



Home Office

Country Policy and Information Note

Iraq: Internal relocation, civil documentation and returns

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Executive summary

The Iraqi Nationality Identity Document (INID) is a government issued electronic biometric card, which holders are required to carry at all times. The INID replaces the Civil Status Identity Document (CSID) however CSIDs remain valid ID documents for legal and administrative purposes whilst INID rollout continues. These documents legally allow access to healthcare, education, freedom of movement within the country, the state justice system, social welfare and humanitarian assistance.

In [SMO2](#), the Upper Tribunal found that persons not in possession of either a CSID or INID on return, or shortly after return, to Iraq or the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR), are at a real risk of serious harm sufficient to breach paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules/Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) at security checkpoints when attempting to travel internally by land within Iraq or the KRI.

Persons without a CSID or INID will also face significant difficulties in accessing public services, employment and housing and this is likely to result in destitution sufficient to amount to a breach of paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules/Article 3 of the ECHR.

Following the replacement of the CSID with the INID, nationals of Iraq are no longer able to reapply for CSIDs either in Iraq or abroad and can only obtain an initial INID, in person, in the governorate they originate from. Whilst CSIDs are no longer being produced in Iraq, they can still be used to pass through checkpoints.

Family members or friends remaining in Iraq may be able to apply for a replacement INID on behalf of someone in the UK, providing the person has had their biometrics taken in Iraq and has previously been issued with an INID.

People who cannot return and/or relocate because of a lack documentation but are not otherwise at a real risk of persecution do not fall within the definition of the Refugee Convention but may in some cases be granted Humanitarian Protection.

In general, there are parts of the country where it will be reasonable for a person to relocate. Consideration must be given to a person's particular circumstances, civil documentation held and the details of where they originally lived in Iraq when assessing if internal relocation is viable. A fact-specific sliding-scale assessment should be used when assessing return or internal relocation.

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Assessment

About the assessment

This section considers the evidence relevant to this note – that is information in the [country information](#), refugee/human rights laws and policies, and applicable caselaw – and provides an assessment of **whether, in general**:

- a person can feasibly be returned to Iraq (because they have, or can obtain, the requisite travel documents),
- a person can reasonably relocate elsewhere in Iraq or the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR) if they are unable to return to their registered place of origin,
- a person is at risk of serious harm sufficient to breach paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules/Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) as a result of their lack of documentation,
- a grant of asylum, humanitarian protection or other form of leave is likely, and
- if a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as ‘clearly unfounded’ under [section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002](#).

Decision makers **must**, however, still consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case’s specific facts.

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1. Material facts, credibility and other checks/referrals

1.1 Key terms and points to note

1.1.1 **The Iraq Country Guidance (CG) case of AH, AK and AJ was heard on 15 – 18 September 2025. The country of origin information and assessment in this CPIN are based on CG determinations and sources available before that hearing and do not reflect the Home Office’s position during the hearing. The CPIN will be updated in full following the promulgation of the new Country Guidance.**

1.1.2 For definitions of key terms, see [Glossary of key terms](#).

1.1.3 The Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR) is referred to as the Kurdish Region of Iraq (KRI) throughout this document.

1.1.4 The term ‘feasible’ only refers to the physical process of being able to return someone to Iraq via air and does not take into account any circumstances or situations after arrival in Iraq.

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1.1.6 Decision Makers should be aware that whilst existing caselaw makes reference to the Qualification Directive, claims lodged after June 2022 should be considered in line with [Part 11 of the Immigration Rules](#).

1.1.7 There have been 5 country guidance cases concerning Iraq since 2015.

- (i) [AA \(Article 15\(c\)\) \(Rev 2\) \[2015\] UKUT 544 \(IAC\)](#), heard on 18-19 May 2015 and promulgated on 30 October 2015 (hereafter referred to as 'AA'). This was a wide ranging-case which replaced all previous Country Guidance on Iraq, making findings on returns, documentation, relocation and security issues. In AA it was conceded by the respondent that a civilian with no distinguishing characteristics would, simply by virtue of his presence in one of the contested areas (the governorates of Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa and Salah al Din) be at real risk of suffering serious harm of the type identified in Article 15(c) of the Council Directive 2004/83/EC (the Qualification Directive). For the reasons it gave at [101]-[106], the Upper Tribunal (UT) had no hesitation in endorsing that concession, noting that life in those areas (which were controlled at the time by Daesh) was characterised by systematic and widespread acts of violence and gross violations of international humanitarian law and abuses of human rights. The UT also concluded that certain parts of the so-called Baghdad Belts were affected by an internal armed conflict of such intensity that there was a generalised Article 15(c) risk there. It was not accepted that the remainder of Iraq, including Baghdad City, was affected by such a level of internal armed conflict.

In June 2017, the Court of Appeal, in [AA \(Iraq\) vs Secretary of State for the Home Department \[2017\] EWCA Civ 944](#) ('AA 2017'), remade one specific Country Guidance point in AA regarding documentation and feasibility of return. The rest of AA's findings were undisturbed.

- (ii) The second Country Guidance case was [BA \(Returns to Baghdad Iraq CG\) \[2017\] UKUT 18 \(IAC\)](#), heard on 24-25 August 2016 and promulgated on 23 January 2017 (hereafter referred to as 'BA'). This case looked at the risk to those perceived as having collaborated with the West and the levels of violence in Baghdad City. The UT proceeded to give guidance which included a conclusion that the level of violence in Baghdad City remained significant but did not justify departing from the guidance in AA (Iraq).
- (iii) [AAH \(Iraqi Kurds – internal relocation\) Iraq CG UKUT 212 \(IAC\)](#), heard on 27-28 February 2018 and promulgated on 26 June 2018 (hereafter referred to as 'AAH'), which supplemented Section C (about the Civil Status ID (CSID)) and replaced Section E (about return and relocation to the Iraqi Kurdish Region (IKR)) of the Country Guidance annexed to the CoA's decision in [AA 2017](#).
- (iv) [SMO, KSP & IM \(Article 15\(c\); identity documents\) Iraq CG \[2019\] UKUT 400 \(IAC\)](#), heard on 24-26 June 2019 and promulgated on 20 December 2019 (hereafter referred to as 'SMO1'). This case looked at the levels of indiscriminate violence and the humanitarian situation across Iraq, identity documents and internal relocation. In relation to the security situation, the court considered whether return would expose an individual to a risk contrary to Article 15(c) of the Qualification Directive. The court concluded that the situation did not generally give rise to such a risk although a fact-specific, 'sliding-scale' assessment will be necessary in all cases. The second issue, which has featured prominently in many if not all country guidance decisions on Iraq, concerned the identity documents an individual requires in order to live

and function in Iraq, and how a replacement document could be obtained in the event that they lost the original. The court concluded a claimant might acquire a new document in a variety of ways and that most would be aided in this task by their likely memory of the volume and page reference of their entry in Iraq's locally held Civil Status records, known as the 'Family Book.'

- (v) The most recent Country Guidance case was [SMO & KSP \(Civil status documentation; Article 15\) Iraq CG \[2022\] UKUT 110 \(IAC\)](#), heard on 4-5 October 2021 and promulgated on 16 March 2022 (hereafter referred to as 'SMO2'). The appellants SMO and KSP sought permission to appeal against the UT decision in SMO1 which was granted on 8 December 2020. On 16 February 2021 the appeals were remitted to the UT "for determination of whether, given the importance of a Civil Status Identity Card, most Iraqi citizens will recall the volume and page reference of their entry in the Family Book." The remaining findings were preserved "save that the Upper Tribunal is entitled to reconsider any such finding if and to the extent that it thinks it right to do so in the light of any developments" since the issuance of the first decision.' (Para 4).

There was no further consideration of the UT's conclusions regarding Article 15(c) of the Qualification Directive, but both parties agreed that the UT should also consider questions concerning identity documentation and its acquisition as well as onward travel from Baghdad International Airport using a Laissez Passer and supporting letter (for more information see Para 7-8). [SMO2](#) replaces all existing country guidance on Iraq.

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1.2 Credibility

- 1.2.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).
- 1.2.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).
- 1.2.3 Decision makers should also consider the need to conduct language analysis testing (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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1.3 Exclusion

- 1.3.1 Decision makers must consider whether there are serious reasons for considering whether one (or more) of the exclusion clauses is applicable.

Each case must be considered on its individual facts and merits.

- 1.3.2 If the person is excluded from the Refugee Convention, they will also be excluded from a grant of Humanitarian Protection (HP) (which has a wider range of exclusions than refugee status).
- 1.3.3 For guidance on exclusion and restricted leave, see the Asylum Instruction on [Exclusion under Articles 1F and 33\(2\) of the Refugee Convention](#), [Humanitarian Protection](#) and the instruction on [Restricted Leave](#).

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2. Convention reason(s)

- 2.1.1 People who cannot return and/or relocate because of a lack documentation but are not otherwise at real risk of persecution do not fall within the definition of the Refugee Convention. This is because the reasons for their fear of harm do not relate to their actual or imputed political opinion, race, religion, nationality or membership of a particular social group.
- 2.1.2 In the absence of a link to one of the 5 Convention grounds necessary for the grant of refugee status, the question is whether the particular person will face a real risk of serious harm sufficient to qualify for HP.
- 2.1.3 For further guidance on the 5 Refugee Convention grounds see the Asylum Instruction, [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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3. Consideration of issues

3.1 Considering undocumented return

- 3.1.1 The Civil Status Identity Card (CSID) is being replaced with a new biometric Iraqi National Identity Card – the INID. As a general matter, it is necessary for an individual to have one of these two documents in order to live and travel within Iraq without encountering treatment or conditions which are contrary to Article 3 ECHR. Many of the checkpoints in the country are manned by Shia militia who are not controlled by the Government of Iraq and are unlikely to permit an individual without a CSID or an INID to pass.
- 3.1.2 In deciding whether a person can travel internally within Iraq, decision makers must determine whether the person has or can acquire (or reacquire) identity documentation necessary to:
 - make their return to Iraq feasible
 - travel within Iraq; and
 - access various public and private services.

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3.2 Assessment of risk arising from a lack of documentation

a. Conditions on return for undocumented persons

- 3.2.1 A person who is unable to retrieve their existing CSID/INID or obtain a new INID is likely to face significant difficulties in accessing services and thus risk being exposed to humanitarian conditions which are likely to result in destitution sufficient to amount to a breach of paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules/Article 3 of the ECHR.
- 3.2.2 A person who can be feasibly returned (see [Feasibility of return](#)) and is at real risk of destitution because of a lack of documents should be granted HP (unless the person is excluded from such protection).
- 3.2.3 Where a person is unable to obtain a CSID or INID within a reasonable time frame, consideration must be given to their other means of support (i.e. family members etc). While a family may be able to provide support, it may not be possible for the returnee to access it. As an example, while a wealthy family based in Mosul could provide an undocumented person with food and shelter, the undocumented person would not be able to travel internally from their airport of arrival to Mosul without being at risk of encountering treatment or conditions which are contrary to paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules/Article 3 ECHR at the various security checkpoints along the route. In cases such as these, a grant of Humanitarian Protection is appropriate (unless the person is excluded from such protection).
- 3.2.4 For more information, see [Absence of identity documents](#) and the Asylum Instruction on [Humanitarian Protection](#).

