accommodation'.

[75] Other charities supporting private hosting through HfU have been established specifically in response to the crisis in Ukraine, such as Opora (https://opora.uk) and Ukrainian Sponsorship Pathway UK (https://www.uspuk.org), both founded in 2022.

[76] Michael Garkisch, Jens Heidingsfelder, and Markus Beckmann, 'Third sector organizations and migration: A systematic literature review on the contribution of third sector organizations in view of flight, migration and refugee crises', *Voluntas*, 28 (2017), pp. 1839–80; Lucy Mayblin and Poppy James, 'Asylum and refugee support in the UK: Civil society filling the gaps?', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 45:3 (2019), pp. 375–94.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

contrary. Forms of grassroots or volunteer responses to humanitarian and displacement crises within the Global South are characterised by long-standing forms of private support: 'the invisible force of who is first on the scene … but who is never recognised for upholding humanitarianism'.[77] These include survivor- and community-led responses such as refugee-led humanitarian protection and assistance in Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey, in Kenya and Uganda, and elsewhere,[78] and localised, citizen-led humanitarian responses to environmental, health, and displacement crises from Tanzania to Syria to Pakistan to Bangladesh.[79] In both the Global South and Global North, these private responses are often driven by geographic proximity to sites of humanitarian crisis and response[80] as well as reflecting commitments to compassion, empathy, and solidarity[81] and political resistance to exclusionary, hostile, and punitive state policies regarding refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants.[82]

However, such everyday humanitarianism might also be interpreted as an 'outsourcing' of humanitarian responsibility, away from the state and onto private individuals and households and wider civil society, echoing critiques of neoliberal shifts in the humanitarian field more broadly.[83] Private hosting in the UK, Canada, Australia, and elsewhere occurs in contexts of private refugee sponsorship, where associations, groups, or individuals fund and support refugee resettlement. While reflecting a practice of trans-border connection and collective action,[84] it also reflects a neoliberal outsourcing of states' refugee resettlement commitments and positions private citizens as migration management actors and gatekeepers for resettlement,[85] representing a privatisation of states' humanitarian programmes.[86] This parallels broader processes of neoliberal privatisation of accommodation for refugees and asylum seekers.[87]

'Modern' humanitarianism is therefore a 'product of a contradictory mixture of aims and ambitions: encompassing self-interest, social improvement, religious conviction, and scientific and philosophical discourses', many of which do not sit easily with one another.[88] The uneasy and contradictory relationship between compassion and power, authority and ethics, and force and

[77]Tammam Aloudat and Themrise Khan, 'Decolonising humanitarianism or humanitarian aid?', *PLOS Global Public Health*, 2:4 (2022), pp. 1–4 (p. 2).

[78]Justin Corbett, Nils Carstensen, and Simone Di Vicenz, 'Survivor- and community-led crisis response: Practical experience and learning', Humanitarian Practice Network, ODI, 2021; Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Yusif M. Qasmiyeh, 'Refugee neighbours and hostipitality', *The Critique* (5 January 2017), available at: {http://www.thecritique.com/articles/refugee-neighbours-hostipitality-2/}; Kate Pincock, Alexander Betts, and Evan Easton-Calabria, *The Global Governed? Refugees as Providers of Protection and Assistance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

[79]Aloudat and Khan, 'Decolonising humanitarianism'; David Lewis, 'Humanitarianism, civil society and the Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh', *Third World Quarterly*, 40:10 (2019), pp. 1884–902; Sulley and Richey, 'The messy practice'.

[80]Fechter and Schwittay, 'Citizen aid'; Sandri, '"Volunteer humanitarianism"'.

[81]Óscar G. Agustín and Martin B. Jørgensen, *Solidarity and the 'Refugee Crisis' in Europe* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); della Porta, *Solidarity*.

[82]Óscar G. Agustín and Martin B. Jørgensen, 'Solidarity cities and cosmopolitanism from below: Barcelona as a refugee city', *Social Inclusion*, 7:2 (2019), pp. 198–207; Gunaratnam, 'Empathy and intimacy'; Monforte et al., 'Private hospitality'; Sandri, '"Volunteer humanitarianism"'.

[83]Gemma Bird and Davide Schmid, 'Humanitarianism and the "migration fix": On the implication of NGOs in racial capitalism and the management of relative surplus populations', *Geopolitics*, 28:3 (2023), pp. 1235–61; Mayblin and James, 'Asylum and refugee support'.

[84]Jennifer Hyndman, Johanna Reynolds, Biftu Yousuf, Dawit Demoz and Kathy Sherrell, 'Sustaining the private sponsorship of resettled refugees in Canada', *Frontiers in Human Dynamics*, 3 (2021), pp. 1–13.

[85]Dajani, 'Refuge under austerity'; Gabriella D'avino, 'Framing community sponsorship in the context of the UK's hostile environment', *Critical Social Policy*, 42:2 (2022), pp. 327–49; Emine Fidan Elcioglu, 'Neoliberal fatigue: The effects of private refugee sponsorship on Canadians' political consciousness', *Critical Sociology*, 49:1 (2023), pp. 97–113; Genevieve Ritchie, 'Civil society, the state, and private sponsorship: The political economy of refugee resettlement', *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 37:6 (2018), pp. 663–75.

[86]Asher Lazarus Hirsch, Khanh Hoang, and Anthea Vogl, 'Australia's private refugee sponsorship program: Creating complementary pathways or privatising humanitarianism?', *Refuge*, 35:2 (2019), pp. 109–22.

[87]Jonathan Darling, *Systems of Suffering: Dispersal and the Denial of Asylum* (London: Pluto Press, 2022).

