

Explore All Countries Iraq

Middle East

Page last updated: September 05, 2024



INTRODUCTION

Background

Formerly part of the Ottoman Empire, Iraq was occupied by the United Kingdom during World War I and was declared a League of Nations mandate under UK administration in 1920. Iraq attained its independence as a kingdom in 1932. It was proclaimed a republic in 1958 after a coup overthrew the monarchy, but in actuality, a series of strongmen ruled the country until 2003. The last was SADDAM Hussein, from 1979 to 2003. Territorial disputes with Iran led to an inconclusive and costly war from 1980 to 1988. In 1990, Iraq seized Kuwait but was expelled by US-led UN coalition forces during the two-month-long Gulf War of 1991. After Iraq's expulsion, the UN Security Council (UNSC) required Iraq to scrap all weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles and to allow UN verification inspections. Continued Iraqi noncompliance with UNSC resolutions led to the Second Gulf War in 2003, when US-led forces ousted the SADDAM regime.

In 2005, Iraqis approved a constitution in a national referendum and elected a 275-member Council of Representatives (COR). The COR approved most of the cabinet ministers, marking the transition to Iraq's first constitutional government in nearly a half-century. Iraq's constitution also established the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), a semi-autonomous region that administers the governorates of Erbil, Dahuk, and As Sulaymaniyah. Iraq has held four national legislative elections since 2006, most recently in 2021. The COR approved Mohammad Shia' al-SUDANI as prime minister in 2022. Iraq has repeatedly postponed elections for provincial councils -- last held in 2013 -- and since 2019, the prime minister has had the authority to appoint governors rather than provincial councils.

Between 2014 and 2017, Iraq fought a military campaign against the Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham (ISIS) to recapture territory the group seized in 2014. In 2017, then-Prime Minister Haydar al-ABADI publicly declared victory against ISIS, although military operations against the group continue in rural areas. Also in 2017, Baghdad forcefully seized disputed territories across central and northern Iraq from the KRG, after a non-binding Kurdish independence referendum.

GEOGRAPHY

Location

Middle East, bordering the Persian Gulf, between Iran and Kuwait

Geographic coordinates

33 00 N, 44 00 E

Map references

Middle East

Area

total : 438,317 sq km

land: 437,367 sq km

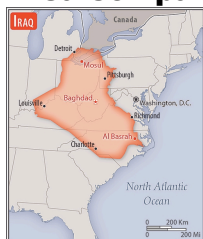
water: 950 sq km

comparison ranking: total 60

Area - comparative

slightly more than three times the size of New York state

Area comparison map:



Land boundaries

total: 3,809 km

border countries (6): Iran 1,599 km; Jordan 179 km; Kuwait 254 km; Saudi Arabia 811 km; Syria 599 km; Turkey 367 km

Coastline

58 km

Maritime claims

territorial sea: 12 nm

continental shelf: not specified

Climate

mostly desert; mild to cool winters with dry, hot, cloudless summers; northern mountainous regions along Iranian and Turkish borders experience cold winters with occasionally heavy snows that melt in early spring, sometimes causing extensive flooding in central and southern Iraq

Terrain

mostly broad plains; reedy marshes along Iranian border in south with large flooded areas; mountains along borders with Iran and Turkey

Elevation

highest point: Cheekha Dar (Kurdish for "Black Tent") 3,611 m

lowest point: Persian Gulf 0 m

mean elevation: 312 m

Natural resources

petroleum, natural gas, phosphates, sulfur

Land use

agricultural land: 18.1% (2018 est.)

arable land: 8.4% (2018 est.)

permanent crops: 0.5% (2018 est.)

permanent pasture: 9.2% (2018 est.)

forest: 1.9% (2018 est.)

other: 80% (2018 est.)

Irrigated land

35,250 sq km (2012)

Major lakes (area sq km)

fresh water lake(s): Lake Hammar - 1,940 sq km

Major rivers (by length in km)

Euphrates river mouth (shared with Turkey[s], Syria, and Iran) - 3,596 km; Tigris river mouth (shared with Turkey[s], Syria, and Iran) - 1,950 km; the Tigris and Euphrates join to form the Shatt al Arab

note – [s] after country name indicates river source; [m] after country name indicates river mouth

Major watersheds (area sq km)

Indian Ocean drainage: (*Persian Gulf*) Tigris and Euphrates (918,044 sq km)

Major aquifers

Arabian Aquifer System

Population distribution

population is concentrated in the north, center, and eastern parts of the country, with many of the larger urban agglomerations found along extensive parts of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers; much of the western and southern areas are either lightly populated or uninhabited

Natural hazards

dust storms; sandstorms; floods

Geography - note

strategic location on Shatt al Arab waterway and at the head of the Persian Gulf

PEOPLE AND SOCIETY**Population**

total: 42,083,436

male: 21,193,356

female: 20,890,080 (2024 est.)

