



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

[New Search](#) | [About RIRs](#) | [Help](#)

The Board		4 May 2007
About the Board	ISR102452.E	
Biographies		
Organization Chart	Israel: Availability of fraudulent or illegally obtained identity documents (2005 - 2007)	
Employment	Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa	
Legal and Policy		
References	Information on the availability of fraudulent or illegally obtained identity documents in Israel was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.	
Publications		
Tribunal		
Refugee Protection Division	In January 2007, Israeli media reported on the arrest by Jerusalem police of six Arab residents of East Jerusalem and one from the West Bank (<i>Ynetnews</i> 10 Jan. 2007). Those arrested were suspected of operating a network that sold false documents to Jews and Arabs across Israel (<i>ibid.</i>) as well as to Palestinians living in the Palestinian Territories (<i>ibid.</i> ; <i>Jerusalem Post</i> 11 Jan. 2007). Among the documents that the suspected forgers sold to hundreds of people (<i>ibid.</i>) were Israeli identification cards, Israeli insurance cards and fake court protocols (<i>ibid.</i> ; <i>Ynetnews</i> 10 Jan. 2007) on Arab family reunification cases (<i>Jerusalem Post</i> 11 Jan. 2007). The documents, which in some cases were sold for thousands of shekels [hundreds of Canadian dollars (Canada 11 Apr. 2007)] (<i>Ynetnews</i> 10 Jan. 2007; <i>Jerusalem Post</i> 11 Jan. 2007), were bought from intermediaries who forged the documents in their own homes (<i>ibid.</i>). According to the <i>Jerusalem Post</i> , "[t]housands of forged Israeli documents have been sold to Palestinians in recent years, and police are investigating whether the fake ID cards were used in terrorist attacks" (<i>ibid.</i>).	
Immigration Division		
Immigration Appeal Division		
Decisions		
Forms		
Statistics		
Research		
Research Program		
National Documentation Packages		
Issue Papers and Country Fact Sheets		
Responses to Information Requests	In April 2006, <i>Haaretz</i> published an article which cited the head of the Interior Ministry's Population Registry, Sasi Katzir, as remarking that Israel has become "a desirable target" for immigrants who use forged documents to immigrate under the Law of Return (26 Apr. 2006), which grants Jews, as well as certain relatives of Jews, the right to immigrate to Israel (Israel 5 July 1950). According to Katzir, "[p]arents and their children obtain their citizen status by borrowing the identities of families genuinely eligible under the Law of Return and using forged documents in order to immigrate" (<i>Haaretz</i> 26 Apr. 2006). In 2005, the Population Registry reportedly dealt with 121 cases of immigrants who obtained their status through fraudulent means (<i>ibid.</i>). In response, the Israeli government has considered equipping its diplomatic missions in the former Soviet Union with devices to be used for fingerprinting and identifying false documents and reviving a plan to establish a 24-member detective unit to catch forgers (<i>ibid.</i>). However, information on the implementation of this plan could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.	
Recent Research		
Media Centre		
News		
Information Sheets		
Media Relations		
Proactive Disclosure	A report on Azerbaijani Day.az Web site states that in 2006, Israeli authorities arrested 17 people for using false documents to prove that they were Jewish (19	

Mar. 2007), although this figure could not be corroborated among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within time constraints.

A 15 November 2006 article published by the *Jerusalem Post* revealed that, according to Israeli police, an increasing number of women who are being smuggled into Israel as sex slaves by human traffickers were using forged passports, although further or corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

In 30 April 2007 correspondence sent to the Research Directorate, an immigration program manager at the Embassy of Canada in Tel Aviv stated that while his office did not possess any intelligence data on the availability and prevalence of fraudulent or illegally obtained Israeli identification documents, the Embassy encountered such documents "extremely rarely" (Canada 30 Apr. 2007). Although he acknowledged the Israeli documents' vulnerability to fraud, he also indicated that the Embassy was "not aware that genuine documents could be obtained improperly as Israel is known to have good controls" (ibid.).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Canada. 30 April 2007. Embassy of Canada, Tel Aviv. Correspondence from an immigration program manager.

_____. 11 April 2007. Bank of Canada. "Daily Currency Converter." <<http://www.bank-banque-canada.ca/en/rates/converter.html?style=print>> [Accessed 12 Apr. 2007]

Day.Az [Baku]. 19 March 2007. "Repatriate from Azerbaijan Detained in Israel." (Factiva)

Haaretz [Tel Aviv]. 26 April 2006. Relly Sa'ar. "Immigration Candidates from Former USSR to Be Fingerprinted." <<http://www.haaretz.com/>> [Accessed 26 Apr. 2006]

Israel. 5 July 1950. The Law of Return 5710 (1950). (Last Amended 10 March 1970). <<http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/return.htm>> [Accessed 11 Apr. 2006]

Jerusalem Post. 11 January 2007. Etgar Lefkovits. "Seven Arabs Held for Forging Israeli IDs." (Factiva)

_____. 15 November 2006. Rebecca Anna Stoil. "Rising Prices for Sex Slaves Raises Smugglers' Motivation." (Factiva)

Ynetnews [Tel Aviv]. 10 January 2007. "6 Residents of East Jerusalem Suspected of Forging Documents." <<http://www.ynetnews.com/Ext/Comp/ArticleLayout/CdaArticlePrintPreview/1,2506,L-3350634,00.html>> [Accessed 5 Apr. 2007]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources, including: The Canadian Embassy in Tel Aviv and the Embassy of Israel in Ottawa did not respond to requests for information within the time constraints of this Response.

Internet sites, including: Amnesty International (AI); Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI); British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC); European Country of Origin

Information Network (ecoi.net); European Union (EU) ; Freedom House; Global Integrity; Human Rights Watch (HRW); *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*; Israeli Embassy in Ottawa; Israeli Embassy in Washington, DC; Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Israeli Ministry of the Interior; United Nations (UN) Security Council; United States Department of State; World News Connection (WNC).


[Top of Page](#)

[Important Notices](#)

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