



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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| The Board | | 26 February 2004 |
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| About the Board | TUR42435.E | |
| Biographies | | |
| Organization Chart | Turkey: The possible entries (and their meaning) that can be made in the space concerning military service on the last page of the Turkish passport; the manner by which Turkish border officials are notified of an individual's draft evasion | |
| Employment | Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa | |
| Legal and Policy | | |
| References | | |
| Publications | | |
| Tribunal | | |
| Refugee Protection Division | In a telephone interview with the Research Directorate, the First Secretary of the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey, in Ottawa, indicated that although he could not provide precise information on the exact period of time, the practice of making entries into passports in the section on the last page pertaining to military service was suspended for approximately two years (20 Feb. 2004). It was only some time last year (2003) that making entries into passports in the section pertaining to military service was reinstated (Embassy of the Republic of Turkey 20 Feb. 2004). | |
| Immigration Division | | |
| Immigration Appeal Division | | |
| Decisions | When the section is left blank or has a "-" (horizontal line), it could mean that the passport was issued during the aforementioned period of time when the practice of making entries in passports pertaining to military service had been suspended (ibid.). If the passport was issued before or after that period and the section is left blank or has a horizontal line, it could mean that the passport holder is a female (since females are not required to serve in the military service) or that the passport holder, for a reason established by the relevant government authority, is not "obliged to serve" in the military (i.e., health reasons, not of military serving age) (ibid.). | |
| Forms | | |
| Statistics | | |
| Research | | |
| Research Program | | |
| National Documentation Packages | Although the 2001 report on military service in Turkey by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Netherlands indicates that "[t]he entry 'yapmıptir' (done) or 'yapmamıptir' (not done) in the passport indicates whether the holder has completed military service or not" (The Netherlands July 2001, Sec. 3.1), the First Secretary stated that other entries in this section can also be made (Embassy of the Republic of Turkey 20 Feb. 2004). Although entries in the section pertaining to military service on the last page of the Turkish passport are not standardized, the First Secretary said that they are self-explanatory when translated from Turkish to English (ibid). Stating that all entries are in Turkish, examples of such entries provided by the First Secretary include, but are not limited to, the Turkish translation of "carried out," "served," "not served," "postponed" or "exempt" (ibid.). | |
| Issue Papers and Country Fact Sheets | | |
| Responses to Information Requests | | |
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| Media Relations | | |
| Proactive Disclosure | In the updated November 2002 edition of the report prepared by researchers who were commissioned to conduct a fact-finding mission to Turkey in October 2000, David McDowall writes that draft evaders cannot obtain passports nor renew them (Nov. 2002, 70). | |

Further to information he provided to the Research Directorate in September 2003 (see TUR41761 of 9 September 2003) where he stated that "neither draft evaders nor *bakaya* are 'permitted to travel abroad until they legalize their situation'," the First Secretary stated that that is still the case today, and added that "legalizing one's situation" requires that individuals report to their regional military office and sort out their documents in order to be able to travel (ibid.). The First Secretary also cautioned that from the time that an individual initially fails to report for military service to the time when officials at ports or entry/exit in Turkey are notified of this, a period of time passes (ibid.). That is because when a person fails to report to their regional military office, the office first makes several attempts to contact the individual, including via telephone, notices that are mailed to the individual's home and by sending a police officer to the individual's residence, all of which "takes time" (ibid.). When these attempts to contact the individual are not successful, the regional military office then proceeds to notify each of the governorships, which then notify each city and relevant government authority, including border authorities (ibid.). Again, this "takes time" (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 to refugee status or asylum. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Embassy of the Republic of Turkey. 20 February 2004. Telephone interview with the First Secretary.

McDowall, David. November 2002. Asylum Seekers from Turkey II. A Revised, Updated Edition of the Report of a Mission to Turkey, October 2000. <http://www.ecoi.net/pub/ds/497_02652tur.doc> [Accessed 19 Feb. 2004]

The Netherlands. July 2001. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate for Movements of Persons, Migration and Consular Affairs, Asylum and Migration Division. Turkey/Military Service. <<http://www.ecoi.net/pub/ms59/neth-tur0701.pdf>> [Accessed 20 February 2004]

Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sources, including:

European Country of Origin Information Network (ECOI)

United Kingdom, Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND)

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