



Iran - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Monday 22 July 2013

Information on difficulties in obtaining passports for those with problems with the state

In February 2013 a publication released by *Landinfo* states:

“Mr. Hossein Abdy, Head of Passport and Visa Department, stated that only the court could hinder the issuance of a passport. This could be due to a person having an outstanding issue with the government” (Landinfo (February 2013) *Iran: On Conversion to Christianity, Issues concerning Kurds and Post-2009 Election Protestors as well as Legal Issues and Exit Procedures*, p.69).

Citing another source, this report also notes:

“...by pulling passports, the authorities are able to put pressure on political types such as artists, directors, journalists and are thereby giving them no option to leave. This is as a way of keeping them compliant” (ibid, p.70).

Citing an external source, a report issued in September 2010 by the *Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation/ACCORD* states that:

“...obtaining a passport was more complicated for certain individuals, namely those who had ‘matters to settle with the Iranian authorities” (Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation/ACCORD (6 September 2010) *Iran: 1) Information on the current procedure for issuance of Iranian passports; 2) Information on last changes of the procedure for issuance of Iranian passports; information on possible updates of the procedure in the period between or previous to 2004-2005; 3) a) Provided that there was an update: Information on time requirements for replacing an old with a new passport; b) provided that there was no update: Information on time requirements for issuance of a biometric passport*, p.13).

Utilising another source, this report states:

“According to the Iranian Passport Law, “persons will not be issued a passport to leave the country ... [if] according to the written announcement of the judicial officials, [they] are banned from exiting the country.” If such persons, according to this law, have already been issued a passport, upon attempting to exit the country, “the passport will be confiscated” and “the person will not be permitted to leave the country” until the restriction on the persons traveling is lifted.” (ibid, p.14).

A report issued in April 2013 by the *United States Department of State* commenting on events of the preceding year notes:

“The government required exit permits for foreign travel for all citizens. Some citizens, particularly those whose skills were in demand and who were educated at government expense, had to post bond to obtain an exit permit. The government restricted foreign travel of some religious leaders, members of religious minorities,

and scientists in sensitive fields. It increasingly targeted journalists, academics, opposition politicians, and activists--including women's rights activists--for travel bans and passport confiscation during the year" (United States Department of State (19 April 2013) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012, Iran*, Section 2d Freedom of Movement, Internally Displaced Persons, Protection of Refugees, and Stateless Persons/Foreign Travel).

A report published by *Amnesty International* in November 2012 notes that:

"...Narges Mohammadi has been banned from travelling abroad since 2009, when the Iranian authorities confiscated her passport" (Amnesty International (1 November 2012) *Wire, November/December 2012. Vol. 42, issue 06*, p.2).

Article 19 in July 2013 states:

"Trend reports that upon his return to Iran, film director Asghar Farhadi was welcomed warmly at the airport by a long wait and having his passport taken away from him. Although his passport was given back to him, he has been asked to appear before Iranian authorities as he has some explaining to do. It may be because of this interview he did on 26 May 2013 at the Cannes Film Festival around censorship in Iran" (*Article 19* (11 July 2013) *Key moments coming up in Iran*).

In April 2013 *Article 19* notes:

"On 27 February, the Iranian authorities confiscated the passports and imposed a travel ban on co-director Maryam Moghaddam and actress Kamboziya Partovi for their participation in the film, *Closed Curtains*" (*Article 19* (11 April 2013) *Artist Alert: March 2013*).

No further information on this issue could be found among sources available to the RDC.

References

Amnesty International (1 November 2012) *Wire, November/December 2012. Vol. 42, issue 06*

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/NWS21/006/2012/en/e6736e55-d411-41d0-8ad7-947000114d3d/nws210062012en.pdf>

Accessed Monday 22 July 2013

Article 19 (11 July 2013) *Key moments coming up in Iran*

<http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/tehis/vtx/rwmain?page=printdoc&docid=51dfb7c74>

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Article 19 (11 April 2013) *Artist Alert: March 2013*

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procedure in the period between or previous to 2004-2005; 3) a) Provided that there was an update: Information on time requirements for replacing an old with a new passport; b) provided that there was no update: Information on time requirements for issuance of a biometric passport

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United States Department of State (19 April 2013) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012, Iran*

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre 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 read in full all documents referred to.

Sources Consulted

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Freedom House
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Human Rights Watch
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
International Crisis Group
IRIN News
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Online Newspapers
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