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b. Conditions on return for documented persons

- 3.2.5 The situation is different for documented persons returning to their home area. They would not, in general, face conditions which breach paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules/Article 3 ECHR. In considering whether it would be in breach of Articles 3 and 8 ECHR to return a documented person to their home area within the Formerly Contested Areas or Baghdad the UT in [SMO1](#) held that:

'Nevertheless, we remind ourselves that the threshold is that in *N v UK* and we accept the respondent's submission that **the cumulative difficulties faced by a healthy, documented male returning to their place of origin in the formerly contested areas do not cross that threshold. Such an individual would be able to access food through the PDS or other humanitarian assistance programmes. They would have access to the limited employment options available. There is some primary healthcare available there. The risks of food insecurity and water scarcity, together with the risks from disease and unexploded ordnance, even in the worst affected areas and even in respect of those who would be required to live in a critical shelter arrangement, do not reach the high threshold required for us to conclude that there is a general risk of conditions which breach Article 3 ECHR, or engage Article 15(b) QD.** A healthy, documented male returning to a home area in the formerly contested areas, therefore, will not generally be able to establish that theirs is a very exceptional case where the humanitarian grounds against removal are sufficiently compelling to require such protection.' (paragraph 331) [emphasis added].

3.2.6 However the UT in [SMO1](#) also held that:

‘It is imperative to recall that the minimum level of severity required by Article 3 is relative and depends on all the circumstances of the case, including the duration of the treatment, its physical and mental effects and the sex, age and state of health of the individual concerned: Saadi v Italy (2009) 49 EHRR 30. Although it is clear to us that a documented, healthy male would not, on return to a home area in the formerly contested areas, encounter conditions in breach of Article 3 ECHR, additional vulnerabilities including those considered under the ‘sliding scale’ of Article 15(c) might conceivably combine to cross the N v UK threshold. In considering any such submission, decision makers will nevertheless wish to recall that that the combination of factors in Said, including mental health problems and a lack of family support, offset by clan support and remittances from the UK, were held by the Court of Appeal to be so short of the N v UK threshold that remittal to the Upper Tribunal would serve no purpose: [32]-[33] refers.’ (paragraph 332)

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3.3 General approach to returns and internal relocation in Iraq

3.3.1 In [AA](#), the UT found that the assessment of whether a person would be at risk of destitution because of a lack of a CSID should **only** be made if return was feasible. However, this position was reversed by the [Court of Appeal \(CoA\) in June 2017 \(Annex: C9\)](#). Decision makers **must** now assess the risk arising from a lack of a CSID **regardless** of ‘feasibility of return’ (whether a person can be returned or not).

3.3.2 In [SMO2](#), the UT held that it is necessary for a person to have a CSID or INID in order to live in Iraq without encountering conditions contrary to Article 3 ECHR. They also held that it remains possible for a person to obtain the documentation required to make return to Iraq feasible (para 93-107).

3.3.3 At paragraph 61 of [SMO2](#), the UT held that ‘The process for applying for a CSID whilst in the UK was examined at [173]-[177] of [AA \(Iraq\)](#) and it was clear, even at that stage, that the Embassy did not issue the document itself; it would act as an intermediary by sending the completed application for a CSID to the General Directorate for Travel and Nationality...’

3.3.4 However, since the promulgation of [SMO2](#), **there are no longer any Civil Status Affairs (CSA) offices in Iraq producing and issuing CSIDs following the rollout of the INID system** (see [Annex D](#) and [Annex E](#)). Nationals of Iraq are required to have biometrics taken (including a scan of their irises and fingerprints taken) in the initial application of an INID. Although CSIDs are no longer being issued, due to the delays in the rollout of the INID, CSIDs are still accepted as forms of identification at checkpoints, when obtaining other types of civil documentation and when accessing services. This development does not affect a person’s ability to return to Iraq but does affect their ability to travel internally as well as access services.

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3.4 Feasibility of return

a. Return documentation

3.4.1 If a person has a valid passport, an expired passport or a laissez-passer then **return is feasible**. If they do not have or cannot obtain either of these,

then **return is not feasible**.

- 3.4.2 The passport and laissez-passer (the term used by the Iraqis for an emergency travel document) are travel documents and should not be confused with civil documentation such as the INID and CSID cards which enables access to various services.

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b. Obtaining passports

- 3.4.3 Available evidence indicates that to obtain a passport a person (who is 18 or over) needs to go to an Iraqi consulate and present:
- a Civil Status ID (CSID) or Iraqi National Identity Card (INID) **and**
 - an Iraqi Nationality Certificate (INC) **and**
 - a Residency card (for those outside Iraq) (see [Documentation – Passport](#))
- 3.4.4 The new ePassport is now available from Al-A'adhmiya, Al-Kadhimiya and Al-Mansour e-passport offices in Baghdad. It can also be obtained abroad (see [ePassport/ Electronic Passport](#)). The A-series passport is still available elsewhere.

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c. Obtaining Laissez Passers

- 3.4.5 Laissez Passers are also known as 'Pass Doc', 'Passport Laissez' or simply 'Passport'.
- 3.4.6 The UT in [SMO1](#) held that a person 'must simply be able to establish their nationality in order to obtain a Laissez Passer.' (Para 375).
- 3.4.7 An application for a Laissez Passer is considered on a case-by-case basis by the Iraqi Embassy in London. For the enforced return of a failed asylum seeker (FAS) there is no interview requirement providing they hold at least one of the following (copy or original, valid or expired) [a telephone interview may be requested by the Embassy in certain cases]:
- Passport
 - Birth Certificate
 - Marriage Certificate
 - Civil Status ID (CSID)
 - Iraqi Nationality Certificate (INC)
 - Iraqi National Identity Card (INID)
 - Iraq Citizenship certificate
 - Iraq residency card
 - Registration Document (1957)
- 3.4.8 For those without supporting documents, a mandatory embassy interview is required. The embassy verification process tends to take 10-14 days. All categories of voluntary cases will be considered (including those without documents) but will usually require an interview face to face or by phone.
- 3.4.9 The information obtained from Returns Logistics (see [Annex B](#)) further stated that family members in Iraq can present any of the documentation listed in the paragraph above to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Iraq in order to help prove the person's nationality. Additionally, phone numbers or signed

affidavits (a written statement of evidence) from family members in Iraq are also useful to the verification process. Once a person's verification in Iraq is complete it is sent to the Iraqi Embassy in London to issue a laissez-passer, however straightforward verification of documents can be done locally at the Embassy in London. Verification takes between 10–14 days if done locally, however if enquiries are required in-country it could take up to 30+ days.

- 3.4.10 Additionally, in [SMO1](#), the UT held that ‘... once verified the individual will be issued with a document enabling the individual to return to Iraq... the resulting document is valid for six months and that it “permits a single entry into Iraq”.’ (paragraph 375)
- 3.4.11 Foreign National Offenders (FNOs) who have completed their custodial sentence in the UK can be issued with a Laissez Passer after being enrolled onto an interview and documentation scheme run by the Home Office in conjunction with the Iraqi Embassy (see Returns Logistics information on the Iraq country page on Horizon and the [Country returns guide](#) (this guide is updated regularly)).
- 3.4.12 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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d. Return routes by air

- 3.4.13 Since 30 September 2020, the Home Office has been able to return Iraqis from the KRI to Erbil and Sulaymaniyah airports directly (i.e., without needing to travel via Baghdad). Before 19 August 2025, the Home Office was not able to return Iraqis previously resident outside the KRI directly to the KRI, but only to Baghdad airport. On 19 August 2025, the UK and the Government of Iraq signed an agreement allowing Iraqis previously resident outside the KRI to be returned to the KRI directly.

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3.5 Lack of return documentation

- 3.5.1 A lack of documentation, in itself, is not sufficient to be granted HP. It is only where a person would be at real risk of serious harm because of a lack of documentation that a grant of HP would be appropriate.
- 3.5.2 In [SMO2](#), the UT concluded ‘In light of the Court of Appeal’s judgement in [HF \(Iraq\) and Others v Secretary of State for the Home Departments \(\[2013\] EWCA Civ 1276\)](#), an international protection claim made by P cannot succeed by reference to any alleged risk of harm arising from an absence of a current or expired Iraqi passport or a Laissez passer, if the Tribunal finds that P’s return is not currently feasible on account of a lack of any of those documents.’ [144(9)]
- 3.5.3 A person returned without identity documentation is likely to be questioned at the airport and a family member asked to attend to confirm their identity (see [Return of Iraqi nationals](#)).

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3.6 Feasibility of internal relocation

a. Process of return

- 3.6.1 In [SMO2](#), the UT held that:

‘Where internal relocation is raised in the Iraqi context [i.e. within the areas controlled by the Government of Iraq and not the areas controlled by the Kurdistan Regional Government], it is necessary to consider not only the safety and reasonableness of relocation but also the feasibility of that course, in light of sponsorship and residency requirements in operation in various parts of the country. Individuals who seek to relocate within the country may not be admitted to a potential safe haven or may not be permitted to remain there.’ [Paragraph 144(23)]

- 3.6.2 Decision makers must start by considering (i) where the person would be returned to, (ii) where the proposed destination for internal relocation would be (if they cannot return to their home area), and (iii) the internal travel required to achieve that.

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b. Requiring a CSID or INID for onward travel

- 3.6.3 In [SMO2](#), the UT held that ‘As a general matter, it is necessary for an individual to have... [either a [CSID](#) or an [INID](#)]...in order to live and travel within Iraq without encountering treatment or conditions which are contrary to Article 3 ECHR. Many checkpoints in the country are manned by Shia militia who are not controlled by the GOI [Government of Iraq] and are unlikely to permit an individual without a CSID or an INID to pass.’ [Paragraph 144(11)]
- 3.6.4 Decision makers must therefore assess whether a person will be returned to Iraq in possession of the necessary civil documentation or could obtain a replacement INID in a reasonable timeframe. If the original documentation still exists and is held by family members in Iraq, the document can be provided by family members meeting them on arrival or sent by secure post to the person in the UK.
- 3.6.5 Decision makers must read the [Documentation section](#) to determine whether a person can obtain civil documentation. The onus is on the person to show why they cannot reasonably obtain necessary documentation.
- 3.6.6 Internal travel is possible for those persons who would arrive in Iraq either in possession of a CSID or INID or who would be able to be redocumented on arrival at the airport, or shortly after arrival at a location that does not require passing through a checkpoint. They would then be able to travel to their home governorate (or elsewhere) through the various security checkpoints and are, in general, unlikely to encounter treatment or conditions contrary to paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules/Article 3 ECHR.
- 3.6.7 However, those who return to Iraq or the KRI without a CSID or INID, cannot obtain one via a family member on arrival and who would be required to travel internally to a CSA office in another area of Iraq or the KRI to obtain one **would** be at risk of encountering treatment or conditions which are contrary to paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules/Article 3 of the ECHR. In these cases, a grant of Humanitarian Protection is therefore appropriate (unless the person is excluded from such protection).

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c. Passports and Laissez Passers for onward travel

- 3.6.8 The UT in [SMO2](#) held that:

‘...A valid Iraqi passport is not recognised as acceptable proof of identity for internal travel by land.

‘Laissez Passers are confiscated on arrival and will not, for that reason, assist a returnee who seeks to travel from Baghdad to the IKR by air without a passport, INID or CSID. The Laissez Passer is not a recognised identity document for the purpose of internal travel by land.