comparison rankings: female 35; male 35; total 35

Nationality

noun: Iraqi(s)

adjective: Iraqi

Ethnic groups

Arab 75-80%, Kurdish 15-20%, other 5% (includes Turkmen, Yezidi, Shabak, Kaka'i, Bedouin, Romani, Assyrian, Circassian, Sabaeen-Mandaean, Persian)

note: data is a 1987 government estimate; no more recent reliable numbers are available

Languages

Arabic (official), Kurdish (official); Turkmen (a Turkish dialect) and Syriac (Neo-Aramaic) are recognized as official languages where native speakers of these languages are present

major-language sample(s):

(Arabic) كتاب حقائق العالم، أحسن مصدر للمعلومات الأساسية

(Kurdish) راستییه‌کانی جیهان، باشترین سەرچاوهیه بۆ زانیارییه بنه‌ڕه‌نییه‌کان

The World Factbook, the indispensable source for basic information.

Arabic audio sample:**Kurdish audio sample:****Religions**

Muslim (official) 95-98% (Shia 61-64%, Sunni 29-34%), Christian 1% (includes Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Assyrian Church of the East), other 1-4% (2015 est.)

note: the last census in Iraq was in 1997; while there has been voluntary relocation of many Christian families to northern Iraq, the overall Christian population has decreased at least 50% and perhaps as much as 90% since 2003, according to US Embassy estimates, with many fleeing to Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon

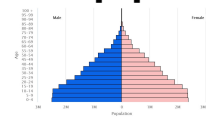
Age structure

0-14 years: 34.6% (male 7,447,266/female 7,130,883)

15-64 years: 61.7% (male 13,064,516/female 12,907,702)

65 years and over: 3.6% (2024 est.) (male 681,574/female 851,495)

2023 population pyramid:



Dependency ratios

total dependency ratio: 71

youth dependency ratio: 65.2

elderly dependency ratio: 5.8

potential support ratio: 17.1 (2021 est.)

Median age

total: 22.4 years (2024 est.)

male: 22 years

female: 22.7 years

comparison ranking: total 184

Population growth rate

1.99% (2024 est.)

comparison ranking: 41

Birth rate

23.7 births/1,000 population (2024 est.)

comparison ranking: 48

Death rate

3.9 deaths/1,000 population (2024 est.)

comparison ranking: 217

Net migration rate

0 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2024 est.)

comparison ranking: 84

Population distribution

population is concentrated in the north, center, and eastern parts of the country, with many of the larger urban agglomerations found along extensive parts of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers; much of the western and southern areas are either lightly populated or uninhabited

Urbanization

urban population: 71.6% of total population (2023)

rate of urbanization: 2.91% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)

Major urban areas - population

7.711 million BAGHDAD (capital), 1.792 million Mosul, 1.448 million Basra, 1.075 million Kirkuk, 958,000 Najaf, 897,000 Erbil (2023)

Sex ratio

at birth: 1.05 male(s)/female

0-14 years: 1.04 male(s)/female

15-64 years: 1.01 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 0.8 male(s)/female

total population: 1.02 male(s)/female (2024 est.)

Maternal mortality ratio

76 deaths/100,000 live births (2020 est.)

comparison ranking: 78

Infant mortality rate

total: 18.7 deaths/1,000 live births (2024 est.)

male: 20.4 deaths/1,000 live births

female: 17 deaths/1,000 live births

comparison ranking: total 81

Life expectancy at birth

total population: 73.7 years (2024 est.)

male: 71.9 years

female: 75.7 years

comparison ranking: total population 146

Total fertility rate

3.1 children born/woman (2024 est.)

comparison ranking: 47

Gross reproduction rate

1.51 (2024 est.)

Contraceptive prevalence rate

52.8% (2018)

Drinking water source

improved: urban: 100% of population

rural: 97.4% of population

total: 99.3% of population

unimproved: urban: 0% of population

rural: 2.6% of population

total: 0.7% of population (2020 est.)

Current health expenditure

5.1% of GDP (2020)

Physician density

0.97 physicians/1,000 population (2020)

Hospital bed density

1.3 beds/1,000 population (2017)

Sanitation facility access

improved: urban: 100% of population

rural: 100% of population

total: 100% of population

unimproved: urban: 0% of population

rural: 0% of population

total: 0% of population (2020 est.)

Major infectious diseases

degree of risk: intermediate (2023)

food or waterborne diseases: bacterial diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever

Obesity - adult prevalence rate

30.4% (2016)

comparison ranking: 23

Alcohol consumption per capita

total: 0.16 liters of pure alcohol (2019 est.)

beer: 0.11 liters of pure alcohol (2019 est.)

wine: 0 liters of pure alcohol (2019 est.)

spirits: 0.04 liters of pure alcohol (2019 est.)

other alcohols: 0 liters of pure alcohol (2019 est.)

comparison ranking: total 174

Tobacco use

total: 18.5% (2020 est.)

male: 35.1% (2020 est.)

female: 1.8% (2020 est.)

comparison ranking: total 91

Children under the age of 5 years underweight

3.9% (2018)

comparison ranking: 80

Currently married women (ages 15-49)

65.5% (2023 est.)

