



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

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Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**Consideration of reports submitted by States Parties under
article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms
of Discrimination against Women**

**Replies of Iraq to the list of issues and questions in relation
to its eighth periodic report*****

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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Women and peace and security**1.**

1. The Women's Studies Centre at the University of Baghdad conducted a study assessing the humanitarian needs of families affected by the conflict inside and outside the camps in seven governorates. That study highlighted the most significant challenges facing displaced families and women in camps. It made a number of recommendations:

- Adopt national strategies and plans to protect families and put into effect international agreements and national legislation;
- Shine a light on women victims of violence, those who have lost their breadwinners, widows and orphans;
- Support education services and ensure adequate financial allocations to teaching institutions;
- Open women's economic empowerment and rehabilitation centres;
- Speed up procedures for the return of displaced families to their homes, necessary services, rebuilding and reconstruction.

2. Iraq has launched its third national plan (2025–2030). Among its main priorities was increasing women's participation in decision-making positions relating to politics, security, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Iraq is working to build capacities and qualifications for proactive participation in development. National legislation is being reviewed to ensure that it takes into account women's needs and protects them from all forms of violence. Multi-sectoral services are provided to women affected by violence. Partnerships and cooperation are being strengthened with local, regional and international organizations.

3. Iraq depends on the financial budgets of the implementing agencies as the main funding mechanism for approved national plans and strategies. That includes the third national plan. That was the mechanism relied on to implement the second national plan (2021–2024), and it provided adequate funding to implement programmes. A total of 1,295,645,796 Iraqi dinars was allocated for its implementation.

4. Women play a major role in implementing the third national plan through women's affairs units managed by women in ministries and Government agencies. Hundreds of women work in such units. There are also more than 275 women's civil society organizations involved in women's issues in Iraq.

5. Iraq has benefited from the outcomes of implementation of the second national plan for Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#), particularly in connection with improving the situation of women during and after conflict. A number of programmes were adopted to enhance the role of women in building and maintaining peace, increase security sector training for women and build their security decision-making capacities, with a focus on protection. Statistics on the role of women in defence show that there are 787 women officers, 511 enlisted women, 2,622 women staff, 21 women department heads, 107 women division heads and 3,683 women in affiliated positions. There are 11,534 women at the Ministry of Interior, including 688 women officers, 2,557 women civilian staff, 6,564 enlisted women and 1,638 women security personnel. The National Security Agency has 343 women employees, 15 of whom hold the post of department head. The National Security Advisory has 38 female employees, one of whom holds the post of Director-General and two of whom hold the position of deputy Director-General.

6. The Prime Minister launched the Women Mediators for Peace network, which has members from all governorates. A training programme was developed for qualification and capacity building. Arrangements have been made with local Governments to coordinate work in the governorates. A Women Mediators for Peace manual of procedure has been drafted to serve as a roadmap for defining roles, tasks and guidelines in coordination with the women's affairs divisions in the governorates.

Constitutional and legislative framework

2.

7. The Iraqi Council of Representatives has a special committee to propose constitutional amendments in accordance with article 142 of the Constitution. It is currently completing its work. Regarding amendment of article 41 of the Constitution, we draw attention to Act No. 1 of 2025 amending the Personal Status Code, which is closely related to that article of the Constitution. It gives Iraqis the freedom to regulate their personal status according to their religion, sect or creed.

8. The Iraqi Government is moving ahead with a draft act on protection from domestic violence. It was approved in the previous session and sent to the Council of Representatives for completion of the legislative process. The draft act is currently undergoing rigorous review to ensure that it is formulated in a comprehensive manner that responds to the demands of Iraqi society. With regard to amendment of Act No. 8 (2011) on combating domestic violence in the Kurdistan Region, the matter currently in process.

9. The Personal Status Code was amended based on article 41 of the Iraqi Constitution, which provides that Iraqis are free to regulate their personal status according to their religion, sect, creed or choice, to be regulated by law. That amendment reflects the State's respect for religious and sectarian pluralism in Iraqi society. It guarantees individuals the freedom to choose the legal system that corresponds to their religious and sectarian beliefs, with a view to preserving the diversity and freedom guaranteed by the Constitution.

10. The new amendment does not abolish the Personal Status Code. Rather it provides an option for those who wish their personal affairs to be regulated in accordance with their creed. It was stressed that the basic provisions of the Code in force must not be violated. That includes marriage age, and that a marriage may only be allowed with the approval of the court and the support of the health authorities. There are also other conditions to safeguard the fundamental rights of the spouses.

3.

11. The Iraqi Constitution guarantees freedom of religion and belief for all members of Iraqi society, and the freedom to practice religious rites. It guarantees equality for all members of society before the law, without discrimination on the basis of gender, race, nationality, origin, colour, religion, sect, belief, opinion or economic or social status. Article 7 of the Constitution bans any entity or ideology that adopts, incites, promotes, disseminates or justifies racism, terrorism, takfirism or sectarian or any other kind of cleansing. These are constitutionally prohibited acts. Iraqi law likewise criminalizes acts that promote sectarian or religious chauvinism.

12. An act on the protection of minorities has been drafted and is currently under legal review.

13. A national social diversity management strategy is also being drafted.

14. The Secretariat of the Council of Ministers has finished drafting an act to criminalize sectarian incitement, racism and hate speech. It contains a comprehensive

definition of hate crimes and provides for penalties for anyone proven to have committed acts inciting, expressing or promoting hate speech by any means whatsoever. The draft has been sent to the relevant authorities for comments and completion of legislative procedures.

15. Some parliamentary blocs have been working with civil society organizations that work with minorities on a draft act on protection of minority rights and a draft act on the rights of the Chaldean, Syriac, Assyrian and Armenian communities. That draft act is currently under review.

16. Amendments to the Iraqi Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and other laws are currently under review by the competent State authorities. The Federal Supreme Court has ruled that there is no conflict between article 29/1 of the Constitution and article 41/1 of the Iraqi Penal Code. The right to discipline contained in the latter is limited by the final paragraph of that same article and the above-cited constitutional provision. Any abuse of that right shall be subject to accountability and punishment.

17. The second amendment to the General Amnesty Act does not distinguish between the genders of those covered by its provisions; it adopts the principle of gender equality. It does not negatively impact women's rights or the principle that there should be no impunity for perpetrators. We draw your attention here to article 9(1) of the Yazidi Survivors Act (No. 8 (2021)), which provides that perpetrators of kidnapping and enslavement shall not be covered by any general or special amnesty.

18. The Property Restitution Act (No. 3 (2025)) is a piece of legislation that complements transitional justice measures to redress abuses committed by the former regime in connection with the seizure of citizens' property without justification or compensation. It is necessary to reverse those decisions and return property to its owners. That process did not affect any rights acquired by women and did not negatively impact their rights.

4.

19. Most national legislation does not contain provisions that discriminate against women and girls. Most discriminatory provisions, where they exist, are cancelled out by other legal provisions. For example, article 41(1) of the amended Iraqi Penal Code (No. 111 (1969)), which grants a husband the right to discipline his wife, is cancelled out by article 40 of the Personal Status Code and articles 412, 413, 414, 415, and 416 of the Penal Code itself. In addition, the Iraqi Government is currently considering several draft acts to address certain articles and provisions that could be interpreted as discriminatory against women.

Women's access to justice

5.

