



Algeria - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Wednesday 21 August 2013

Information on the Algerian criminal justice system

In May 2013 the *Economist Intelligence Unit* notes:

“The judiciary lacks independence, the courts are slow and procedures largely opaque” (Economist Intelligence Unit (21 May 2013) *Algeria: Political and institutional effectiveness*).

A report issued by *Freedom House* in May 2012 states that:

“The judiciary is susceptible to government pressure” (Freedom House (May 2012) *Algeria, Freedom in the World 2012*).

The *United States Department of State* points out in a report issued in April 2013 commenting on events of the preceding year that:

“Impunity remained a problem. The criminal code provides mechanisms to investigate abuses and corruption, but the government did not provide public information on disciplinary or legal action against police, military, or other security force personnel, citing morale and security concerns” (United States Department of State (19 April 2013) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012, Algeria*, Section 1d Arbitrary Arrest or Detention/Role of the Police and Security Apparatus).

This document also states:

“While the constitution provides for an independent judiciary, the president exercises supreme judicial authority, and the executive branch limited judicial independence. In practice the judiciary was not impartial and was subject to influence and corruption” (Ibid, Section 1e Denial of Fair Public Trial).

It is also pointed out in this report that:

“The judiciary was neither independent nor impartial in civil matters and lacked independence in some human rights cases. Family connections and status of the parties involved influenced decisions” (ibid, Section 1e Denial of Fair Public Trial /Civil Judicial Procedures and Remedies).

A report issued in 2012 by the *Bertelsmann Transformation Index*

“In 2010, NGOs such as Human Rights Watch or Reporters without Borders, as well as some voices in the Algerian press, have again asserted that the Algerian judiciary is subject to political interference or bribery. When judges are dealing with particularly delicate topics, they are frequently under pressure to make decisions based on political concerns” (Bertelsmann Transformation Index (2012) *Algeria Country Report*, p.13).

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

References

Bertelsmann Transformation Index (2012) *Algeria Country Report*
<http://www.bti-project.org/countryreports/mena/dza/>
(Accessed 20 August 2013)

Economist Intelligence Unit (21 May 2013) *Algeria: Political and institutional effectiveness*
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Freedom House (May 2012) *Algeria, Freedom in the World 2012*
<http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2012/algeria>
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United States Department of State (19 April 2013) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012, Algeria*
<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>
(Accessed 20 August 2013)

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

Amnesty International
BBC News
Electronic Immigration Network
European Country of Origin Information Network
Freedom House
Google
Human Rights Watch
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
International Crisis Group
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Online Newspapers
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