UNHCR IRAQ

MONTHLY UPDATE

June 2026

Akram, a Syrian refugee and former DAFI scholar, fled with his family to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq at the age of 11. Despite the challenges of displacement in Kawergosk refugee camp, his family encouraged him to continue his education. Today, he works as a geneticist in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. ©UNHCR/Viola E. Bruttomesso

CONTEXT

As of the end of June 2026, Iraq generously hosts around 351,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, the majority (88%) of whom are Syrians. Close to 80% of this population resides in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. While most refugees and asylum-seekers live in urban and peri-urban settings, 30% remain in nine refugee camps across the country. Additionally, around 97,000 Internally Displaced People (IDPs) live in 18 IDP camps.[1]

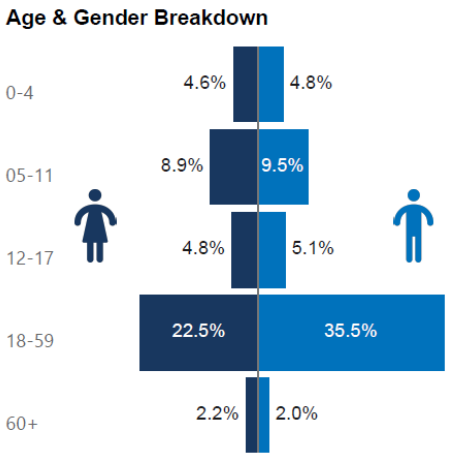
UNHCR works with the Government of Iraq and partners to support refugee and asylum-seeker access to protection and inclusion in public services, such as education and healthcare, as well as access to economic opportunities and in advancing solutions.

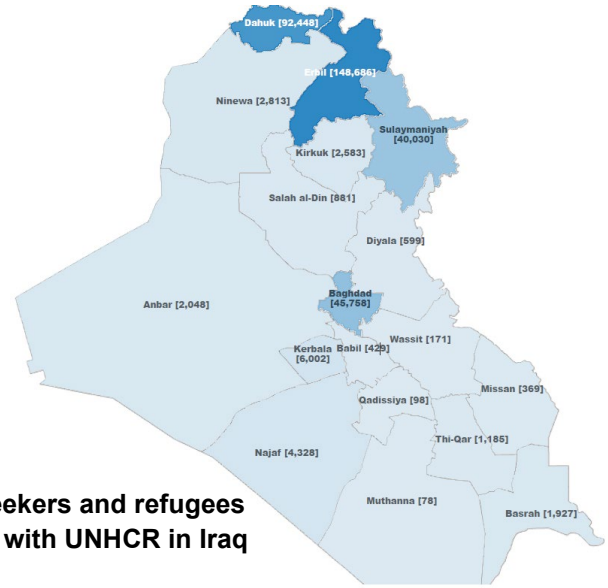
44%

Funded

of the $60.6 million required by UNHCR in 2026 to protect people forced to flee in Iraq

POPULATION AT A GLANCE





Asylum-seekers and refugees registered with UNHCR in Iraq

[1] As of February 2026, UNHCR, together with the Government, have decided to administratively consolidate four IDP camps into two IDP camps in Dohuk Governorate. This means there are now 18 IDP camps in Iraq, although the population figures remain the same.

JUNE MONTHLY ACHIEVEMENTS

15,278
Refugees and asylum-seekers newly registered or with registration verified with UNHCR. This process assists access to government-issued documentation and protects against refoulement.

As result of close engagement and coordination with relevant Iraqi authorities, **159** refugees and asylum-seekers were released from detention on immigration related charges; this included **134** individuals whose deportation was prevented thanks to legal support and interventions.

384
Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR returned voluntarily to Syria.

2,318 Communications received through UNHCR's HelpLine from refugees and asylum seekers.

WHAT'S NEW IN IRAQ…

- On 20 June, **UNHCR, the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Barzani Charity Foundation commemorated World Refugee Day in Erbil** under the theme "*Until everyone is safe*." UNHCR and senior governmental officials underscored ongoing protection efforts and the importance of strengthened cooperation to support refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs). The event featured a testimony from a Syrian refugee and former DAFI scholar, cultural performances by refugee children and musicians, and an exhibition showcasing handicrafts produced by refugee artisans. The event brought together representatives from federal and regional authorities, UN agencies, NGOs, and the diplomatic community, and received coverage from several local and regional media outlets.
- In June, **UNHCR and the State Council convened a workshop in Erbil with federal and regional officials, academics, and legal experts to review the fifth draft of the new refugee law**. Participants discussed the draft law in relation to international refugee law standards while also reflecting the context in Iraq. Once finalized, the draft will be submitted to the State Council's General Committee. After being finalized by the State Council, the draft law will be sent, with reservations and or recommendation to the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers for review and approval. If approved by the Council of Ministers, it will be referred to the Iraqi Parliament for review and voting. The current Refugee Law in Iraq dates from 1971, the passing of an updated law will represent an important step in providing a legal framework for refugees and asylum seekers in the country in line with international standards.
- In 2026, a total of **1,706 Syrian refugees and asylum seekers voluntarily returned from Iraq to Syria**, of which 384 individuals returned in June. Among them, 317 Syrian refugees returned from the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, whereas 67 Syrian refugees were processed for return in Baghdad. As part of the facilitated return process, UNHCR supports eligible Syrian refugees who wish to return with cash assistance of IQD 130,000 (USD 100) per individual to help with logistical costs, with additional financial support available for the most vulnerable.
- In June, UNHCR finalized the technical handover to the Ministry of Education of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG-MOE) of **two new schools in Qushtapa and Baherka subdistricts of Erbil Governorate.** In total, UNHCR has completed the construction of six new schools in Iraq in 2026 (one in Zakho, one in Dohuk, one in Sitak, one in Raniya, one in Qushtapa and one in Baherka) in support of refugee inclusion in public schools. UNHCR is now liaising with the Ministry of Education around the provision of furniture and the official opening of these schools ahead of the academic year in September.
- Data collection for the **refugee chapter of the Iraqi Socioeconomic Household Survey (IHSES)** commenced in June through UNHCR's partnership with the Kurdistan Regional Statistics Office, covering a representative sample of 1,600 refugee households. Information collated through this government-owned survey will allow a greater understanding of the socio-economic conditions of refugees in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, including a comparison with the host community, supporting evidence-based programming and conversations around their inclusion in public services. The analysis is expected to be published later in 2026.
- **Eight reverse missions were conducted by legal actors in Al-Amal Centre**, bringing families from Al-Amal Centre to Mosul Civil Affairs Directorate (CAD) for the purposes of processing National Unified ID (NUIDs) applications. This resulted in submission of 360 applications for National Unified IDs (NUIDs) for Al-Amal Centre residents. In 2026, 43 reverse missions have taken place, resulting in 2,117 applications submitted, out of which 1,288 NUIDs have been issued.

SPECIAL THANKS TO PARTNERS

UNHCR in Iraq thanks its major partners of unearmarked funds, as well as those who contribute to directly to the Iraq operation and to the regional response for Syrian refugees: Australia | Australia for UNHCR | Belgium | Canada | Denmark | España con ACNUR | European Union | Finland | Germany | Ireland | Italy | Japan for UNHCR | Luxembourg | Netherlands (Kingdom of the) | Norway | Private Donors | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe

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