



[Français](#) | [Home](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Help](#) | [Search](#) | [canada.gc.ca](#)

[Home](#) > [Research](#) > [Responses to Information Requests](#)

RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

[New Search](#) | [About RIRs](#) | [Help](#)

| The Board | | 20 September 2004 |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| About the Board | TUR43002.E | |
| Biographies | | |
| Organization Chart | Turkey: The situation of Alevi Kurdish students at Turkish universities (specifically those in Istanbul and Ankara), particularly whether they are experiencing discrimination; the extent to which the university administration and police tolerate or investigate complaints; internal complaint processes (April 2002 - September 2004) | |
| Employment | | |
| Legal and Policy | | |
| References | | |
| Publications | Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa | |
| Tribunal | | |
| Refugee Protection Division | This Response contains sections of TUR38531.E of 16 April 2002. | |
| Immigration Division | No information on the situation of Alevi Kurdish students at Turkish universities could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. | |
| Immigration Appeal Division | However, the following information, which is outside the covered period is relevant. According to an article published on the Alevilik-Bektasilik Research Site, "Alevi have no distinguishing physical characteristics such as skin color, or eye shape ... [and] wear no traditional dress that sets them apart from anyone in the street" (1 Oct. 2000). Even so, "Alevi almost universally feel that they have been persecuted for their beliefs and cultural values" (ibid.). However, when harassed they "seldom seek redress either from the police or from the judicial system, since they believe the latter to be deeply prejudiced against them" (Utrikespolitiska Institutet 2001, 9). A report written for Asylum Aid by Navita Atreya et al. in February 2001 noted that the "issue is not that Alevi Kurds are persecuted per se, but rather that they are at significantly greater risk [and] are vulnerable to suspicion, gross prejudice and mistreatment if individuals belonging to the community attract police attention" (Feb. 2001, 36-37). | |
| Decisions | | |
| Forms | | |
| Statistics | | |
| Research | | |
| Research Program | | |
| National Documentation Packages | | |
| Issue Papers and Country Fact Sheets | | |
| Responses to Information Requests | The education was considered discriminatory by Alevi (UNHCR Oct. 1997, 13; Atreya et al. Feb. 2001, 33). Navita Atreya et al. argued that | |
| Recent Research | | |
| Media Centre | | |
| News | Since [the 1980's] probably as a result of the doctrine of 'Turkish-Islamic synthesis', itself an attempt to assuage the apparent frustration of the Islamic-minded constituency in Turkey, compulsory classes in (Sunni) religious education take place in the Turkish education system. ... [C]ompulsory education in Sunni Islam is clearly discriminatory. Furthermore, in the course of this compulsory education, Alevi schoolchildren report being picked upon and punished for failing to learn Sunni Qur'anic or liturgical material, or are mocked by their peers. Those in schools with a predominantly Sunni intake learn what it is to be reviled at a young age (ibid.). | |
| Information Sheets | | |
| Media Relations | | |
| Proactive Disclosure | | |

This information could not be corroborated by sources consulted by the Research Directorate within time constraints.

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

Alevilik-Bektasilik Research Site. 1 October 2000. John Shindeldecker. "Turkish Alevis Today." <<http://www.alevibektasi.org/xalevis1.htm>> [Accessed 17 Sept. 2004]

Atreya, Navita et al. February 2001. *A Report to Asylum Aid: Asylum Seekers From Turkey: The Dangers They Flee*. <<http://www.asylumaid.org.uk/Publications/turkey%20report.PDF>> [Accessed 17 Sept. 2004]

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). October 1997. *Background Paper on Refugees and Asylum Seekers from Turkey*. <http://www.asylumlaw.org/docs/turkey/unhcr_bpas97_turkey.pdf> [Accessed 17 Sept. 2004]

Utrikespolitiska Institutet. 2001. Occasional Papers No. 19. Nigar Karimova and Edward Deverell. *Minorities in Turkey*. <<http://www.ui.se/texter/op19.pdf>> [Accessed 17 Apr. 2004]

Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sites, including : Amnesty International (AI), Dialog, Human Rights Association of Turkey, Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (HRFT), European Country of Origin Information Network (ECOI), Freedom House, Human Rights Watch, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, Minority Rights Group International (MRG), Organization of Human Rights and Solidarity for Oppressed People (MAZLUMDER), *Turkish Daily News*.

 [Top of Page](#)

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