

# THE REUNITE FAMILIES UK LETTER

ISSUE NO 2. | MAY 2023

Welcome to the Reunite Families UK Letter! With our new newsletter we will be able to share with you what has been happening in the Reunite Families UK community as well as keeping you up to date with the latest developments/news with everything spouse visa! If there is anything you'd like to see in the newsletter do get in touch with the team at [hello@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk](mailto:hello@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk)

## Ask your MP to sign our pledge for mental-health friendly migration policies



Mental health is affected by a variety of factors including work, money and health.

There is clear evidence that the UK's immigration policies have a hugely detrimental impact on the mental health of people caught up in the system, including the lengthy, complex and expensive routes to permanent settlement and the Minimum Income Requirement for British/settled citizens to be reunited with their loved ones.

That is why I pledge to support immigration policies that help alleviate the mental health crisis affecting tens of thousands of people and their communities as a result of the #HostileRoutes and policies introduced in the last decade.

If we want to build thriving communities, everyone must be given the opportunity to thrive, regardless of what papers they hold.



To achieve this, this government **can and must** introduce policies that alleviate the mental health impacts of its immigration system.



This year, Reunite Families UK, together with our friends at Praxis, Migrant Voice and JCWI will mark Mental Health Awareness Week by highlighting how the increasingly harsh UK's family reunification policies contribute to worsen the mental health of people (including children) caught up in the system.

Throughout this week we will highlight various themes or elements that show the impact of these policies and the need to reform or scrap them to make the system more humane and family friendly.

Conscious of this, we will ask MP, Councillors and the general public to sign and share our pledge to support policies that alleviate the mental health crisis caused by family separations and long or impossible route to settlement.

We will be really grateful, if, during MHAW you could re-share the social media posts and graphics we will be publishing on our social media channels including Twitter, Instagram and our Facebook community so to amplify our collective message amongst your friends and networks.

## Call Out for More Families to Take Part in our Mental Health Research

We want to say a HUGE thank you to the mums and dads who attended our focus groups on the 9th and 11th May to share their experiences about how the spouse visa rules have impacted their children. They were very powerful sessions and it is clear that there are many ways these rules are affecting children – and their parents. The personal insights will make the report even more hard hitting as a result.

If you would like to be involved, we will be creating a questionnaire that will be sent out and will give you the opportunity to share your thoughts and feelings. All contribution will be anonymously used. Your input is invaluable and we have experts from the field of immigration and mental health who are ready and keen to build on this work.

# Call Out for Families/Child Professionals to Take Part in our Mental Health Research

We are currently liaising with child mental health experts about how we can best gather information directly from children. This may take the form of a non-invasive creative process such as drawing and writing – and for some of the older children, possibly some spoken word. We will update you on this as soon as we can and hope that we will be able to get as many people involved in this as possible.

## Webinar on family schemes available to EU citizens and their families

Thanks to the generous support of the Justice Together Initiative and of our friends at Fragomen we are really pleased to announce a new webinar which will be focused on the various family schemes available to EU citizens and their families.

The webinar will be held the **15th of May between 5.30 and 6.30 PM.**

Register here and don't forget to share it with your friends and family

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/629216231687/>



**FRAGOMEN**  
Family Members  
schemes for EU  
citizens

15 MAY 2023 5.30 TO 6.30 PM

What will be covered:

- Overview of EUSS and the EUSS Family Permit
- How the route is distinct from Appendix FM in terms of the applicants and their 'sponsors'
- Who can apply under Appendix EU, versus who can apply under Appendix FM
- and much more

In collaboration with:

the 3 million

Settled

## Published recording of webinar

Thanks to the many of you who joined our previous webinar on the Spouse Visa rules. During the event, also organised in collaboration with Fragomen we looked at the complexities around the Spousal Visa Rules including which family members can be included in the application, the eligibility and financial requirements and the type of leave granted as part of the route.

To view the recording of the event and the slide pack used by the presenters visit [our website](#).

## Media training in June + IMIX Masterclasses

As we are writing this newsletter, we are also busy preparing our upcoming programme of media training which you will receive more information about it in the next edition of our newsletter.

However, if you are keen to join a training programme as soon as possible, our friends at IMIX – the migration communications hub is running a series of super useful trainings in the second half of May, here below you can find the dates and link to reserve your spot:

[Intro to the Media 23rd May](#) or [Intro to Social Media 24th May](#) or [Intro to the Media \(Lived experience only\) 25th May](#).

Or if you prefer to wait for the Reunite Families training please email Matteo at [matteo@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk](mailto:matteo@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk) to reserve your spot in the June training



## Times' journalist caught up in the spousal visa policy disaster

We were really sad but unfortunately not surprise to read Anabel's story in The Times. Like many in our community, the journalist was also got caught up in the spouse visa policy and the cruelty of the Minimum Income Requirement when trying to be reunited with her German partner which sadly after Brexit would also be caught up in the Spouse Visa policy.

We were particularly struck by this line in her article:

*"You'd think, especially as a self-employed new mother without maternity pay, that I would benefit greatly from the financial support of the father I am trying to obtain a visa for. But no, on paper, the government would rather I operate as a single parent, reliant on the state, than grant permission for my partner to live with us, earn his keep and pay UK taxes."*

Read our [thread](#) about the article and what it reveals once again about the UK's migration policy

### **Migration Observatory at Oxford Uni proves the dire consequences of mooted increase to MIR with half of women unable to sponsor partners.**

According to a recent [briefing note](#) by the Migration Observatory at Oxford University, as it currently stands, the MIR would not be met by 26% of working age employees. However, if we add together people who do not work and those who work but earn less than £18,600, they make up roughly 46% of the working-age.

If the Minimum Income Requirement were to increase at the same rate of inflation from 2012 to 2022 of 2.4% (using the Bank of England Inflation Calculator) and not including the high inflation from 2022-2023 we can see how the new amount would be £23,565.40 in 2022. This amount would significantly increase the number of people (male and female) unable to meet the MIR with a third of males (28%) and half the female population (51%) in the UK being unable to earn enough to meet the MIR if it was increase at this level.

### **Be the next Reunited Families UK Volunteers!**

As a small (but rapidly growing!) organisation we are looking to recruit more volunteers to help us grow more organically and support even more families affected by the spousal visa rules.

We are looking for a variety of skills (from admin to event organising to comms and social media wizardry ) so if you can give us a hand give us a shout at [hello@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk](mailto:hello@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk) !



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