[88]S. M. Reid-Henry, 'Humanitarianism as liberal diagnostic: Humanitarian reason and the political rationalities of the liberal will-to-care', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 39:3 (2014), pp. 418–31 (p. 418).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

altruism is part and parcel of the history, conceptualisation, and practice of humanitarianism. As Polly Pallister-Wilkins argues, 'while humanitarian action might succeed in saving the lives of those migrants exposed to border violence, it simultaneously (re)produces and structures violence'.[89] This tension persists in the practice (and politics) of HfU. In the following sections we unpack how refugee hosting as humanitarian response challenges existing notions of the public and the private, how the 'home' is constructed, and the gendered and racialised power dimensions underpinning the scheme.

Public duty, private spaces

HfU is funded by the UK's Official Development Assistance under what is called 'in-donor refugee costs'. This funding would normally go to overseas development and humanitarian aid but has in recent years been increasingly used within UK borders.[90] While this shift in the geography of funding is politically expedient for the government, it also carries some important conceptual reframings. The expansion of the 'humanitarian space', not only from the distant crisis-affected areas typically associated with humanitarian action,[91] but from the public settings of asylum centres or hotels housing refugees and into people's private homes, signals a significant reconceptualisation of *what* humanitarianism is and *where* it takes place. Private refugee hosting challenges fundamental binaries of public and private, as a form of humanitarianism taking place 'within the intimate setting of the household and everyday domestic practices'.[92] As such, it signifies a unique blurring of private and public dimensions, where private homes are offered up for a public duty. This is especially true with HfU, which is explicitly part of a state-defined and -led programme and reflects a more formalised private response mobilised by the state – an 'institutionalised private hospitality'[93] or 'institutionalized solidarity'[94] – rather than the informal 'grassroots mobilisation' described elsewhere.[95] In this scheme, hosts are performing a humanitarian public service in the intimate space of the home.

Conceptions of 'public' and 'private' are complex and vary across contexts and over time yet are characterised by assumed distinctions: 'the open and revealed versus the hidden or withdrawn; and the collective versus the individual'.[96] These distinctions are blurred in the context of schemes such as HfU. The act of hosting takes place in an intimate, domestic space, but one which is fundamentally also public and international in its framing. The tensions and continuities between the domestic and the international, the private and the public, the hidden and the visible are not surprising to anyone concerned with the gendered dimensions of global politics. As Cynthia Enloe writes, 'The personal is international. The international is personal'[97] – and private hosting as a form of humanitarian practice bears this out. These private actions occur in response to – and are articulated within – wider public forms of hospitality (that is, government responses to humanitarian

[89]Polly Pallister-Wilkins, *Humanitarian Borders: Unequal Mobility and Saving Lives* (London: Verso, 2022), p. 121.

[90]Such use of ODA funds may change once the UK government implements the Illegal Migration Act, as 'such aid must only be used for humanitarian purposes and not any form of coercion, such as detention or deportation'. See 'UK aid funding for refugees in the UK', Independent Commission for Aid Impact, 2022); 'Home Office asylum costs could no longer be counted as aid under Illegal Migration Act', available at: {https://icai.independent.gov.uk/home-office-asylum-costs-could-no-longer-be-counted-as-aid-under-illegal-migration-act/}.

[91]Hilhorst and Jansen, 'Humanitarian space'.

[92]Ala Sirriyeh, 'Hosting strangers: Hospitality and family practices in fostering unaccompanied refugee young people', *Child and Family Social Work*, 18:1 (2013), pp. 5–14 (p. 5). See also Burrell, 'Domesticating responsibility'.

[93]Clément Luccioni, 'Migration, hospitality, justice: Looking at refugee hosting initiatives to question the migration/hospitality nexus', *ILCEA*, 50 (2023), pp. 1–16 (p. 6).

[94]Agustín and Jørgensen, *Solidarity and the 'Refugee Crisis'*, p. 42.

[95]Ishkanian and Shutes, 'Who needs the experts?', p. 398.

[96]Leonore Davidoff, 'Gender and the "great divide": Public and private in British gender history', *Journal of Women's History*, 15:1 (2003), pp. 11–27 (p. 12).

[97]Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, p. 343.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

crisis) and the wider 'public worlds' of migration systems and policies.[98] Indeed, private hosting itself 'connects the private home to societal debates and mobilisations' around migration and asylum, and welcome and belonging,[99] pointing to the deeply political (and public) nature of the 'private' home.[100] This is reiterated in official communication from the UK government stating that 'without the generosity of all our hosts, we simply would not have been able to give shelter to so many of those in need'.[101]

These connections are illustrated in multiple ways. Research on HfU point to intersecting motivations for hosting, including a desire to help Ukrainians fleeing Russia's aggression, a response to the injustice and immorality of Russia's invasion, and a sense of connection to people in Ukraine, with extensive media coverage of the Russian invasion playing an important role.[102] Private expressions of compassion and generosity through hosting are directly associated with collective national action and conceptions of national identity, described in political statements and local authority guidance materials as 'living up to the values we all cherish and … a central part of a national effort driven by compassion',[103] '[standing] together to support [Ukraine's] displaced people'[104] and reflecting 'the very best of our country'.[105] A report by the charity More in Common locates HfU within Britain's 'proud history of those fleeing conflict and persecution', stating that the scheme 'has shown Britain at its unarguable best' and demonstrates that 'supporting those in need is just what this country does'.[106] Reports by the Sanctuary Foundation situate HfU within 'a longstanding British tradition of providing sanctuary and asylum to those in need', rooted in a 'generous impulse' that is 'a reflection of British values'.[107] At times, hosting is expressly associating with 'doing their bit' for a wider national cause, as a response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. For example, a statement by More in Common notes that the UK 'has a proud history of leading the fight against tyrants … HfU sits firmly within that tradition', with a later report describing hosts as doing 'their small part to stand up to Putin'.[108]

The politics of home and hospitality

As is evident, HfU incorporates the home as a site of patriotic and humanitarian practice, a place of sanctuary, refuge, and support. The various and contentious meanings of the home have long been studied within social science, especially within feminist scholarship. The home is, as Katherine Brickell writes, 'one of the most idealized sites of human existence'.[109] Alison Blunt and Robyn Dowling refer to the home as a place or physical location where people live but also 'an idea and an imaginary that is imbued with feelings' – at once 'a material dwelling and … an affective space'.[110] Or, as Deborah Chambers explains, home is both a location and 'an emotional desire'.[111] While home is

[98] Bassoli and Luccioni, 'Homestay accommodation'; Monforte et al., 'Private hospitality'; Sirriyeh, 'Hosting strangers'.

