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Iraq: Despite decreased violence, challenges to stability persist



The EUAA has just published a Country-of-Origin Information (COI) report on Iraq, which provides an update on the security situation and reviews the latest developments regarding the treatment of select profiles. Despite a decrease in violence, the continued presence of ISIL in parts of the country, sporadic military strikes by Türkiye in northern Iraq as well tribal violence in the south continue contributing to overall instability.

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) has just published an updated **Country of Origin Information report on Iraq**. It provides an update on the EUAA's previous report of May 2024, including in terms of the security situation, and reviews the latest developments regarding the treatment of select profiles by State and non-State actors.

Over the last year, and despite a continued decline in attacks, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (**ISIL**) has **remained active in several governorates** (Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salah Al-Din), primarily **targeting security forces** through asymmetric operations. **Türkiye continued its military campaign against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)** in the north of the country, by carrying out air and drone strikes, as well as ground operations. Following the PKK's unilateral ceasefire and announcement of dissolution in May 2025, Turkish strikes peaked in June (notably in Duhok's Amedi district) before sharply decreasing in July, although new ground operations were launched in Zakho's Batifa district.

Tribal violence remained a security concern especially in southern Iraq, while family disputes requently turned violent in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). Iran-backed militias were widely suspected in strikes against oil fields in the region. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) faced **major challenges in accessing housing, basic services and documentation**, limiting opportunities in education and healthcare. Many IDPs remained unwilling to return due to insecurity and insufficient reconstruction.

The report highlights persistent human rights concerns, including lack of accountability for serious crimes, ongoing discrimination and harassment of women, children, LGBTIQ+ individuals, and civil society actors. Individuals with perceived ISIL affiliation – including children – **continued to face prosecution, detention and difficulties accessing civil documentation**. Reports of torture, ill-treatment, and enforced disappearances persisted. A recent amendment to the Personal Status Law granted Shia religious authorities expanded control over family matters, **raising concerns about child marriage, polygamy and restrictions on women's rights.**

EU Asylum situation for Iraqi nationals

Between March and June 2025, Iraqi applications across EU+ countries dropped below a thousand per month, a level unseen since mid-2020 though the number rose to just over 1 000 in July 2025.[1] In general, the number of asylum applications by Iraqi nationals has been on a downward trend since September 2023.

The decline in applications, coupled with an increase in the number of first instance decisions issued to Iraqis resulted in a lower backlog. At the end of July 2025, some 14 000 Iraqi cases were pending at first instance in the EU+..[2] Over three fifths of them were pending in **Germany** and the **Netherlands**. Between January – July 2025, the first instance recognition rate for Iraqi applications in the EU+ stood at 22 %.

Background

The EUAA regularly updates its Country-of-Origin Information reports, which aim to provide accurate and reliable up-to-date information on third countries to support EU+ asylum and migration authorities in reaching accurate and fair decisions in asylum procedures, as well as to support national policymaking.

Download the Country of Origin Information report on Iraq.

Any further information may be obtained from the European Union Agency for Asylum's Press Office at the following email addresses:

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1

Data for July 2025 were missing for Czechia and Portugal.

2

Data for July 2025 were missing for Czechia, Italy and Portugal, for which data for earlier months were used.

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