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# The Reunite Families UK Letter

Issue No. 7 January 2024

## Government announces increases to the Minimum Income Requirement will be staggered and transitional arrangements

Dear Friends,

The Government released new details on the increase to the MIR as well as clarifying the transitional arrangements for the people already on the route:

Following the [Home Secretary's announcement](#) on the 4th of December regarding an increase to the Minimum Income Requirement (MIR) from £18,600 to £38,700 on the 21st of December, the Home Office issued a [Factsheet with further detail](#) on the proposed increase as well as more information on the transitional arrangements affecting people already on the route.

It clarified how the increase will be introduced in stages:

- In Spring 2024 the threshold will be increased to £29,000
- Later (date not confirmed Autumn 2024) moving to £34,500
- £38,700 by Spring 2025

The document also suggests that **there will no longer be a separate child element**

The Home Office also clarified details **about the transitional arrangements for the families who are already on the route:**

- Those who already have a family visa within the five-year partner route, or who apply before the minimum income threshold is raised, will continue to have their applications assessed against the current income requirement and will not be required to meet the increased threshold. This will also be the case for children seeking to join or accompany parents.
- Anyone granted a fiancé visa before the minimum income threshold is raised will also be assessed against the current income requirement when they apply for a family visa within the five-year partner route.
- Those already in the UK on a different route who apply to switch into the five-year partner route, after the minimum income requirement has been increased, will be subject to the new income requirement.

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## Webinar: How to Engage With Your MP Session

[Register to join](#)

**Learn some skills and tips on how best to engage your MP on issues that matter to you**

Daniel Sohege from Migrant Voice will be joining RFUK to share his knowledge and expertise on engaging with MPs.

Given the announcement on 4th Dec about the huge rise in the MIR threshold and an upcoming general election there has never been a more critical time to be reaching out to your

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This session will help give you the tools to do this so don't miss it!

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## Interested in showing the real human impact of these cruel rules? Sign up to our media team

Reunite Families UK is gathering case study information from members who are willing to speak to the press and be included as case studies on our website to raise awareness of the impacts of the spouse migration policy.

If you have any questions at all relating to this, please contact Matteo at [matteo@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk](mailto:matteo@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk)

[Sign up to our media team](#)

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## Help us celebrate love and criticise the MIR on Valentine's Day

### Celebrating our families this



We are working with IMIX and other orgs in the sector to use Valentine's Day as an opportunity to celebrate our international love and to criticise the increase to MIR which will make more the lives of so many multinational

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Valentine's  
Day!



Keep an eye on our website as we will be publishing more news in the coming weeks...

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## Possible legal action against new threshold

We have been working with a law firm called Leigh Day on possible legal action against the new income threshold.

We are currently waiting on a response from the Home Office that will provide the team with insight into what areas of challenge may be possible.

It is very early days and there is still much to determine but it is quite likely that should there be grounds for a legal challenge it would need to be brought by individuals/a group of individuals affected by the increase.

**If you are interested in putting yourself forward and would like to discuss this with us please contact Caroline at [caroline@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk](mailto:caroline@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk) with Legal Challenge in the subject heading.**

Please rest assured that any communication at this time does not commit anyone. We are still very much in the scoping out phase

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## Join over 2300 people in signing our letter to the PM

At this link you will be able to [sign the letter to the Prime Minister and Home Secretary](#) against the changes to the Minimum Income Requirement Reunite Families UK is coordinating.

[Sign the Letter to the Prime Minister](#)

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## Write to your MP against the latest increase to the MIR

Reunite Families UK, is organising various lobbying activities to try and halt this vicious changes which will impact the lives of so many of our friends and families.

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available in this [google doc](#)) into the box and hit send.

Feel free to personalise it should you wish to :)

*I am a constituent of yours, residing at [insert first line of home address and postcode]. I am writing to you today because I am extremely concerned about the Government's decision to incrementally increase the minimum income requirement (MIR) to £38,700, above the median annual salary for a full-time worker, and well above average earnings in many regions of the UK.*

*Currently, many people particularly women, those living outside of the South East and London, those operating as forced single parents, families with children who have additional support needs and or/work part time are already struggling to meet the £18,600 MIR and I cannot begin to describe the huge detrimental impact and the countless families who will be impacted as a result of this change.*

*[option here to insert here your personal experiences].*

*Having a family is one of our most basic human rights, therefore it is outrageous that our government has decided to deny such a basic human right to so many British citizens and long-term residents. A threshold of £38,700 will mean that 60% of men and 75% of women in the UK earn less than the new income requirement and would not be eligible to be joined by their partners in the UK.*

*The system as it stands already represents a significant obstacle for so many people, especially women [\[like me\]](#), who are working part time whilst caring for their children and trying to reach the Minimum Income Requirement; young couples just starting out and older couples who are at pension age*

*As recent research published by Reunite Families UK shows, the current spouse visa policy has already caused and continues to cause untold damages to families looking to live together in the UK. As a result of this prolonged separation, children in particular are suffering from a range of mental health impacts including selective mutism, stool holding, behavioural and emotional issue and even suicidal ideation.*