Child marriage

women married by age 15: 7.2%

women married by age 18: 27.9% (2018 est.)

Education expenditures

4.7% of GDP (2016)

comparison ranking: 87

Literacy

definition: age 15 and over can read and write

total population: 85.6%

male: 91.2%

female: 79.9% (2017)

ENVIRONMENT

Environment - current issues

government water control projects drained most of the inhabited marsh areas east of An Nasiriyah by drying up or diverting the feeder streams and rivers; a once sizable population of Marsh Arabs, who inhabited these areas for thousands of years, has been displaced; furthermore, the destruction of the natural habitat poses serious threats to the area's wildlife populations; inadequate supplies of potable water; soil degradation (salination) and erosion;

desertification; military and industrial infrastructure has released heavy metals and other hazardous substances into the air, soil, and groundwater; major sources of environmental damage are effluents from oil refineries, factory and sewage discharges into rivers, fertilizer and chemical contamination of the soil, and industrial air pollution in urban areas

Environment - international agreements

party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Nuclear Test Ban, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands

signed, but not ratified: Climate Change-Paris Agreement, Environmental Modification

Climate

mostly desert; mild to cool winters with dry, hot, cloudless summers; northern mountainous regions along Iranian and Turkish borders experience cold winters with occasionally heavy snows that melt in early spring, sometimes causing extensive flooding in central and southern Iraq

Land use

agricultural land: 18.1% (2018 est.)

arable land: 8.4% (2018 est.)

permanent crops: 0.5% (2018 est.)

permanent pasture: 9.2% (2018 est.)

forest: 1.9% (2018 est.)

other: 80% (2018 est.)

Urbanization

urban population: 71.6% of total population (2023)

rate of urbanization: 2.91% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)

Food insecurity

severe localized food insecurity: *due to civil conflict and economic slowdown* - the 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview identified 2.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, of which 960,000 have acute humanitarian needs; while the number of people in need remained similar to the previous year, the severity of those needs increased, largely due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on top of an existing humanitarian crisis, leading to a 35% increase in the number of people in acute need; more than half of these are concentrated in the governorates of Nineveh and Anbar; the number of severely food insecure people is estimated at about 435,000, while 731,000 are vulnerable to food insecurity (2022)

Revenue from forest resources

0% of GDP (2018 est.)

comparison ranking: 188

Revenue from coal

0% of GDP (2018 est.)

comparison ranking: 136

Air pollutants

particulate matter emissions: 39.29 micrograms per cubic meter (2019 est.)

carbon dioxide emissions: 190.06 megatons (2016 est.)

methane emissions: 17.44 megatons (2020 est.)

Waste and recycling

municipal solid waste generated annually: 13.14 million tons (2015 est.)

Major lakes (area sq km)

fresh water lake(s): Lake Hammar - 1,940 sq km

Major rivers (by length in km)

Euphrates river mouth (shared with Turkey[s], Syria, and Iran) - 3,596 km; Tigris river mouth (shared with Turkey[s], Syria, and Iran) - 1,950 km; the Tigris and Euphrates join to form the Shatt al Arab

note – [s] after country name indicates river source; [m] after country name indicates river mouth

Major watersheds (area sq km)

Indian Ocean drainage: (*Persian Gulf*) Tigris and Euphrates (918,044 sq km)

Major aquifers

Arabian Aquifer System

Total water withdrawal

municipal: 6.9 billion cubic meters (2020 est.)

industrial: 5.49 billion cubic meters (2020 est.)

agricultural: 44.23 billion cubic meters (2020 est.)

Total renewable water resources

89.86 billion cubic meters (2020 est.)

GOVERNMENT

Country name

conventional long form: Republic of Iraq

conventional short form: Iraq

local long form: Jumhuriyat al-Iraq/Komar-i Iraq

local short form: Al Iraq/Eraq

former: Mesopotamia, Mandatory Iraq, Hashemite Kingdom of Iraq

etymology: the name probably derives from "Uruk" (Biblical "Erech"), the ancient Sumerian and Babylonian city on the Euphrates River

Government type

federal parliamentary republic

Capital

name: Baghdad

geographic coordinates: 33 20 N, 44 24 E

time difference: UTC+3 (8 hours ahead of Washington, DC, during Standard Time)

etymology: although the origin of the name is disputed, it likely has compound Persian roots with *bagh* and *dad* meaning "god" and "given" respectively to create the meaning of "bestowed by God"