‘There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate the existence or utility of the “certification letter” or “supporting letter” which is said to be issued to undocumented returnees by the authorities at Baghdad International Airport.’ [Paragraph 144(17-19)]

3.6.9 The UT in [SMO2](#) held that that passports are not an accepted form of identification document for the purpose of confirming identities and passing through checkpoints [Paragraph 144(17)]. Therefore, only those who currently hold accepted forms of identification (i.e. a CSID, an INID) can pass through checkpoints without encountering treatment or conditions which are contrary to paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules/Article 3 ECHR.

3.6.10 In March 2023, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) indicated that a passport can be used to cross **some** checkpoints and that an additional valid identity document (CSID/INID) besides the passport may be required due to concerns over the reliability of passports (see [Annex G](#)). However, this is **not** sufficient to depart from the findings in [SMO2](#) outlined in the paragraph above.

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3.7 Key civil documentation

a. Iraqi National Identity Card (INID)

3.7.1 The Iraqi National Identity Card (INID) replaces the Iraqi Nationality Certificate (INC) and the Civil Status ID Card (CSID). In 2023, the Danish Immigration service indicated that since 2017, the uptake of the INID has been slow but estimated that 85-90% of people in the KRI have now obtained the INID. INID uptake figures in the rest of Iraq could not be found in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

3.7.2 The INID is linked to a record of a person’s biometric data and can only be issued in person, in Iraq. It is valid for 10 years and after this, a person must return to their home governorate to receive a renewed document. When a person’s civil status has changed, e.g., through marriage or divorce, they must renew their INID through submitting a new application.

3.7.3 UNHCR informed CPIT that not all checkpoints within Federal Iraq and the KRI have the necessary technological capabilities to validate a person’s identity through biometric records when presented with an INID (see [Annex H](#)).

3.7.4 For more, see [Documentation- Iraqi National Identity Card \(INID\)](#).

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b. Civil Status ID Card (CSID)

3.7.5 Whilst the INID replaces the CSID, it can still be used for passing through checkpoints and accessing services such as financial assistance,

employment, education, housing and medical treatment. It is also still a gateway to obtaining other documents including the initial issuance of an INID (see [Documentation - Civil Status Identity Card \(CSID\)](#)).

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c. Iraqi Nationality Certificate (INC)

- 3.7.6 The Iraqi Nationality Certificate (INC) is another important document, although not as important as the INID or CSID.
- 3.7.7 The Upper Tribunal in [AAH](#) held that an INC ‘simply serves to confirm that the holder is an Iraqi citizen. It does not hold the practical significance of a CSID... An Iraqi in possession of a CSID can ordinarily use that document to obtain a replacement INC and in any event, the absence of an INC would not have any particular consequences for his ability to function in society. Conversely possession of an INC could assist the holder in replacing a lost CSID.’ (paragraph 95)
- 3.7.8 For more information on how to obtain an INC see [Documentation – Iraqi Nationality Certificate \(INC\)](#).

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d. Obtaining an INID in the UK

- 3.7.9 At the time of publication, INIDs cannot be obtained while a person is in the UK unless replacing an in-date lost ID by proxy (see [Issuing identity documents by proxy](#)). The UT in [SMO2](#) held that ‘In order to obtain an INID, an individual must personally attend the Civil Status Affairs ("CSA") office at which they are registered to enrol their biometrics, including fingerprints and iris scans.’ [Paragraph 144(12) and (15-16)]. They must also do this for the purpose of renewing an INID after its 10 year period of validity.
- 3.7.10 For more information on how to obtain an INID see [Documentation – Iraqi Nationality Identity Card \(INID\)](#).

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e. Obtaining a CSID in the UK

- 3.7.11 In [SMO2](#), the UT held that ‘We consider it more likely than not that CSIDs continue to be available through the Iraqi Embassy in the UK but only for individuals who are registered at a Civil Status Affairs office which has not transferred to the digital INID system.’ (Para 60).
- 3.7.12 Since the promulgation of [SMO2](#), the British Embassy in Baghdad and the Iraq Embassy have confirmed that there are no longer any CSID issuing offices in Iraq due to the rollout of the INID system (see [Annex E](#) and [Annex E](#)). **CSIDs are therefore no longer attainable to Iraqi nationals in the UK.**

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f. Obtaining a CSID or INID in Iraq

- 3.7.13 The UT in [SMO2](#) held:
- ‘In order to obtain an INID, an individual must personally attend the Civil Status Affairs ("CSA") office at which they are registered to enrol their biometrics, including fingerprints and iris scans.
- ‘... Once in Iraq, it remains the case that an individual is expected to attend

their local CSA office in order to obtain a replacement document. All CSA offices have now re-opened, although the extent to which records have been destroyed by the conflict with ISIL is unclear, and is likely to vary significantly depending on the extent and intensity of the conflict in the area in question.

‘An individual returnee who is not from Baghdad is not likely to be able to obtain a replacement document there [in Baghdad], and certainly not within a reasonable time. Neither the Central Archive nor the assistance facilities for IDPs are likely to render documentation assistance to an undocumented returnee.’ [Paragraph 144(12) and (15-16)].

- 3.7.14 However, as noted in paragraph 3.7.12 CSIDs are no longer being issued in any Civil Status Affairs Offices and are therefore no longer attainable to Iraqi nationals within Iraq or the IKR (see [Annex E](#) and [Annex F](#)).
- 3.7.15 According to the Danish Immigration Service, females under the age of 18 and estranged from their family will not be able to access documentation due to the need for their father’s presence and approval during the application process. Women, especially widowed or single women, have encountered issues of harassment when applying for identity documents (see [Ability of women to obtain identity documentation](#)).

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3.8 Impact of the security and humanitarian situation on onward travel

a. ‘contested’ and ‘formerly contested areas’

- 3.8.1 Decision makers must consider the country’s humanitarian and security situation when assessing internal relocation. This is because it relates to the ability to travel to and/or through a particular place, as well as whether the place is suitable for living. For example whether the level of destruction of some of the cities (in particular Mosul) rendered them suitable for living. This was an issue considered by the UT in [SMO1](#) (paragraphs 75, 330 and 402).
- 3.8.2 The Tribunal in [SMO2](#) held that any civilian returning to Iraq would, in general, not face a real risk of being subjected to indiscriminate violence amounting to serious harm with the exception of the small mountainous area north of Baiji in Salah al-Din (see [Annex A](#)). The UT found this area to remain under doctrinal control by Daesh [Paragraph 144(2)]. The UT in [SMO2](#) held that ‘the living conditions in Iraq as a whole, including the Formerly Contested Areas, are unlikely to give rise to a breach of Article 3 ECHR or (therefore) to necessitate subsidiary protection... [However] any such circumstances require individualised assessment in the context of the conditions of the area in question.’ [Paragraph 144(6)].
- 3.8.3 However, the UT in [SMO2](#) also held that ‘The situation in the Formerly Contested Areas (the governorates of Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewah and Salah Al-Din) is complex, encompassing ethnic, political and humanitarian issues which differ by region. Whether the return of an individual to such an area would be contrary to Article 15(c) requires a fact sensitive, “sliding scale” assessment...’ [Paragraph 144(3)]
- 3.8.4 For information and a detailed assessment of risk due to the general country situation, see country policy and information notes, [Iraq: Humanitarian situation](#) and [Iraq: Security situation](#).
- 3.8.5 For further guidance on considering internal relocation and factors to be

taken into account, see the asylum instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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b. Relocation within/to the Formerly Contested Areas

3.8.6 In [SMO2](#) the UT held:

‘Where relocation within the Formerly Contested Areas is under contemplation... the ethnic and political composition of the home area and the place of relocation will be particularly relevant. In particular, an individual who lived in a former ISIL [Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant also known as Daesh] stronghold for some time may fall under suspicion in a place of relocation. Tribal and ethnic differences may preclude such relocation, given the significant presence and control of largely Shia militia in these areas. Even where it is safe for an individual to relocate within the Formerly Contested Areas, however, it is unlikely to either be feasible or reasonable without a prior connection to, and a support structure within, the area of question.’ [Paragraph 144(24)]

3.8.7 Certain profiles (Single Sunni Arab men of fighting age and single women) may be treated with suspicion when passing through checkpoints in these areas and face questioning as well as having their names checked against security lists (see [Security clearance permit](#)). However, being treated with suspicion does not necessarily amount to facing a real risk of serious harm.

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c. Relocation within/to Baghdad

3.8.8 The Tribunal in [SMO2](#) held:

‘Baghdad is generally safe for ordinary civilians but whether it is safe for a particular returnee is a question of fact in the individual case. There are no on-entry sponsorship requirements for Baghdad but there are sponsorship requirements for residency. A documented individual of working age is likely to be able to satisfy those requirements. Relocation to Baghdad is likely to be reasonable for Arab Shia and Sunni single, able-bodied men, Arab Shia and Sunni married couples of working age without children and without specific vulnerabilities. Other individuals are likely to require external support, i.e. a support network of members of his or her family, extended family or tribe, who are willing and able to provide genuine support. Whether such a support network is available is to be considered with reference to the collectivist nature of Iraqi society, as considered in [AAH \(Iraq\) \[para 96\]](#)’ [Paragraph 144(25)].

3.8.9 The UT held that a civil identity document (CSID or INID) is required to pass checkpoints and be admitted into Baghdad. Therefore, only those who are documented or who could obtain either original or replacement documents from a family member would be able to enter the Baghdad. For information see [Entry and residency requirements in central and southern Iraq](#).

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d. Relocation within/to the IKR

3.8.10 In general, Kurds who do not originate from the KRI can relocate to the region providing they pass residency requirements. Available country information suggests that ethnic Kurds are able to enter the KRI, depending

on their ability to pass security requirements (see [Security clearance permit](#)).

3.8.11 Available evidence indicates that a civil identity document (CSID or INID) are required to pass checkpoints and be admitted into the KRI. Therefore, only those who are documented or who could obtain either original or replacement documents (i.e. a CSID or INID obtained via proxy) from a family member would be able to enter the KRI (see [Entry and residency requirements in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region \(IKR\)](#)). The risk of ill-treatment during the security screening process must be assessed on a case-by-case basis taking into account any additional factors that may increase this risk.

3.8.12 The Tribunal in [SMO2](#) also held:

‘Once at the IKR border (land or air) P would normally be granted entry to the territory. Subject to security screening, and registering presence with the local mukhtar, P would be permitted to enter and reside in the IKR with no further legal impediments or requirements. There are no sponsorship requirements for entry or residence in any of the three IKR Governorates for Kurds.

‘Whether P would be at particular risk of ill-treatment during the security screening process must be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Additional factors that may increase risk include: (i) coming from a family with a known association with ISIL, (ii) coming from an area associated with ISIL and (iii) being a single male of fighting age. P is likely to be able to evidence the fact of recent arrival from the UK, which would dispel any suggestion of having arrived directly from ISIL territory.

‘If P has family members living in the IKR cultural norms would require that family to accommodate P. In such circumstances P would, in general, have sufficient assistance from the family so as to lead a “relatively normal life”, which would not be unduly harsh. It is nevertheless important for decision-makers to determine the extent of any assistance likely to be provided by P’s family on a case-by-case basis.

