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RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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The Board		17 September 2004
About the Board	TUR43001.E	
Biographies		
Organization Chart	Turkey: whether Istanbul's Gazi District is predominantly Alevi (Alawi) and whether there are other districts in Istanbul which are mainly dominated by Alevis (September 2001 - September 2004)	
Employment	Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa	
Legal and Policy References	This Response replaces TUR37723.E of 4 September 2001.	
Publications		
Tribunal		
Refugee Protection Division	A November 2002 report by David McDowall, an author who has written extensively on middle Eastern issues mentions a substantial Kurdish Alevi community in the Gazi neighborhood of Istanbul. A 2002 Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) news report refers to the 1995 clashes between Alevis and police forces as taking place in "Gaziosmanpasa, a poor Istanbul neighborhood with a large Alevi community" (18 Feb. 2002). More recent information referring to the Alevi population living in the Gazi District of Istanbul could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.	
Immigration Division		
Immigration Appeal Division		
Decisions		
Forms		
Statistics	Other more dated information includes a 12 March 2000 BBC news report which describes the Gazi district as "largely inhabited by Alawite Muslims." A 14 February 1997 article appearing in the <i>Turkish Daily News</i> referred to Alevi protests in Istanbul as occurring in the "predominantly Alevi populated neighborhoods" of Okmeydani, Nurtepe, Ornektepe and Maltepe-Gulsuyu. No other reference to predominantly Alevi districts in Istanbul could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.	
Research		
Research Program		
National Documentation Packages		
Issue Papers and Country Fact Sheets	The following information on the general geographic distribution of Alevis across Turkey is relevant. The Alevis nowadays live mainly in "the outlying areas of large cities, such as Istanbul, Ankara or Izmir " (Shankland 2003, 13). However, according to RFE/RL, Alevis are "concentrated in Central Anatolia and in Turkey's predominantly Kurdish southeastern provinces" while there are large Alevi communities "in western Anatolia, along the Mediterranean coast, in Istanbul, and in Ankara" (18 Feb. 2002).	
Responses to Information Requests		
Recent Research		
Media Centre		
News	In a January 2002 report on Turkey, the Netherlands delegation of the Council of the European Union indicated that although Alevis can be found across Turkey, they were concentrated in the western provinces of East Anatolia (92).	
Information Sheets		
Media Relations		
Proactive Disclosure	A November 2002 report prepared by David McDowall for Asylum Aid is the only source found by the Research Directorate that makes the distinction between areas inhabited by Turkish Alevis and Kurdish Alevis (55). According to McDowall, Turkish Alevis live mainly in western, central and northern Anatolia, more	

specifically in the provinces of Amasya, Corum, Nevsehir, Yozgat, Tokat, Sivas and Erzincan (McDowall Nov. 2002, 55). Kurdish Alevis, however, reside predominantly in "the marginal areas between Turkish and Kurdish regions of Turkey ... [n]otably in Bingol, Maras, Malatya, Adiyaman, Tunceli, Sivas and Erzincan provinces (ibid.). The presence of large Kurdish Alevi communities in "neighborhoods of Istanbul, ... Izmir, Adana, Gaziantep and other cities of migration " is also mentioned (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 additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

- BBC.12 March 2000. "Turkish Police Arrest 350 Protesters."
<<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/675243.stm>> [Accessed 16 Sept. 2004]
- Council of the European Union.15 April 2002. *Official General Report on Turkey (January 2002)*. <<http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/01/st11/11533en1.pdf>> [Accessed 14 Sept. 2004]
- McDowall, David.*Asylum Seekers from Turkey II*. Asylum Aid Website.
<[http://www.asylumaid.org.uk/Publications/Turkey%20report%2011%20\(Nov%202002\).doc](http://www.asylumaid.org.uk/Publications/Turkey%20report%2011%20(Nov%202002).doc)> [Accessed 14 Sept. 2004]
- Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL).18 February 2002. "Turkey: Court Ruling Shows Authorities' Refusal to See Alevism as a Religious Community."
<<http://www.rferl.org/features/2002/02/18022002084416.asp>> [Accessed 13 September 2004]
- Shankland, David. 2003. *The Alevis in Turkey: The Emergence of a Secular Islamic Tradition*. London: Routledge Curzon.
- Turkish Daily News.14 February 1997. Zafer F. Yoruk. "One Minute DARKNESS Leads to Daylong Controversy."
<http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_edition/02_14_97/dom.htm> [Accessed 15 September 2004]

Additional Sources Consulted

Publication : *The Europa World Year Book*.

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).

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