Administrative divisions

18 governorates (muhafazat, singular - muhafazah (Arabic); parezgakan, singular - parezga (Kurdish)); 'Al Anbar; Al Basrah; Al Muthanna; Al Qadisiyah (Ad Diwaniyah); An Najaf; Arbil (Erbil) (Arabic), Hewler (Kurdish); As Sulaymaniyah (Arabic), Slemani (Kurdish); Babil; Baghdad; Dahuk (Arabic), Dihok (Kurdish); Dhi Qar; Diyala; Karbala'; Kirkuk; Maysan; Ninawa; Salah ad Din; Wasit

note: Iraq's Kurdistan Regional Government administers Arbil, Dahuk, and As Sulaymaniyah (as Hewler, Dihok, and Slemani respectively)

Independence

3 October 1932 (from League of Nations mandate under British administration); note - on 28 June 2004 the Coalition Provisional Authority transferred sovereignty to the Iraqi Interim Government

National holiday

Independence Day, 3 October (1932); Republic Day, 14 July (1958)

Legal system

mixed legal system of civil and Islamic law

Constitution

history: several previous; latest adopted by referendum 15 October 2005

amendments: proposed by the president of the republic and the Council of Ministers collectively, or by one fifth of the Council of Representatives members; passage requires at least two-thirds majority vote by the Council of Representatives, approval by referendum, and ratification by the president; passage of amendments to articles on citizen rights and liberties requires two-thirds majority vote of Council of Representatives members after two successive electoral terms, approval in a referendum, and ratification by the president

International law organization participation

has not submitted an ICJ jurisdiction declaration; non-party state to the ICCT

Citizenship

citizenship by birth: no

citizenship by descent only: at least one parent must be a citizen of Iraq

dual citizenship recognized: yes

residency requirement for naturalization: 10 years

Suffrage

18 years of age; universal

Executive branch

chief of state: President Latif RASHID (since 13 October 2022)

head of government: Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-SUDANI (since 27 October 2022)

cabinet: Council of Ministers proposed by the prime minister, approved by Council of Representatives (COR)

elections/appointments: president indirectly elected by COR to serve a 4-year term (eligible for a second term); COR parliamentary election for president last held on 13 October 2022 (next to be held NA)

election results:

2022: Latif RASHID elected president in second round; COR vote in first round - Latif RASHID (PUK) 157, Barham SALIH (PUK) 99; COR vote in second round - Latif RASHID 167, Barham SALIH 99; Mohammed Shia' al-SUDANI approved as prime minister

2018: Barham SALIH elected president in second round; COR vote in first round - Barham SALIH (PUK) 165, Fuad HUSAYN (KDP) 90; COR vote in second round - Barham SALIH 219, Fuad HUSAYN 22; Adil ABD AL-MAHDI approved as prime minister

Legislative branch

description: unicameral Council of Representatives of Iraq (COR) or Majlis an-Nuwwab al-Iraqiyy (329 seats; 320 members directly elected in 83 multi-seat constituencies by single nontransferable vote, 9 seats elected by religious minorities - 5 by Christians, 1 each by Sabaeen-Mandaeans, Yazidis, Shabaks and Fayli Kurds, and 25% of seats allocated to women; members serve 4-year terms)

elections: last held on 10 October 2021 (next to be held in 2025)

election results: percent of vote by party/coalition - NA; seats by party/coalition - Taqadum 47, State of Law Coalition 43, Al Fatah Alliance 37, Kurdistan Democratic Party 31, Kurdistan Coalition 18, Azm Alliance 16, Imtidad 16, State Forces Alliance 11, Ishraqat Kanun 10, New Generation Movement 9, National Contract Party 8, Tasmim Alliance 7, Babiliyun Movement 3, other 73; composition - men 234, women 95, percentage women 29.2%; note - seat counts reflect updated numbers following the 12 June 2022 Sadrist Trend withdrawal from government formation, and its 73 seats were reallocated to other parties

Judicial branch

highest court(s): Federal Supreme Court or FSC (consists of 9 judges); note - court jurisdiction limited to constitutional issues, application of federal laws, ratification of election results for the COR, judicial competency disputes, and disputes between regions or governorates and the central government; Court of Cassation (consists of a court president, 5 vice presidents, and at least 24 judges)

judge selection and term of office: Federal Supreme Court (FSC) judges nominated by the High Judicial Council (HJC) president, the FSC chief justice, the public prosecutor's office chief, and the head of the Judicial Oversight

Commission; FSC members required to retire at age 72; Court of Cassation judges appointed by the HJC and confirmed by the Council of Representatives to serve until retirement, nominally at age 63, but can be extended to age 66 by the HJC

subordinate courts: Courts of Appeal (governorate level); civil courts, including first instance, personal status, labor, and customs; criminal courts including felony, misdemeanor, investigative, major crimes, juvenile, and traffic courts

Political parties

Al Fatah Alliance
Azm Alliance
Babiliyun Movement
Imtidad
Ishraqat Konun
Kurdistan Democratic Party
National Contract Party
New Generation Movement
Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
Sadrist Bloc
State Forces Alliance
State of Law Coalition
Taquadum
Tasmim Alliance

