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13 October 2015

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST REF: FOI 0975-15

Thank you for your email of 6 October 2015 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

“Please provide me with:

- 1. A list of all cases in which the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) gave advice or support during the calendar years 2012, 2013 and 2014.**

Please break this down by: a) the local authority of the person to whom you gave advice and b) calendar year.

- 2. Please provide figures for the calendar years in question 1 showing:**
 - a) Where known the destination country of the forced marriage (eg Pakistan)**
 - b) The age of the victim**
 - c) Calendar year**

Please break the figures in question 2 down by government office region (eg North West, North east). Please include Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in both questions 1 and 2.

As FMU is a joint venture between the Home Office and the FCO, I am copying both departments' FOI addresses into this request.



We have now completed our search and consultation process and I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold some information relevant to your request.

Disclosure

- 1 We hold information of all the cases the FMU gave advice or support on during the requested years. Under section 21 of the FOIA, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is already reasonably accessible to you. A detailed breakdown of our statistics is already available in the public domain at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage#statistics-on-forced-marriage-collected-by-fmu>.

These statistics show the percentage of cases for each region of the UK. We do not break down our statistics any further, or provide a list of cases, to protect the identities of the victims and potential victims to whom we have provided support. We regard lists of cases and information on local authorities as personal data relating to third parties, the disclosure of which would contravene one of the data protection principles. In such circumstances sections 40(2) and (3) of the FOIA apply. In this case, our view is that disclosure would breach the first data protection principle. 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 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. There is, therefore, no public interest test to apply.

- 2 As above, a detailed breakdown of our statistics is already available in the public domain at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage#statistics-on-forced-marriage-collected-by-fmu>.

These statistics show the percentage of cases for each destination country and the percentage of cases for each age bracket.

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Yours sincerely,

Consular FOI/DPA team
Consular Directorate