‘For Kurds without the assistance of family in the IKR the accommodation options are limited:

- (i) Absent special circumstances it is not reasonably likely that P will be able to gain access to one of the refugee camps in the IKR; these camps are already extremely overcrowded and are closed to newcomers. 64% of IDPs are accommodated in private settings with the vast majority living with family members;
- (ii) If P cannot live with a family member, apartments in a modern block in a new neighbourhood are available for rent at a cost of between \$300 and \$400 per month;
- (iii) P could resort to a “critical shelter arrangement”, living in an unfinished or abandoned structure, makeshift shelter, tent, mosque, church or squatting in a government building. It would be unduly harsh to require P to relocate to the IKR if P will live in a critical housing shelter without access to basic necessities such as food, clean water and clothing.
- (iv) In considering whether P would be able to access basic necessities, account must be taken of the fact that failed asylum seekers are entitled to apply for a grant under the Voluntary and assisted returns scheme, which could give P access to £1500. Consideration should

also be given to whether P can obtain financial support from other sources such as (a) employment, (b) remittances from relatives abroad, (c) the availability of ad hoc charity or by being able to access PDS [Public Distribution System] rations.

‘Whether P is able to secure employment must be assessed on a case-by-case basis taking the following matters into account:

- (i) Gender. Lone women are very unlikely to be able to secure legitimate employment;
- (ii) The unemployment rate for Iraqi IDPs living in the IKR is 70%;
- (iii) P cannot work without a CSID or INID;
- (iv) Patronage and nepotism continue to be important factors in securing employment. A returnee with family connections to the region will have a significant advantage in that he would ordinarily be able to call upon those contacts to make introductions to prospective employers and to vouch for him;
- (v) Skills, education and experience. Unskilled workers are at the greatest disadvantage, with the decline in the construction industry reducing the number of labouring jobs available;
- (vi) If P is from an area with a marked association with ISIL, that may deter prospective employers.’ [Paragraph 144 (30-34)]

3.8.13 The Tribunal in [SMO2](#) held the following in regard to non-Kurdish returnees’ ability to relocate to the IKR:

‘The ability of non-Kurdish returnees to relocate to the IKR is to be distinguished [from Kurdish returnees]. [...] Although Erbil and Sulaymaniyah are accessible for such individuals, particular care must be taken in evaluating whether internal relocation to the IKR for a non-Kurd would be reasonable. Given the economic and humanitarian conditions in the IKR at present, an Arab with no viable support network in the IKR is likely to experience unduly harsh conditions upon relocation there.’ [Paragraph 144(35)]

3.8.14 For guidance on internal relocation and factors to be taken into account, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

3.8.15 For further information on residency requirements see [Entry and residency requirements in the Iraqi Kurdish Region \(IKR\)](#)

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4. Certification

4.1.1 Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as ‘clearly unfounded’ under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

4.1.2 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#).

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Country information

About the country information

This contains publicly available or disclosable country of origin information (COI) which has been gathered, collated and analysed in line with the [research methodology](#). It provides the evidence base for the assessment which, as stated in the About the assessment, is the guide to the current objective conditions.

The structure and content of this section follow a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to the scope of this note.

This document is intended to be comprehensive but not exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned this does not mean that the event did or did not take place or that the person or organisation does or does not exist.

Decision makers must use relevant country information as the evidential basis for decisions.

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5. Return of Iraqi nationals

5.1.1 The Inspection Report on Country of Origin information, Iraq and Myanmar (Burma) undertaken by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIBI), published June 2023 (ICIBI report June 2023), quoting Dr Rebwar Fateh, an expert witness on the Middle East, stated:

'If a failed asylum seeker is returned to Iraq without an ID document, they will be detained at the airport.

- a) The returnee will then be interviewed to give some indication of whether they are from their claimed governorate or region (through dialect, accent etc.). From the returnee's Kurdish or Arabic dialect, the officer will be able to tell whether the returnee is from Iraq or not.
- b) At this time, the returnee's claimed name and address will also be cross referenced against suspect names in possession of the security services.
- c) Next, the returnee will be asked to phone their immediate family to bring their ID.
- d) If they claim to have no immediate family, the returnee will be asked to contact a paternal uncle or cousin for their ID.
- e) If this is negative too, another relative will come to the airport with their own IDs to act as a guarantor for the returnee. This would allow the returnee a seven-day residency permit pending proof of identity.
- f) During this period, the returnee needs to obtain their own ID or provide evidence that they are in the process of obtaining an ID – such as a letter from the nationality department to show that their ID is pending via the usual procedure.
- g) If the returnee has no such luck, they must find a local Mukhtar [local chief or village elder] by the seventh day who can provide a letter in exchange for a small fee which states that the person is who they say that they are, that they are from the claimed neighbourhood, and that they are in the process of obtaining an ID.
- h) If the Mukhtar cannot identify the returnee, they will need two witnesses

to come forward who know them and can provide evidence on their identity.

- i) The returnee then needs to apply in writing to the nationality department. Here, they will be interviewed by the chief and the witnesses will need [sic] to give evidence under oath, stating how they know the returnee.
- j) Once the chief has been convinced, the process of obtaining the ID will start. Once these steps have been completed, the returnee needs to communicate back to the security services at the airport, or their guarantor will face legal consequences.¹

5.1.2 It should be noted that the above information was presented to and considered by the Upper Tribunal in [SMO2](#) and as such cannot be used to depart from the Country Guidance findings.

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Section updated: 20 October 2023

6. Documentation

6.1 Legal Context

6.1.1 In October 2021 the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) published a report written by Protection Cluster Iraq (PCI) entitled 'Protection Analysis Report – Right to identity and civil documentation' which stated:

'The right to legal identity is the right to be recognized by the State as a person before the law, which allows the person to access further rights, benefits and responsibilities in the country. In practice, one's legal identity is established through the issuance by the State of identity documents, which provide official recognition of someone's nationality and identity. Consequently, identity documents (Civil Status ID Card, Iraqi Nationality Certificate, Unified ID Card [also known as the Iraqi National Identity Card INID]) are different from, but a requirement for, civil documents (Birth, Death or Marriage Certificates). In Iraq, the right to a legal identity and to civil documentation is enshrined in various bodies of law, including the Constitution of the Government of Iraq of 2005, the Civil Status Law No. 65 of 1972, the Civil Status System Law No. 32 of 1974 and the Iraq Nationality Act No. 26 of 2006.'²

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6.2 Civil registration system

6.2.1 A paper published in the Canadian Studies in Population (CSIP) in 2014, based on a United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) funded field visit to Iraq, explained that all births, deaths, marriages and divorces are updated on the family registry. The source explained that family records were held locally at the daa'ira (local civil registration office), where a new event, for example a birth, marriage or divorce, would be manually inputted onto the family register³.

6.2.2 The same source noted that the registrar would record the following

¹ ICIBI, '[Inspection report on Country of Origin Information, Iraq...](#)', July 2023

² PCI via UNOCHA, '[Protection Analysis Report – Right to... documentation](#)' (page 4), October 2021

³ CSIP, '[The Iraqi civil registration system and the test of political upheaval](#)' (page 112-115), 22 April 2014

information: serial number, name, title, father's name, mother's name, sex, relationship to head of household, occupation, literacy, religion, date of birth, place of birth, and date of registration⁴.

- 6.2.3 The paper explained the precise way in which family records were maintained, based on three unique information markers: the sijil (family record) number; sahifa (family page) number and daaira (local civil registration office). As the source explained:

'All vital events occurring to any member of the family are entered into this "family page". This is done until the child gets married and establishes his own family, in which case a new "family page" is started for him. Through this innovative system, it can take as little as five minutes to locate anyone's records. From this ID system, three pieces of ID are produced: the civil registration ID, nationality ID, and residence ID (location of house). The retention period for the documents in the local offices is 20 years.'⁵

- 6.2.4 The source commented that when the register was full (each register contains around 200 families), the document would be sent back to the head office for scanning, after which it would be returned to the local office for archiving. It was also noted that at head office 'separate archives exist for records from 1934–1947', whilst information from 1948–1957 had been scanned and stored on CDs. For records from 1958 to the time of writing (2011) scanned images were stored on an external hard drive, with one hard drive for each governorate⁶.

- 6.2.5 CPIT was unable to find any information regarding how information is currently archived in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

- 6.2.6 A letter from the British Embassy in Baghdad, dated 7 April 2012 (available on request), explained that there was an extensive civil status (CSA/CAD) office network across Iraq, with each district (sub-governorate) or Nahyas (sub-district) having a local ID office. A list of these offices is available upon request. The source reaffirmed that information was retained by the Civil Status Office's local records and that information was referenced using a "book page number", which was also written on the CSID or INID (see [Civil Status Identity Card \(CSID\), Iraqi National Identity Card \(INID\)](#)). In the case of marriage, the civil record for the wife was transferred to be inserted with the husband's record (on his family's page)⁷.

- 6.2.7 A Landinfo report dated 16 December 2015 also confirmed that all personal data was entered onto a family registry at the local population registration office (CSA office) near the family's residence. The source stated there were over 300 population registration offices (unofficially called Civil Status Offices or Civil Status Departments, or Jinsiya⁸). The report stated that each family had their own registration number, which was listed on the personal identity cards. The source also confirmed that any Iraqi could obtain a copy of their page in the family registry⁹.

- 6.2.8 The family registry had several synonymous names in the unofficial English

⁴ CSIP, '[The Iraqi civil registration system and the test of political upheaval](#)' (page 112-115), 22 April 2014

⁵ CSIP, '[The Iraqi civil registration system and the test of political upheaval](#)' (page 112-115), 22 April 2014

⁶ CSIP, '[The Iraqi civil registration system and the test of political upheaval](#)' (page 112-115), 22 April 2014

⁷ BEB, 'Re-documentation procedures', 7 April 2012 (available on request)

⁸ Landinfo, '[Travel documents and other identity documents](#)' (page 15,16), December 2015

⁹ Landinfo, '[Travel documents and other identity documents](#)' (page 16), December 2015

translation: family book; family census and family registry 57 (after the 1957 law which introduced civil registration in Iraq following the 1957 census)¹⁰.

- 6.2.9 See [Annex I](#) for an example of a page in the family book.
- 6.2.10 In 2021, The Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems, a 'global knowledge hub on civil registration and vital statistic (CRVS) systems'¹¹, published a report entitled 'Documenting Life and Death: Women's experiences during conflict in Syria and Iraq' which stated that 'All personal data which is entered into the population registry is collected in a large family registry at the local population registration offices near the family's place of residence. Iraqis can obtain a copy of their entry in the family registry.'¹²

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6.3 Importance of identity documents

- 6.3.1 The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) (now called the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA)) published a report entitled 'Iraq – Key socio-economic indicators for Baghdad, Basrah and Sulaymaniyah' in November 2021, citing various sources. The report stated that proper civil documentation is:

'... [R]equired to access the rights stipulated by the law, e.g., healthcare, education, and freedom of movement within the country, the state justice system, and social welfare. In addition, possession of a legal identity enables access to humanitarian assistance for displaced persons... [They are] used in all contact with public authorities. It is necessary to access health services, social welfare services, schools and for buying and selling a home and a car. In addition, it must be presented when applying for other official documents, such as passports. Stateless persons who were not able to register for ID cards were reported to be unable to register marriages and to gain access to some government services without ID cards.'¹³

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6.4 Ability of women to obtain identity documents

- 6.4.1 In March 2023, The Danish Immigration Service (DIS) published a report entitled 'Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) – Issues regarding single women, documents and illegal exit' which stated:

'If a single woman is under the age of 18, she will need her father's approval and presence when applying for different types of official documents, especially when applying for a passport. If the minor's mother is the guardian of the child, the father's approval is still needed in order to get at least a passport.