International organization participation

ABEDA, AFESD, AIIB, AMF, CAEU, CICA, EITI (compliant country), FAO, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICRM, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, IMO, IMSO, Interpol, IOC, IPU, ISO, ITSO, ITU, LAS, MIGA, NAM, OAPEC, OIC, OPCW, OPEC, PCA, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WFTU (NGOs), WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO (observer)

Diplomatic representation in the US

chief of mission: Ambassador Nazar Issa Abdulhadi AL-KHIRULLAH (since 30 June 2023)

chancery: 1801 P Street NW, Washington, DC 20036

telephone: [1] (202) 483-7500

FAX: [1] (202) 462-8815

email address and website:

washington@scrdiraq.gov.iq

<https://www.iraqiembassy.us/>

consulate(s) general: Detroit, Los Angeles

Diplomatic representation from the US

chief of mission: Ambassador Alina L. ROMANOWSKI (since 2 June 2022)

embassy: Al-Kindi Street, International Zone, Baghdad; note - consulate in Al Basrah closed as of 28 September 2018

mailing address: 6060 Baghdad Place, Washington DC 20521-6060

telephone: 0760-030-3000

email address and website:

BaghdadACS@state.gov

<https://iq.usembassy.gov/>

Flag description

three equal horizontal bands of red (top), white, and black; the Takbir (Arabic expression meaning "God is great") in green Arabic script is centered in the white band; the band colors derive from the Arab Liberation flag and represent oppression (black), overcome through bloody struggle (red), to be replaced by a bright future (white); the Council of Representatives approved this flag in 2008 as a compromise replacement for the Ba'thist SADDAM-era flag

note: similar to the flag of Syria, which has two stars but no script; Yemen, which has a plain white band; and that of Egypt, which has a golden Eagle of Saladin centered in the white band

National symbol(s)

golden eagle; national colors: red, white, black

National anthem

name: "Mawtini" (My Homeland)

lyrics/music: Ibrahim TOUQAN/Mohammad FLAYFEL

note: adopted 2004; following the ouster of SADDAM Husayn, Iraq adopted "Mawtini," a popular folk song throughout the Arab world; also serves as an unofficial anthem of the Palestinian people

National heritage

total World Heritage Sites: 6 (5 cultural, 1 mixed)

selected World Heritage Site locales: Ashur (Qal'at Sherqat) (c); Babylon (c); Erbil Citadel (c); Hatra (c); Samarra Archaeological City (c); The Ahwar (Marshland) of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and the Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities (m)

ECONOMY**Economic overview**

highly oil-dependent Middle Eastern economy; fiscal sustainability subject to fluctuation in oil prices; rising public confidence in economic conditions; import-dependent for most sectors; persistent challenges of corruption, informal markets, banking access, and political fragility

Real GDP (purchasing power parity)

\$572.939 billion (2023 est.)

\$590.267 billion (2022 est.)

\$548.372 billion (2021 est.)

note: data in 2021 dollars

comparison ranking: 45

Real GDP growth rate

-2.94% (2023 est.)

7.64% (2022 est.)

1.5% (2021 est.)

note: annual GDP % growth based on constant local currency

comparison ranking: 209

Real GDP per capita

\$12,600 (2023 est.)

\$13,300 (2022 est.)

\$12,600 (2021 est.)

note: data in 2021 dollars

comparison ranking: 136

GDP (official exchange rate)

\$250.843 billion (2023 est.)

note: data in current dollars at official exchange rate

Inflation rate (consumer prices)

4.99% (2022 est.)

6.04% (2021 est.)

0.57% (2020 est.)

note: annual % change based on consumer prices

comparison ranking: 107

Credit ratings

Fitch rating: B- (2015)

Moody's rating: Caa1 (2017)

Standard & Poors rating: B- (2015)

note: The year refers to the year in which the current credit rating was first obtained.

GDP - composition, by sector of origin

agriculture: 3.3% (2017 est.)

industry: 51% (2017 est.)

services: 45.8% (2017 est.)

comparison rankings: services 196; industry 10; agriculture 147

GDP - composition, by end use

household consumption: 50.4% (2013 est.)

government consumption: 22.9% (2016 est.)

investment in fixed capital: 20.6% (2016 est.)

investment in inventories: 0% (2016 est.)

exports of goods and services: 32.5% (2016 est.)

imports of goods and services: -40.9% (2016 est.)

Agricultural products

wheat, dates, tomatoes, maize, watermelons, grapes, potatoes, milk, cucumbers/gherkins, eggplants (2022)

note: top ten agricultural products based on tonnage

Industries

petroleum, chemicals, textiles, leather, construction materials, food processing, fertilizer, metal fabrication/processing

Industrial production growth rate

-6.34% (2023 est.)

note: annual % change in industrial value added based on constant local currency

comparison ranking: 202

Labor force

11.812 million (2023 est.)

note: number of people ages 15 or older who are employed or seeking work

comparison ranking: 50

Unemployment rate

15.53% (2023 est.)

15.59% (2022 est.)

