

Forced Marriage Unit
Two- Year Strategy 2007-2009

Following the consultation "A Wrong Not a Right" we decided not to create specific criminal legislation around forced marriage at this time. We have not ruled out the possibility of creating legislation in the future, and we have committed to exploring current legislation and filling any gaps.

Respondents to "A Wrong Not a Right" made many recommendations of non-legislative activity which could be used to tackle forced marriage. These recommendations centered around three main themes:

- 1. Preventing forced marriages taking place by helping more people to understand what forced marriage is, the damage it causes, and the help available to victims from the Forced Marriage Unit.*
- 2. Ensuring that statutory agencies and other professionals know how to help victims of forced marriage, and that the Forced Marriage Unit works in partnership with them.*
- 3. Making existing legislation an effective resource for victims of forced marriage, and ensuring that victims can access the protection and justice they need within the UK legal system.*

Based on these three themes the Forced Marriage Unit have developed the following two-year strategy:

Objective 1: We will increase education and work to raise levels of awareness of forced marriage within affected communities and professionals

Activity 1: Work with overseas governments to raise awareness of the risks of coming to the UK as a result of forced marriages.

Activity 2 : Develop a targeted outreach programme to engage with affected communities and build capacity of professionals.

Activity 3: Ensure that MPs are aware of the issue of forced marriage to better advise constituents, in particular the immigration issues.

Activity 4: Ensure FMU website contains accurate and updated information for victims, third parties and professionals.

Activity 5: Raise awareness of forced marriage amongst men and the older generations on affected communities.

Activity 6: Develop programme of support for survivors of forced marriage.

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Objective 2: We will engage in more joined up work with statutory agencies and ensure that best practice is shared effectively

Activity 7: We will continue to improve our response to assisting victims of forced marriage.

Activity 8: Work with health professionals to raise awareness and build their capacity in recognising risk factors and helping patients at risk.

Activity 9: Work with the Immigration and Nationality Directorate and Ukvisas to assess the effectiveness of current policies.

Activity 10: Ensuring that all cases involving a visa application are dealt with sensitively.

Activity 11: Work with ACPO to develop a programme of work to target honour based violence, including forced marriage.

Activity 12: Work with Department of Education and Skills to target young and vulnerable people at risk of forced marriage.

Activity 13: Work with Registrars to reduce the number of forced marriage taking place within the UK.

Activity 14: Work with Safeguarding Children's Boards in the UK to ensure that appropriate policies are in place to tackle forced marriage.

Activity 15: Share best practice with partners across the EU.

Activity 16: Share best practice with diplomatic posts and work with Non-Governmental Organisations overseas to assist victims of forced marriage.

Objective 3: We will work with our partners in the Police and Criminal Justice System to ensure that existing legislation is used effectively in cases of forced marriage.

Activity 17: Work with Local Criminal Justice Boards to ensure effective responses to cases of forced marriage.

Activity 18: Work with ACPO to strengthen the police response in cases of forced marriage.

Activity 19: Work with the Crown Prosecution Service to ensure effective responses to cases of forced marriage.

Activity 20: Work to build capacity within the legal profession in using legal remedies in cases of forced marriage.