'... A single, unmarried woman who does not live with her family cannot in any way obtain a Housing Card for herself.

'... A single woman who is not the head of a household and thus does not have a Housing Card on her own will face difficulties in obtaining official documents if she is in conflict with her family.'¹⁴

¹⁰ BEB, 'Re-documentation procedures', 7 April 2012 (available on request)

¹¹ Centre of Excellence For CRVS Systems, '[About us](#)', no date

¹² Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems, '[Documenting Life and Death...](#)' (page 23), 2021

¹³ EASO, '[Iraq – Key socio-economic indicators for Baghdad...](#)' (page 56), 25 November 2021

¹⁴ DIS, '[...Issues regarding single women, documents and illegal exit](#)' (page 14-17), March 2023

- 6.4.2 The Norwegian Refugee Council's (NRC) report 'Life in the Margins: Re-examining the needs of paperless people in post-conflict Iraq' published in September 2022 stated 'In some cases, women who do attempt the process to (re)issue their documentation have reported instances of harassment and exploitation – including sexual harassment and exploitation - in accessing related offices and in associated travel.'¹⁵

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6.5 Ability of children to obtain identity documents

- 6.5.1 Simaet Bhatha, a digital communication and information platform launched under the Signpost project in Iraq¹⁶, published an article entitled 'The Importance of Civil Documentation for Children in Iraq' in April 2023 which detailed the importance for children to have a national ID card to access healthcare and enrol in school. It is a requirement that all Iraqi citizens have civil documentation, including children¹⁷.
- 6.5.2 CPIT has not been able to find information on the process of taking biometric data for children and babies or whether the 10 year issuance period of INIDs still applies in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).
- 6.5.3 Norwegian Refugee Council report '[Barriers from birth: Undocumented children in Iraq sentenced to a life on the margins](#)' from April 2019 said:

'...About 45,000 children displaced in camps today do not have Iraqi-state issued birth certificates or other civil documents proving their legal identity. This is depriving them of their most basic rights as Iraqi citizens.

The majority of children in Iraq impacted by civil documentation challenges that have arisen in the aftermath of IS are currently under five years old, born during the period the group was in control.[and have not been issued with Birth certificated due to ISIS control of their territory, being a child born of rape or their parents not having an official marriage certificate]

Registering children in Iraqi schools requires several types of civil documents, including the ID of the student, as well as the IDs of both of his or her parents. Sitting exams or obtaining graduation certificates is often not allowed without a civil ID. In the case of a deceased or missing father, an official death certificate must be provided to the school administration proving the circumstances of the death. Families who do not possess these documents today almost immediately raise questions or suspicions of association with IS group, stigmatising them within their own community.¹⁸

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6.6 Forged identity documents

- 6.6.1 In February 2016, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRBC) published a paper on fraudulent passports which stated:
- 'The IOM [International Organisation of Migration] Director in Baghdad ...stated that identification documents have "some security features," but that "they do not seem to be very effective," adding that passport features "can

¹⁵ NRC, '[Life in the margins: Re-examining the needs of...](#)', (page 21), September 2022

¹⁶ Simaet Bhatha, '[About us](#)', undated

¹⁷ Simaet Bhatha, '[The Importance of Civil Documentation for Children in Iraq](#)', April 2023

¹⁸ NRC, '[Barriers from birth: Unocumented children in Iraq...](#)', 30 April 2019

be fairly easy to reproduce"

'The IOM Director in Baghdad similarly said that ISIS [Islamic State of Iraq and Syria] is a huge player on the black market; they can now create passports and [they have] also stole [sic] thousands of original ... Iraqi passports. But it is impossible to say how far they have hit the market, what is the prevalence of passports or other fake documents they produce compared to those introduced by other criminals on the black market. We have no statistics on ISIS and the false documents they produce. (IOM 25 Jan. 2016)¹⁹

- 6.6.2 On 16 January 2023 the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) published a country information report on Iraq which stated:

'Fraudulent documents are cheap and commonly available. Genuine documents obtained through fraudulent means are also common, mostly obtained by paying bribes to officials. Documents issued under religious procedures such as marriage, divorce and custody certificates have weak or no security features. The forms of documentation superseded by the National Identity (ID) Card [INID] have weaker security features than the biometric ID cards and may have been issued according to antiquated or unreliable procedures.'²⁰

- 6.6.3 The DIS March 2023 report stated that:

'According to three sources consulted for this report, forgery of documents in KRI is very limited.

'...Women's Legal Assistance Organization (WOLA) had previously heard of cases of people in KRI getting documents with manipulated information regarding name, date, place of birth and place of issuance. However, the source had not heard of such cases in KRI in recent years. The consulted lawyer, Bilbas, had not seen cases of manipulated official documents obtained by means of bribe in the seven years he had been working on legal issues in KRI.'²¹

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6.7 Iraqi National Identity Card (INID)

- 6.7.1 The Iraqi National Identity Card (INID) is also known as the Unified National Card or, Unified Card or Unified National Card in several sources.

- 6.7.2 The EASO report, citing various sources, published in November 2021 stated:

'In September 2015, the issuance of new electronic and biometric unified national cards (also called new national card, new ID card, al-bitāqa al-watāniya al-muwāhhada, al-bitāqa al-watāniya al-jādida) started in Iraq. The unified national card is supposed to replace the civil status ID and make the nationality certificate and ultimately the residency card obsolete, so that Iraqis will eventually have only one official ID document.

'... According to a diplomatic source in Amman interviewed by Landinfo... [the INID is] issued at the local offices of the Directorate of National Card

¹⁹ IRBC, '[Iraq: Availability of fraudulent identification documents...](#)', February 2016

²⁰ DFAT, '[Country Information Report – Iraq](#)' (page 44), 16 January 2023

²¹ DIS, '[...Issues regarding single women, documents and illegal exit](#)' (page 30), March 2023

Affairs, situated all over the country and were referred to as Civil Affairs Directorate (CAD) offices [Note: CPIT and the Home Office refer to these as Civil Status Affairs' offices]. This directorate is part of the Directorate of Civil Status, Passports and Residencies of the General Directorate of Nationality which belongs to the Ministry of Interior. The offices can be found in most cities and in the provincial capitals. Both types of ID cards [INIDs and CSIDs] could only be issued in the district where the family was registered....

'...Individuals applying for the unified national card had to book an appointment with the local office via the website of the Directorate of National Card Affairs and download an application form, which had to be completed and taken to the appointment. In addition, they had to submit their civil status ID and their nationality certificate. The website of the Directorate of National Card Affairs also requested applicants to submit their residency card with the application and it stated that the original documents needed to be presented.

'... It is mandatory for applicants to appear in person to submit their application, because a photo, an iris scan and fingerprints will be taken. Subsequently, the application is sent to a central office in Baghdad together with the biometrics, where the information is checked. It costs 5,000 Iraqi dinars (IQD) [£2.92 GBP²²] to get the unified national card issued, both at the first issuance and upon renewal after the expiration of the validity period. Should the card be damaged or get lost, the issuance of a new card costs 10,000 IQD [£5.83 GBP²³] and 25,000 IQD (£14.58 GBP²⁴), respectively. In accordance with the Act on National ID Cards of 2016 a new unified national card has to be issued in the event of loss or damage to the card. All newborns will be given the unified national card provided that they are registered in an area where the population registration office has the necessary equipment.

'... With a few deviations, the aforementioned procedure applies for the KRI [Kurdistan Region of Iraq]. According to Abdulrahman Ismael Azaz, Director of the Directorate of Nationality and Civil Status in Erbil, which belongs to the Ministry of the Interior of the KRG [Kurdistan Regional Government], interviewed in 2018 by Landinfo and DIS [Danish Immigration Service], in Erbil, people did not need to make an appointment via the website, because many people did not have internet access. Applicants needed to present their civil status ID, their nationality certificate and their residency card with the application. The documents handed in were first checked at the Directorate of Nationality and Civil Status and only after the document check was finished, they were sent to the main servers in Baghdad, where the personal identification number was produced. According to Director Azaz, the applicants' fingerprints of all ten fingers had to be taken as well.

'...The card was valid for ten years but, when the civil status changed, e.g., through marriage or divorce, a renewal was required by submitting a new application for the issuance of a new unified national card.'²⁵

6.7.3 In July 2021, Simaet Bhatta published an article entitled 'Iraqi Official Identification Documents: What are they and how do I get them?' which

²² XE.com, '[5,000 Iraqi Dinar to British Pound conversion](#)', 18 July 2023

²³ XE.com, '[10,000 Iraqi Dinar to British Pound conversion](#)', 18 July 2023

²⁴ XE.com, '[25,000 Iraqi Dinar to British Pound conversion](#)', 18 July 2023

²⁵ EASO, '[Iraq – Key socio-economic indicators for Baghdad...](#)' (page 50-51), 25 November 2021

stated: 'The national card is accepted by governmental and non-governmental agencies to prove the identity of its owner and identifying their Iraqi nationality. It is an alternative to the Iraqi Nationality Certificate, civil status card and the Residence Card. The Unified National Card Law was enacted in order to unify the Iraqi nationality certificate, the ID card, and the Residence Card form in one document, within a one integrated network of civil information.'²⁶

6.7.4 In February 2023 Simaet Bhatta noted that 'The unified card is valid for 10 years from the date of its issuance and must be renewed after that'.²⁷

6.7.5 The DFAT report published in January 2023 stated:

'The Iraqi National ID card is an electronic biometric card issued by the Ministry of Interior, which holders are required to carry at all times. The National ID card is a credit card-sized plastic card with an embedded radio frequency identification (RFID) chip. It is covered with multi-coloured guillochés (an ornamental pattern formed of two or more curved bands that interlace to repeat a circular design). All information on the card is in Arabic and Kurdish. The front side of the card shows the coat of arms of Iraq and the words "Republic of Iraq", "Ministry of Interior" and "General Directorate of Nationality". It also contains the photograph of the holder, the holder's 12-digit national identification number, the 9-alphanumeric digit access number for the RFID chip, the holder's given name, father's, mother's and paternal grandfather's names, tribe and the holder's sex and blood type. The rear side contains the issuing authority, dates of issue and expiry, date and place of birth (city or town), 18-alphanumeric digit family number, and machine-readable zone.