20. Men and women judges and prosecutors have entered the public prosecution service at the federal and non-federal levels. There is no discrimination in capacity-building programmes in the area of rule of law. In 2024, some 941 judges, prosecutors and judicial investigators took part in 61 workshops and courses.

21. In 2025, the Ministry of Interior, in its federal and non-federal authorities and through its training institutions and other directorates active in the field of human rights, had instituted training programmes with a total of 76 courses with 518 participants. They included officers and enlisted personnel. The Ministry strengthened the capacities of its female staff, enhanced the role of women in leadership positions, combated cyberextortion, strengthened cybersecurity and

developed crisis management skills. During the 2023–2024 period, 239 training courses were held, with 5,442 women participants.

22. There were a total of 203 courses offered to build the capacities of correctional staff, with a total of 5,021 trainees taking part in 2024.

23. The Supreme Judicial Council is one of the independent authorities in Iraq, subject only to the law. It is the party responsible for oversight. There has been an increase in women’s participation in the judiciary, which was very low before 2003. The Iraqi judiciary applies equal and non-discriminatory legal procedures to both genders in accordance with the principles, inter alia, of “no punishment or crime except by law”, “the right to litigation and defence is guaranteed to all”, “the accused is innocent until proven guilty” and “court hearings are public unless otherwise specified by law”. In many cases, it takes into account childhood and womanhood as mitigating rather than aggravating factors when it comes to penalties. In addition, the Supreme Judicial Council has issued a number of guidelines that amount to positive discrimination in favour of women and take gender considerations into account. Those include the following:

- Women may not be detained for unintentional crimes.
- Women are exempted from detention during investigation and trial for the crime of leaking exam questions.
- Persons accused of domestic violence are not released if they reoffend.
- Woman and girl victims of human trafficking are distinguished from victims of prostitution.
- Cases of extortion and exploitation targeting women are referred to courts specializing in combating human trafficking and organ trafficking.
- Specialized female staff have been assigned to investigate cases of human trafficking and exploitation of women and children.

24. There are a total of 265 woman judges and prosecutors throughout Iraq.

25. The table below contains statistics on female administrative staff in the Ministry of the Interior.

Female staff in the Ministry of Interior as of 2025

<i>Total officers</i>	<i>Total enlisted personnel</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>Security personnel</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>Grand total</i>
688	6 564	2 557	1 638	87	11 534

26. The table below shows the number of female employees in the Ministry of Defence.

Female staff in the Ministry of Defence as of 2025

<i>Officers</i>	<i>Enlisted personnel</i>	<i>Civilian</i>	<i>Total</i>
787	511	2 622	3 920

27. There were 667 women working in the Iraqi Corrections Department, as follows: 60 attorneys, 72 social researchers, 289 administrative staff, 42 engineers, 32 technicians, 6 vocational instructors and 166 corrections guards.

28. The Legal Aid Act (No. 7 (2024)) aims to ensure that legal assistance and representation are provided before the courts so that the groups covered by its provisions can defend their rights. The covered groups are specified in article 2 of the Act. It institutionalizes the mechanisms whereby legal assistance is provided by establishing a Legal Aid Centre at the High Commission for Human Rights with two offices in Baghdad and a mandate to open departments and divisions in the governorates and districts under article 3 of the Act. The Centre has a board called the Legal Aid Council, whose composition and functions are specified in article 4 of the Act.

6.

29. The provisions of the 2005 Constitution of the Republic of Iraq affirm and protect the right to litigation. Paragraph 3 of article 19 states that litigation is a right protected and guaranteed to all. Paragraph 6 of that same article provides that judicial proceedings must be fair, stating that every individual has the right to fair treatment in judicial and administrative proceedings. Article 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure states that the court shall appoint an attorney for the defendant if they do not have one, and that the attorney's fees shall be paid by the State. Article 293 of the Code of Civil Procedure similarly provides for legal aid for defendants who are poor and unable to hire an attorney or bear the fees and expenses. That aid is to be recovered from the opposing litigant after the decision is handed down.

30. The death penalty in Iraq is applicable only to extremely serious crimes that threaten the foundations and stability of society, coexistence or the citizenry's right to life.

31. Death sentences in Iraq, whether for criminal or terrorist offences, are subject to mandatory appeal under article 224/D of the Code of Criminal Procedure and article 10/I of the Public Prosecution Act (No. 49 (2017)). They must then be ratified by the Office of the President of the Republic. A special Republican Decree is issued for execution of the death sentence after the convicted person has received a fair and public trial with legal counsel present, in accordance with the Code of Criminal Procedure and human rights standards.

32. Iraqi law envisages several avenues of appeal against death sentences. In addition, prosecutors have the authority to review cases and appeal rulings. Death sentences are subject to mandatory appeal.

33. There is no information to suggest that any women human rights defenders or journalists are being detained in Iraqi correctional facilities or other places of detention as a result of actions taken because of their opinions or their defence of human rights. All the institutions of the State are committed to protecting freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of advertising, freedom of the media and freedom of publication by all means, as well as freedom of assembly and peaceful demonstration without prejudice to public order and morals. In that connection, the Iraqi Government has approved a draft law on freedom of expression and peaceful demonstration; it has been sent to the Council of Representatives to for legislative procedures. It should be pointed out that Iraq has an effective legal and institutional system that regulates and protects freedom of thought and opinion. We draw attention to the following:

- Act No. 12 (2010) on non-Governmental organizations regulates the establishment of civil society organizations. There are more than 400 women's civil society organizations operating with complete freedom on women's issues, women's empowerment and women's protection.

- The National Committee for the Protection of Journalists at the Ministry of Justice is the point of contact with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It submits an annual report on protection measures taken.
- The Supreme Judicial Council has set up a special court for cases involving publishing and the media. Some 22 judges have been appointed from across the country's appellate districts to work on criminal and civil cases and to receive complaints and lawsuits involving men and women journalists.
- The Journalists' Rights Act (No. 21 (2011)) grants protection and freedom of expression for journalists.

National machinery for the advancement of women

7.

34. The Supreme Council for Women's Affairs is chaired by the Prime Minister. It is composed of three women ministers from the Council of Ministers, the Prime Minister's advisor on women's affairs and the National Department for Iraqi Women in the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers. It is responsible for setting general policies on women's issues.

35. The National Department for Iraqi Women is responsible for executive management of the Supreme Council for Women. It follows up on decisions and drafts progress reports. It works in partnership with the Government to promote the advancement of Iraqi women and improve implementation of policies and strategies related to women.

36. There are women's affairs units in all Government agencies at the departmental level. They report to the agency chiefs. There are 72 such units, which are the implementing arms of the Department. They are all managed by capable women who have decision-making authority over their units. Hundreds of exceptional women work in these departments to implement and draw up plans and policies for women in accordance with the sectoral tasks of each agency.

37. The National Department for Iraqi Women coordinates Government efforts on women's issues. It forms committees for tasks that fall within its mandate in accordance with implementation of the National Strategy for Iraqi Women (2023–2030). These include supporting and promoting women's political participation. Training has been provided to than 1,500 women candidates for the 2020 parliamentary elections and the 2023 governorate council elections.

38. It has adopted number of national plans and strategies to integrate women into public policy, and has contributed to the implementation of others:

- (a) It launched the National Strategy for Iraqi Women 2023–2030.
- (b) It updated the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and Girls 2023–2030.
- (c) It launched the Third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2025–2030.
- (d) It took part in implementation of the National Anti-Trafficking Strategy 2023–2026.
- (e) It contributed to implementation of the national plan to reduce illegal migration.

