



Using Country of Origin Information (COI) Research

IARMJ – Arusha
November, 2022
Session 1 (Intermediate)

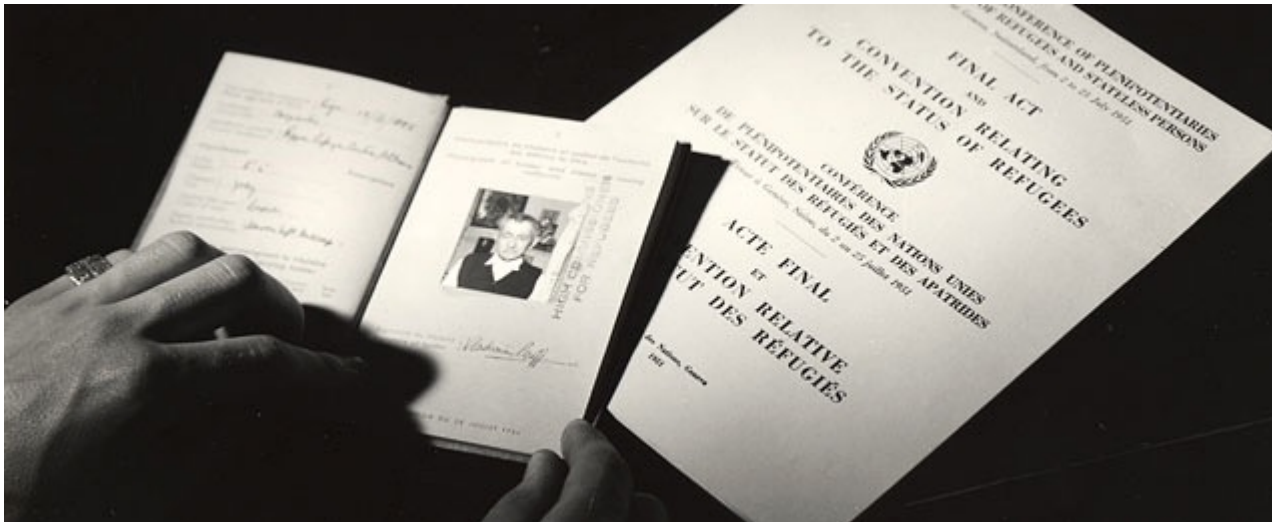


Overview

- Basis of COI
- Definition
- Use as Evidence
- Sources of COI
 - at the IRB
 - Refworld
- Use of COI in Decision Making
- Practical Exercise



Basis of Country-of-Origin Information (COI) Research



© UNHCR

“... well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion ...” [Emphasis added]



The lack of information about a specific incident or situation does NOT mean that it did not happen or that it does not exist.



Country of Origin Information (COI)

Definition:

- Country of Origin Information is reliable, timely, and publicly available country information that aims to accurately and objectively report on country conditions in the countries from which refugee claimants originate.
- COI is used by decision-makers, claimants, and their legal advisors to assess claims to refugee status or international protection.
- It does not and could not identify a claimant or any other person who is not a public figure, even if the information is given to another Canadian government department or an external agency; and if the information were made public, would not seriously endanger the life, liberty or security of the claimant or any other person.



Country of Origin Information (COI)

Country conditions:

- the human rights and security situation
- the political situation and the legal framework
- cultural aspects and societal attitudes
- the humanitarian and economic situation
- events and incidents
- geography



COI as Evidence: Considerations

- Search for reliable documents
 - Originating from reputable persons or organisations
 - Recent publication date
 - Methodology indicated
 - Sources provided
 - Author cited
 - Corroborated by other documents
- Make use of advanced search tools when searching the internet or other databases



Research Challenges

- Sources available only in foreign language
- Obtaining information from governments whose resources are scarce
- Lack of:
 - International presence (NGOs and media) and
 - Local presence (civil society and media)
- Finding information on local events/situations
- Finding evidence of legislation being enacted and enforced



