



UK Visas & Immigration

Freedom of Information
Central Correspondence Team
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18 February 2016

Dear Mr Taynton

Thank you for your enquiry of 24 January in which you requested information on Spouse Visa applications. Your request is being handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You requested:

Publish the number of people and their nationality who were refused spouse visas in 2014-2015, with the reason for refusal.

Nationality	Refused
AFGHANISTAN	490
ALBANIA	140
ALGERIA	190
ANDORRA	*
ANGOLA	*
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA	*
ARGENTINA	10
ARMENIA	5
AUSTRALIA	90
AZERBAIJAN	10
BAHAMAS	*
BAHRAIN	*
BANGLADESH	595

BARBADOS	10
BELARUS	10
BELIZE	-
BENIN	*
BHUTAN	-
BOLIVIA	*
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	5
BOTSWANA	*
BRAZIL	55
BRITISH NATIONAL OVERSEAS	5
BRITISH OVERSEAS CITIZEN	-
BRITISH PROTECTED PERSON	-
BRUNEI	-
BURKINA	*
BURMA (MYANMAR)	15
BURUNDI	*
CAMBODIA	5
CAMEROON	20
CANADA	50
CHAD	*
CHILE	10
CHINA	285
COLOMBIA	45
COMOROS	*
CONGO	*
COSTA RICA	-
CUBA	5
CYPRUS	-
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO	35
DJIBOUTI	5
DOMINICA	5
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	*
ECUADOR	5
EGYPT	85
EL SALVADOR	-
ERITREA	40
ETHIOPIA	65
FIJI	10
GABON	*
GAMBIA	50
GEORGIA	5
GHANA	190
GRENADA	10
GUATEMALA	-
GUINEA	20
GUINEA-BISSAU	*

GUYANA	10
HAITI	*
HONDURAS	-
HONG KONG	20
INDIA	955
INDONESIA	25
IRAN	120
IRAQ	60
ISRAEL	10
IVORY COAST	20
JAMAICA	235
JAPAN	15
JORDAN	15
KAZAKHSTAN	10
KENYA	70
KOREA (NORTH)	-
KOSOVO	70
KUWAIT	*
KYRGYZSTAN	*
LAOS	*
LEBANON	45
LESOTHO	*
LIBERIA	5
LIBYA	5
MACAO	-
MACEDONIA	5
MADAGASCAR	-
MALAWI	5
MALAYSIA	40
MALDIVES	-
MALI	*
MAURITIUS	35
MEXICO	20
MICRONESIA	*
MOLDOVA REPUBLIC OF	5
MONGOLIA	5
MONTENEGRO	5
MOROCCO	205
MOZAMBIQUE	5
NAMIBIA	*
NEPAL	160
NEW ZEALAND	40
NICARAGUA	5
NIGER	-
NIGERIA	425
OMAN	-
PAKISTAN	3595

PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY	*
PANAMA	5
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	-
PARAGUAY	-
PERU	15
PHILIPPINES	230
Refugee (Art 1 1951 Convention)	5
Refugee (Other)	*
RUSSIA	80
RWANDA	10
SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE	*
SAUDI ARABIA	5
SENEGAL	5
SERBIA	20
SEYCHELLES	*
SIERRA LEONE	30
SINGAPORE	10
SOMALIA	95
SOUTH AFRICA	95
SOUTH KOREA	10
SRI LANKA	320
ST KITTS AND NEVIS	-
ST LUCIA	10
ST VINCENT	5
SUDAN	95
SWAZILAND	-
SYRIA	20
TAIWAN	10
TAJIKISTAN	5
TANZANIA	15
THAILAND	210
TOGO	*
TONGA	-
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	10
TUNISIA	85
TURKEY	300
TURKMENISTAN	*
UGANDA	45
UKRAINE	45
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	-
UNITED STATES	250
Unspecified Nationality	5
URUGUAY	-
UZBEKISTAN	5
VENEZUELA	25
VIETNAM	60
XXH	*

XXP	10
YEMEN	35
YUGOSLAVIA	-
ZAMBIA	15
ZIMBABWE	80

Data has been rounded to the nearest 5 in accordance with FOI procedures (- = 0, * = 1 or 2)

We are able to provide the information you have requested up to 30 September 2015. The figures quoted are not provided under National Statistics protocols and have been derived from local management information and are therefore provisional and subject to change.

Information is provided up to the end of September 2015, in line with current published statistics procedures. We do hold the information you have requested for the period up to December 2015, but as it will not be placed in the public domain until later this month, we are unable to provide it to you at this stage.

In relation to the information covering October to December 2015, I can confirm that the Home Office holds the information that you requested. However, after careful consideration we have decided that the information is exempt from disclosure under section 36(2)(c) of the Freedom of Information Act. This provides that information can be withheld where disclosure would prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs and the public interest falls in favour of applying the exemption.

Arguments for and against disclosure in terms of the public interest, with the reasons for our conclusion, are set out below.

Public interest test

Some of the exemptions in the FOI Act, referred to as 'qualified exemptions', are subject to a public interest test (PIT). This test is used to balance the public interest in disclosure against the public interest in favour of withholding the information, or the considerations for and against the requirement to say whether the information requested is held or not. We must carry out a PIT where we are considering using any of the qualified exemptions in response to a request for information.

The 'public interest' is not the same as what interests the public. In carrying out a PIT we consider the greater good or benefit to the community as a whole if the information is released or not. The 'right to know' must be balanced against the need to enable effective government and to serve the best interests of the public.

The FOI Act is 'applicant blind'. This means that we cannot, and do not, ask about the motives of anyone who asks for information. In providing a response to one person, we are expressing a willingness to provide the same response to anyone, including those who might represent a threat to the UK.

Considerations in favour of disclosing the information

There is a general public interest in statistics relating to migration. Disclosure of the information requested would increase accountability and transparency and enhance the public's understanding of current trends in types of applications and processing times. All of these factors are in the public interest and there is some weight to be given to the considerations in favour of disclosing the information.

Considerations in favour of withholding the information

The Department publishes migration statistics quarterly and intends to publish migration statistics for October to December 2015 later this year. Although the exact breakdown of the information requested will not be published, it will form part of the overall figures. Premature release of the subset of data requested could form part of a series of requests which together could build up a picture of the overall data due to be published. Although it is accepted that you may not necessarily be interested in making subsequent requests, information released to one person under the FOI Act is, in effect, released to the public at large. This would provide an opportunity for others to submit additional requests ahead of the planned publication date in order to obtain the information prematurely.

Premature disclosure of statistics without adhering to established pre-publication procedures (which include internal consultation about the final statistics being published) would undermine the Department's ability to use its staff resources effectively in a planned way, so that reasonable publication timetables are not affected. We conclude that the overall balance of the public interest lies in favour of withholding the information to ensure that the Home Office is able to publish migration statistics in a managed and coherent way.

With regards to your request to provide the reasons for refusal, we have carried out a thorough search and we have established that the Home Office does not hold the information which you have requested. The reasons for the refusal of a visa application are given in the notification letter that is sent to the applicant. However, these reasons are not recorded on our electronic records.

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to the address below, quoting reference 38249. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

Information Access Team
Home Office
3rd Floor, Peel Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

e-mail: info.access@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

As part of any internal review the Department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by staff not involved in providing you with this response. If you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Yours sincerely

J Harvey
Customer Service Operations

We value your feedback, please use the link below to access a brief anonymous survey to help us improve our service to you:
<http://www.homeofficesurveys.homeoffice.gov.uk/s/108105TAZNG>