(f) It contributed to the development and implementation of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy in Iraq 2023–2030.

(g) It involved women in implementation of the national strategy to combat extremist ideologies conducive to terrorism.

(h) It put together a national women’s team to support energy. That was spearheaded by the National Department for Iraqi Women. Its goal is to mobilize women for environmental protection and increase their input into drafting a national policy to regulate sound and sustainable energy consumption and reduce emissions, in line with the ISO 50001 international standard for energy management.

39. The Republic of Iraq is working to shift from line-item budgeting to programme- and performance-based budgeting to improve Government efficiency. The Secretariat of the Council of Ministers has directed all ministries, non-ministerial entities and governorates to create divisions for programme- and performance-based budgeting within their administrative structures to implement programme- and performance-based budgeting and prepare progress reports. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has established a special division for programmes and performance linked to the Financial Affairs Division of the Administrative and Financial Department. Based on article 10(b) of the Financial Management Act (No. 6 (2019)), the Ministries of Planning and Labour and Social Affairs, in coordination with the Ministry of Finance, prepare budgets for segments of society - women and men. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has gone ahead with preparing programme- and performance-based budgets for the Child Welfare Commission in the amount of 63 million Iraqi dinars and the Directorate of Yazidi Survivors Affairs in the amount of 5 billion Iraqi dinars.

National human rights institution

8.

40. The High Commission for Human Rights Act (No. 53 (2008)) provides for mechanisms for selecting the Commissioners with a high degree of transparency and independence. After the end of the previous Commission’s term, to ensure institutional continuity, the Iraqi State went ahead and formed a committee to select candidates. It initiated analysis and laid out criteria and conditions based on standards of competence and integrity, while ensuring fair representation of women in its leadership hierarchy. That coincided with the end of the proceedings of the Council of Representatives and the parliamentary elections of November 2025. A senior advisor was appointed to oversee the Commission’s technical affairs. The Minister of Justice, who is also chair of the committee in charge of drafting international human rights reports, was tasked with overseeing the work of the Commission, while preserving the technical independence of its staff until the new Commission is selected by the Council of Representatives. The Commission is operating smoothly and performing the tasks it is charged with by law.

Gender stereotypes and harmful practices

9.

41. The National Strategy for Iraqi Women, the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and Girls, and the Third National Plan for Women, Peace and Security contain numerous programmes aimed at changing stereotypes of women. They include the following:

- Raise the profile of women in media and cultural work to counter stereotypical images of women;

- Increase the number of women in law enforcement and security forces with the aim of changing stereotypes about women;
- Support the participation of women in political, economic and cultural life;
- Reduce the incidence of early and underage marriage;
- Address the school dropout among girls and combat female illiteracy;
- Strengthen the role of the awqaf religious foundations, religious leaders and society in changing the stereotypical image of women in society;
- Hold workshops and training sessions aimed at addressing negative stereotypes and harmful behaviours towards women and girls.

10.

42. The Ministry of Interior conducts awareness campaigns on the dangers of violence and how to report it. It trains law enforcement agencies on how to handle cases of violence, particularly how investigate complaints. It has set up a hotline to receive complaints and reports from law enforcement agencies, take measures to investigate them and refer perpetrators to the judiciary.

43. Iraqi courts cited article 128 in 11 judgments under article 405 and cited article 131 in 57 judgments. These judgments had to do with weapons possession and other matters completely unrelated to women.

Gender-based violence against women and girls

11.

44. The number of survivors benefiting from the Yazidi Survivors Act (No. 8 (2021)) as of May 2025 was 2,354, as follows:

- 1,099 women and girls from the Yazidi, Turkmen, Christian and Shabak groups;
- 1,231 children who were under the age of 18 at the time of their abduction: 585 females and 646 males;
- 24 survivors of mass killings;
- 822 people inside Iraq;
- 1,532 people outside Iraq.

45. There were 262 beneficiaries of residential land plots, with the first batch distributed in the Sinjar and Tal Afar districts.

46. There were 192 beneficiaries of psychological and social support services as of May 2025.

47. Some 471 health cards were issued for survivors in coordination with the Iraqi Ministry of Health and the Ninawa Health Department for health services and treatment in Government facilities and hospitals free of charge.

48. Efforts are being made to set up two comprehensive care centres and provide psychological rehabilitation, development, education, and capacity-building services. The Ninawa Governorate has set aside two plots of land for the two centres in coordination with the Iraqi Ministry of Health with support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

49. There were 73 students reinstated to their studies and exempted from age requirements.

50. Educational courses have been held for survivors and their families. They include literacy courses and remedial classes at all levels, in coordination with the Directorate of Women Survivors' Affairs and IOM, with support from the Italian Government.
51. Preparations are underway between the Directorate of Women Survivors' Affairs and IOM to launch small income-generating projects for survivors. That will include training 400 survivors on small projects and granting 30 small loans.
52. A special committee formed between the Directorate of Women Survivors' Affairs and the Ministry of Interior has issued 1,728 Unified Cards.
53. All survivors covered by the Survivors Act have criminal cases to prosecute against the perpetrators of the crimes they have suffered, to ensure that criminals do not escape punishment.
54. The Supreme Judicial Council issued a directive that perpetrators of genocide and crimes against humanity committed against the Yazidis and other communities should not be covered by any general or special amnesty.
55. Video conferencing has been adopted as a mechanism for filing complaints and recording survivors' statements remotely. Some 163 survivors in Germany and France have used this mechanism.
56. Approvals have been secured to record the statements of survivors residing in other countries, including the United States, Sweden, Canada, and Australia, by having their statements recorded by an Iraqi consul in those countries and sent to us via diplomatic pouch for certification by the committee and procedures for covering them.
57. Cooperation is ongoing between the General Directorate for Survivors Affairs and the National Centre for Judicial Cooperation, which was established after the end of the mandate of the International Investigation Team (UNITAD) to investigate crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity committed against the Yazidis and other communities.
58. Special training has been offered to judges of the Ninawa courts, as well as judicial investigators and public prosecutors, on how to deal with survivors and victims, in cooperation with Physicians for Human Rights.
59. The Higher Committee for the Search for Persons Abducted by the Terrorist Entity Da'esh established pursuant to article 5 of the Yazidi Survivors Act (No. 8 (2021)) is chaired by the Prime Minister's Human Rights Advisor, with members from the relevant agencies. The Committee has worked to prepare a consolidated database of abductees and launch an electronic form and hotline to register information on Yazidi abductees and other groups. It coordinates with security agencies and intelligence agencies to step up efforts to seek out and investigate abductees.
60. In the Region, the Supreme Council for Women and Development has set aside a shelter to provide health, psychological, and professional services to approximately 500 women annually, including survivors of violence and women with disabilities.
61. Psychological and social treatment centres have been set up, including a psychotherapy institute at the University of Dahuk, a "genocide centre" for documenting sexual crimes during conflicts, and a centre for rehabilitating liberated women. These centres have provided psychological and legal support to more than 1,278 survivors.
62. There are serious discussions underway to expand the scope of the Yazidi Survivors Act (No. 8 (2021)) by adding to the categories covered by its provisions

and changing the date of inclusion from 3 August 2014 to 10 June 2014. The proposed amendment also changes paragraph 3 of article 2, which refers only to Yazidi children, to include children from other communities to be covered by the same privileges and rights.