16.17% (2021 est.)

note: % of labor force seeking employment

comparison ranking: 192

Youth unemployment rate (ages 15-24)

total: 32.2% (2023 est.)

male: 27.8% (2023 est.)

female: 62% (2023 est.)

note: % of labor force ages 15-24 seeking employment

comparison ranking: total 22

Population below poverty line

23% (2014 est.)

Gini Index coefficient - distribution of family income

(2012 est.)

Average household expenditures

on food: 29.6% of household expenditures (2021 est.)

on alcohol and tobacco: 4.2% of household expenditures (2021 est.)

Remittances

0.35% of GDP (2023 est.)

0.38% of GDP (2022 est.)

0.4% of GDP (2021 est.)

note: personal transfers and compensation between resident and non-resident individuals/households/entities

Budget

revenues: \$51.534 billion (2020 est.)

expenditures: \$85.546 billion (2020 est.)

Public debt

27.44% of GDP (2018 est.)

note: central government debt as a % of GDP

comparison ranking: 173

Taxes and other revenues

1.34% (of GDP) (2019 est.)

note: central government tax revenue as a % of GDP

comparison ranking: 206

Current account balance

\$58.01 billion (2022 est.)

\$24.565 billion (2021 est.)

-\$6.306 billion (2020 est.)

note: balance of payments - net trade and primary/secondary income in current dollars

comparison ranking: 9

Exports

\$127.079 billion (2022 est.)

\$78.261 billion (2021 est.)

\$50.666 billion (2020 est.)

note: balance of payments - exports of goods and services in current dollars

comparison ranking: 42

Exports - partners

India 32%, China 28%, US 8%, South Korea 7%, Greece 5% (2022)

note: top five export partners based on percentage share of exports

Exports - commodities

crude petroleum, refined petroleum, gold, petroleum coke, natural gas (2022)

note: top five export commodities based on value in dollars

Imports

\$69.162 billion (2022 est.)

\$50.707 billion (2021 est.)

\$54.865 billion (2020 est.)

note: balance of payments - imports of goods and services in current dollars
comparison ranking: 58

Imports - partners

UAE 32%, China 21%, Turkey 20%, India 4%, South Korea 2% (2022)

note: top five import partners based on percentage share of imports

Imports - commodities

refined petroleum, broadcasting equipment, cars, jewelry, garments (2022)

note: top five import commodities based on value in dollars

Reserves of foreign exchange and gold

\$112.233 billion (2023 est.)

\$97.009 billion (2022 est.)

\$64.231 billion (2021 est.)

note: holdings of gold (year-end prices)/foreign exchange/special drawing rights in current dollars
comparison ranking: 34

Debt - external

\$73.02 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$64.16 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

comparison ranking: 61

Exchange rates

Iraqi dinars (IQD) per US dollar -

Exchange rates:

1,312.5 (2023 est.)

1,450 (2022 est.)

1,450 (2021 est.)

1,192 (2020 est.)

1,182 (2019 est.)

ENERGY

Electricity access

electrification - total population: 100% (2022 est.)

Electricity

installed generating capacity: 31.339 million kW (2022 est.)

consumption: 65.908 billion kWh (2022 est.)

imports: 3.534 billion kWh (2022 est.)

transmission/distribution losses: 71.17 billion kWh (2022 est.)

comparison rankings: transmission/distribution losses 206; imports 53; consumption 44; installed generating capacity 36

Electricity generation sources

fossil fuels: 98% of total installed capacity (2022 est.)

hydroelectricity: 2% of total installed capacity (2022 est.)

Coal

imports: 3,000 metric tons (2022 est.)

Petroleum

total petroleum production: 4.437 million bbl/day (2023 est.)

refined petroleum consumption: 918,000 bbl/day (2022 est.)

crude oil estimated reserves: 145.019 billion barrels (2021 est.)

Natural gas

production: 9.86 billion cubic meters (2022 est.)

consumption: 19.298 billion cubic meters (2022 est.)

imports: 9.438 billion cubic meters (2022 est.)

proven reserves: 3.729 trillion cubic meters (2021 est.)

Carbon dioxide emissions

156.892 million metric tonnes of CO2 (2022 est.)

from coal and metallurgical coke: 6,000 metric tonnes of CO2 (2022 est.)

from petroleum and other liquids: 119.027 million metric tonnes of CO2 (2022 est.)

from consumed natural gas: 37.858 million metric tonnes of CO2 (2022 est.)

comparison ranking: total emissions 33

Energy consumption per capita

57.702 million Btu/person (2022 est.)

comparison ranking: 85

COMMUNICATIONS

Telephones - fixed lines

total subscriptions: 2.392 million (2022 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 5 (2022 est.)

comparison ranking: total subscriptions 47

Telephones - mobile cellular

total subscriptions: 43.688 million (2022 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 98 (2022 est.)

