

# REFUGEE DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

Information Leaflet



# Refugee Documentation Centre

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### What is the Refugee Documentation Centre?

The Refugee Documentation Centre (RDC) is an independent service operating under the aegis of the Legal Aid Board.

The role of the Centre is:

- To provide a research and query service for key organisations involved in the asylum process (see below).
- To build and maintain a collection of objective and up to date country of origin information (COI), asylum, immigration, legal and human rights documentation for general access.
- To provide training on country of origin information research.
- To undertake other research activities and provide a lending and research library service.
- To cooperate with similar agencies elsewhere to enhance knowledge of the country of origin research area.

Members of the public and other agencies may make an appointment to use the Documentation Centre to conduct their own research.

The Refugee Documentation Centre provides an independent and objective information service to all its user groups.

### Query and Research Service

A query and research service is provided for the UNHCR, Refugee Legal Service and Legal Aid Board, Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner, Refugee Appeals Tribunal, Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS), Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and private practitioners associated with the above. The research service is not available to members of the public.

Research Sources used include:

- our in-house collection of country specific documentation on human rights and other issues, which is continually updated as the results of new research are added
- Internet and other electronic sources
- national and international contacts (other research units, governmental/non-governmental organisations, embassies)

Requests are recorded on a standard query form, and query responses include a fully referenced list of sources used. Responses are generally issued by email, but can be sent by post or DX in exceptional circumstances. Anonymised query responses are stored on the RDC Library Management System, which is accessible to organisations involved in the asylum process

### When Making Queries to the Refugee Documentation Centre

- Please be as specific as possible when making your request, for example specify the particular area/topic you wish us to concentrate on.
- For legal queries (caselaw etc.) please provide as much information as you have eg type of court, jurisdiction, date, case names etc.
- Please state your exact deadline, including any statutory deadlines, to enable us to schedule queries. We require a minimum of five days notice. Queries without specified deadlines will be treated as non-urgent and dealt with within two weeks of receipt. Note that queries requiring us to contact other agencies either in Ireland or overseas will require longer deadlines.
- If you consider the request to be client-specific (ie. that making the results of the request publicly available would directly affect the client's confidentiality) please state this at the time of making the request. Note that personal names or application numbers where provided with the request are not made publicly available by the Refugee Documentation Centre.
- Telephone or email are the best methods to reach us if your query is very urgent. Requests may also be made by fax or post, or through the Electronic Library. Our query form is also available on the Legal Aid Board Website in the Refugee Documentation Centre section. Please supply contact details when making your request, in case it is necessary to clarify your query

### Library Service

The Refugee Documentation Centre houses a growing collection of books, reports, news reports and journals on a number of relevant subject areas including asylum, immigration, law, politics, anthropology and country of origin information. Details of holdings can be found on the online library catalogue which is available to organisations involved in the asylum process. Certain texts such as directories and dictionaries are reference only and must be consulted in the Centre. Other items may be borrowed- a maximum of 3 items for a 4 week period, renewable if the item is not required by another borrower. The lending service is restricted to organisations and individuals eligible to use our query/research service. Journals may not be borrowed but articles may be photocopied subject to copyright regulations. The Refugee Documentation Centre subscribes to a number of electronic services and sources of information. Our Electronic Library incorporates a digital archive and current awareness service, and a new web portal for seamless access to resources is planned for 2008..

### Other Activities

#### Publications

The Refugee Documentation Centre publishes its own newsletter, The Researcher, which is available on the Legal Aid Board Website and the European Country of Origin Information Network (ecoi.net). Reports are occasionally commissioned where there is little information on a particular issue and the issue recurs frequently as part of our research work. Any such reports are published on www.ecoi.net.

#### Provision of Training

The Refugee Documentation Centre provides training to our client base on the use of our in-house electronic resources. Training courses are also provided on researching country of origin information to COI researchers, COI users and decision makers involved in any aspect of the asylum process. These courses can be provided over a four week period by e-training methods, with e-tutor support and a one day seminar for participants in the final week. Courses are also offered on a seminar basis over two days and include practical research and case studies.

#### Suggestions and Donations

The Refugee Documentation Centre welcomes any feedback on our service and suggestions regarding materials for purchase. We also welcome donations of any materials of interest, for example, conference and seminar papers.

#### Visiting Us

Our opening hours to visitors are as follows: Morning 10.00 to 12.30. Afternoon 14.00 to 17.00. If possible please contact us prior to any visit. We may be able to facilitate visits outside these times if you contact us in advance.

#### Contact Details

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1st Floor, Montague Court,  
7-11 Montague St,  
Dublin 2  
DX 149  
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The Refugee Documentation Centre is here to help you. Please do not hesitate to contact us.

#### March 2008