63. All survivors covered by the Survivors Act have criminal cases to prosecute against the perpetrators of the crimes they have suffered to ensure that criminals do not escape punishment. The General Directorate for Survivors Affairs is coordinating with the National Centre for Judicial Cooperation, established after the end of the mandate of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant to investigate the crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity committed against the Yazidis and other communities. The Directorate supports the Centre by recording the statements of some survivors against criminals in other countries.

64. In 2024, some 39 court judgments were handed down against perpetrators of Da'esh crimes - 36 men and 3 women. For the years 2020–2023, the compensation provided to victims of terrorist operations by the relevant committees amounted to 35,058,977,625 Iraqi dinars.

65. The figures for cases registered for crimes committed by Da'esh terrorists against Yazidis and other communities through May 2025 was as follows:

- 2,991 cases registered with the investigatory authority;
- 3,290 complainants registered with the investigatory authority (complainant = victim);
- 3,090 victims registered as missing;
- 1,222 female victims registered as missing;
- 1,868 male victims registered as missing;
- 2,848 victims who received psychological and social support at the investigatory authority - 1,848 females and 964 males;
- 2,076 female victims of serious violations.

12.

66. The Ministry of Interior is working to develop and build the capacities of its personnel in a way that is mindful of the need to preserve human rights, protect women and girls, and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable. The Iraqi Constitution makes the family the foundation of society. It requires the State to preserve its integrity and values and prevent all forms of violence and abuse within it. The national legislative system contains several laws that prevent and punish violence within the family. They include the Iraqi Penal Code, the Personal Status Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Juvenile Welfare Act. These laws respond to the requirements for protecting women in society from all forms of violence. Government institutions have also taken numerous measures aimed at providing protection for women and girls. They include the following:

- All approved national strategies and plans have components and targets aimed at providing full protection for women and girls, with some 14 created throughout Iraq.
- A unified system has been designed for the State's role in social protection. It is in the final stages of approval.

- Women's care units have been opened in hospitals to provide health and psychological services to women victims of violence.
- Codes of conduct have been adopted in Government institutions such as the Ministry of Interior, the Iraqi Corrections Department, the Media and Communications Commission, the National Security Agency and the Bureau of Sunni Awqaf.
- Domestic violence cases are given priority by investigating judges. Legal measures are stiffened in cases of recurrence.

67. The Directorate for Family and Child Protection at the Ministry of Interior is responsible for the following measures:

- It receives domestic violence complaints, including complaints from children abused by their families, and takes legal action against those accused.
- A toll-free 911 hotline has been set up to field complaints of domestic violence. Confidentiality is maintained and the identity of the informant is not disclosed. Legal action is taken against the accused after obtaining a decision from an investigating judge.
- Female officers and officers with psychology expertise are selected to investigate assaults against women and children, out of consideration for the psychological states of the victims.
- Victims of violence are sent to hospitals and health clinics for examination and treatment. A preliminary medical report confirming the injury is obtained, attached to the investigation documents and presented to the investigating judge.
- Psychological and social support is provided to victims through psychological and social workers in the family and child protection departments.
- The lives of victims are protected through coordination with the judiciary and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. In rape cases, victims of sexual assault are placed in Government shelters.

68. The Directorate of Family and Child Protection has 17 branches at the departmental level covering the whole of Iraq, with the exception of the Region. It has 10 specialized divisions. The Directorate has 1,059 security personnel, who include 105 male officers, 48 female officers, 792 enlisted men and 71 enlisted women. It also has a number of civilian employees. The Directorate has numerous programmes and activities aimed at building the capacities of employees of both sexes. In 2024, there were 110 training courses, with 320 participants. During that same period, the Directorate printed 22,000 leaflets explaining the reporting mechanism and conducted 800 visits to schools, universities and hospitals to raise awareness of the dangers of domestic violence. It conducted 142 awareness campaigns and provided psychological and social support to 520 women, in addition to its daily work of receiving and following up reports and complaints via the hotline.

69. Some 15 units for the care of women and girls affected by violence were opened in cooperation and coordination with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in general and specialized hospitals in all governorates of Iraq. They operate under a multi-sectoral referral system to provide health services and psychological support to women and girl victims of violence.

70. A health centre was opened in the shelter for battered men and women in Kirkuk in 2024.

Trafficking in women and girls

13.

71. The Iraqi Government's ministerial agenda places high priority on combating human trafficking. It adopted a National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking in Iraq for the years 2023–2026 and national implementation plans. That led to Iraq being removed from the special watch list.

72. Act No. 11 (2016) on human organ transplantation and prevention of trafficking has been amended. The Iraqi Council of Representatives voted on the first amendment to the aforementioned Act, which is now Act 18 (2024).

73. Iraq has ratified the Arab Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the Arab Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, by Act No. 4 (2024).

74. An amendment has been drafted to Act No. 28 (2012) on combating human trafficking. It strengthens the legal framework and ensures equality in referral mechanisms regardless of the victim's nationality.

75. Work is underway on implementing the Aman project to combat human trafficking. In coordination with the relevant authorities, mechanisms are being strengthened to protect victims of human trafficking, refer them to comprehensive protection services and prosecute those implicated in that crime.

76. International cooperation is being strengthened by expanding partnerships with the relevant regional and international organizations to exchange knowledge and technical support and improve the quality of services.

77. Human trafficking units are being reinforced with female officers and staff to enhance the interactive human dimension in dealing with victims, especially women and children.

78. Workshops have been held for judges, prosecutors and investigators in coordination with the Judicial Development Institute to enhance skills for combating human trafficking crimes.

79. A national referral mechanism and written procedures have been operationalized for referring known or suspected victims of human trafficking to social service providers.

80. The competent authorities have adopted a package of proactive mechanisms to examine suspected human trafficking cases in accordance with approved international standards. That ensures early identification of victims and provision of appropriate support.

81. The table below shows data on human trafficking of women and girls for 2024, as compiled by the Central Committee to Combating Human Trafficking.

Data on Trafficking in Women and Girls 2024

Number of human trafficking cases recorded in 2024	302 cases	
Number of gangs dismantled	92 criminal networks	
Victims of sexual exploitation	Adult girls	83
	Minor girls	22
Victims of forced labour and servitude	67 adult female victims	
Victims of trafficking for the purpose of selling children	22 children	
Victims of trafficking for the purpose of begging	Adult girls	9
	Minor girls	8

Participation in political and public life**14.**

82. The Political Parties Act contains several provisions guaranteeing equal political rights for men and women citizens, as provided for in the constitutional principles. Article 4(I) guarantees citizens (men and women) the right to establish or join a political party. Article 9 specifies the conditions that must be met by those who wish to establish a party; it makes no reference to gender. Article 11(I) requires women to be represented in the founding bodies of parties.