[99] Merikoski, 'Contentious hospitality', p. 100.

[100] Alison Blunt and Robyn Dowling, *Home* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022).

[101] Michael Gove, 'Email to hosts: Information on the Homes for Ukraine programme' (1 March 2023), available at: {https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homes-for-ukraine-emails-to-guests-and-hosts/email-to-hosts-information-on-the-homes-for-ukraine-programme}.

[102] Garbers et al., 'Homes for Ukraine'; Tryl and Surmon, 'Welcoming Ukrainians'.

[103] Welsh Government, 'Homes for Ukraine: Guidance for hosts and sponsors' (4 April 2022), available at: {https://www.gov.wales/homes-ukraine-guidance-hosts-and-sponsors}.

[104] Gove, 'Email to hosts'.

[105] 'Gloucestershire Homes for Ukraine sponsor guide', Gloucestershire County Council, 2023, p. 1.

[106] Tryl and Surmon, 'Welcoming Ukrainians', pp. 3, 31, 32.

[107] Kandiah, 'The UK's Homes for Ukraine', p. 13; 'Waves of compassion', p. 10.

[108] More in Common, 'Letter to the Prime Minister' (2022), p. 1; Tryl and Surmon, 'Welcoming Ukrainians', p. 3.

[109] Katherine Brickell, '"Mapping" and "doing" critical geographies of home', P*rogress in Human Geography*, 36:2 (2012), pp. 225–44 (p. 225).

[110] Blunt and Dowling, *Home*, pp. 9, 28.

[111] Deborah Chambers, *Cultural Ideals of Home: The Social Dynamics of Domestic Space* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020), p. 5.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

understood in a multiplicity of ways, cutting across these diverse understandings is a recognition of its connections to intimate relations and the domestic sphere, as well as how it generates borders and boundaries.[112] The concept of home becomes particularly complex in relation to displacement and migration, as it is imagined and reimagined, made and remade, left and returned to, and lived and felt in contexts of mobility.[113]

The importance of the home being represented as a place of sanctuary and safety – 'idealised as a haven'[114] – is crucial in the public representation of the HfU scheme. In promotional materials, policy statements, and guidance documents, the home is 'cast as a uniform space of safety and familiarity', a space of refuge, protection, security, and comfort.[115] Statements and materials on private hosting by charities such a Reset, Refugees at Home, and Sanctuary Foundation and by governments and local authorities consistently describe hosting arrangements in terms of safety and stability, refuge and sanctuary, comfort and welcome, and care, compassion, and warmth.[116] An illustrative statement from the Sanctuary Foundation reads, 'The vast majority of hosts have been welcoming and continue to offer a safe haven to their matched refugee families.'[117]

Statements from political figures, local authorities, and charities reflect both material and affective dimensions of the 'home'. Secretary of State Michael Gove has offered 'special thanks' to 'families across the UK who opened their homes and their hearts to Ukrainians fleeing war'.[118] According to the former Minister for Refugees, 'the response of the British public has been incredible, opening their hearts and homes to the people of Ukraine'.[119] Refugees at Home likewise calls on 'individuals and families … who are willing to open their hearts and their homes to people in need'.[120] This framing of 'open homes and hearts', while certainly a cliché, speaks to the way that hosting is simultaneously and explicitly constructed in both material *and* deeply emotional terms. As described by the Refugee Council's chief executive, 'Ukrainian families arriving here need a warm welcome, safe housing … emotional support, and connection.'[121]

On offer here is something more than to simply to allow entry into the state or the home. As Nick Gill argues, 'welcome' 'involves conveying to the newcomer the positive reception of their presence' – it relies upon human warmth and 'as such it cannot be mechanistic and unfeeling … Welcome demands intimacy.'[122] HfU statements and documents explicitly reflect these assumptions about affective responsibilities associated with hosting and hospitality – warmth of welcome, emotional support and understanding, kindness and friendship, and more. As stated in the Welsh Government's guidance for hosts, 'You are supporting a person or a family fleeing war who may be significantly distressed and vulnerable. *We know* … you will provide a warm welcome along

[112] Blunt and Dowling, *Home*, p. 16.

[113] Sara Ahmed, Claudia Castañeda, Anne-Marie Fortier, and Mimi Sheller (eds), *Uprootings/Regroundings: Questions of Home and Migration* (Oxford: Berg, 2003); Paolo Boccagni, *Migration and the Search for Home: Mapping Domestic Space in Migrants' Everyday Lives* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

[114] Chambers, *Cultural Ideals*, p. 1.

[115] Brickell, '"Mapping" and "doing"', p. 225.

[116] 'Welcome pack: Homes for Ukraine in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole – Guidance for guests', Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, 2022; Department for Levelling Up, '"Homes for Ukraine" scheme launches'; Kandiah, 'The UK's Homes for Ukraine'; Scottish Government, 'Super Sponsor Scheme and Homes for Ukraine: Guidance for hosts', available at: {https://www.gov.scot/publications/ukraine-super-sponsor-scheme-guidance-for-hosts/}; Welsh Government, 'Homes for Ukraine'.

