



Home Office

Immigration Enforcement
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Diane Taylor
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www.gov.uk/home-office

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Dear Ms Taylor

Re: Freedom of Information – 49901

Thank you for your e-mail of 20 August, in which you ask for information regarding DNA testing on asylum seekers (2009-2011). Your query has been handled as a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You have asked:

- 1) *How many asylum seekers were subjected to DNA testing between 2009 and 2011 during a Home Office pilot scheme which DNA tested some asylum seekers to determine their country of origin?*
- 2) *Is the data relating to these DNA tests still stored by the Home Office or has it been destroyed?*
- 3) *If it was destroyed when was it destroyed?*

We are now in a position to provide a full reply to your request. I am able to disclose the following information:

Your first question was answered under a previous FOI response, published in 2011 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/20818-human-provenance-pilot-project>

For convenience, we have copied the question and response below:

I would like to request information relating to the outcome and evaluation of the Human Provenance Pilot (HPP) Project and the decision made by the UK Border Agency (UKBA) regarding the future use of HP testing.

We released the following information on 12 December 2011:

The start date of the HPP Project was 5th February 2009 with the first test taking place on 22nd September 2009. The end date of the pilot study was 31st March 2010.

The number of tests carried out under the Familial testing element of the pilot was 198 carried out over 76 family groups. Under the Country of Origin element of the pilot, there were 38 persons tested.



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Following the conclusion of the pilot, a decision was taken within UKBA not to take forward DNA / Isotope testing for country of origin identification purposes in the foreseeable future. On the basis of this decision, it was agreed that resources would not be devoted carrying out an evaluation of the pilot at this point in time.

If a decision to resume Familial DNA or Country of Origin testing is taken in the future, further consideration will be given to the scientific, legal and ethical basis on which it would operate. The Home Office would engage with relevant experts to address any concerns that may be raised regarding the use of this technique.

It should also be noted that the country of origin results were not used in reaching decisions on live cases and the results were anonymised.

In response to your second and third questions, all DNA samples were destroyed following the conclusion of the testing process.

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 foirequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk, quoting reference **49901**. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

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

Yours sincerely

Immigration Enforcement Secretariat