

2. Human rights and treatment of specific profiles

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2.1 General human rights situation

Over the reference period serious human rights challenges persisted in the country. Authorities failed to hold perpetrators of serious crimes accountable,454 restricted civic space,455 and maintained discriminatory legal provisions affecting women456 and children.457 Perpetrators of violence against women458 largely acted with impunity, while legal protections and support services remained limited.459 Individuals with perceived affiliation with ISIL, including children, 460 faced severe challenges, and limited reintegration prospects.461 LGBTIQ+ individuals continued to face threats from militias and social persecution.462 Civil society actors, human rights defenders, and journalists continued to face administrative and legal restrictions on their work, as well as threats and harassment, including online.463 Arrests of journalists covering protests continued.464

The use of torture and ill treatments during arrest and detention persisted over the reference period.465 Enforced disappearances continued, with estimates ranging between 250 000 and 1 million people missing over the past five decades.466

A few years after the Tishreen protests (2019-2021), progress on accountability remained limited.467 Amnesty International reported that, as of August 2024, out of 2 700 criminal investigations opened, only 10 arrest warrants had been issued and seven convictions handed down.468

Conditions in prisons remained dire, and prisoners were denied adequate healthcare. No effective investigations were carried out into deaths in custody.469 Death penalty is still in force in Iraq,470 while the KRG has maintained a de facto moratorium on the death penalty since 2008.471 The number of executions, all for terrorism-related offences, almost quadrupled in 2024 compared to 2023,472 including reports of secret executions.473 The counter-terrorism framework and practices in Federal Iraq and the KRI remained non-compliant with international human rights standards.474

UNAMI will cease all works and operations after 31 December 2025.475

In January 2025, Iraq underwent the fourth Universal Periodic Review (UPR), receiving 263 recommendations from 93 countries on a variety of topics including: human rights framework, freedom of expression, death penalty.476

Several key draft laws aimed at protecting human rights, including on Anti-Domestic Violence, freedom of Expression, protection from enforced disappearances and protection of minorities, remain pending.477

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