[117] Kandiah, 'Waves of compassion', p. 23.

[118] Department for Levelling Up, 'New over £650 million support package'.

[119] Jamie Grierson, 'UK opens more welcome hubs for Ukrainian refugees', *The Guardian* (3 April 2022), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/apr/03/uk-opens-more-welcome-hubs-for-ukrainian-refugees}.

[120] 'Refugees at Home impact report 2022–2023', Refugees at Home, 2023.

[121] Emily Dugan, 'Hundreds of Ukrainian refugees left homeless in England, data shows', *The Guardian* (16 June 2022), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/16/hundreds-of-ukrainian-refugees-left-homeless-in-england-data-shows}.

[122] Nick Gill, 'The suppression of welcome', *Fennia: International Journal of Geography*, 196:1 (2018), pp. 88–98 (p. 91).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

with generosity, understanding and support.'[123] An email to HfU hosts from Michael Gove refers to 'people who arrived as strangers, and are now hopefully becoming friends' and notes, '*We know* that sponsors are motivated by philanthropy and kindness.'[124]

In the most recent Office for National Statistics (ONS) survey of HfU hosts, 92 per cent reported that the accommodation provided to guests was their own home (as opposed to a separate housing entity owned by the host).[125] These arrangements therefore require 'the sharing of space, time, and daily routines' and daily exchanges through 'the mundane experience of family life'.[126] This might encourage 'intimate solidarity', social closeness, and emotional connections, which involve complex negotiations of trust, care, and intimacy and of mutual expectations and needs between hosts and guests.[127] HfU is therefore 'far more than a simple hosting arrangement', with hosts 'doing far more … than providing a safe place to stay'.[128] Studies of HfU hosting arrangements describe 'a re-visioning of the meaning and practice of family and family life' for hosts and guests.[129] This is linked to navigation of 'house rules' and routines and dynamics of communication and expression[130] – that is, the 'expectations and small practices of how individuals live together on a day-to-day basis'.[131]

The flip side of this, as some HfU materials acknowledge and as emphasised in research on the scheme, is that offering hospitality in one's home is never just an offering of space, services, or goods.[132] Hosts control the spaces, services, and goods offered to guests and determine processes and boundaries of inclusion and exclusion.[133] This 'creates an asymmetric relationship between the host, who is at home, and the guest, who is given a precarious right to stay'.[134] Hospitality is a 'deeply hierarchical and conditional' form of inclusion characterised by power asymmetries between host and guest.[135] As Gillian McFadyen explains, drawing on Jacques Derrida, in 'creating a home, you create a space with a border that is yours … The guest must cross over a border … in order to be included – hence the conditionality of the hospitality.'[136] Said differently, 'hospitality is always inseparable from power because it is an ability, capacity, or strength to receive and give shelter to a stranger, foreigner, or other'.[137] This is further complicated by how expressions of compassion and welcome contribute to the reproduction of asymmetrical power relations and boundaries of

[123] Welsh Government, 'Homes for Ukraine', pp. 20–1, emphasis added.

[124] Gove, 'Email to hosts', emphasis added.

[125] ONS, 'Experiences of Homes for Ukraine scheme sponsors'.

[126] Bassoli and Luccioni, 'Homestay accommodation', p. 1537; Monforte et al., 'Private hospitality', p. 683.

[127] Boccagni and Giudici, 'Entering into domestic hospitality'; Sirriyeh, 'Hosting strangers'; Witcher and Fumado, 'Informal citizen volunteering'.

[128] Garbers et al., 'Homes for Ukraine', p. 34.

[129] Arlene Vetere and Karen Shimwell, 'Safety and security in family life: Experiences of involuntary dislocation', *Journal of Family Theory and Review* 16:1 (2024), pp. 19–27 (p. 19).

[130] Garbers et al., 'Homes for Ukraine'; Tryl and Surmon, 'Welcoming Ukrainians'.

[131] Vetere and Shimwell, 'Safety and security', p. 4. Research on HfU highlights challenges associated with hosting, including the practicalities of having long-term guests, language and cultural differences, challenges in helping guests access services, and tensions associated with navigating interactions and communication in the home, contrasting routines and expectations, physical and emotional lack of space, and more. See Garbers et al., 'Homes for Ukraine'; Tryl and Surmon, 'Welcoming Ukrainians'.

[132] Garbers et al., 'Homes for Ukraine'; Refugees at Home, 'Information for hosts', available at: {https://refugeesathome.org/help-and-information/information-for-hosts/}; Reset, 'Homes for Ukraine toolkit', available at: {https://resetuk.org/toolkits/homes-for-ukraine-toolkit/}.

[133] Bradby et al., 'Understanding racism'; Gillian McFadyen, 'The language of labelling and the politics of hostipitality in the British asylum system', *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 18:3 (2016), pp. 599–617.

[134] Bassoli and Luccioni, 'Homestay accommodation', p. 1549.

[135] Katerina Rozakou, 'Socialities of solidarity: Revisiting the gift taboo in times of crises', *Social Anthropology*, 24:2 (2016), pp. 185–99 (p. 189).

[136] McFadyen, 'The language of labelling', p. 601.

[137] Pheng Cheah, 'To open: Hospitality and alienation', in Thomas Claviez (ed.), *The Conditions of Hospitality: Ethics, Politics, and Aesthetics on the Threshold of the Possible* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), pp. 57–80 (p. 57).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

inclusion and exclusion when linked to expectations of gratitude, reciprocity, or affection on the part of hosts[138] or when dynamics between hosts and guests (as providers and recipients of 'charity') challenge possibilities for relations of reciprocity.[139] Furthermore, they often hide the unequal distribution of compassion and its gendered and racialised underpinnings, to which we finally turn.

