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## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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| The Board                            |  | 27 February 2004  |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| About the Board                      | <b>TUR42457.FE</b>   |                   |
| Biographies                          |  |                   |
| Organization Chart                   |  |                   |
| Employment                           | Turkey: The likelihood that the Turkish authorities would change identity cards and civil status registers in order to change Christian given names and the Christian religion to Muslim names and the Muslim religion; the registration of Christian births   |                   |
| Legal and Policy                     | Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa  |                   |
| References                           |  |                   |
| Publications                         | <p>The following information was provided by an official of the Embassy of Turkey during a 25 February 2004 telephone interview. The likelihood that the Turkish authorities themselves change the given name or the religion indicated on identity cards or in the civil status registers "is zero." Given that Turkey has been a secular state since 1923, the government would have no reason to change the religion indicated on identity cards or in civil status registers. There is no official discrimination based upon religious persuasion (<i>International Religious Freedom Report 2003</i> 18 Dec. 2003, Sec. 2).</p> |                   |
| Tribunal                             |  |                   |
| Refugee Protection Division          |  |                   |
| Immigration Division                 |  |                   |
| Immigration Appeal Division          |  |                   |
| Decisions                            | <p>However, if people want to convert from one religion to another, they may apply to a civil court, which will take the steps required to amend the relevant documents (Turkey 25 Feb. 2004). According to the <i>International Religious Freedom Report 2003</i>, a number of people who converted from Islam to another religion were reportedly harassed when they attempted to amend the religion indicated on their identity cards (18 Dec. 2003, Sec. 2).</p>   |                   |
| Forms                                |  |                   |
| Statistics                           |  |                   |
| Research                             |  |                   |
| Research Program                     |  |                   |
| National Documentation Packages      | <p>With respect to the registration of Christian births, the official of the Embassy of Turkey indicated that it did not differ from the registration of Muslim births (Embassy of Turkey 25 Feb. 2004). A document attesting to the birth of a child is simply sent to the birth registration office (<i>ibid.</i>).</p>  |                   |
| Issue Papers and Country Fact Sheets |  |                   |
| Responses to Information Requests    | <p>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.</p>   |                   |
| Recent Research                      |  |                   |
| Media Centre                         |  |                   |
| News                                 |  | <u>References</u> |
| Information Sheets                   |  |                   |
| Media Relations                      | Embassy of Turkey, Ottawa. 25 February 2004. Telephone interview with an official.   |                   |
| Proactive Disclosure                 | <i>International Religious Freedom Report 2003</i> . 18 December 2003. United States Department of State. Washington, DC.  |                   |
|                                      | < <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2003/24438.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2003/24438.htm</a> > [Accessed 26 Feb. 2004]  |                   |

Additional Sources Consulted

IRB Databases

**Internet sites, including:**

European Country of Origin Information Network

Human Rights Foundation of Turkey

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

*Turkish Daily News*

United Kingdom, Immigration and Nationality Directorate

**Search engine:**

Google

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