'The process to obtain a new electronic ID card involves first making an appointment with the local civil status office via the [website](#) of the directorate for national ID cards. The applicant can download an application form from the same website and must complete it before meeting the local civil status office. The applicant must bring their current ID card, proof of citizenship, proof of residence, ration card, and the IQD 5,000 (approximately AUD 6) [£2.92 GBP²⁸] fee. The civil status office will retain these documents, which will be invalidated when the new card is issued. All applicants must attend the office in person for the photo, iris scan and fingerprint registration. The local civil status office sends the application form and biometric data to the central office in Baghdad where the information is checked and the card personalised before being returned to the local civil status office.'²⁹

6.7.6 eRegulations Baghdad, a website which provides step-by-step guides on administrative procedures in Baghdad³⁰, published the following image of the front and rear of an INID card:

²⁶ Simaet Bhatta, '[Iraqi Official Identification Documents...](#)', July 2021

²⁷ Simaet Bhatta, '[The Unified National Card](#)', February 2023

²⁸ XE.com, '[5000 Iraqi Dinar to British Pound conversion](#)', 18 July 2023

²⁹ DFAT, '[Country Information Report – Iraq](#)' (page 42), 16 January 2023

³⁰ eRegulations Baghdad, '[Home](#)', no date



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- 6.7.7 The DIS March 2023 report on women in the KRI, stated, 'According to a consulted lawyer, Bilbas, around 85-90% of all people in KRI have obtained the new National ID Card... while the national ID-cards in KRI are issued locally, all data in these cards come from central databases in Baghdad.'³²
- 6.7.8 CPIT was unable to ascertain INID uptake figures for areas of Iraq outside of the KRI in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).
- 6.7.9 On 19 January 2023, the Iraqi Embassy in London confirmed that the process for renewing an INID can be commenced from the UK but would need to be retrieved by a person acting as power of attorney, who would then send the INID to the UK or meet the returnee on arrival with the renewed INID (see [Annex D](#)). The correspondence received from the Iraqi Embassy stated:
- a) The Iraqi citizen shall report the loss to the local police and an official notification report shall be issued, and submit it to the Iraqi Consulate to be certified by the Consul.
 - b) The Iraqi Consul organizes an official lost report that includes the citizen's signature and fingerprint.
 - c) A written undertaking shall be made by the Iraqi citizen that he did not give up the Iraqi nationality.

³¹ eRegulations Baghdad, '[New unified national ID](#)', no date

³² DIS, '[...Issues regarding single women, documents and illegal exit](#)' (page 29), March 2023

d) The application has to be sent to MOFA (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

e) A power of attorney shall be made for someone to follow up with competent authority to issue a new INID.³³

- 6.7.10 CPIT was unable to ascertain if scanned copies of the lost INID are required in order to replace it in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)). It should also be noted the process to assign power of attorney from the UK requires the person to attend the Iraqi Embassy and show some other form of ID (see [Issuing identity documents by proxy](#)).

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6.8 Civil Status Identity Card (CSID)

- 6.8.1 In February 2019 EASO published a report, citing various sources, entitled 'Iraq: Internal mobility' which stated that the CSID is called 'bitaqat hawwiya al-ahwal al-shakhsiya'³⁴ in Arabic. The same source additionally stated that CSIDs are:

'... [I]ssued in the district where a person is registered and on the basis of information in the person's family register. Family registers (also known as family book, or family census or sijilla al-qayd or sijil al ahwal al-shakhsiyya) are kept manually and created locally in approximately 300 civil status registration offices across Iraq and information is updated with birth, death, marriages, and changes to civil status. Landinfo stated that "the family register forms the basis for the issuing of national ID cards and nationality certificates, which in turn form the basis for the issuing of passports".³⁵

- 6.8.2 The Landinfo report published in December 2015 stated that a CSID must include the following data:

- Personal name
- Name of father and paternal grandfather
- Surname
- Name of mother and maternal grandfather
- Gender
- Signature of authorised representative
- Date of issue
- Signature of issuer
- Full name of issuer
- Date of birth in digits and letters
- Place of birth
- Marital status
- Name of spouse
- Religious affiliation

'The right-hand side of the card's front page contains the name of the issuing

³³ Iraqi Embassy London email to Returns Logistics, 19 January 2023, [Annex D](#)

³⁴ EASO, '[Iraq – Internal Mobility](#)', (page 20), February 2019

³⁵ EASO, '[Iraq – Internal Mobility](#)', (page 20), February 2019

regional office, a register number indicating the number of the family book in which the person is registered, as well as the page number in the family book. The serial number is entered on the top left-hand side. The font of the serial number is serif, and the figures increase in size. These digits and the signature of the issuer give an indication of the authenticity of the card.³⁶

- 6.8.3 The July 2021 article by Simaet Bhatha published the following image of a CSID³⁷:



- 6.8.4 According to the British Embassy in Baghdad ([Annex E](#)) and the Iraqi Embassy in London ([Annex F](#)), CSIDs are no longer being issued in Iraq due to the rollout of the new INID system.

- 6.8.5 The ICIBI report June 2023, quoting Dr Rebwar Fateh, stated:

‘In September 2022, the Director General of Citizenship in Erbil informed me that the issuing of CSIDs in the IKR has stopped. However, the document remains valid for all legal and administrative purposes while individuals are waiting to receive their INID. Moreover, an individual working for the Iraqi Independent Election Commission confirmed that no CSA office is [sic] Iraq is issuing the CSID or INC. They are all now issuing the INID. However, the long waiting time, due to the shortage of cards, means that the INC and CSID continue to be valid.’³⁸

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6.9 Iraqi Nationality Certificate (INC)

- 6.9.1 In November 2021 EASO stated:

‘A nationality certificate is issued to all Iraqi nationals upon application. Children normally obtain them around the age of 12. In practice, both the ID card and nationality certificate were required to obtain certain services such as health services or education access.

³⁶ Landinfo, ‘[Travel documents and other identity documents](#)’ (page 16-17), 16 December 2015

³⁷ Simaet Bhatha, ‘[Iraqi Official Identification Documents...](#)’, July 2021

³⁸ ICIBI, ‘[Inspection report on Country of Origin Information, Iraq...](#)’, July 2023

'Referring to information obtained in 2013 from IOM [International Organization for Migration], the Canadian immigration authorities reported that Iraqis living in Iraq needed to present a nationality certificate from the father or a brother, their own ID card, their own or their father's residency card, their own or their father's PDS [Public Distribution System] card and four passport photos against a white background in order to be issued a nationality certificate.'³⁹

6.9.2 The July 2021 article published by Simaet Bhatha stated:

'The Iraqi Nationality Certificate is a document proving the nationality of the Iraqi citizen and is considered as a formal document in governmental and non-governmental institutions. It is granted under the Iraqi Nationality Law (No. 26 of 2006) by the Travel and Nationality Directorates of the Ministry of Interior.

'Requirements to obtain it:

1. Visit the Nationality Department in person (it is not acceptable for agency or representation to visit the nationality departments, and this includes even newborns).
2. Complete application form to obtain the Iraqi Nationality Certificate.
3. Attach the supporting documents:
 - Father's Nationality Certificate (in the event that the father's nationality certificate is not present or damaged, the person must bring the Nationality Certificate of the brother, mother, grandfather or uncle)
 - Residence card
 - Two recent photos of the citizen'⁴⁰

6.9.3 The Simaet Bhatha article also included the following image of an INC⁴¹:



6.9.4 The same source further outlined the Nationality Departments in Baghdad and the procedures for those in Iraq without identification:

³⁹ EASO, '[Iraq – Key socio-economic indicators for Baghdad...](#)' (page 54), 25 November 2021

⁴⁰ Simaet Bhatha, '[Iraqi Official Identification Documents...](#)', July 2021

⁴¹ Simaet Bhatha, '[Iraqi Official Identification Documents...](#)', July 2021

'Nationality Departments in Baghdad:

- Iraqi Nationality Certificate Department/Baghdad/Rusafa/General Department - Karada, near the shrine of Sayed Idris
- Iraqi Nationality Certificate Department/Baghdad/Rusafa/Al-Waziriya Al-Maghrib Street
- Iraqi Nationality Certificate Department/Baghdad/Rusafa/Sadr City
- Iraqi Nationality Certificate Department/Baghdad/Al-Karkh/Al-Mansour
- Iraqi Nationality Certificate Department/Baghdad/Al-Karkh/Mahmoudiya

'As for the governorates, the relevant department is the nationality certificate department in the governorate itself, and the above departments are visited according to the beneficiary's residence card [i.e. residents of the above areas of Baghdad can use these Nationality Departments].

'There are special cases that require a person to travel between governorates, such as those of some returnees whose Iraqi nationality has been revoked, or people who do not have identification papers proving their Iraqi identity, which require travel to Baghdad to obtain the required identification papers from the General Directorate in Baghdad and located on Rasheed Street. Iraqi nationality is granted to a child born to an Iraqi mother just as it is granted to a child born to an Iraqi father, according to (Article Three of the Nationality Law No. 26 of 2006).'⁴²

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6.10 Passport

6.10.1 Landinfo's 2015 report on travel documents, citing various sources, stated:

'In order to be issued a passport, the applicant must, in addition to the completed application form, present the following documents:

- A national ID Card (Bitaka Shakhsiyeh/Jinsiya/Hawiya).
- An Iraqi nationality certificate (Shahadet Jinsiyaa).
- A certificate of residence (Bitaka Sakan/Zanyari). This applies to applicants living in Iraq. Applicants who live outside Iraq must enclose their residence permit from the country they live in. Only heads of households must present a certificate of residence (GDN [General Directorate for Nationality], meeting in Baghdad April 2012). According to the Director-General of GDN, it is not strictly necessary to present this card, but it will be required if there is any doubt about the place of residence.
- Two colour passport photos (three for persons applying from abroad) against a white background. In addition, 25,000 Iraqi dinars (or an amount equivalent to USD 20 [approximately £14.58 GBP⁴³]) must be included, and fingerprints must be given upon submission and collection.'⁴⁴

6.10.2 The July 2021 article published by Simaet Bhatha stated:

⁴² Simaet Bhatha, '[Iraqi Official Identification Documents...](#)', July 2021

⁴³ XE.com, '[25,000 Iraqi Dinar to British Pound conversion](#)', 18 July 2023

⁴⁴ Landinfo, '[Travel documents and other identity documents](#)' (page 8), 16 December 2015

'The Iraqi passport is an official document issued by the government to verify the identity and nationality of an individual for the purpose of traveling across international borders. It provides information about the holder, including name, place and date of birth, photograph, signature, and other relevant identifying information.

'How to get an Iraqi Passport:

1. Pay the application legal fees (25,000 Iraqi dinars) [approximately £14.58 GBP⁴⁵] and obtain a certified receipt from any bank approved by the Central Bank of Iraq. (Note: approximate total fees with banks fees and photocopies could reach 50,000-55,000 IQD)
2. Visit the Passport Department in your governorate and fill out the application form for obtaining a new passport.
3. Attach the support documents to the application including:
 - a) The original documents (not to be submitted but have to be available through the whole procedure) and colour copies to be submitted of: Civil Status ID or the Unified National Card, Iraqi Nationality Certificate, Residence Card and Ration Card.
 - b) Passport size photos (with white background)
 - c) Passport fee receipt
4. The Passport Department staff should then take your fingerprints (biometric information).
5. Obtain a date for receiving the passport.⁴⁶

6.10.3 The DFAT report published in January 2023 stated:

'The Ministry of Interior's Passports Directorate issues "A" series passports to ordinary passport holders; "D" passports to diplomatic staff; "C" passports to officials; and "E" series passports to government service staff. Applicants must present their national ID card, Certificate of Iraqi Nationality, residency card, two photographs, the national ID card of their guardian (if the applicant is a minor), and a IQD10,000 (AUD13) [£5.83 GBP⁴⁷] fee. All applicants must appear in-person to apply for their passport, regardless of age. The processing time is one week.