comparison ranking: total subscriptions 39

Telecommunication systems

general assessment: civil stability has made it easier for mobile and fixed-line operators to rebuild telecom services and infrastructure damaged during previous periods of violence; the government extended the licenses held by the MNOs for an additional three years to compensate for the chaos and destruction caused between 2014 and 2017 when Islamic State controlled many areas of the country; the companies have struggled to develop LTE services; most services are still based on GSM and 3G, except in Iraq's Kurdistan region where LTE is more widely available (2022)

domestic: about 7 per 100 for fixed-line and 86 per 100 for mobile-cellular subscriptions (2021)

international: country code - 964; landing points for FALCON, and GBICS/MENA submarine cables providing connections to the Middle East, Africa and India; satellite earth stations - 4 (2 Intelsat - 1 Atlantic Ocean and 1 Indian Ocean, 1 Intersputnik - Atlantic Ocean region, and 1 Arabsat (inoperative)); local microwave radio relay connects border regions to Jordan, Kuwait, Syria, and Turkey (2019)

Broadcast media

the number of private radio and TV stations has increased rapidly since 2003; government-owned TV and radio stations are operated by the publicly funded Iraqi Media Network; private broadcast media are mostly linked to political, ethnic, or religious groups; satellite TV is available to an estimated 70% of viewers and many of the broadcasters are based abroad; transmissions of multiple international radio broadcasters are accessible (2019)

Internet country code

.iq

Internet users

total: 21.56 million (2021 est.)

percent of population: 49% (2021 est.)

comparison ranking: total 41

Broadband - fixed subscriptions

total: 6,254,099 (2020 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 16 (2020 est.)

comparison ranking: total 30

TRANSPORTATION

National air transport system

number of registered air carriers: 4 (2020)

inventory of registered aircraft operated by air carriers: 34

annual passenger traffic on registered air carriers: 2,075,065 (2018)

annual freight traffic on registered air carriers: 16.2 million (2018) mt-km

Civil aircraft registration country code prefix

YI

Airports

71 (2024)

comparison ranking: 71

Heliports

10 (2024)

Pipelines

2,455 km gas, 913 km liquid petroleum gas, 5,432 km oil, 1,637 km refined products (2013)

Railways

total: 2,272 km (2014)

standard gauge: 2,272 km (2014) 1.435-m gauge

comparison ranking: total 68

Roadways

total: 58,592 km (2021)

comparison ranking: total 81

Waterways

5,279 km (2012) (the Euphrates River (2,815 km), Tigris River (1,899 km), and Third River (565 km) are the principal waterways)

comparison ranking: 24

Merchant marine

total: 74 (2023)

by type: general cargo 1, oil tanker 6, other 67

comparison ranking: total 103

Ports

total ports: 6 (2024)

large: 0

medium: 1

small: 1

very small: 4

ports with oil terminals: 3

key ports: Al Basrah, Al-Basra Oil Terminal, Khawr Al Amaya, Khawr Al Zubair, Umm Qasr

MILITARY AND SECURITY

Military and security forces

Ministry of Defense: Iraqi Army, Army Aviation Command, Iraqi Navy, Iraqi Air Force, Iraqi Air Defense Command, Special Forces Command, Special Security Division

National-Level Security Forces: Iraqi Counterterrorism Service (CTS; reports to the Prime Minister), Prime Minister's Special Forces Division, Presidential Brigades

Ministry of Interior: Federal Police Forces Command, Border Guard Forces Command, Federal Intelligence and Investigations Agency, Emergency Response Division, Facilities Protection Directorate, and Provincial Police

Ministry of Oil: Energy Police Directorate

Popular Mobilization Committee (PMC): Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), Tribal Mobilization Forces (TMF); the PMF and TMF are a collection of more than 50 militias of widely varied sizes and political interests

the federal constitution provides the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) the right to maintain its own military/militia (peshmerga) and security forces, but the two main Kurdish political parties, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), each maintain their own forces and participate in the staffing of the joint KDP-PUK Regional Guard Brigades:

KRG Ministry of Peshmerga: Unit (or Division) 70 Forces and Counter Terrorism Group (CTG) of the PUK; Unit (or Division) 80 Forces and Counterterrorism Directorate (CTD) of the KDP; Regional Guard Brigades

KRG Ministry of Interior: both the KDP and PUK maintain separate police, emergency response, and internal security/intelligence (Asayish) services under nominal Ministry of Interior control (2024)

note: the Iraqi military and associated forces are collectively known as the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF)

Military expenditures

3% of GDP (2023 est.)
2.1% of GDP (2022 est.)
3.7% of GDP (2021 est.)
4.1% of GDP (2020 est.)
3.8% of GDP (2019 est.)

comparison ranking: 32

Military and security service personnel strengths

information varies; approximately 200,000 personnel under the Ministry of Defense (190,000 Army/Aviation Command/Special Forces; 5,000 Navy; 5,000 Air/Air Defense Forces); approximately 25,000 National-Level Security Forces; estimated 125,000 Popular Mobilization Forces

Ministry of Peshmerga: approximately 150,000 (45-50,000 Regional Guard Brigades; 40-45,000 Unit 70 Forces; 65-70,000 Unit 80 Forces) (2023)

Military equipment inventories and acquisitions

the Iraqi military's inventory includes a mix of equipment from a wide variety of sources, including Europe, South Africa, South Korea, Russia, and the US; in recent years, Russia and the US have been the leading suppliers of military hardware to Iraq (2023)

Military service age and obligation

18-40 years of age for voluntary military service; no conscription (2022)

note: service in the armed forces was mandatory in Iraq from 1935 up until 2003; in 2021, the Iraqi cabinet approved a draft law to reinstate compulsory military service and referred the proposed law, called the "Service Under the Flag Law," to the Iraqi parliament

Military - note

the Iraqi security forces (ISF) are primarily focused on internal security duties; they are actively conducting counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham (ISIS) terrorist group, particularly in northern and western Iraq; the Counter Terrorism Service (CTS), which is comprised of three special forces brigades, is the ISF's principal operational unit against ISIS

Kurdish Security Forces (KSF, aka Peshmerga) also conduct operations against ISIS; the KSF are recognized as a legitimate Iraqi military force under the country's constitution and have operated jointly with the Iraqi military against ISIS militants, but largely operate outside of Iraqi military command structure; since 2021, the ISF and the KSF have conducted joint counter-ISIS operations in an area known as the Kurdish Coordination Line (KCL), a swath of disputed territory in northern Iraq claimed by both the Kurdistan Regional Government and the central Iraqi Government; the KSF/Peshmerga report to the Kurdistan Regional Government or Kurdistan Democratic Party and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan parties instead of the Iraqi Ministry of Defense

Popular Mobilization Commission and Affiliated Forces (PMF or PMC), also known as Popular Mobilization Units (PMU, or al-Hashd al-Sha'abi in Arabic), tribal militia units have fought alongside the Iraqi military against ISIS since 2014, but the majority of these forces continue to largely ignore the 2016 Law of the Popular Mobilization Authority, which mandated that armed militias must be regulated in a fashion similar to Iraq's other security forces and act under the Iraqi Government's direct control; the Iraqi Government funds the PMF, and the prime minister legally commands it, but many of the militia units take orders from associated political parties and/or other government officials, including some with ties to the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and some that have been designated as terrorist organizations by the US; the PMF/PMU is an umbrella organization comprised of many different militias, the majority of which are Shia:

--Shia militias backed by Iran; they are considered the most active and capable, and include such groups as the Badr Organization (Saraya al-Sala), Asaib Ahl al-Haq, and Kataib Hizballah

--Shia militias affiliated with Shia political parties, but not aligned with Iran, such as the Peace Brigades (Saraya al-Salam)

--Shia militias not connected with political parties, but affiliated with the Najaf-based Grand Ayatollah Ali al-SISTANI (Iraq's supreme Shia cleric), such as the Hawza militias

--other PMF/PMU militias include Sunni Tribal Mobilization militias, or Hashd al-Asha'iri; some of these militias take orders from the ISF and local authorities while others respond to orders from the larger Shia PMU militias; still other militias include Yazidi and Christian militias and the Turkmen brigades; the links of these forces to the PMU are not always clear-cut and may be loosely based on financial, legal, or political incentives

two international military task forces operate in Iraq to assist the country's security forces at the request of the Iraqi Government; in October 2018, NATO established an advisory, training and capacity-building mission for the Iraqi military known as the NATO Mission Iraq (NMI); in December 2021, a US-led task force that leads the defeat ISIS mission in Iraq, Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR), transitioned from a combat role to an advise, assist, and enable role (2024)

TERRORISM

Terrorist group(s)

Terrorist group(s): Ansar al-Islam; Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq; Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)/Qods Force; Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham (ISIS); Jaysh Rijal al-Tariq al-Naqshabandi; Kata'ib Hizballah; Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)

note: details about the history, aims, leadership, organization, areas of operation, tactics, targets, weapons, size, and sources of support of the group(s) appear(s) in the Terrorism reference guide

TRANSNATIONAL ISSUES

Refugees and internally displaced persons

refugees (country of origin): 7,864 (West Bank and Gaza Strip) (mid-year 2022); 273,258 (Syria), 8,575 (Iran), 8,091 (Turkey) (2023)

IDPs: 1.142 million (displacement in central and northern Iraq since January 2014) (2023)

stateless persons: 47,253 (2022); note - in the 1970s and 1980s under SADDAM Husayn's regime, thousands of Iraq's Faili Kurds, followers of Shia Islam, were stripped of their Iraqi citizenship, had their property seized by the government, and many were deported; some Faili Kurds had their citizenship reinstated under the 2006 Iraqi

Nationality Law, but others lack the documentation to prove their Iraqi origins; some Palestinian refugees persecuted by the SADDAM regime remain stateless