Source of COI at the IRB

- Because conditions in a country often change, the IRB produces regular information about “countries of origin”.
- Decision-makers may consult this information as part of their work. The information is available in the following formats:
 - National Documentation Packages
 - Responses to Information Requests
 - Other Documents
- Additional information on IRB website
 - <https://irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/country-information/Pages/index.aspx>



Country

Language

Get Package for Selected Country

Print Preview Selected Files

Print Preview List of Documents

Export HTML

National Documentation Package - 29 September 2022

List of Documents

- Mexico
- 1. General Information and Maps
- 2. Human Rights
- 3. Identification Documents and Citizenship
- 4. Political Activities and Organizations
- 5. Gender, Domestic Violence and Children
- 6. Sexual Minorities
- 7. Criminality and Corruption
- 8. Military Service - (No items in this section)
- 9. Judiciary, Legal and Penal Systems
- 10. Police and Security Forces
- 11. Media Freedoms
- 12. Religion
- 13. Nationality, Ethnicity and Race
- 14. Exit/Entry and Freedom of Movement
- 15. Labour, Employment and Unions - (No items in this section)
- 16. Other - (No items in this section)

The following changes have been made to the previous package dated 29 April 2022:

- Updated
- Removed
- Added

National Documentation Package

29 September 2022

Mexico

List of Documents

National Documentation Packages are prepared by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) on the basis of publicly available information, analyses and comments. All sources are fully cited to facilitate location of the source documents. In addition, as a convenience to users, where possible, links are provided to referenced material available through public web sites. Although the IRB will attempt to ensure that these links are maintained for the most recent NDPs, please note that it cannot guarantee or be responsible for: the functionality of links to external sources; the content accessed by these links; the availability of external content in both English and French; any other part of a third party Web site.

Please note that NDPs are not, and do not purport to be, exhaustive with regard to conditions in the countries surveyed or conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or protection.

1. General Information and Maps

- 1.1.
 - Title:** Mexico
 - Source:** United --States. --Central --Intelligence --Agency.
 - Date of Document:** 1997
 - URL:** http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/mexico_pol97.jpg
 - Accessed Date:** 23 October 2012
- 1.2.
 - Title:** Mexico. The World Factbook.
 - Source:** United --States. --Central --Intelligence --Agency.
 - Date of Document:** 12 September 2022
 - URL:** <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/mexico/>
 - Accessed Date:** 20 September 2022
- 1.3.
 - Title:** Mexico City
 - Source:** Advantage --Mexico. --Accent --Discount --Travel.
 - Date of Document:** 2005
 - URL:** http://www.advantagemexico.com/mexico_city/images/mexico_city.pdf
 - Accessed Date:** 17 February 2020
- 1.4.
 - Title:** Mexique. L'Encyclopédie en ligne.
 - Source:** Larousse
 - URL:** <http://www.larousse.fr/encyclopedie/cartes/Mexique/1306106>
 - Accessed Date:** 23 October 2012



Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) are research reports on country conditions. They are requested by IRB decision makers.

The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIR. Earlier RIR may be found on the [European Country of Origin Information Network](#) website.

Please note that some RIR have attachments which are not electronically accessible here.

To obtain a copy of an attachment, [please e-mail us](#).

Relat

Full text:

All Words ▾

Title:

All Words ▾

Country(ies):

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Algeria
- Angola
- Anguilla
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Aruba
- Australia
- Austria

Language:

English ▾

From:

2015 ▾

To:

2022 ▾

Results per page:

20 ▾

Submit

Clear

Other documents

Fact Finding Mission Reports, Issue Papers, transcripts of guest speaker presentations and other research documents.