83. The Iraqi election law uses a quota system to ensure women's representation in parliament, with 25% of seats reserved for women. That system is considered an important step in promoting women's participation in political life. Iraq has made remarkable progress in that area. Women's participation in the Council of Representatives in its fifth term (2021–2025) was 29%, with 96 women, higher than the 25% quota set by the Constitution. Increases were not limited to mere membership in the Council of Representatives. They extended to an increased share of membership and chairpersonship of the 28 parliamentary committees. Women's participation in those committees was over 50%, with 158 women out of 314 representatives. Nine of them chaired a parliamentary committee and 16 were deputy chairs. The 2023 Iraqi governorate council elections resulted in women winning 76 out of 285 seats. Some 17 seats were won by female candidates outside the women's quota system, that is, through direct votes without the need for a quota. The fact that 17 women won seats outside that system is a positive indicator of the progress of women's participation in Iraqi political life. A total of 84 women won seats in the sixth term of the Council of Representatives (2026–2029), 25 directly and 59 through the quota and replacement mechanism.

84. The Standing Committee to Support Iraqi Women in Politics has achieved fruitful results through the following:

- It drafted a national plan to support political participation by Iraqi women in the 2025 elections. The plan had four main objectives and 34 programmes aimed at strengthening the regulatory framework to support women's political participation, provide protection for women and mobilize political parties to support women's political participation.
- It drafted a manual of operations for local subcommittees to operate in all governorates to implement a plan to support women's political participation, standardize working mechanisms and prepare a training packet to empower women's organizations in the political parties.
- It put together a number of teams to visit political parties and assess their procedures, women's participation in their plenary bodies, and the effectiveness of their women's organizations, using a special form.

Education**15.**

85. Iraq approved the National Strategy for Education and Higher Education (2022–2031), prepared in collaboration with UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank. It includes projects related to the education sector, higher education, technical education, urgent infrastructure needs, enrolment rates and dropout rates. They include the following:

- Education: Access and equity, quality, suitability, educational and financial governance and management, human resources: a total of 61 projects;

- Higher education: internal performance, scientific research and innovation, quality and accreditation, institutional governance, external performance: a total of 174 projects;
- Technical education: equitable access to vocational and technical education and training, internal performance, external quality and performance, governance, management, financing: a total of 34 projects.

86. There were total of 494 implementing measures from the Ministry of Education for the National Strategy for Education and Training. They were distributed across the general and vocational education sectors. Some 473 measures were distributed across four components in the general education sector, as follows:

- Equity and access (enrolment and equality): a total of 117 implementing measures;
- Quality and suitability: a total of 106 implementing measures;
- Educational and financial governance and management: a total of 124 implementing measures;
- Human resources: a total of 126 implementing measures;
- In the vocational education sector, there were 21 implementing measures distributed across four components. The total completion rate for the overall targets for the years 2023 and 2024 for the general education and vocational education sectors was assessed at 100%.

87. The Back to Education initiative was launched by the Ministry of Education with support from UNICEF on 16 September 2024. It lasted 45 days. It collected data on dropouts and unenrolled children to put into a central database. The Ministry of Education issued orders to promote awareness and psychological support, and stepped up its media efforts. It discovered 261,338 dropout cases and returned 30,198 of them to formal education and 36,576 to informal education. It identified 62,869 people willing to take the external exam. That reflects the campaign's success in reintegrating children into education.

88. The second outcome of the poverty reduction is focused on "improving education for the poor by providing quality education". That has played an important role in empowering women through the following:

- Focus on the role of education in realizing women's social empowerment and increasing employment opportunities;
- Awareness programmes to encourage enrolment in different stages of education by raising awareness among families and communities in poor areas;
- Encouraging more children and young people to enroll in different stages of education;
- Financial support programmes for poor students, especially girls, which help to alleviate the financial burden on poor families.

89. The Ministry of Education is working to amend the Ministry of Education Act (No. 22 (2011)) and the Compulsory Education Act (No. 118 (1979)). The Act has been amended to address a number of issues, including reducing the dropout rate and expanding compulsory education, particularly with regard to rural areas and girls' schools. Several meetings have been held by the ministerial committee responsible for this issue to draft the legal wording.

90. As part of implementation of approved policies, plans, and strategies, the Ministries of Education and Higher Education and Scientific Research are working to

update educational curricula to ensure equality and non-discrimination. Human rights has been added as a subject, and covers women's rights topics. The Iraqi Government has also tried to make sure that curricula at all grade levels are free of violence and discrimination of any kind – including against women – directly or indirectly in their content, images, drawings or activities. Incorporation of women's rights concepts is a fundamental educational goal that Iraq is actively pursuing.

91. Ministry of Education net enrolment rate by grade level and gender for the academic year 2023–2024

<i>Kindergarten</i>			<i>Primary education</i>			<i>Secondary education</i>			<i>Vocational education</i>		
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
9.7	10.3	10.0	94.1	93.8	93.9	75.1	75.4	75.2	2.5	0.7	1.6

92. Ministry of Education net enrolment rate by grade level and gender for the academic year 2024–2025

<i>Kindergarten</i>			<i>Primary education</i>			<i>Secondary education</i>			<i>Vocational education</i>		
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
10.4	10.9	10.6	96.5	95.1	95.9	74.3	78.0	76.1	4.0	1.2	2.6

93. Dropout rates by grade and gender for the academic year 2023–2024

<i>Primary</i>			<i>Middle</i>			<i>Preparatory</i>			<i>Secondary</i>			<i>Vocational</i>			<i>Academies</i>		
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
2.3	2.4	2.4	4.1	3.8	4.0	2.8	2.5	2.6	3.7	3.3	3.5	4.9	5.6	5.0	3.3	1.7	2.5

94. Total number of educational and teaching bodies by educational stage and gender (male and female) in public education for the academic year (2023–2024)

<i>Kindergarten</i>			<i>Primary education</i>			<i>Secondary education</i>		
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
0	8 102	8 102	127 236	232 469	359 705	102 002	140 841	242 843
<i>Vocational education</i>			<i>Academies</i>					
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>			
6 244	6 103	12 347	886	778	1 664			

95. Total number of educational and teaching bodies by educational stage and gender (male and female) in public education for the academic year (2024–2025)

<i>Kindergarten</i>			<i>Primary education</i>			<i>Secondary education</i>		
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
0	8 243	8 243	124 635	232 964	357 599	105 397	151 094	256 491

<i>Vocational education</i>			<i>Academies</i>		
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
6 487	6 259	12 746	986	869	1 855

96. Total number of students enrolled in special education classes by type of disability (physical, visual, hearing, mental, slow learner and psychological conditions)

Academic year 2023–2024

<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
8 479	7 073	15 552

Academic year 2024–2025

<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
8 482	6 496	14 978

97. Net enrolment rate of students in higher education (public and private) for the years 2023–2025

<i>Academic year</i>	<i>Net enrolment rate in higher education (public and private)</i>			<i>Net enrolment rate in higher education (public and private)</i>		
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Males and females</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Males and females</i>
2019–2020	20%	18%	19%	14%	15%	15%
2020–2021	24%	23%	24%	16%	18%	17%
2021–2022	23%	23%	23%	14%	17%	15%
2022–2023	24%	24%	24%	14%	16%	15%
2023–2024	27%	28%	27%	14%	17%	16%
2024–2025	28%	28%	28%	14%	16%	15%

98. Total number of employees in the Ministry of Higher Education and faculty members (male/female) for the years 2023–2025

<i>Numbers of temporary staff in undergraduate education at all universities and private colleges for the academic year 2024/2025</i>			<i>Numbers of permanent staff in undergraduate education at all universities and private colleges for the academic year 2024/2025</i>		
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
2 376	1 308	3 684	52 284	42 157	94 437

