New family reunification rules enter into force

The entry into force of the amendments is on 18 August 2025, while the different amendments have different dates of application:

- Family members whose residence was authorised before 18 August 2025 remain under the previous rules. When they renew their residence permit, they will need to show that they fulfil the criteria under the old family reunification rules.
- Applications submitted before 18 August 2025 or applications that involve a person who was authorised to stay before that day will be processed under the old rules until 17 August 2027. After that date, the new rules will apply. However, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and persons with temporary protection will remain exempted a criteria and they will not have to prove that the family ties were established prior to arriving Belgium
- For all applications submitted involving a person who is authorised to stay after 18 August 2025, the new rules will apply immediately.

The amendments include:

- Higher income requirement: the sponsor must demonstrate an income which amounts to at least 110% of the average guaranteed minimum monthly income. The amount increases 10% for each additional family member, without any upper limit.
- Reduced period for exception from the income requirement for beneficiaries of international protection: this period is now 6 months for refugees (instead of the previous 12 months). It was entirely removed for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and they must now fulfil the income criteria, whenever they apply for family reunification.
- Waiting period for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection: While no waiting period applied previously, not beneficiaries of subsidiary protection must wait two years, before they can apply for family reunification.
- Higher age limit for family reunification sponsorship: this increased from 18 to 21 years.

Source(s)

- Belgian Official Gazette | Moniteur belge | Belgisch Staatsblad (18 July, 2025), Loi du 18 juillet 2025 modifiant la loi du 15 décembre 1980 sur l'accès au territoire, le séjour, l'établissement et l'éloignement des

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étrangers en ce qui concerne les conditions pour le regroupement familial (1) [Law amending the Act of 15 December 1980 on access to the territory, residence, establishment and removal of foreigners with regard to the conditions for family reunification (1)], https://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/eli/loi/2025/07/18/2025005990/moniteur

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