

# Responses to Information Requests - Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

Iraq: Passports, including appearance and security features; procedure to apply from within the country and from abroad (2016-February 2019)

## 1. Appearance and Security Features

In a country information report on Iraq, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) notes that the security features of the "current" A series passports as well as those of the "previous" G series correspond to international standards, with "good security features" (Australia 9 Oct. 2018, para. 5.35). For further information on differences between A and G series passports, see Response to Information Request IRQ105844 of July 2017.

### 1.1 Ordinary Passport

According to the European Union's (EU) Public Register of Authentic Travel and Identity Documents Online (PRADO), A series passports are ordinary passports issued to Iraqi nationals (EU n.d.a). Similarly, according to the US Department of State's Reciprocity Schedule for Iraq, A series passports "are issued to non-diplomatic or official passport holders" (US n.d.). According to PRADO, ordinary passports are valid for a maximum of six years (EU n.d.a). However, Keesing Technologies' Documentchecker indicates that the passport is valid for four or eight years, and that the date of expiry is indicated on page two (Keesing Technologies n.d.a). The website of the Iraqi Directorate of Passports, which is part of the Ministry of Interior's General Directorate for Nationality, explains that passports are valid for 8 years or, for individuals under 15 years of age, for 4 years (Iraq n.d.a).

According to sources, the passport has 48 pages and its dimensions are 87 or 88 mm by 125 mm (Keesing Technologies n.d.a; EU n.d.a). PRADO describes the colour of the passport cover as blue, with gold embossing (EU n.d.a). Sources indicate that the passport's security features include the following:

- UV security features (EU n.d.a; Keesing Technologies n.d.a), including "fluorescent overprint," "fluorescent ink," "fluorescent fibres," "fluorescent stitching thread" and "fluorescent serial number" (EU n.d.a);
- Printing techniques, such as "intaglio printing" (EU n.d.a) or microprint (Keesing Technologies n.d.a);
- Holder's photo (facial image), including a "secondary (ghost) image," and "[b]iographical data" (EU n.d.a) or photo and "[p]hoto repetition" on the biographical data page (Keesing Technologies n.d.a);
- Hologram on the biographical data page (Keesing Technologies n.d.a);
- 2D barcode on the biographical data page (Keesing Technologies n.d.a);
- "Latent image" on the inside front cover (Keesing Technologies n.d.a);
- "Printed Embossed Anticopy Key (PEAK)" on the inside back cover; (Keesing

- Technologies n.d.a);
- Laminate (EU n.d.a; Keesing Technologies n.d.a);
  - Numbering (EU n.d.a);
  - Number perforation (Keesing Technologies n.d.a);
  - Watermarks (EU n.d.a; Keesing Technologies n.d.a).

In addition, according to Keesing Technologies' Documentchecker, the passport includes the following biographical data: [sur]name, first names, date of birth, place of birth, nationality, bearer's signature, and gender (Keesing Technologies n.d.a). The same source notes that the following document data also appears on the biographical data page: document number, expiry date, date of issue, issuing country, and [issuing] authority (Keesing Technologies n.d.a).

A sample of the ordinary passport, as provided by Keesing Technologies' Documentchecker, is attached to this Response (Attachment 1).

## **1.2 Diplomatic Passport**

According to sources, diplomatic passports belong to the D series (EU n.d.b; US n.d.) and are issued to Iraqi nationals with diplomatic immunity (EU n.d.b). According to PRADO, the Iraqi diplomatic passport has a maximum validity of five years (EU n.d.b). In contrast, Keesing Technologies' Documentchecker indicates that the diplomatic passport is valid for a maximum of eight years (Keesing Technologies n.d.b). It has 48 pages and its dimensions are 87 or 88 mm by 125 mm (EU n.d.b; Keesing Technologies n.d.b). PRADO notes that the cover page is red with gold embossing (EU n.d.b). According to sources, the diplomatic passport has the same security features as the ordinary passport (EU n.d.b; Keesing n.d.b). A sample of the diplomatic passport, as provided by Keesing Technologies' Documentchecker, is attached to this Response (Attachment 2).

## **1.3 Service Passport**

According to sources, service passports belong to the E series (EU n.d.c; US n.d.) and are issued to government service staff (US n.d.). Sources indicate that the service passport has 48 pages and measures 87 or 88 mm by 125 mm (Keesing Technologies n.d.c; EU n.d.c). The same sources state that service passports have a maximum validity of eight years (Keesing Technologies n.d.c; EU n.d.c). According to PRADO, the cover page of E series passports is red (EU n.d.c). According to Keesing Technologies' Documentchecker, the service passport has the same security features as the ordinary passport (Keesing Technologies n.d.c).

A sample of the service passport, as provided by Keesing Technologies' Documentchecker, is attached to this Response (Attachment 3).