'The current "A" series passports and the previous "G" series passports are of an international standard with good security features, including a hologram image and seal and water marks. "S" series passports (issued between 2003 and 2006) are more vulnerable to fraud, and inexpensive counterfeit versions are reportedly available in Iraq. "S" series passports are no longer accepted as valid ID by the Iraqi Government. While the current "A" series passports have good security features, the supporting documents listed above can be vulnerable to fraud and counterfeit, increasing the risk of the passports being obtained on the basis of counterfeit documentation.⁴⁸

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6.11 ePassport/ Electronic Passport

⁴⁵ XE.com, '[25,000 Iraqi Dinar to British Pound conversion](#)', 18 July 2023

⁴⁶ Simaet Bhatha, '[Iraqi Official Identification Documents...](#)', July 2021

⁴⁷ XE.com, '[10,000 Iraqi Dinar to British Pound conversion](#)', 18 July 2023

⁴⁸ DFAT, '[Country Information Report – Iraq](#)' (page 43), 16 January 2023

- 6.11.1 In April 2023 Simaet Bhatha published an article entitled “Electronic Passport: What is it and how can I get one?” which stated: ‘The electronic passport is the latest addition to the Iraqi documents which adhere to the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) high-security standards. Introduced in March 2023, this passport offers advanced technological features that provide convenience and ease of travel.’⁴⁹
- 6.11.2 The same source additionally stated the following regarding the process of obtaining an electronic passport, the places that issue them and its period of validity:
- ‘... A Unified National Card [INID] is required, as the information on the card will be used in the electronic passport, which prevents passport forgery due to its eyes and fingerprint scans.
- ‘1. You will need to go to the electronic passport office at the appointed time, where an officer will ask for your national card to enter your personal information. Then, the officer will take your ten fingerprints and eye scans.
- ‘2. Then, you will need to pay legal and printing fees to the Financial Department in the amount of 25,000 IQD and an additional 50 USD, or its equivalent in Iraqi dinars at the current exchange rate.
- ‘3. Once the process is complete, the officer will give you an appointment to receive the electronic passport, which can be on the same day or the day after. You may also request a passport delivery service from the office.
- ‘Available places to issue a passport.
- ‘currently, the following offices have been opened:
- Al-A'adhmiya e-passport office [Baghdad]
 - Al-Kadhimiya e-passport office [Baghdad]
 - Al-Mansour e-passport office [Baghdad]
- ‘... Validity period of the electronic passport.
- ‘The electronic passport is valid for eight years from the date of issuance.’⁵⁰
- 6.11.3 The same source also stated that ‘The passport can be issued and printed for the Iraqi community outside Iraq.’⁵¹
- 6.11.4 CPIT was unable to find further information on the process to apply for a ePassport outside Iraq (see [Bibliography](#)).
- 6.11.5 In August 2023, CPIT contacted the UNHCR (see [Annex H](#)) who stated the following regarding ePassports: ‘ePassports are generally being accepted to pass through checkpoints and if there are any suspicions the individuals name is verified against security databases (see [Security clearance](#) permit) Travellers with ePassports might still be asked to present additional valid document alongside their passport at certain checkpoints. The specific requirements and practices vary among different checkpoints and officers.’⁵²
- 6.11.6 However, it should be noted that the evidence in the paragraph above does **not** present very strong grounds supported by cogent evidence to depart

⁴⁹ Simaet Bhatha, ‘[Electronic Passport: What Is It and How Can I Get One?](#)’, May 2023

⁵⁰ Simaet Bhatha, ‘[Electronic Passport: What Is It and How Can I Get One?](#)’, May 2023

⁵¹ Simaet Bhatha, ‘[Electronic Passport: What Is It and How Can I Get One?](#)’, May 2023

⁵² Correspondence between CPIT and the UNHCR, 14 August 2023, [Annex H](#)

from the findings in paragraph 144(17) of [SMO2](#) which held that ‘A valid Iraqi passport is not recognised as acceptable proof of identity for internal travel by land’.

- 6.11.7 The IQ Forum of Policy Making Consultants (IFPMC) is a network of experts, researchers, politicians and entrepreneurs working on political and economic development in Iraq⁵³. In March 2023 they published an article entitled ‘Biometric passport in Iraq: advantages and future opportunities’ which stated: ‘A biometric passport is not foolproofly, but it is hard to falsify, steal, or alter due to several systems and mechanisms in place to protect the data... A third party cannot store any verification data on the chip as it uses Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) encryption technology. This encryption key will not be issued for fake data and will be detected immediately.’⁵⁴
- 6.11.8 The same source additionally published the following image of an Iraqi Electronic Passport⁵⁵:



- 6.11.9 Passport Index, a global passport ranking website⁵⁶, published the following image of the new Iraqi ePassport middle pages⁵⁷.

⁵³ IFPMC, ‘[About](#)’ no date

⁵⁴ IFPMC, ‘[Biometric passport in Iraq: advantages and future opportunities](#)’, March 2023

⁵⁵ IFPMC, ‘[Biometric passport in Iraq: advantages and future opportunities](#)’, March 2023

⁵⁶ Passport Index, ‘[About](#)’ no date

⁵⁷ Passport Index, ‘[Iraq Introduces 3rd Generation ePassport](#)’, 10 February 2023



6.11.10 The following image is a screenshot from the Government of Iraq’s YouTube channel from 9 March 2023 and shows the official launch of the ePassport⁵⁸:



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6.12 Driving Licence

6.12.1 In August 2022, Iraqi News, an online newspaper⁵⁹, published an article entitled ‘Digital driving license officially launched in Kurdistan’ which stated:

‘The Prime Minister of Kurdistan region, Masrour Barzani, announced on Wednesday the launch of the digital driving license during a press conference held in the General Directorate of Traffic in the capital Erbil.

‘... [The] Kurdistan government is now in a modern stage where it moved from red-tape procedures to a digital system, Barzani explained.

“Today, I tested the new driver licence system. Each citizen will have a unique personal number – the basis for our digital transformation agenda. Our people will soon enjoy many more digital services, reducing corruption and red tape”, Barzani said via Twitter.

“The new scheme is based on a central population information system, through which the government can issue digital IDs for citizens and provide services more efficiently and effectively.” Head of Kurdistan Department of

⁵⁸ Government of Iraq, [“Electronic Passport- YouTube”](#), 9 March 2023

⁵⁹ Iraqi News, [‘About’](#), undated

Information Technology, Hiwa Afandi, told Kurdistan 24.⁶⁰

- 6.12.2 A 2023 article entitled '13 steps to obtain the Iraqi Driving License' published by Simaet Bhatha stated that a medical test receipt, driving license application, INID or CSID, INC and residence card were required for the issuance of the Iraqi driving license⁶¹.
- 6.12.3 eRegulations Baghdad published the following image of an Iraqi driving license:



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- 6.12.4 CPIT was unable to ascertain whether a person is required to submit their biometric data to the INID central population information system in order to receive a digital driver's licence and whether the new system is applicable outside of the KRI in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

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6.13 Residency (Housing) Card: Central and Southern Iraq

- 6.13.1 In November 2021 EASO, citing various sources, stated that the residency card is also called housing card, housing information card or residence card and is bitaqat al-sakan in Arabic⁶³.
- 6.13.2 The same source additionally stated:

'The residency card is a "proof of an individual's place of residence and must be routinely presented as part of the application procedure for other identity cards and for access to a range of services." It is issued by the Ministry of Interior to the head of the household. Information on requirements to obtain the residency card in Iraq is scarce. The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada stated in 2013 with reference to an IOM representative in Iraq that for the issuance, renewal and replacement of the residency card applicants needed to present an original and a copy of the nationality certificate for the applicant and the applicant's wife and children, an original and copy of the civil status ID for the applicant and the applicant's wife and children, the original and a copy of the residency card of the applicant's father, the original

⁶⁰ Iraqi News, '[Digital driving license officially launched in Kurdistan](#)', 25 August 2022

⁶¹ Simaet Bhatha, '[13 steps to obtain the Iraqi Driving License](#)', January 2023

⁶² eRegulations Baghdad, '[Driving License](#)', no date

⁶³ EASO, '[Iraq – Key socio-economic indicators for Baghdad...](#)' (page 49), 25 November 2021

and a copy of the PDS [Public Distribution System] card of the applicant or his father, the original and a copy of the marriage certificate and a support of residence from the Municipal Council as well as four photos with a white background. UNHCR [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees] explained that furthermore, “in order to obtain a housing card, the head of household is required to present an official housing deed or rental contract with his/her name on it”.⁶⁴

6.13.3 The Simaet Bhatha July 2021 article stated:

‘The Residence Card is an official document which determines the place of residence of a family and includes details related to the ID of the head of the family. Steps to get a residence card:

1. Visit your local Information Office and complete a Residence Card application.
2. Attach the required supporting documents to the application including:
 - a) A Support letter from the Mukhtar addressed to the Central Information Office in the event of a new residence card request, or to the Residence Area Information Office in the case of renewing the old residence card.
 - b) Family ration card (original and photocopy).
 - c) Family Civil Status IDs (original and photocopy).
 - d) Iraqi Nationality Certificates for the family (original and photocopy).
3. You should receive your Residence Card within a period of two days.⁶⁵

6.13.4 The same source also provided the below image of a Residency card:

⁶⁴ EASO, ‘[Iraq – Key socio-economic indicators for Baghdad...](#)’ (page 54-55), 25 November 2021

⁶⁵ Simaet Bhatha, ‘[Iraqi Official Identification Documents...](#)’, July 2021



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6.13.5 In November 2022, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) published a report entitled ‘Country Guidance on Iraq: Ability of Iraqis to Legally Access and Settle Durably in Proposed Areas of Internal Relocation’ which stated:

‘The Housing Card is issued at the household level. Heads of household who already hold a Housing Card in their name from any location in Iraq and who seek to change their place of residency are required to transfer their Housing Card to the new location. Heads of household who do not hold a Housing Card in their name because they are still included in their family’s records must apply for a new Housing Card in the place in which they seek to reside.

‘... Requirements for the transfer of the Housing Card to the new location:

- ‘• Approval from the Housing Information Office in the former place of residency to transfer the individual’s records to the new place of residency and deactivate the Housing Card in the former place of residency. This approval is not granted if there is an ongoing investigation or an arrest warrant against the individual or any family member;
- ‘• An application form signed and stamped by the mukhtar (or local council or mayor) in the new place of residency;
- ‘• The approval from the concerned security actor/s in the new location, normally the Ministry of Interior Intelligence Department (Federal Iraq) or the Asayish (KR-I), respectively.

‘Documents required for the transfer/issuance of the Housing Card:

⁶⁶ Simaet Bhatha, ‘[Iraqi Official Identification Documents...](#)’, July 2021

- ‘• Original CSID and nationality certificate or UNID [Unified ID card – another term for the INID] for all family members;
- ‘• Approval letter from the local police department;
- ‘• Original Housing Card or, in case of first-time issuance, copy of the Housing Card in which the individual’s name was included (e.g., father’s Housing Card);
- ‘• Marriage contract in case of first-time issuance;
- ‘• A rental contract or house ownership deed from the new location; and
- ‘• At times, other documents such as the PDS (Ration card) are also required. If all conditions are met, the Housing Card will be transferred or issued, usually within 10 to 14 days.

