



Home Office

# Statement of policy in relation to family reunion of unaccompanied children seeking international protection in the EU or the UK

March 2020



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Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 17(1) of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018

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## **STATEMENT OF POLICY IN RELATION TO FAMILY REUNION OF UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN SEEKING INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IN THE EU OR THE UK**

1. The vision for the UK's future relationship with the EU was set out in the Prime Minister's written Ministerial statement on 3 February 2020. This made clear the Government's commitment to supporting the most vulnerable children and to the ongoing principle of family reunion for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in the UK or the EU. This principle was further reinforced in the document 'The Future Relationship with the EU – The UK's Approach to Negotiations', published on 27 February 2020.
2. In that document, the Government stated that:

*The UK has made a specific commitment to seek to negotiate a reciprocal agreement for family reunion of unaccompanied children seeking asylum in either the EU or the UK, with specified family members in the UK or the EU, where this is in the child's best interests.*
3. The Government is seeking to negotiate with the EU in line with this commitment. At the first round of negotiations on the UK-EU future relationship, which took place from 2-5 March 2020, negotiators from the UK set out the UK's proposals, in line with the document 'The Future Relationship with the EU – The UK's Approach to Negotiations'.
4. We are seeking an arrangement with the EU which would allow unaccompanied children seeking international protection in either the UK or the EU to join, where it is in the child's best interests, a "relative" as specified under [section 17\(4\) of the EU \(Withdrawal\) Act 2018](#) who is either a lawful resident of the UK or an EU Member State, or who has made a claim for international protection that has not yet been decided in the UK or an EU Member State.
5. The UK position is clear that our exit from the EU should not affect our commitment to continue working together with the EU to reunite unaccompanied asylum-seeking children with family and keep them safe. Any future arrangement with the EU is a matter for negotiations, and we understand that the EU is considering further the UK's proposals in this area.

**Home Office, 16 March 2020**

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