## **2. Application Procedure**

### **2.1 From Within Iraq**

The website of the Iraqi Ministry of Interior's Directorate of Passports explains that, in order to apply for a passport, an Iraqi citizen must complete an electronic form

with information corresponding to the data appearing on the Iraqi identity card (Iraq n.d.a). Once the form is completed, the applicant must print it out and present it at the local Directorate of Passports office (Iraq n.d.a). The applicant must present the following supporting documents: identity card (civil status ID), issued less than 10 years before the application; certificate of Iraqi nationality, and housing card (Iraq n.d.a). The applicant must also provide two photographs with a white background, measuring 45 mm by 35 mm, and pay the fee of 25,000 Iraqi dinars (IQD) [approximately C\$27.50] (Iraq n.d.a).

According to the US Reciprocity Schedule for Iraq, the processing time is one week (US n.d.). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

## **2.2 From Abroad**

According to the website of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, an Iraqi citizen applying for a passport from abroad must present themselves at a Consular mission (Iraq n.d.b). The applicant must complete the form available on the website of the Directorate of Passports (Iraq n.d.b). The applicant's photograph must be stamped with the consular seal and the application form must be signed by the consul and stamped with the consular seal (Iraq n.d.b). The following documents must be provided with the application form: three colour photographs with a white background and colour copies of the applicant's nationality card and "Civil Status Document" (Iraq n.d.b). According to the Directorate of Passports website, "residents living abroad" must present a "[r]esidence ID" document [in lieu of the housing card requirement for applications from within Iraq] (Iraq n.d.a). The applicant must also pay a fee of US\$20, or "its equivalent in other currencies" (Iraq n.d.b). According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, the application form and the required documents should be sent electronically to the Directorate of Passports (Iraq n.d.b).

## **2.3 Further Requirements**

According to the website of the Directorate of Passports, for children under 18 years old, [translation] "parental or guardian consent" is required to obtain a passport (Iraq n.d.a).

According to the US Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2017*, the law does not allow a woman to apply for a passport without "the consent of her male guardian or a legal representative" (US 20 Apr. 2018, 43). However, the website of the Directorate of Passports states that any Iraqi citizen above 18 years old, [translation] "male or female," "can obtain a passport without a guardian's consent" (Iraq n.d.a). A 2018 Landinfo report, as cited in a report by the Finnish Immigration Service on the status of women living without a safety net in Iraq, indicates that the Passport Law, which came into force in 2015, entitles every Iraqi citizen aged 18 or over to apply for a passport, without the consent of a spouse or a guardian (Finland 22 May 2018, 45). However, according to the same source, sources contacted by Cedoca, the Belgian country of origin information service, note that "this law is not applicable to women in central and southern Iraq" (Finland 22 May 2018, 45).

Human Rights Watch reports that families of persons suspected of being part of the Islamic State (IS) [ISIS, ISIL, Daesh] were unable to obtain civil documentation, including passports, because they "automatically fail the [required] security screening" by the Ministry of Interior, the intelligence services or the National Security Service (Human Rights Watch 25 Feb. 2018). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

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 sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

## References

Australia. 9 October 2018. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). [DFAT Country Information Report: Iraq](#). [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019]

European Union (EU). N.d.a. Public Register of Authentic Travel and Identity Documents Online (PRADO). "[Document: IRQ-AO-03001](#)." [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019]

European Union (EU). N.d.b. Public Register of Authentic Travel and Identity Documents Online (PRADO). "[Document: IRQ-AD-03001](#)." [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019]

European Union (EU). N.d.c. Public Register of Authentic Travel and Identity Documents Online (PRADO). "[Document: IRQ-AS-03001](#)." [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019]

Finland. 22 May 2018. Finnish Immigration Service. [Overview of the Status of Women Living Without a Safety Net in Iraq](#). [Accessed 4 Feb. 2019]

Human Rights Watch. 25 February 2018. "[Iraq: Families of Alleged ISIS Members Denied IDs](#)." [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019]

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Iraq. N.d.b. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "[Passport Issuance](#)." [Accessed 4 Feb. 2019]

Keesing Technologies. N.d.a. Keesing Documentchecker. "Iraq - National Passport." [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019]

Keesing Technologies. N.d.b. Keesing Documentchecker. "Iraq - Diplomatic Passport." [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019]

Keesing Technologies. N.d.c. Keesing Documentchecker. "Iraq - Service Passport." [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019]

United States (US). 20 April 2018. Department of State. "Iraq." [Country Reports on](#)

[\*Human Rights Practices for 2017\*](#). [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019]

United States (US). N.d. Department of State. "[Iraq Reciprocity Schedule](#)." [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019]

## **Additional Sources Consulted**

**Oral sources:** Iraq – embassy in Ottawa, Consulate Department.

**Internet sites, including:** Al Jazeera; Amnesty International; eoi.net; Electronic Document Information System on Network (Edison TD); Factiva; Freedom House; International Crisis Group; UN – Refworld.

## **Attachments**

1. Keesing Technologies. N.d. Keesing Documentchecker. "Iraq - National Passport." [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019]
2. Keesing Technologies. N.d. Keesing Documentchecker. "Iraq - Diplomatic Passport." [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019]
3. Keesing Technologies. N.d. Keesing Documentchecker. "Iraq - Service Passport." [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019]