



Home Office

Phil Woolas MP
MINISTER OF STATE

2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF
www.homeoffice.gov.uk

Margaret Moran MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

2 5 NOV 2009

Dear Margaret,

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION No 291741 on how many visas have been rescinded on the grounds that a spouse signed under duress or threat of violence; and what steps his Department takes against the perpetrators of such duress or violence.

You tabled the above Parliamentary Question and I undertook to write to you with a substantive answer.

The UK Border Agency cannot identify from its central records how many visas have been revoked for a particular reason.

Leave to enter (LTE) may be curtailed after a person has used their visa and arrived in the UK. Whilst the UK Border Agency keeps a record of cases where LTE as a spouse has been curtailed, it cannot identify from its records how many of these cases involved curtailment of LTE on the grounds that the UK spouse was coerced into sponsoring the overseas spouse's visa application. The numbers are, however, very low, as very few UK sponsors in this situation are willing to make a public statement withdrawing their support for their spouse's application. The joint FCO/Home Office Forced Marriage Unit (FMU), set up in 2005 to help victims of forced marriage and those at risk of being forced into marriage, has so far this year dealt with 14 cases involving curtailment of LTE.

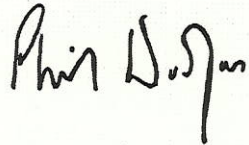
The FMU works closely with the Association of Chief Police Officers and, where an individual discloses that they have been threatened with violence, they advise them to notify the police who can determine whether to take further action.

The number of reluctant sponsors the FMU have supported is as follows:

2006	83
2007	94
2008	207
2009	96 (Jan-August)

I will arrange for a copy of this reply to be placed in the House Library.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Woolas', is centered on the page. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

PHIL WOOLAS MP