

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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> Responses to Information Requests

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 Basesdedonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca.

26 May 2010

TUR103457.E

Turkey: Compulsory military service for Turkish citizens living abroad
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Sources report that male Turkish citizens who live abroad may avoid serving the usual fifteen months of compulsory military service (WRI 23 Oct. 2008; *Hürriyet Daily News* 23 Apr. 2010). They can serve a shorter term of military service in exchange for paying a fee (*Today's Zaman* 25 Apr. 2010; WRI 23 Oct. 2008; *Hürriyet Daily News* 23 Apr. 2010; Turkey 13 May 2010). In a telephone interview with the Research Directorate on 13 May 2010, an official of the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey in Ottawa stated that Turkish citizens who have been living abroad for a minimum of three years and have a legal work permit in the country where they live, have the option of paying 5,112 Euros to shorten their compulsory military service to a term of three weeks. One Turkish media source also indicates that the reduced military service is three weeks (*Hürriyet Daily News* 23 Apr. 2010), while other sources state that it is one month (*Today's Zaman* 25 Apr. 2010; WRI 23 Oct. 2008). War Resisters' International (WRI), a London-based organization promoting non-violent action against the causes of war (WRI 24 July 2008), corroborates that the fee for reducing the term of service is 5,112 Euros (WRI 23 Oct. 2008).

WRI and the Official report that Turkish citizens living abroad can their military service up until the age of thirty-eight (*ibid.*; Turkey 13 May 2010). The Official indicated that both students and legal workers who are living abroad are allowed to postpone military service (Turkey 13 May 2010). WRI indicates that postponement can be arranged for up to three years at a time (WRI 23 Oct. 2008).

The Official noted that Turkish citizens who are living abroad and do not complete or legally postpone their compulsory military service would be sent to the nearest military training centre when they arrive in Turkey and may face charges of draft evasion (*ibid.*). In addition, they would not be able to renew their passports abroad and would only be allowed to travel back to Turkey (*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 for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Hürriyet Daily News [Istanbul]. 23 April 2010. Işıl Eğrikavuk. "Debate Over Who Should Bear Burden of Arms in Turkey Heats Up Again." <<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=paid-military-service-debates-heat-up-once-again-2010-04-23>> [Accessed 13 May 2010]

Today's Zaman [Istanbul]. 25 April 2010. "Professional Army Key to End Debates over Conscription." <<http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/news-208408-professional-army-key-to-end-debates-over-conscription.html>> [Accessed 12 May 2010]

Turkey. 13 May 2010. Embassy of the Republic of Turkey in Ottawa. Telephone interview with the Vice Consul.

War Resisters' International (WRI). 23 October 2008. "Country Report and Updates: Turkey." <http://www.wri-irg.org/programmes/world_survey/country_report/en/Turkey> [Accessed 12 Apr. 2010]

_____. 24 July 2008. "About WRI." <http://www.wri-irg.org/network/about_wri> [Accessed 11 May 2010]

Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sites, including: Amnesty International (AI), Coalition to Stop the Use of Child-Soldiers, European Bureau for Conscientious Objection, European Country of Origin Information Network (ecoi.net), Forum 18, Freedom House, Human Rights Watch, International Crisis Group, Office of the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Refworld.

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