Gendered and racialised conditions of private hospitality

The public/private distinction – and in turn dominant conceptions of the home as part of the private or domestic rather than public space – is a profoundly gendered one, mapped onto categorisations of male and female, masculine and feminine.[140] In the Global North, the home has historically been defined in deeply gendered, racialised, and classed terms – in terms of a patriarchal, heterosexual, white, middle-class nuclear family, deeply rooted in constructions of nation and, in the UK, empire.[141] In turn, gendered and racialised logics are reflected in conceptions of care and hospitality as well as vulnerability and protection that underpin constructions of HfU arrangements, including through 'labour of care' regimes that surround hosting roles and portrayals and expectations of guests.

As Blunt and Dowling explain, gender and its intersections with race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, age, (dis)ability, and more, 'is crucial in lived experiences and imaginaries of home', including 'relations of caring and domestic labour, affective relations of belonging, or establishing connections between the individual, household, and society' as well as the relations of power and identities 'constituted through home'.[142] These patterns are reproduced both in *where* welcome takes place (that is, the home) and in *who* does (or is assumed to do) the labour of 'welcome' within the humanitarian hospitality regime. This 'labour of care' that the governance of migration and refuge more broadly requires is largely feminised and racialised[143] – and is reproduced within private hosting schemes such as HfU. In the context of hosting, this labour – 'without which state-centred, institutional … 'welcome' would not be possible'[144] – includes preparing and maintaining the home, nourishment and meeting basic needs, emotional support and intimacy, and more.[145] While it is of course is not only women who labour in the domestic sphere, recent studies show that in the UK women still perform the majority of household and caring labour.[146] According to the most recent ONS survey, the small majority of HfU sponsors (55 per cent) are women.[147] However, it is not necessarily the named sponsor who does most of the practical and emotional labour when it comes to hosting work, and research on HfU[148] and elsewhere[149] points to the particular responsibilities managed by women.

Within private refugee hosting more broadly, hosts tend to be white, 'native-born' or national citizens, middle- or upper-class, and middle-aged (58 per cent of HfU hosts are aged 50 and older and

[138] Bassoli and Luccioni, 'Homestay accommodation'; Serhat Karakayali, 'Feeling the scope of solidarity: The role of emotions for volunteers supporting refugees in Germany', *Social Inclusion*, 5:3 (2017), pp. 7–16; Monforte et al., 'Private hospitality'.

[139] Cameron Parsell and Andrew Clarke, 'Charity and shame: Towards reciprocity', *Social Problems*, 69:2 (2022), pp. 436–52.

[140] Blunt and Dowling, *Home*; Brickell, '"Mapping" and "doing"'; Chambers, *Cultural Ideals*; Davidoff, 'Gender and the "great divide"'.

[141] Ahmed et al., *Uprootings*; Blunt and Dowling, *Home*; Chambers, *Cultural Ideals*.

[142] Blunt and Dowling, *Home*, pp. 16, 29.

[143] Elisa Pascucci, 'Who welcomes? The geographies of refugee aid as care work: Commentary to Gill', *Fennia: International Journal of Geography*, 196:2 (2018), pp. 236–38 (p. 237).

[144] Pascucci, 'Who welcomes', p. 237.

[145] Garbers et al., 'Homes for Ukraine'; Tryl and Surmon, 'Welcoming Ukrainians'.

[146] Melissa Hogenboom, 'The hidden load: How "thinking of everything" holds mums back', *BBC* (18 May 2021), available at: {https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20210518-the-hidden-load-how-thinking-of-everything-holds-mums-back}.

[147] ONS, 'Experiences of Homes for Ukraine scheme sponsors'.

[148] Burrell, 'Domesticating responsibility'.

[149] Bassoli and Luccioni, 'Homestay accommodation'.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

38 per cent are aged 30 to 49),[150] all factors that reflects the ease with which someone is financially and materially able to offer accommodation according to HfU guidelines (e.g. have a spare room or own a separate property). While the impetus to host or 'the need to help'[151] does not seem to be primarily driven by financial gain,[152] financial security, class, and material resources certainly figure in people's ability to host. Reliance on private resources and independent means can effectively exclude less advantaged households and individuals from engaging in this form of humanitarian helping and care. Thus, the realities of *who* hosts also reproduces particular racialised and classed conceptions and relations of hosting and humanitarian helping and care. In a recent study of 35 HfU hosting households, for example, all hosts identified as white.[153] This reflects broader private hosting dynamics in Europe where 'the vulnerable victim ... depends on the help of more powerful (middle-class and white) actors',[154] reproducing the racialised and classed relations of the broader humanitarian field.[155]

HfU, in its conceptualisation and operationalisation, has provided an avenue for demonstrating humanitarian compassion and care for those deemed as requiring – and being deserving of – protection and refuge, notably war-affected and displaced 'womenandchildren' or more specifically 'refugeewomenandchildren',[156] or 'part of a displaced family, preferably female or child'.[157] Gender and age are central to representations of refugees, mobilising and reproducing assumptions about innocence, vulnerability, and protectability (and in turn intensifying insecurity for others, as discussed below).[158] This is reflected in how HfU is presented to (and by) hosts, to the wider public (including potential hosts) and to guests, centring women and their children as key constituents of the scheme under the logic that 'we can't say to the Ukrainian government that we're standing with them if we're not adequately caring for women and children who are here'.[159] As stated by the Refugee Council's chief executive, 'We are talking about very traumatised women and children.'[160] Media reporting on HfU across the board (from the *Guardian* to the *Daily Mail*) has centred images of women and children, and statements from hosts in media and other reports also reflect a focus on women and children and clear assumptions and preferences regarding guests' gender, age, racialisation, and family status.[161] In line with traditional conceptions of who does what in war, 'the notion of women and children being sent to safety whilst men stayed to fight' has been one motivating

[150] Bassoli and Luccioni, 'Homestay accommodation'; Gunaratnam, 'Empathy and intimacy'; Luccioni, 'Migration, hospitality, justice'; Monforte et al., 'Private hospitality'.