*I can't begin to describe the anger I feel for a government that, despite professing support for family values, has done so much to undermine them. To add insult to injury the government continues to spread an incorrect narrative of protecting the*

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*Funds. In addition to this, non-British partners pay a high fee for the health service and income tax on their earnings once in the UK so they are effectively double taxed.*

*This is an important aspect that we want MPs to be better informed on as the taxpayer is already protected regardless of the threshold. Furthermore, recent comments around the impact on housing is another angle being put out there. To clarify that in relation to spouse visa migration, partners have no impact on housing as they are moving to their family home rented or owned by the British/settled citizen. It is nothing short of gaslighting - smoke and mirrors- to distract the public and to justify this move and the Minimum Income Requirement generally.*

*We want to know why families should pay the price for this Government's over promises on migration?*

*Families have witnessed over promises on migration that are destined to fail but that in the meantime have destroyed and will continue to destroy [\[their/our\]](#) family life.*

*This change comes hot on the heels of the latest visa application fee increases and the upcoming immigration health surcharge increases. Increases which are deeply immoral and are designed once again to target so many in our community who in some cases will have to pay over £30k in the midst of a national cost of living crisis which forces people into poverty just to be able to settle here with their partner and child.*

*I urge you to oppose this attack on [\[my/the\]](#) right to a family life. There is already ample evidence that the existing income threshold is undermining the mental health and wellbeing of people and children who are currently affected. A recent survey, as part of [research undertaken by Reunite Families UK](#) on the mental health impact of the spouse visa policy, found 65% of respondents (including those who are unable to meet the current MIR or are currently on the route to settlement) saying that their child had received a diagnosis of a mental health condition.*

*It is tragic that the government has ruined the festive season for families [\[like mine\]](#) by worsening a measure already associated with widespread poverty and serious mental health implications. For children [\[like mine\]](#) in particular they will bear the scars of these experiences for the rest of their lives.*

*As one of your constituents, I would really welcome your support for a cause so important for so many in our community. In particular I would welcome you signaling*

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*Yours faithfully,*

If you write to your MP and want to tell your friends don't forget to use the hashtags **#TheCostOfLovingCrisis** on your social media channels :)

**Write to your MP !**

If you've written to your MP since the announcement and have received a response, could you share the response of your MP? this will help us make our advocacy even better by responding to the lines and points adopted by MPs when replying to you

**Share your MP's response with us**

## Thanks for our members for speaking out against the changes

We would like to briefly mention and thank once again our members for speaking to the media during these very difficult circumstances.

We know how difficult it must have been so we just wanted to thank them again for helping us sharing the real-life implications of a change.

If you spoke out against the rules and are happy to be featured on our website please get in touch with [matteo@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk](mailto:matteo@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk)

Here are just some of the media items featuring our members:

### Raquel and Manoel on BBC Radio 4



### Ruby and Furkan on BBC News



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### [Polly and Saroch on Sky News](#)



### [Jessica and Sanas on the I News](#)



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## [Harsh UK visa rules already causing mental health crisis for separated families even before latest increase](#)

Reunite Families UK's report lays bare the hidden psychological burden bi-national families, and their children experience as a result of an increasingly harsh and expensive UK family migration policy.

The two-part initial findings report has been commissioned by ReuniteFamilies UK and funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and outlines the countless psychological and financial hurdles British and settled residents face in order to be together as a family in the UK.

65% of respondents to the survey conducted as part of the research say that their child received a diagnosis of a mental health condition.

[Read the Report](#)

The report highlights the following key findings:

1. The requirements create single parent families and impose a very high economic, social and emotional burden on all affected families.
2. The effect is discriminatory because it is felt disproportionately by women, young people, and those living outside of London or the South East, and working single parents (usually mothers).



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the Rules.

4. British citizens and settled residents are very badly affected by these rules; with significant impact on the mental health and well-being of British children.

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## Help us or be helped by Reunite's JustGiving festive season

It's hard to believe the festive season is already round the corner and we know this is a challenging time for many of our members for so many reasons. We understand the many impacts it is having on you and please know that RFUK continues to work hard for you to lobby government, collaborate with other migration orgs to push for kinder, more humane family migration policies, communicate with UKVI on issues facing members, urgent cases and wrong refusals, provide pro bono legal services with Fragomen law firm, provide mental health support and a space to share and seek advice, raise awareness in any way we can. Next year will most likely see the political landscape change in the elections and we will continue to push hard for you all.

Every year we also we raise money for children caught up in the awful spouse/partner migration policy to give them a little gift on behalf of RFUK.

**If you would like your children to be beneficiaries of this fundraising please contact [caroline@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk](mailto:caroline@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk)**

More details and fundraising page to come but in the meantime, we would like to include a short film as part of the JUSTGIVING page and **would like to ask if you would be open to sending a family/couple photo that you'd be happy to be included.**

Please email a pic to [caroline@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk](mailto:caroline@reunitefamiliesuk.co.uk)

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We are really pleased to be part of the advisory board of this [new research project](#) looking at the impact of Brexit on UK-EU couples who must apply for leave as a spouse or partner under British immigration law.

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