

2.9.1 Honour crimes and behaviours/acts perceived as contravening sexuality and gender norms

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In Iraq, traditional patriarchal norms define what is considered as acceptable behaviour.984 In Iraq, women not following rules of what is considered as an acceptable behaviour risk being excluded from society and losing family support.985 Honour crimes can include physical abuse, confinement, control of movement, deprivation of education, forced marriage, forced suicide, and public dishonouring.986 Honour killings target individuals, mostly women, believed to have brought shame or dishonour on their families.987 Violations of honour encompass acts perceived as contravening sexuality and gender norms. Understanding of honour is deeply influenced by tribal customs, which play a big role in Iraqi society. Most victims are women and girls, and to a smaller extent men. Some behaviours can trigger honour-based killing including: friendships or any correspondence between a woman and a man she is not married to, pre-marital relationships with a member of the opposite sex; 'disobedient' behaviour to male relatives; refusal of an arranged marriage; same-sex relationships; marriage against the family's wishes; seeking a divorce against their family or tribes' wishes; adultery; being a victim of rape, sexual assault or kidnapping; and 'shameful' dress or behaviour, including on social media. In case of a perceived transgression, males relatives such as the brother, father or husband are expected to 'wash away the dishonour' of the female relative, or to restore honour to the family and tribe's reputation, by killing the said relative.988 See also section 2.6 Women and girls. Legal framework of federal Iraq allows for reduced sentences in cases of honour killings, perpetuating the idea that these are ''natural' reactions to perceived family shame'.989 Haley Bobseine noted that some reports show that honour killings do not affect only Muslim and Arab communities but also Yazidis, Turkmen, and others.990

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