[151] Malkki, *The Need to Help*.

[152] Garbers et al., 'Homes for Ukraine'; Tryl and Surmon, 'Welcoming Ukrainians'.

[153] Garbers et al., 'Homes for Ukraine'.

[154] Monforte et al., 'Private hospitality', p. 683.

[155] Adia Benton, 'Risky business: Race, nonequivalence and the humanitarian politics of life', *Visual Anthropology*, 29:2 (2016), pp. 187–203; Polly Pallister-Wilkins, 'Saving the souls of white folk: Humanitarianism as white supremacy', *Security Dialogue*, 52:S1 (2021), pp. 98–106.

[156] Cynthia Enloe, *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Lewis Turner, 'The politics of labeling refugee men as "vulnerable"', *Social Politics*, 28:1 (2021), pp. 1–23.

[157] Heidi Armbruster, '"It was the photograph of the little boy": Reflections on the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme in the UK', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 42:15 (2019), pp. 2680–99 (p. 2695).

[158] Heather L. Johnson, 'Click to donate: Visual images, constructing victims and imagining the female refugee', *Third World Quarterly*, 32:6 (2011), pp. 1015–37; Lesley Pruitt, Helen Berents, and Gayle Munro, 'Gender and age in the construction of male youth in the European migration "crisis"', *Signs*, 43:3 (2018), pp. 687–709; Turner, 'The politics of labeling'.

[159] Geneva Abdul, 'Ukrainian refugees and hosts petition UK government for housing support', *The Guardian* (29 November 2022), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/nov/29/ukrainian-refugees-and-hosts-petition-uk-government-for-housing-support}.

[160] Refugee Council, 'Homes for Ukraine Scheme: Refugee Council response', available at: {https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/latest/news/homes-for-ukraine-scheme-refugee-council-response/}.

[161] Clea Skopeliti and Christy Cooney, '"Those fleeing war need certainty": The UK residents hoping to house refugees', *The Guardian* (14 May 2022), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/14/those-fleeing-war-need-certainty-the-uk-residents-hoping-to-house-refugees}.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

factor identified by HfU hosts, and most would only consider hosting women and children.[162] Statements by politicians and charities in the UK have also repeatedly centred families – that is, nuclear, white, heteronormative families – fleeing Ukraine, as have local authorities.[163] For example, the welcome guide for guests prepared by the Gloucestershire County Council begins with, 'we are pleased to … provide a safe place for *you and your family* … Our priority is to provide a safe and welcoming environment for *you and your children*'.[164]

The privileging of the language of the home as a space of sanctuary and safety in private hosting arrangements, and assumptions about the home and hosting as necessarily rooted in kindness, generosity, and care negate the often-hidden violences of these spaces and relationships. As explained in feminist literature, the home is by no means universally experienced as safe, representing for many a place of insecurity, fear, alienation, exclusion, oppression, conflict, and violence.[165] The 'idealised home' masks the ways in which home can be 'a threatened and threatening space', characterised by precarity, vulnerability, insecurity, and instability.[166] As the vast majority of Ukrainian refugees are women with dependent children (though men are also hosted under HfU), this can add additional and different vulnerabilities and risks. In the context of humanitarian assistance and refugee support, conditions of vulnerability – structured by gender, race, ability, geography, and more – are produced and reinforced by and through humanitarian systems, practices, and interactions.[167]

This reality is borne out in the HfU scheme. Since its launch, there have been numerous reports of and concerns raised about 'predatory' or 'potentially abusive' men, traffickers, and 'unscrupulous landlords' targeting Ukrainian women and children.[168] Given the differential power relations between 'host' and 'guest', and hosts' ability to withdraw hospitality, the scheme relies on transient and fleeting emotional attachments, generating additional vulnerabilities for guests. The rise in the numbers of Ukrainian refugees who end up as homeless in the UK speaks to this.[169]

As is clear, numerous bordering practices and contradictions underpin HfU, where care, compassion, generosity, inclusion, and solidarity exist alongside power, precarity, and exclusion. In addition to the dynamics discussed above, the clearest manifestation of the gendered and racialised dimensions of HfU are arguably the boundaries drawn between those who are included in the scheme and those who are not. In the UK, men (particularly single young men) are frequently vilified as 'bogus asylum seekers', where 'gendered expectations regarding men's agency and strength may actually increase their vulnerability'.[170] Quotes from some hosts explicitly demarcate gendered and racialised categorisations of 'wanted', 'deserving', and 'protectable' refugees: 'I think people

[162] Garbers et al., 'Homes for Ukraine', p. 24.

[163] Dugan, 'Hundreds of Ukrainian refugees'.

[164] 'Welcome to Gloucestershire: Useful information', Gloucestershire County Council, 2023, p. 4, emphasis added.

[165] Blunt and Dowling, *Home*; Brickell, '"Mapping" and "doing"'.

[166] Chambers, *Cultural Ideals*, p. 11.

[167] Gabrielle Daoust and Synne L. Dyvik, 'Reconceptualizing vulnerability and safeguarding in the humanitarian and development sector', *Social Politics*, 29:1 (2022), pp. 355–78; Hande Sözer, 'Humanitarianism with a neo-liberal face: Vulnerability intervention as vulnerability redistribution', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 46:11 (2020), pp. 2163–80; Turner, 'The politics of labeling'.

