



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

3 June 2016

Consular Directorate
WH4.3
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

www.gov.uk/government/organisations

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0481-16

Thank you for your email of 10 May 2016 setting out your request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked for;

How many British nationals have received assistance from the Foreign Office in the Benidorm area since 2011 as a victim of crime? If possible, please can you break the figures down by cases type, i.e. rape, mugging, burglary?

Outcome of Search

We have now completed our search and I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold information relevant to your request. We have not been able to fully answer your questions as the data available to us is not stored in a way that matches your question. To get the additional detail would require us to manually search our records which would exceed the cost limit as set out in Section 12 of the FOIA (detail below).

Disclosure (Data and Format)

Please find attached a table showing cases under the heading 'victim of crime' for the last 4 years and for 2016 from January to April. This includes murder/manslaughter. You will note that in the latter case we have disclosed figures less than 6 because a non living subject has no rights under the

Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998. However in all other cases where the subject is living we have not disclosed actual figures where these fall below 6 because to do so may result in the victims of these crimes being identified. This would breach the first principle of the DPA. This states that personal data should be processed fairly and lawfully. It is the fairness aspect of this principle, which, in our view, would be breached by disclosure. In such circumstances, section 40(2) and (3) of the FOIA confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. There is, therefore, no public interest test to apply.

For the passport lost/stolen figures, we cannot break this down any further so not all these cases were necessarily victims of crime.

Please note that Benidorm cases are handled by our Consulate in Alicante; the figures we have provided cover all those cases handled by that office, and therefore may go beyond Benidorm.

Section 12 Cost Limit

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit. The limit has been specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. For central government the appropriate limit is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 3 ½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it. Your request as presently formulated is narrowly-framed, but given the way our data is stored I estimate that it will take more than 3 ½ working days to locate, retrieve and extract this precise information.

A high level summary data search yielded approximately 4,943 manual consular assistance records for Alicante (covering Benidorm) from 1 January 2011 to 30 April 2016. Each record totalled an average of 15 pages of data which took approximately 15 minutes to search for specific crime types not available from our database. I therefore estimate that in one working day I would be able to assess approximately 64 records. To manually search 4,943 cases would take approximately 77 working days.

In these circumstances we are not obliged under the Act to comply with your request. However I hope that the information we have provided will suffice.

Yours sincerely,

Desk Officer

FOI / DPA Team

Consular Directorate



We keep and use information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We may release this personal information to other UK government departments and public authorities.