

2.7.4 Child labour

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The minimum working age in both Federal Iraq and KRI is 15 years. Under Labor Law, child labour in Iraq is illegal for children under 15 years old[883] – with an exception in the KRI for those working in a family enterprise – and punishable with a prison sentence for up to six months and a fine of one million IQD [about 652 EUR]. Cases of child labour are to be investigated by the Ministry of Labour.[884] While about 5 % of Iraqi children are estimated to be involved in work, [885] according to Kurdistan24, referring to a research done by the Independent Arabia,[886] some 13 % of children 'are engaged in labour deemed hazardous or exploitative'.[887] Reasons why the phenomenon persists include poverty, lack of documentation,[888] unemployment, displacement and weak institutional measures against the practice.[889] Children were reportedly working in services, agriculture, and industries sectors,[890] or collecting recyclable materials in the streets. [891] After the authorities registered 600 cases of child labour in Baghdad in 2024, ten new committees to monitor the issue were formed in January 2025.[892] The authorities have reportedly developed a plan to address child labour that includes 'offering social protection salaries or loans to affected families'.[893] In April 2025, the government has taken measures aiming at reintegrating working children in the school life.[894]

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  MEMO, Iraq to raid industrial areas to effort to tackle child labour, 31 January 2025, url

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  NRC, Legal Guide to Children's Rights in Iraq, November 2024, url, p. 34

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  Kurdistan24, Iraq's Lost Childhoods: Begging, Labor, and Broken Dreams, 29 April 2025, url ; Shafaq News, Iraq's children face alarming crisis: rising labor, violence, and legal gaps, 24 November 2024, url

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  Independent Arabia is an arabic Version of the British newspaper The Independent. See: Independent Arabia, [Linkedin], posted on: n.d., url

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  Shafaq News, Iraq’s forgotten children: Orphans of war left to scavenge for survival, 14 February 2025, url

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