[168] Ella Cockbain and Aiden Sidebottom, 'The war in Ukraine and associated risks of human trafficking and exploitation: Insights from an evidence gathering roundtable', Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (29 April 2022); Angus Crawford and Tony Smith, 'Homes for Ukraine: Housing scheme called danger to refugees', *BBC News*, available at: {https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-61311046}; Syal, 'Stop matching'; Townsend, 'UK's Homes for Ukraine'.

[169] Local Government Association, 'Homelessness among Ukrainian refugees in the UK', available at: {https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/homelessness-among-ukrainian-refugees-uk-house-commons-14-march}; Richard Machin, 'The UK – a home for Ukrainians? An analysis of social security and housing policy', *Journal of Poverty and Social Justice*, 31:2 (2023), pp. 298–305.

[170] Melanie Griffiths, '"Here, man is nothing!": Gender and policy in an asylum context', *Men and Masculinities*, 18:4 (2015), pp. 468–88; Anne-Kathrin Kreft and Mattias Agerberg, 'Imperfect victims? Civilian men, vulnerability, and policy preferences', *American Political Science Review*, (2023), pp. 1–17; Turner, 'The politics of labeling'.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

relate more to people because they're in Europe … we do find it harder to relate to Syrian refugees or Afghan refugees … to see people who live similar lives to us being in that situation, I think that really affected people.' 'You're more cautious about it if a family of five with a completely different world view descended on us.' 'In my mind, most refugees from Syria are young men … it's mostly young men and so we wouldn't have ever hosted a young man.'[171]

These views reflect, and are sometimes also acknowledged as such, a wider societal discourse of 'unwanted' and 'undeserving' refugees, paralleled by hostile migration and asylum policies. In the UK, these bordering practices are particularly acute at a time when 'Stop the Boats'[172] is a key government priority, where asylum seekers are held in detention centres and barges in conditions described as 'inhumane',[173] and the cartoon murals of well-known Disney characters in a reception centre are painted over as they were considered 'too welcoming and sent the wrong message'.[174] Indeed, schemes such a HfU, emphasising and supporting 'everyday' humanitarian responsibility towards certain refugees, as valid as that responsibility is, also serve a strategic function, diverting attention away from increasingly repressive asylum, refugee, and migration regimes targeting those from the 'Global South'. Conceptions of 'home' are also significant in relation to these forms of border and migration governance, as explored through the framework of 'domopolitics', which considers how the state is constructed as a (national) 'home' and in turn secured and protected through the management and regulation of borders and of migration and migrants.[175]

Conclusion

Our analysis, bringing together discussions of private refugee hosting and everyday humanitarianism, centres the humanitarian logics and motivations underpinning hosting as a response to humanitarian crisis. Explicitly reading private refugee hosting as a form of 'everyday humanitarianism' enables us to decentre prevailing conceptualisations of *what, who*, and *where* counts as 'humanitarian', notably as being solely, or even primarily, the formalised system of Global North organisations intervening in the Global South. This decentring is crucial to considering how power and resources are decentralised to 'local' actors within the broader humanitarian sector[176] and to examining 'the local politics of giving' alongside critical examination of 'the concepts we use to build our theories explaining relationships of "helping"'.[177] This enables us to centre instead on the intimate and embodied space of the home as a key site of humanitarian practice and to unpack the gendered and racialised dimensions it holds and reproduces.

At the same time, our analysis shows how private refugee hosting as a form of humanitarianism does not exist outside of the prevailing colonial, racialised, and gendered hierarchies and dynamics that structure it as a whole.[178] As such, it is 'a humanitarian intervention implicit in, rather

[171] Garbers et al., 'Homes for Ukraine', pp. 23, 41; see also Crossley, '"Homes for Ukraine"'.

[172] Margherita Matera, Tamara Tubakovic, and Philomena Murray, 'Is Australia a model for the UK? A critical assessment of parallels of cruelty in refugee externalization policies', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 36:2 (2023), pp. 271–93.

[173] Greg Barradale, 'Asylum seekers to be returned to "inhumane" Bibby Stockholm barge', *The Big Issue* (11 October 2023), available at: {https://www.bigissue.com/news/social-justice/bibby-stockholm-ruling-high-court-reaction-asylum-seekers/}; Diane Taylor, 'Physical and verbal abuse found in Brook House immigration removal centre inquiry', *The Guardian* (19 September 2023), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/sep/19/toxic-culture-brook-house-immigration-removal-centre-inquiry}.

[174] Diane Taylor, 'Robert Jenrick has cartoon murals painted over at children's asylum centre', *The Guardian* (7 July 2023), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/jul/07/robert-jenrick-has-cartoon-murals-painted-over-at-childrens-asylum-centre}.

[175] Crossley, '"Homes for Ukraine"'; Jonathan Darling, 'Domopolitics, governmentality and the regulation of asylum accommodation', *Political Geography*, 30 (2011), pp. 263–71; Gwyneth Lonergan, 'Reproducing the "national home": Gendering domopolitics', *Citizenship Studies*, 22:1 (2018), pp. 1–18.

[176] Aloudat and Khan, 'Decolonising humanitarianism'.

[177] Sulley and Richey, 'The messy practice', pp. 390–1.

