



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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The Board		17 July 2007
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Biographies		
Organization Chart	Israel: The military obligations of Israelis over 35 years of age who have never completed military service because they were living abroad; their situation if they return to Israel at 30 years of age, 35 years, and 40 years; the situation of an immigrant from the former Soviet Union who completed military service in a former Soviet republic who is over 35 years of age; whether it is a policy of the Israeli government to inform ex-Soviet immigrants of the fact that Israel has compulsory military service before the ex-Soviet immigrants depart from their country of origin	
Employment		
Legal and Policy		
References		
Publications	Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa	
Tribunal		
Refugee Protection Division	In an information booklet entitled "Military Service," Israel's Ministry of Immigrant Absorption explains that:	
Immigration Division		
Immigration Appeal Division	Israeli citizens of army age living abroad who return to Israel are required to serve in the army according to the following criteria:	
Decisions		
Forms	Those who either left Israel under the age of 16 (or 15, if they left prior to 1/5/97) or were born abroad to Israeli parents, are generally exempt from conscription for as long as they remain resident abroad. Those who do return to Israel on a permanent basis are subject to conscription according to their age.	
Statistics		
Research		
Research Program	Women born to Israeli citizens overseas who return to take up residence in Israel after the age of 20 are exempt from service on condition that they did not previously reside in Israel for one year.	
National Documentation Packages		
Issue Papers and Country Fact Sheets	One who visits the country on a one-time basis, for a period of up to one year, or who makes separate visits for a number of days totaling no more than 120, [is] not considered as having "returned to Israel."	
Responses to Information Requests	Those who left Israel at age 16 or over are subject to conscription when they become 18 according to the Military Service law. Duration of service is the same as for all other Israelis. (2006, 10-11)	
Recent Research		
Media Centre		
News	A consular official from the Embassy of Israel in Ottawa corroborated this information, saying that if an individual left Israel after the age of 16 and is planning to return to Israel, he or she will be required to perform military service (14 June 2007). The Consular Official also stated that "Israeli citizens who are 30 and older are automatically exempted from military service" (ibid. 22 June 2007). A postdoctoral instructor at the Buchmann Faculty of Law at Tel Aviv University referred the Research Directorate to a section of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Web site which, according to the Postdoctoral Instructor, states in Hebrew that "any	
Information Sheets		
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new immigrant over the age of 30 is completely exempted from military service, including reserve service" (15 May 2007; Israel n.d.a).

With respect to immigrants from the former Soviet Union who have completed military service in a former Soviet republic, Israel's Ministry of Immigrant Absorption states that individuals who have served in foreign armies are eligible for shortened service in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) (Israel 2007, 130-131; *ibid.* 2006, 10). Such individuals must provide documents, translated and notarized, that prove service in a foreign military (*ibid.*). The "Guide for the New Immigrant," published by Israel's Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, explains that an individual who has served abroad 18 months or more will typically serve a shorter period of time in the IDF; if the shortened period is deemed to be less than six months, the individual will serve in the reserve force instead of performing compulsory service (*ibid.* 2007, 130-131). The information booklet on military service states that immigrant men over the age of 30 are exempt from compulsory military service (*ibid.* 2006, 8). According to the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, physicians and dentists who have served in a foreign military are also eligible for shortened service in the IDF (*ibid.*, 10).

Information on whether it is a policy of the Israeli government to inform ex-Soviet immigrants of the fact that Israel has compulsory military service before the ex-Soviet immigrants depart from their country of origin was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. However, the Consular Official stated in correspondence with the Research Directorate that "all immigrants to Israel who came from the former Soviet Union, and are of the appropriate age, know that they are required to serve in the military according to Israeli law" (Israel 22 June 2007). The Postdoctoral Instructor from Tel Aviv University was unaware whether Israel is under "any 'obligation' to inform new immigrants of service status, since immigration to Israel is voluntary" (15 May 2007). The "Guide for the New Immigrant" contains information on military service and is available online in Russian, Hebrew, English, Spanish and French (Israel n.d.b.; *ibid.* 2007).

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

Israel. 22 June 2007. Embassy of Israel, Ottawa. Correspondence from a consular official.

_____. 14 June 2007. Embassy of Israel, Ottawa. Telephone interview with a consular official.

_____. 2007. Ministry of Immigrant Absorption. "Guide for the New Immigrant." Fifth Edition. <http://www.moia.gov.il/NR/rdonlyres/374A8641-4D1C-4701-8EFD-2FBA0AE6289F/0/moleh_en.pdf> [Accessed 11 June 2007]

_____. 2006. Ministry of Immigrant Absorption. "Military Service." 4th Edition. <http://www.moia.gov.il/NR/rdonlyres/5F529074-C477-4C12-9A42-F85CA36ECFDF/0/idf_en.pdf> [Accessed 11 June 2007]

_____. N.d.a. Israel Defense Forces (IDF). <<http://www.aka.idf.il/giyus/general/?CatID=23080&DocID=24984>> [Accessed 14 June 2007]

_____. N.d.b. Ministry of Immigrant Absorption. "Guide for the New Immigrant." <http://www.moia.gov.il/Moia_en/Publication/ImmigrantGuide.htm> [Accessed 11 June 2007]

Postdoctoral Instructor, Tel Aviv University. 15 May 2007. Buchmann Faculty of Law.
Correspondence.

Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sites, including: *Haaretz* [Tel Aviv], Jewish Agency for Israel.

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