



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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01 February 2006

**UZH100741.E**

Uzbekistan: Treatment of ethnic Tajiks and the state protection available to them (2003 - 2005)  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Information regarding the current treatment of ethnic Tajiks in Uzbekistan and on the state protection available to them was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

According to *Freedom in the World 2005*, five per cent of the Uzbekistan's population is Tajik (Freedom House 2005a.). A news article reported that political observers were "concerned about alleged acts of discrimination committed by Uzbek authorities against ethnic Tajiks in Uzbekistan" (Eurasianet 28 June 2004). The same article noted that according to a study by the Dushanbe-based Asia-Plus news agency, "Tajiks have been subject for the past few years to extortion and humiliation at the border post 'Kushkand' in Yangiabad district" (ibid.).

In Uzbekistan, Tajiks like other minorities, "enjoy representation in nationwide political institutions but do not have separate party representation based on nationality or ethnicity" (Freedom House 2005b).

Under the Constitution of Uzbekistan, there are

equal rights for all citizens, irrespective of national or ethnic, religious or linguistic affiliation. All citizens are equal before the law. The population of Uzbekistan includes Koreans, Russians, Tatars, Meskhetin Turks, Jews, Bashkirs, Ukrainians, Germans, Poles and other nations and peoples. All nations and peoples are accorded equal rights for the development of their cultures, the study of their mother tongue, and their national attributes and traditions. Conditions are created for the development of national schools at which representatives of national minorities can receive education in their mother tongue. Recognizing that "positive measures by States may also be necessary to protect the identity of a minority and the rights of its members to enjoy and develop their culture and language and to practise their religion in community with the other members of the group", Uzbekistan has established schools that provide instruction in the Korean, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Russian, German and other languages (UN 3 Aug. 2004).

According to Freedom House, Tajik is spoken widely in Samarkand and Bukhara (2004b). The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in Uzbekistan noted in a 24 June report that 318 schools provide instruction in Tajik. There are Tajik-language newspapers in Uzbekistan (2 Sept. 2005). The 2004 *Freedom in the World* report stated that even though "racial and ethnic discrimination is prohibited by the law, the belief that senior positions in government and business are reserved for ethnic Uzbeks is widespread" (Freedom House 2004a; *Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, Sec. 5).

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

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#### Additional Sources Consulted

**Internet sites, included:** Amnesty International, Center for International Development and Conflict Management (CIDCM), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Factiva, Human Rights Internet, Human Rights Watch, International Committee of the Red Cross, International Federation for Human Rights, International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, International League for Human Rights (ILHR), International Press Institute, IRIN Asia News, Radio Free Europa/Radio Liberty, Tribune.uz, UK House of Commons - Foreign Affairs Committee.

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