[178] Benton, 'Risky business'; Pallister-Wilkins, 'Saving the souls'; Lewis Turner, '"#Refugees can be entrepreneurs too!" Humanitarianism, race, and the marketing of Syrian refugees', *Review of International Studies*, 46:1 (2020), pp. 137–55.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

than separate from, larger policies of racialised and gendered migration management' and border regimes, involving 'selective admission for some refugees whilst legitimizing the exclusion of others'.[179] Put differently, 'mechanisms of bordering emerge within the home itself as an extension of the nation'.[180] Conceptions of home and hospitality here depend on boundaries of inclusion and exclusion – those who are welcomed versus those who are not. HfU creates clear boundaries where some are understood as protectable, vulnerable, and deserving of this form of private hospitality while others are very clearly defined as outside this humanitarian practice. This echoes the broader boundaries and dynamics of a 'humanitarian politics of life' that determines 'whose lives are saved' within a context of global crises[181] or, put differently, a humanitarianism complicit in 'producing and securing whiteness'.[182]

While we echo many charities in praising HfU as a welcome break in what is an otherwise 'hostile environment' for refugees,[183] we nevertheless suggest that this scheme is a worrying 'outsourcing' of humanitarian responses – specifically, responsibility for housing and providing direct material and affective supports to refugees – to private individuals.[184] HfU signals a shift toward the formalisation of a reliance on private humanitarian hospitality in response to (certain) large-scale humanitarian crises and in turn an expansion of the humanitarian space into the domestic sphere – the private space of home becoming a space of public humanitarian response. Alongside the precarities and vulnerabilities that such schemes can generate for refugees and the challenges facing hosts and local authorities, this scheme more fundamentally represents a problematic intersection of gendered and racialised bordering processes at both domestic and state, or private and public, levels. Refugees deemed more vulnerable and protectable (that is, certain kinds of gendered and racialised 'guests') are welcomed but rendered reliant on transitory emotional attachments, on hosts' changing life circumstances and on hierarchical, conditional, and precarious dynamics of hospitality – while others become subject to increasingly violent border regimes. Herein, 'solidarity and goodwill shown by communities becomes the site from which the state governs and regulates who gets to stay and who gets to be cared for, and how'.[185]

The significance of this is marked by the fact that HfU is already being widely suggested as a 'blueprint' or 'model' for the future of crises response initiatives, as discussed earlier – rooted in assumptions about the home as an idealised space of refuge, sanctuary, and safety. While in many cases private homes *do* represent refuge, sanctuary, and safety for those fleeing war, as in the case for many refugees from Ukraine, this is by no means a guarantee, and the fact that schemes modelled on HfU are reliant on selective conceptions of welcome, hospitality, and care on both private and public scales ought to be cause for concern. Similar critiques are also reiterated by charities, who argue that 'the government is leaving the British public to pick up the pieces of a refugee protection system it has been tearing apart', noting that 'sponsorship is a wonderful way for people to show their support but they cannot be a country's main response to large-scale displacement'.[186]

We should emphasise that our critique of HfU and trends towards 'private' humanitarianism is *not* paralleled by an idealised view of state-led responses to humanitarian crises and refugee support. Indeed, UK government responses to housing and supporting asylum seekers and refugees have been characterised by conditions of precarity, vulnerability, and danger, as illustrated by a reliance on temporary, often overcrowded hotel accommodation (and subsequent evictions) for

[179] Armbruster, '"It was the photograph"', p. 2695.
[180] Crossley, '"Homes for Ukraine"', p. 1.
[181] Benton, 'Risky business', p. 187.
[182] Pallister-Wilkins, 'Saving the souls', p. 100.
[183] Yasmin Ibrahim, *Migrants and Refugees at UK Borders: Hostility and 'Unmaking' the Human* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022).
[184] See also Burrell, 'Domesticating responsibility'.
[185] Dajani, 'Refuge under austerity', p. 67.
[186] Jamie Grierson, 'Refugee groups criticise gaps in UK's Ukraine response', *The Guardian* (13 March 2022), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/mar/13/refugee-groups-criticise-gaps-in-uks-ukraine-response}.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

thousands of refugees[187] and by 'catastrophic' protection failures affecting hundreds of asylum-seeking children in Home Office-funded hotels.[188] We do not suggest that the alternative to a reliance on private hosting is state-managed accommodation (e.g. in hotels) of the kind provided to refugees and asylum seekers to date, nor do we argue that being hosted in a private home is necessarily 'better' than indefinite stays in hotels. Rather, we suggest that these different practices and spaces of 'hospitality' engender, however differently, related dimensions of humanitarian responses to cross-border displacement underpinned by gendered, racialised, classed, and colonial categorisations as well as relations of power, conditionality, and precarity. And we propose that the positive and potentially radical opportunity of the HfU scheme lies in its ability to act as stepping stone for a humanitarian hospitality that mobilises forms of private *and* public care for, and solidarity with, *all* refugees. That would truly be 'Britain at its best'.

Funding statement. No funding was associated with this project.

Competing interests. The authors declare no competing interests.

Gabrielle Daoust is Assistant Professor in the Department of Global and International Studies at the University of Northern British Columbia. Address: University of Northern British Columbia, 3333 University Way, Prince George, British Columbia, Canada, V2N 4Z9. Email: Gabrielle.Daoust@unbc.ca.

Synne Dyvik is Senior Lecturer in the Department of International Relations at the University of Sussex. Address: University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton, UK, BN1 9SJ. Email: S.Dyvik@sussex.ac.uk.

[187] Forsyth et al., 'Afghan refugees'; Rajeev Syal, 'What is happening with Afghan refugees in the UK?', *The Guardian* (28 March 2023), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/mar/28/what-is-happening-with-afghan-refugees-in-the-uk}.

[188] Mark Townsend, 'Asylum seekers: Home Office accused of "catastrophic child protection failure"', *The Guardian* (22 October 2022), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/oct/22/uk-asylum-seekers-home-office-accused-of-catastrophic-child-protection-failure}; 'Revealed: Child migrants racially abused and threatened with violence at Home Office hotel', *The Guardian* (28 January 2023), available at: {https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/jan/28/child-migrants-racially-abused-home-office-hotel-brighton-criminals}.

Cite this article: Gabrielle Daoust and Synne Dyvik, '"Homes for Ukraine' and the politics of private humanitarian hospitality', *Review of International Studies* (2024), pp. 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press