99. Number of students accepted into higher studies (male and female) for the years 2024–2025

<i>Advanced diploma</i>			<i>Master's degree</i>			<i>Doctorate</i>			<i>Grand total</i>		
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
328	367	695	5 162	8 109	13 271	3 185	3 105	6 290	8 675	11 581	20 256

Employment**16.**

100. Iraq has adopted an Economic Empowerment Plan for Iraqi Women (2020–2025) that aims to remove obstacles, create more economic opportunities for women and promote their participation in the private sector. Its pillars include a budget responsive to women’s programmes. Iraq has also adopted a number of national programmes aimed at promoting equal participation in the labour market. It addresses the challenges to women’s economic participation in the labour market in the areas of hiring services, the skills gap, business venture obstacles and disparities in education, including the following:

- An entrepreneurship initiative was launched by the Prime Minister to empower young people and job seekers, provide them with the skills and know-how to seek employment, and support entrepreneurship. The initiative has created significant employment opportunities for women.
- The digital Mihan platform was launched at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.
- Guidelines have been adopted to give preference to women in contract procurement, with a 5% preference ratio for women-owned companies.
- A number of skills training programmes were implemented through vocational training centres run by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. In 2024, there were 14,468 women trainees in educational, vocational and entrepreneurial programmes.
- The Central Bank has launched a number of initiatives, including the 1 trillion dinar and 4 trillion dinar initiatives to provide loans to small- and medium-sized enterprises.
- The Central Bank of Iraq launched the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (2025–2029) with the aim of reinforcing financial inclusion infrastructure to achieve a number of key objectives, including reducing the financial inclusion gap between women and men.
- A programme to increase women’s economic participation, particularly in the formal and protected private sector, was included in the updated 2023 national population policy document.
- Iraq adopted a National Strategy to Prevent and Reduce Inequalities in the World of Work (2024–2028).

101. There were over 314 projects funded under the Central Bank’s initiative for women, with a total value of around 65 billion dinars. Affordable housing and personal loans granted to women under that initiative come to over 700 billion dinars.

102. More than 5,000 women have benefited from some 850 billion dinars under the Central Bank’s initiative, which included loans for medium-sized projects through the A’faq programme.

103. Financial and real estate allocations have been approved to support women and girls in conflict situations. Some 25% of soft loans from banks went to women, breadwinners, widows, and conflict survivors, in coordination with the Ministry of Planning and the Development Fund.

104. Employers have been instructed and educated about taking the circumstances of working women into account. Examples include not employing them in strenuous work, channelling pregnant women and nursing mothers away from work that poses

health risks, and providing appropriate restrooms and separate sanitary facilities for women.

105. Article 63/V of the Labour Act provides that the minimum wage shall be adjusted from time to time to keep pace with the cost of living and other economic conditions, with a periodic review to be conducted every two years. That provision covers both genders without discrimination.

106. In 2023, some 24,848 women were hired, coming to 57.38% of a total of 43,204 in various ministries and non-ministerial bodies. They were top graduates and holders of higher degrees, as provided for in Acts 59 and 67 of 2017.

107. In 2024, some 14,439 women were hired, which was 55.51% of the total number of 26,012 in various ministries and non-ministerial bodies. They were graduates and holders of higher degrees as provided for in Acts 59 and 67 of 2017.

108. Some 46,631 staff were hired in 2023 and 34,783 staff were hired in 2024 at the Ministry of Health. All qualified female candidates were accepted for appointment.

109. All ministries, non-ministerial entities and governorates are committed to filling post grades vacated by members of minorities with members of the same minorities. The mechanism for filling such positions is in accordance with professional criteria and subject to the standard hiring procedures in terms of posting and selection based on the number of applicants and the grades at which they are hired.

110. The Labour Act aims to protect working women and ensure equal opportunity without any form of discrimination. It protects them from sexual harassment or any behaviour that creates an intimidating work environment. The Act also clearly and explicitly regulates leave, maternity care and protection. Chapter 10 is devoted entirely to general protection for women.

111. The Retirement and Social Security Act for Workers provides state-of-the-art benefits for women working in the private sector and the informal sector. Some 57,431 women workers throughout Iraq are covered by its provisions. Like the Labour Act, it defines a worker as a natural person, whether female or male. It provides protection for women working in the informal sector. It grants women preferential retirement benefits different from those granted to men in terms of age and years of service. It requires the maternity insurance system to apply to all female workers covered by the Act's provisions, up to a maximum of four births. The Act makes wives, daughters and sisters eligible to inherit a deceased employee's pension.

112. Labour legislation is just part of the Iraqi Government's institutional framework for providing care and protection to women working in the private sector. That system also comprises of a number of public departments and bodies, including the following: the Retirement and Social Security Department, the Retirement and Social Security Fund, the Board of Directors of the Retirement and Social Security Fund, the Employment and Loans Department, the Higher Committee for Workforce Planning and Employment (chaired by the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs), the general employment divisions, the tripartite committees, employment offices, the vocational training department, vocational training centres, the termination of service committee, the labour courts, the Minimum Wage Committee (chaired by the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs), the inspection departments, the inspection committees and the arbitration board.

113. The Council of Ministers approved the accession of Iraq to the Violence and Harassment Convention, with a view to ensuring a safe working environment.

114. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is responsible for opening and managing nurseries in all corners of Iraq. Licences to open nurseries are granted in

the public and private sectors to unions, companies, associations and individuals in accordance with specific conditions under the regulations for nurseries in Iraq (No. 1 (1992)).

115. The Supreme Council for Women approved decision No. 7 (2025), which provides for cooperation between the Ministries of Education and Labour and Social Affairs, in accordance with relevant laws and regulations, to establish nurseries and kindergartens to support working mothers and promote women's participation in the workforce.

Health

17.

116. The Iraqi Penal Code regulates abortion and other crimes against persons that affect human life and physical integrity and provides for penalties for such crimes. However, the Code also provides for mitigating circumstances in some cases that give the judicial authorities broad powers in enforcing its provisions.

117. The Ministry of Health has drafted regulations for uterine evacuation and therapeutic termination of pregnancy. They permit abortion under certain conditions that make it impossible to continue the pregnancy and affect the life of the mother or fetus or cause congenital deformities, under the supervision of a specialized medical committee in a Government hospital.

118. The Iraqi Government is working to approve several healthcare strategies and projects.

119. The National Strategy for Women, Girls and Adolescents' Health (2025–2030) has been launched.

120. An action plan has been drafted to change the approach to maternal, child, newborn, and adolescent healthcare for the years 2022–2027.

121. The maternal mortality rate has decreased as a result of continuous Government efforts – from 29.6 in 2023 to 27.2 in 2024.

122. The manual for monitoring and responding to maternal mortality has been updated.

123. A project for intensified family follow-up in delivery rooms was launched.

124. The first caesarian committee has been operationalized. Operational protocols have been drafted and the committee's form has been updated.

125. A response plan is adopted for each death, in line with the manual.

126. Caesarean sections are strictly prohibited in outpatient clinics, regardless of the stage of risk.

127. Committees have been formed in hospitals to deal with postpartum hemorrhaging cases that require life-saving hysterectomies.

128. Blood transfusion protocols have been drafted and severe pregnancy side effects are treated in collaboration with the gynaecology and obstetrics advisory committees.

129. Some 15 new hospitals, 184 wards, 116 primary care centres and 82 public clinics have been opened.

130. Some 164 hospitals, 21 specialized centres and 86 health centres have been renovated; there are currently 385 ongoing health projects. Primary healthcare services have been reinforced with a family health approach in 48 centres; 68 mobile clinics have been launched in remote areas.

