



2.7.6 Children in street situations

2.7.6 Children in street situations

Even though illegal in Iraq,[912](#) cases of abandonment of children were reported as ‘alarmingly high’[913](#) and increasing.[914](#) Abandoned children are particularly exposed to the risk of abuse and exploitation, including for prostitution networks.[915](#) There were an estimated five million [916](#) orphans in Iraq (or less than one million, according to the Iraqi authorities[917](#)), many of them without any civil documentation.[918](#) Availability of shelters remained limited.[919](#)

Media sources reported on an increase in child begging in early 2025.[920](#) In a June 2025 report, OHCHR expressed concerns regarding ‘the large number of children in street situation’ in Iraq. [921](#) In July 2024, the governor’s office in Erbil, within the KRI, announced the launch of a campaign aimed at removing children from the streets. According to Save the Children, 1 247 children were working in the streets across the KRI as of June 2024.[922](#) Children who were forced to beg in the streets faced abuse by either organised criminal gangs or their family members and were exposed to the risk of being abducted and trafficked. In the period of 2023-2024, 160 children were documented as victims of trafficking in human beings (THB).[923](#) Authorities have reportedly targeted suspected leaders of begging rings for arrests.[924](#) Exploitation of children in Iraq includes begging alongside forced labour.[925](#)

- [912](#)

Rudaw, Kirkuk hospital cares for 2 abandoned children, 27 December 2024, [url](#)

- [913](#)

iNOV8, Forgotten Lives: Addressing Orphanhood in Iraq, 20 November 2024, [url](#), p. 6

- [914](#)

Shafaq News, Years of care, then goodbye: abandoned Iraqi sisters find new home, 3 March 2025, [url](#),

- [915](#)

Maat for Peace, Development, and Human Rights, Maat for Peace’ report submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child regarding the Republic of Iraq, April 2025, [url](#), p. 8

- [916](#)

iNOV8, Forgotten Lives: Addressing Orphanhood in Iraq, 20 November 2024, [url](#), p. 2; Maat for Peace, Development, and Human Rights, Maat for Peace' report submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child regarding the Republic of Iraq, April 2025, [url](#), p. 8; Seed Foundation, et al., Children's right to identity in Iraq, 99th pre-session (September 2024), Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Report, September 2024, [url](#), p. 1

- [917](#)

Maat for Peace, Development, and Human Rights, Maat for Peace' report submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child regarding the Republic of Iraq, April 2025, [url](#), p. 8

- [918](#)

iNOV8, Forgotten Lives: Addressing Orphanhood in Iraq, 20 November 2024, [url](#), p. 2

- [919](#)

iNOV8, Forgotten Lives: Addressing Orphanhood in Iraq, 20 November 2024, [url](#), p. 2; UNICEF, Identifying Opportunities for Coordination Between Violence Against Children and Violence Against Women Efforts in Iraq, December 2024, [url](#), p. 13

- [920](#)

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](#)

- [921](#)

CRC, Concluding observations on the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Iraq, 18 July 2025, [url](#)

- [922](#)

Rudaw, Erbil police to remove beggars, children from streets, 17 July 2024, [url](#)

- [923](#)

Shafaq News, Iraq's children face alarming crisis: rising labor, violence, and legal gaps, 24 November 2024, [url](#)

- [924](#)

+964, Baghdad: Rusafa police arrest man for 'overseeing begging ring', 27 February 2025, [url](#)

- [925](#)

Seed Foundation, et al., Children's right to identity in Iraq, 99th pre-session (September 2024), Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Report, September 2024, [url](#), p. 3; Shafaq News,

Iraq's children face alarming crisis: rising labor, violence, and legal gaps, 24 November 2024, [url](#)

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu