

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment, please email the [Knowledge and Information Management Unit](#).

23 April 2013

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Kyrgyzstan: Inter-marriage between a Uyghur person and a Kyrgyz person, including treatment by society and the authorities (2011-April 2013)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Information about inter-marriage between a Uyghur person and a Kyrgyz person was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Uyghurs account for only 1 percent of the population of Kyrgyzstan (MRG May 2011; *L'aménagement linguistique dans le monde* 29 Sept. 2011).

In a telephone interview with the Research Directorate, an anthropologist who has been conducting a study since 2002 on political transformations in Kyrgyzstan and who is a research officer at the National Centre for Scientific Research (Centre national de la recherche scientifique, CNRS), a public organization in France whose research covers [translation] "all scientific, technological and societal fields" (CNRS 19 Apr. 2013), stated that, in Kyrgyzstan, marriages between the Uyghurs and the Kyrgyz are not prohibited (ibid. 16 Apr. 2013). However, he added that, according to tradition, the Uyghur people [translation] "tend to marry a person from their ethnic group" (ibid.). According to a report released by the German Institute for Economic Research, a publicly-financed and not-for-profit organization (German Institute for Economic Research n.d.), Kyrgyzstan households generally consist of members of a single ethnicity (Esenaliev and Steiner 2012, 7). The report also highlights that, based on the data obtained through the integrated surveys on households conducted by the National Statistical Committee of Kyrgyz Republic in 2005, 2007 and 2009, household heads of Kyrgyz origin are, in 98 percent of cases, married to a Kyrgyz person (ibid., 6-7).

The anthropologist explained that, in some cases, social pressures may be exerted so that a marriage unites members of the same ethnic group, but that this depends on the origin, geographical location and the economic status of the family or ethnic group (anthropologist 16 Apr. 2013). Sources report that in Kyrgyzstan, marriage is not merely the union of two people but also that of two families (ibid.; Borbieva Jan. 2012). In certain cases, the marriage may be arranged by the families (ibid.; anthropologist 16 Apr. 2013). According to the anthropologist, in general, [translation] "the focus is on marrying the young girl to a man of higher social status" (ibid.). He claimed that in general, men [translation] "have more choices," but that marriage may be more difficult for some because of the modest means of the family (ibid.).

Information on the treatment of Uyghur and Kyrgyz mixed couples by society and the authorities could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

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

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- German Institute for Economic Research. N.d. "About Us." <http://www.diw.de/en/diw_01.c.100293.en/about_us/about_us.html> [Accessed 23 Apr. 2013]
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Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: A professor from the Centre for Interdisciplinary Area Studies – Middle East, Africa, Asia (ZIRS) Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg and a representative of the International Uyghur Human Rights & Democracy Foundation were unable to provide information.

Publication: Lonely Planet Kyrgyzstan.

Internet sites, including: 24.kg; Agence de presse Ferghana; AKIpress.com; Amnesty International; Australia – Migration Review Tribunal; Azerros; Cairn.info; Chine-Nouvelle.com; *Courrier international*; *Le Devoir*; DkNews; ecoi.net; EurasiaNet; Factiva; *Le Figaro*; France – Cour nationale du droit d'asile; France 24; Freedom House; Human Rights First; Human Rights Watch; Institute for War and Peace Reporting; International Crisis Group; International Teams; *Libération*; Minorities at Risk; Minority Electronic Resources; Radio Free Asia; Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty; Rg.ru; *The Times of Central Asia*; United Kingdom – Home Office; United Nations – Refworld, ReliefWeb, Integrated Regional Information Networks; United States – Department of State, Overseas Security Advisory Council; Uyghur American Association; Uyghur Human Rights Project.

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