131. Eight family planning clinics have been opened in Baghdad, Anbar, Karbala, Basrah, Kirkuk, Ninawa and Wasit.
132. Free obstetric and prenatal care services are offered at all primary healthcare centres and mobile clinics in remote areas.
133. A telehealth project has been launched to provide care services for pregnant women and mothers.
134. There is a public/private sector project to prevent mother-to-child transmission of immunodeficiency, viral hepatitis and syphilis.
135. Multidisciplinary task forces have been put together in teaching hospitals to perform advanced placental procedures.
136. Manuals of procedure have been drafted on adolescent health, home visits for mothers and newborns in displacement camps and abortion cases. There is a national guide on family planning programmes.
137. Seven public hospitals, 13 private hospitals and 28 health centres specializing in childbirth have been assigned to the Region. Maternity wards in public hospitals also administer emergency programmes for childbirth and newborns and provide healthcare services for mothers.
138. A National Strategy for Family Planning and Birth Spacing (2021–2025) has been drafted.
139. A guide was drafted for community volunteers working in the field of family planning and birth spacing.
140. A manual of procedure has been drafted for health personnel providing family planning services.
141. A guide has been drafted to strengthen oversight of family planning services. Training courses have been designed for woman community family planning volunteers.
142. Family planning services are offered in remote areas through mobile clinics in all governorates.
143. Immediate postnatal family planning services have been introduced in all relevant hospitals and health centres.
144. Family planning has been incorporated into teaching curricula at nursing colleges and midwifery academies.
145. Family planning services are provided free of charge at primary healthcare centres and hospitals. Contraceptive availability is ensured according to the needs of health departments.
146. Family planning services are provided at 1,012 major centres and 156 branch facilities.

Women in detention

18.

147. The Iraqi Government works to meet international standards for the treatment of inmates in correctional facilities. The Prisoners and Detainees Reform Act regulates required services for inmates, which the Ministry of Justice works to provide in coordination with the relevant sectoral authorities at all levels. Those services include healthcare for inmates and detainees, prenatal and postnatal care for pregnant women (with nursing infants allowed to stay with their mothers), regulation

of legal status and provision of nurseries supervised by specialized staff. Other services include food, outdoor recreation, communication, family visits and other personal needs. The Ministry of Justice has also entered into a cooperation agreement with the Ministries of Education and Higher Education to offer classes for inmates to complete their studies at all levels. It should be noted that administrative staff at correctional institutions for women are exclusively female.

148. Inmates are segregated by age, gender and type of crime in all correctional facilities.

149. The Minister of Justice conducts surprise field visits to all correctional institutions to observe the conditions of inmates and listen to their needs directly. Human Rights Department monitoring teams conduct periodic visits to correctional institutions and submit their findings. In addition, the legally mandated authorities conduct inspection visits to correctional institutions and submit recommendations to the Ministry of Justice.

150. A human rights division has been established for correctional facilities to monitor and evaluate implementation of international standards.

151. The Ministry of Justice has drafted an act on alternative non-custodial penalties. That could release a large number of prisoners for reintegration into society. The draft act is currently undergoing legislative procedures.

Refugee, returnee and internally displaced women and girls

19.

152. The Iraqi experience in responding to displacement has shown that there are no distinctions between the law and what has been implemented on the ground with regard to the services provided to women to integrate them into society and facilitate their voluntary return to their areas. That is clearly demonstrated in the work of the Directorate for Survivors' Affairs, which was established under article 3 of the Yazidi Survivors Act, and the Act on compensation for victims of terrorism operations and military errors. All affected women are covered by rights and services provided for by law without discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion or nationality.

153. The Iraqi Government is overseeing the return of Iraqis currently residing in the Hawl camp in eastern Syria. They will be sent to the Amal Centre for social rehabilitation after undergoing security checks. They will receive psychological and social rehabilitation and logistical, legal and health support before being returned to the governorates from which they were displaced.

154. A psychological unit has been formed at the Amal Centre for psychological and social rehabilitation to reintegrate returnees from the Hawl camp. The most important indicators used by the psychological unit for returning families are the level of extremism, the desire to return and the social and cultural level of the families.

155. Technical teams have been formed to return displaced Iraqis from northeastern Syria in (the Hawl camp) headed by the National Security Advisory, as follows:

- First committee: The committee for the legal protection of children, chaired by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs;
- Second committee: The security and accountability committee for adults, chaired by the Supreme Judicial Council;
- The third committee: the rehabilitation committee, chaired by the Ministry of Displacement and Migration;

- The fourth Committee: the reintegration committee, chaired by the Ministry of Displacement and Migration.

156. The Centre had taken in a total of 3,767 families comprising 14,509 individuals as of the end of the first quarter of 2025. Of those, 2,641 families comprising 9,748 individuals left after going through a special programme of psychological support and intellectual rehabilitation to enable them to reintegrate into their original communities.

157. Some 376 women were included in rehabilitation and development programmes that included courses in sewing, knitting, embroidery and stone painting. There were also courses in computers and other handicrafts.

158. Some 7,749 food packets, 8,016 health packet, 2,478 household packets and 750 clothing packets were provided.

159. The Centre managed to reunite 1,090 families with their loved ones.

160. The Centre provided various health services to 7,442 beneficiaries.

161. Some 2,060 students were included in remedial classes at the elementary, adolescent and accelerated stages.

162. Some 624 Unified Cards were issued as official documents for Centre residents.

163. Some 5,904 individuals benefited from lectures on vocational training, education, life skills enhancement and legal and health awareness at the Amal Centre.

164. Numerous psychological and social rehabilitation programmes were administered at the Amal Centre. They included 85 programmes and activities carried out by a volunteer team of academics and professors from the Ministry of Higher Education and civil society organizations on topics such as legal protection, psychological and social support, women's empowerment, childcare, peacebuilding and reintegration.

165. Through its federal and non-federal institutions, the State provides facilities for the return of displaced persons to safe habitable areas. Financial grants and facilitated legal procedures are provided for this purpose.

166. Some 98,659 families returning from displacement were registered in 2014.

167. Some 1,460 integrated and stable families were registered in the displacement area.

168. The number of families who have returned and been reintegrated is now 100,119.

169. The number of still displaced families headed by women is 56,489.

170. The number of women displaced by climate change was 15,785 out of 17,855 families.

171. Numerous awareness seminars have been held in the areas of return and displacement on topics such as peaceful coexistence, repudiation of violence against women and women's rights.

172. The Ministry of Displacement and Migration has launched a service on the Ur platform where women can report cases of violence confidentially and securely. A team of women responds to and handles cases and takes appropriate action.

173. Some 21,162 female breadwinners were covered by returnee grants.

174. More than 772 women returnees and displaced persons in all governorates were trained and qualified in various professions, with a view to improving the economic situation of women.

175. In-kind assistance was provided to displaced and returnee women. That included some 1,640,928 food packets for women breadwinners.