COVID-19 country bulletins

2021

- [COVID-19 bulletin No. 804 – India](#)
- [COVID-19 bulletin No. 303 – Nigeria](#)
- [COVID-19 bulletin No. 302 – Mexico](#)
- [COVID-19 bulletin No. 803 – India](#)
- [COVID-19 bulletin No. 103 – Nigeria](#)
- [COVID-19 bulletin No. 802 – India](#)

2020

- [COVID-19 bulletin No. 301 – Mexico](#)
- [COVID-19 bulletin No. 102 – Nigeria](#)

Issue Papers

- [Colombia: Fact-Finding Mission Report](#) (March 2020)
- [The Situation of Sexual and Gender Minorities in Nigeria](#) (February 2019)
- [Honduras: Information gathering mission report](#) (February 2018)

El Salvador: Information gathering mission report

- [Part 1: Gangs in El Salvador and the Situation of Witnesses of Crime and Corruption](#) (September 2016)
- [Part 2: The Situation of Women Victims of Violence and of Sexual Minorities in El Salvador](#) (September 2016)

Transcripts of guest speaker presentations

- [Discussion on country conditions with the Political Advisor of the African Union Mission in Somalia](#) (October 2017)
- [Discussion on travel documents from Somalia with Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada](#) (October 2017)



Sources of COI: Refworld



CONTENTS

- UNHCR Documents
- Laws
- Case Law
- Country Information



Sources of COI: Refworld

Search: Case Law

- By country
- By topic
- Judicial Body
- Legal Instrument

Search Case Law ⓘ

Full text

Title of the case

Parties to the case

Third parties to the case

Judicial body

Instance

Jurisdiction

Type of decision

Case number

Start date

End date

Date

Legal instrument

Other Instrument

Topic

Country of origin

Country of asylum

Relevant third country

Language

Case language



Sources of COI: Refworld

Search: COI

- Wide variety of sources selected from UN, NGOs, Governments, International Organisations and others monitoring and reporting on country situations
- Assists the decision maker on issues of credibility and the objective situation in a country of origin
- Source selection takes into account global coverage, relevance and proven reliability, objectivity and timeliness.

The screenshot shows the Refworld website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Browse by Document Type, and Country Reports. Below this, the 'Country Reports' section is displayed. It includes a description: 'Reports covering a general or specific human rights situation in a country of origin. May include reports on the situation of asylum-seekers or refugees in countries of asylum.' There are filter tabs for Publisher, Country, Topic, and Legal Instrument. A list of results is shown, including '28 Too Many' (3), 'Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC)' (30), 'Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU)' (159), 'African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights' (45), 'African Union' (7), 'Amnesty International' (2,409), and 'Article 19' (386). Below the list is a filter box with a search input, 'in Full Text' dropdown, 'Sort by date' dropdown, 'Clear' button, and 'GO' button. A status bar indicates 'Showing 1-10 of 21,154 results'.

The screenshot shows the Refworld website interface for 'Country Profiles'. It includes a description: 'Country Profiles covering a general or specific human rights situation in a country of origin. May include reports on the situation of asylum-seekers or refugees in countries of asylum.' There are filter tabs for Publisher, Country, and Topic. A list of results is shown, including '28 Too Many' (75), 'Amnesty International' (2), 'Australia: Department of Immigration and Citizenship' (1), 'Australia: Immigration Review Tribunal' (1), 'Australia: Refugee Review Tribunal' (9), 'Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada' (57), and 'Child Soldiers International' (1). Below the list is a filter box with a search input, 'in Full Text' dropdown, 'Sort by date' dropdown, 'Clear' button, and 'GO' button. A status bar indicates 'Showing 1-10 of 684 results'.



Use of COI in Decision Making

Analysis – COI:

- COI may support or contradict the asylum seeker's allegations.
- May impact credibility and/or the objective basis for the claim.
- If the COI does not support the allegations, question asylum seeker at the interview.
- Weigh contradictory evidence (COI and other) and explain the reason to prefer one source over another. Assign probative value.
- Properly cite sources.



Use of COI in Decision Making

Factors to Consider:

- the date of the evidence;
- the author's identity;
- the source of the author's information;
- the qualifications/expertise of the author;
- the reputation of the publication/publisher;
- any bias of the author/publisher;
- any spelling errors on official documents;
- consistency with other reliable evidence;
- other publications by the same author;
- the author's knowledge of the subject matter;
- whether the document has an impartial tone;
- the extent to which the document is based on opinion;
- the purpose for which the document was prepared;



Use of COI in Decision Making

COI is notably relevant in the analysis of:

- Credibility
- State Protection
- IFA



Any questions?

