



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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Mexico: Whether Mexicans who move, but fail to change their address on their voter's card (Credencial para Votar) or on the document (constancia) provided with the population register identification number (Clave Única de Registro de Población, CURP), are liable to a fine; whether a third party can access information pertaining to these documents using the affiliated database
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

The Federal Registry of Voters (Registro Federal de Electores) of the Federal Electoral Institute (Instituto Federal Electoral, IFE) has four tools: the voters' registry database (data on Mexicans over 18 years of age), the electoral list (citizens go to an IFE office in person to submit a form in order to be included in the register and to be able to vote), the voter's card, and the voters' list with photographs, which is used in the polling divisions during elections (Mexico n.d.b).

The information in the following three paragraphs was provided by a representative of the international division of the IFE in correspondence sent to the Research Directorate on 7 May 2009. The Representative stated that the voter's card is required in order to be able to vote; it is generally recognized as an identification card and it contains a number of security features.

Citizens are required by law to inform the IFE of any change of address within 30 days of moving (see also Mexico n.d.b, 67). However, there is no sanction for failing to respect this requirement.

Information that citizens provide to the IFE is confidential. Detailed information can be provided under certain circumstances, for example, if required by a court order. Political parties have full access to the data so that they can verify the accuracy of the voters' list, but they are prohibited by law from distributing or sharing the information (see also Mexico n.d.b, 67). The Ministry of the Interior (Secretaría de Gobernación) has access to enable it to create the national citizen registry (*Registro Nacional Ciudadano*). Employees with the IFE and with the Federal Registry of Voters also have limited access to the data and, if they access it without authorization, they could be subject to criminal and administrative sanctions.

An IFE report on transparency and access to information states that 162 requests for access to personal information were received in 2008 (Mexico 27 Feb. 2009, 27). Of these requests, 125 were submitted by third parties (even though they had no right to the information), and 37 were submitted by people looking for their own information (*ibid.*), which was subsequently updated or

verified (ibid., 28). Over 9,280,000 changes of address were filed with the IFE in 2008 (ibid., 29).

The voter's address also appears on the voters' list, which is distributed for logistical reasons during elections (copies are given to political parties and to the authorities responsible for the electoral process) (Mexico n.d.a.). In a document on the federal voters register, the IFE states that these voters' lists are organized geographically (by polling division), that they are produced on paper that has anti-counterfeiting features built into it, and that the polling division receives only the list for its own division in order to verify the identity of voters on voting day (ibid. n.d.b, 65).

Document provided with the population register identification number (Clave Única de Registro de Población, CURP)

In a telephone interview with the Research Directorate on 6 May 2009, the supervisor of the client services division (*Area de Causantes*) of the National Population Register (Registro Nacional de Población, RENAPO) of the Ministry of the Interior provided the following information on the document that is provided with the population register identification number (*Clave Única de Registro de Población, CURP*).

The CURP was established by presidential executive order in 1996. Anyone residing in Mexico or any Mexican living abroad must have a CURP (see also Mexico n.d.c).

A document (*constancia*) is provided with the CURP. It shows the name, date and place of birth, gender, and information on marital status registration (year and date of registration) of the holder (see also Mexico n.d.c). The individual's address does not appear in this document, and in fact, changes of address cannot be submitted to the RENAPO, because it does not record them in its database.

A search can be conducted on the RENAPO website using the CURP to find a person's name, date and place of birth, and gender. This information can also be used to find a CURP number (see also Mexico n.d.c).

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

Mexico. 7 May 2009. Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE). Correspondence sent to the Research Directorate by a representative of the international section.

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Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sites, including: Fiscalía Especializada de Delitos Electorales, Instituto Federal de Acceso a la Información Pública.

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