176. Some 225 women heads of households received vocational training from the World Medical Association.

177. Some 2,353 women received durable goods such as cookers, refrigerators and televisions.

178. Approximately 100 soft loans were granted in areas of voluntary return in coordination with the Ministry of Labour.

179. Some 9,970 families headed by women displaced persons and returnees were covered by social protection allowances.

180. Some 1,155 families of persons with disabilities were covered by a full-time caregiver's salary.

181. Travel fares are 25% lower for women returnees.

182. Surgical fees are 25% lower for women returnees.

183. There are 706 female asylum seekers registered.

184. A committee has been formed to issue identity documents to displaced families. Some 120,000 documents have been issued to date.

185. Citizens from areas liberated from the control of the Da'esh terrorist organization were allowed to submit marriage, birth and death certificates, whose authenticity was verified.

186. The Residence Act (No. 76 (2017)) is a recent law that complies with international standards. It is considered a model law for foreign women. It grants them the right to legal residence, provides them with a semblance of legal stability, reunites them with their families and reduces the chance that they will be interrogated or deported. Article 21(I) states that the Director-General of the Residency Directorate or his authorized representative may grant a foreigner residence in the Republic of Iraq for a period of three years, renewable upon request for the same period, provided that they provide a useful service to the country. Paragraph 2 of the same article allows foreign women married to Iraqi men or foreign men married to Iraqi women to reside in Iraq for a period of three years. The Act provides for different types of entry and residence permits according to the purpose of the stay.

Climate change and disaster risk reduction

20.

187. Iraq has adopted a national environment strategy for the period 2024–2030, which is aimed at strengthening environmental sustainability and climate change adaptation. The Government has also adopted plans to increase reliance on renewable energy, reduce emissions, combat desertification and protect biodiversity.

188. A national women's team, led by the National Department for Iraqi Women and including women's affairs departments across all ministries, agencies and governorates, has been put together to support energy initiatives. It is responsible for preparing a plan to mobilize women in efforts to protect the environment and tackle climate change.

189. The Government of Iraq, as part of its efforts through its various institutions to minimize the impact and mitigate the effects of climate change, has sought to include women in environmental programmes and projects to protect them from those risks, as follows:

- 24 women researchers were involved in the development of crop varieties that are resilient to the effects of climate change, including drought, salinity, heat and reduced yield.
- 702 women benefited from a project aimed at strengthening the resilience of the farming households most vulnerable to climate change in central and southern Iraq.
- 1,160 women benefited from a project on the integration of climate-smart practices to create economic opportunities for vulnerable rural households, with a focus on women, which involved the establishment of groups of small-scale dairy farmers.
- 241 women benefited from a project to monitor land and water productivity using remote-sensing technology, namely, the second phase of the Water Productivity through Open-access of remotely sensed derived data (WaPOR) project.
- 2,281 women benefited from a sustainable land management project aimed at improving livelihoods in degraded areas and preserving and sustainably managing resources in wetland ecosystems.
- 63,026 women benefited from a project to restore and strengthen the resilience of agrifood systems in southern Iraq. The aims of the project include improving agricultural productivity, increasing income and managing resources through climate-resilient practices and capacity-building for service providers, and promoting access to markets for small-scale farmers, with a view to achieving equality and sustainable development.
- 100 women benefited from the Climate Wise Women project, which is aimed at empowering rural women, building their capacity to adapt to climate change and mobilizing them in all aspects of climate-smart agriculture.
- 568 women benefited from an advisory programme on the dissemination of seeds of strategic crops that are tolerant to salinity and drought with the use of modern irrigation methods. The programme's aim is to educate rural women about modern irrigation techniques.
- 691 women benefited from an advisory programme that supports the national programme for Paulownia seed propagation and is aimed at building capacity to adapt to different environmental conditions.
- 7,956 women were provided with agricultural equipment and fertilizers that help to mitigate the effects of climate change.
- Awareness-raising and educational campaigns were conducted on the importance of women's participation in environmental protection, energy and water sustainability, and conservation efforts.

190. A high-level committee on health and climate change has been formed in the Ministry of Health, in coordination with relevant ministries.

191. A survey on the vulnerability of the health sector to climate change and its capacity to adapt is planned as part of the development of a national adaptation strategy for the health sector.

192. Hazardous and non-hazardous waste treatment is carried out in accordance with international standards and in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment.

Marriage and family relations

21.

193. The marriage age is set at 18 years in Iraqi law. A judge may authorize a person who has reached the age of 15 years to marry provided that their eligibility and physical capacity have been established, their legal guardian has given consent and the marriage is necessary. Any marriage contract that deviates from the above shall be deemed invalid. Child marriage and forced marriage are strictly prohibited under Iraqi law. Article 376 of the Criminal Code of Iraq provides that any person who enters into a marriage contract knowing it to be invalid for any reason shall be detained or imprisoned.

194. Article 9 of the Personal Status Code prohibits relatives and others from coercing any person, male or female, into marriage. Anyone who commits coercion shall be punished by imprisonment.

195. National strategies to address early marriage have been approved, including a number of programmes aimed at tackling the root causes by focusing on the economic empowerment of women, raising awareness and educating people about the dangers and consequences, and reducing the school dropout rate among girls.

196. Marriage contracts are bilateral contracts and are concluded only with the consent and agreement of both spouses. Since consent is a fundamental requirement of the contract, no one may force either party to marry. Any contract that deviates from that requirement is considered invalid. Under the law, the parties are required to meet conditions of competence, sound mind and good health when entering into contracts. The law also covers marriages contracted outside of courts to ensure the legal rights of the spouses.

22.

197. The Personal Status Code governs matters relating to the family, including custody, and gives the mother a significant role in custody provided she is of sound mind, trustworthy and capable of raising and caring for the child. The husband is required to provide financial support to meet custody needs. The Code takes into account the best interests of the child in choosing the custodian. In matters of inheritance, there are no legal provisions or judicial procedures that prevent a woman from inheriting from her ascendants or descendants in accordance with the law.

198. Polygamy is prohibited under article 3, paragraph 4, of the Personal Status Code, which stipulates that marriage to more than one woman requires permission from a judge, who must ascertain that the husband has sufficient financial means to support more than one wife and that there is a legitimate interest for doing so. Anyone who enters into a marriage contract with more than one woman in violation of the aforementioned provisions shall be punished in accordance with the law.

Data collection and analysis

23.

199. A national platform for data on Iraqi women at various levels has been established to serve as a source of data and statistics that are accessible to all. As part of its sectoral functions, the National Department for Iraqi Women is working to update and develop the platform to meet the needs of policymakers and decision makers. The results of the November 2024 census revealed the following:

- The average age of first marriage is 21 years for women. The median age of marriage is 20 years for women.
- Female students account for 48.5% of those enrolled in education.
- Women make up 49.78% of the total population, accounting for 49.82% of the population in urban areas and 49.68% in rural areas.
- A total of 910,076 conventional households are headed by women, representing 11.43% of the 7,959,578 households in total, with an average of 5.77 people per household. In urban areas, 733,173 conventional households, or 12.47%, are headed by women; in rural areas, 903,176, or 8.50%, are headed by women.
- With regard to women's empowerment, 63.3% of the population agree that women should be given equal opportunities to men in the workplace; 60.1% believe that women should be granted the same rights as men; 72.4% consider girls' education to be as important as boys' education; 60.4% believe that men are better suited to be political leaders than women; and 51.6% believe that women and men should have equal income-earning opportunities.

200. General population and housing census in Iraq 2024–2025

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Total</i>
Percentage of women	49.82%	49.68%	49.78%
Percentage of ordinary households headed by women	12.47%	8.50%	11.43%