‘... Single men, especially Sunni Arabs and Sunni Turkmen from formerly Da’esh-held or conflict-affected areas, may be subjected to additional scrutiny and therefore the process may take longer. The total cost for the transfer/issuance of the Housing Card, including fees (5,000 Iraqi Dinars [£2.92 GBP⁶⁷]) and costs for stamps, photocopies, etc., can reach up to 20,000 Iraqi Dinars [£11.66 GBP⁶⁸]

‘... Once the Housing Card has been transferred or issued, the individual / family has full access to basic services, including primary health care provided by public health care centres in their neighbourhood (including mandatory vaccinations for children). Access to primary and secondary schools is also available and they can request the transfer of their PDS registration to the new place of residency. Furthermore, they can transfer their civil status records to Baghdad and subsequently obtain/renew the CSID/INID in the new place of residency

‘... Those unable to transfer their Housing Card, or obtain a Housing Card in the new location, can normally not access the full range of basic services and rights, depending on the area.

‘... Single men and women who are still included in their father’s Housing Card are generally not able to transfer the Housing Card to the new location nor can they obtain a new Housing Card in their name (except if they own property in the new location).⁶⁹

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6.14 Residency Card (Housing Card): KRI

6.14.1 The DIS report, published March 2023:

‘A single woman over 18 needs the Housing Card of her family or at least a copy of it to apply for and obtain official documents such as a passport. The Housing Card is the most essential card required in connection with any paper work involving the authorities including issuance of documents such as passports.

‘... According to Landinfo report from 2018, the new digital National ID Card was also meant to replace the Housing Card; however, at the time of

⁶⁷ XE, ‘[5,000 Iraqi Dinar to British Pound conversion](#)’, 18 July 2023

⁶⁸ XE, ‘[20,000 Iraqi Dinar to British Pound conversion](#)’, 18 July 2023

⁶⁹ UNHCR, ‘[...Ability of Iraqis to Legally Access and Settle...](#)’, (page 10), November 2022

publishing of Landinfo report (April 2018), this had not happened yet and it was unclear when such replacement would take place

‘... The Housing Card contains the person’s three-folded name, i.e. the person’s own name, his/her father’s name, the grandfather’s name as well as the person’s place of residence. Within a household or a family, there is only one Housing Card, and it is issued in the name of the head of the household, i.e. often the father.

‘... Usually, single men or women remain included in their father’s Housing Card until they get married. When they marry, men can obtain their own Housing Card whilst women will be included in their husband’s Housing Card. If a single man or woman live independently in their own property, which they own, they can obtain a Housing Card in their name. Single men or women will, thus, generally not be able to obtain a new Housing Card and live on their own unless they become head of the household, for instance by being widowed or divorced or by owning a property’.⁷⁰

- 6.14.2 See [Ability of women to obtain identity documents](#) for more on the issues facing female headed households accessing identity documents.

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6.15 Security clearance permit

- 6.15.1 The January 2021 UNHCR report stated that:

‘... [S]ecurity clearance from relevant security agencies is generally needed in all areas, irrespective of the person’s profile/origin. Sunni Arabs and Sunni Turkmen from formerly ISIS-held or conflict-affected areas may be denied security clearance or run the risk arbitrary arrest and detention under the Anti-Terrorism Law of 2005 (Law No. 13 of 2005) on the basis of broad and discriminatory profiling.

‘... Upon entry to the KR-I (at either an internal border checkpoint or the airports in Erbil or Sulaymaniyah) and following security screening, the Asayish (Kurdish security agency) generally provides such persons with a temporary entry authorization valid for 30 days.’⁷¹

- 6.15.2 However, UNHCR informed CPIT in August 2023, this 30 day temporary entry authorisation cannot be used as a substitution for CSIDs/INIDs to pass through checkpoints at the border between the KRI and Federal Iraq⁷² (see [Annex H](#)).
- 6.15.3 In the report published in November 2021, EASO detailed the difference between the residency card and residency permit in the KRI: ‘The aforementioned residency card [covered in [section 8.13](#)] is not to be confused with the residency permit issued in the KRI, which was sometimes also referred to as residence card, but was basically a security clearance permit issued by the Asayish to individuals who did not originate from the KRI and wished to stay in the KRI longer than a month, such as Iraqi Arabs or Turkmen, individuals from previously ISIL-held areas or areas affected by the conflict.’⁷³

⁷⁰ DIS, “[Kurdistan Region of Iraq \(KRI\) Issues regarding single women...](#)”, pp. 17, March 2023

⁷¹ UNHCR, ‘[Ability of Persons...to Legally Access and Remain](#)’ (page 2-3), 11 January 2021

⁷² Correspondence between CPIT and the UNHCR, 14 August 2023, [Annex H](#)

⁷³ EASO, ‘[Iraq – Key socio-economic indicators for Baghdad...](#)’, (page 54-55), 25 November 2021

6.15.4 The NRC report published in September 2022 stated:

‘As far back as 2014, security actors in Iraq began to maintain databases of individuals believed to be affiliated with ISIS; both combatants and their first-degree relatives, who include wives, fathers, and children, were also added to these databases. Security clearance, which is required for removal from the databases, remains a prerequisite for freedom of movement and for applying for civil documentation. The specific criteria for this clearance remains unclear, and the process also frequently requires processes to disavow (tabrea’a) or report (ikhbar) a relative with perceived affiliation to ISIS. While these conditions are also not required consistently, in places where they are applied it is in contravention to a number of fundamental human rights principles - including due process - and results in severe psychosocial impacts for many families, including reported suicide attempts. It is also important to note that these processes do not replace broader social cohesion or peacebuilding initiatives - i.e. completing tabrea’a or ikhbar does not necessarily result in increased acceptance, or resulting opportunities to return to areas of origin. Indeed, in many cases the process can be perceived by some actors as a confirmation of affiliation to extremist groups. This is particularly notable as processes to secure many documents - for example the housing card - can require the approval or buy-in of local authorities, such as the mukhtar.’⁷⁴

6.15.5 In March 2022, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) published a report entitled ‘Iraq Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022’ stated:

‘Security clearance processes often lack transparency, whereby outcomes are unpredictable and often with no available legal remedies for individuals denied clearance. In some cases, families have been compelled by civilian authorities, armed and security actors, and/ or community and tribal leaders to renounce ties with family members perceived to be affiliated with extremists as a condition to obtain such clearance. These processes create significant anguish, stress and anxiety, and embed guilt by association and collective punishment. Additionally, the processes often have large administrative costs and further isolate already marginalized individuals and families.’⁷⁵

6.15.6 The DIS report, published March 2023, considered security lists in Iraq and stated: ‘In addition to the airport, the authorities at land borders all over Iraq and at checkpoints between KRI and Federal Iraq have access to the exit ban list [also known as security list or security clearance]. There are many cases of people being denied travelling between KRI and Federal Iraq due to similarity of their names to the names of persons wanted for terror-related issues. These cases are usually sorted out, but it takes a lot of time.’⁷⁶

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6.16 Public Distribution System (PDS) card (Ration Card)

6.16.1 The November 2021 EASO report, citing various sources, stated:

‘Holders of the PDS card were provided a monthly food ration via the Public

⁷⁴ NRC, ‘[Life in the margins: Re-examining the needs of...](#)’ (page 19), September 2022,

⁷⁵ UNOCHA, ‘[Iraq Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022](#)’, (page 138), 27 March 2022,

⁷⁶ DIS, ‘[Kurdistan Region of Iraq \(KRI\) Issues regarding single women...](#)’ (page 31), March 2023

Distribution System of the government, managed by the Ministry of Trade (MoT). The card was issued to the head of household, and contained a list of the names of all household members.

‘Several sources indicated that the PDS card was one of the key civil documents in Iraq which sometimes also served as an identity document. Humanitarian and UN agencies used the card to verify family units that were out to receive assistance.

‘In order to get a PDS card, it is necessary to present a civil ID and a residency card. Should the family composition change in any way, the PDS card had to be updated by handing in a marriage, birth or death certificate respectively.

‘In cooperation with the World Food Programme (WFP), as of summer 2020, the Government of Iraq was working on the digitalisation of the PDS System in a pilot study via the MoT. The smartphone app Tamwini (‘My Food Ration’), which was launched on 8 July 2020 as a pilot project in Baghdad, was supposed to enable households to remotely update family information using their smartphone.’⁷⁷

- 6.16.2 The Simaet Bhatha article published in July 2021 stated that the PDS card (known as a Ration Card in the article) is free of charge and takes one month from the date of submitting the application to receive the card, in Baghdad or the rest of the governorates of Iraq⁷⁸.

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6.17 Issuing identity documents by proxy

- 6.17.1 The [Iraq Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#) website noted the process of issuing documents by power of attorney:

‘Iraqi documents required –

- Original Iraqi personal ID(Hawyat el Ahwal) and Iraqi citizenship certificate (Shahdit el Jensia) or unified card(Bitaka el mwahada) and color copies of them all (for the principal).
- A copy of the Iraqi personal ID(Hawyat el Ahwal) and Iraqi citizenship certificate(Shahdit el Jensia) or unified card(Bitaka el mwahada), nationality certificate or unified card (for the attorney)
- Personal photos of the principal, 4 photos.
- Personal photos of the attorney, 4 photos.
- Fees: – (30) thirty dollars in cash [around £22.92 GBP⁷⁹].⁸⁰

- 6.17.2 Dr Fatah in a review of the previous CPIN on civil documentation and returns stated:

‘In order to grant power of attorney from the UK, if the person is from the IKR, they can do so by visiting the KRG office in London. They would need some sort of ID and the details of the person that they want to represent them in the IKR. The representatives ID details are not required. The application will then be approved by the KRG public relations office before

⁷⁷ EASO, ‘[Iraq – Key socio-economic indicators for Baghdad...](#)’ (page 55-56), 25 November 2021

⁷⁸ Simaet Bhatha, ‘[Iraqi Official Identification Documents...](#)’, July 2021

⁷⁹ XE.com, ‘[30 USD to GBP conversion](#)’, 18 July 2023

⁸⁰ Iraq Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ‘[General Power Of Attorney \(Wakala A'ma\)](#)’, undated

being taken to court for another approval. Only then will power of attorney be granted, and it will only be valid inside the IKR. However, if the application takes place in the Iraqi consulate in London, it can be used throughout Iraq. Again, the person would need some form of ID, British or Iraqi, and the details of the person that they wish to represent them.’⁸¹

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6.18 Possible consequences of not holding identity documents

6.18.1 The report authored by Protection Cluster Iraq and published by UNOCHA in October 2021 stated:

‘The lack of identity documentation directly increases the risk of other serious protection incidents and rights violations for the concerned individuals, especially at checkpoints manned by armed and security actors.

‘... Adults who have been lacking a valid identity document for an extended period of time in the context of their protracted displacement and who are unable to obtain or renew such documents are exposed to the risk of losing their legal identity, since they may become unable to prove their Iraqi nationality... In addition, lacking security clearance and/or valid identity documents prevents the affected individual from pursuing legal remedies through judicial institutions for any rights-violations that s/he may be subjected to.

‘...Lacking valid identity and civil documents prevents the affected individuals from accessing basic services and fully enjoying rights and entitlements. Health facilities often require some form of identity documents to provide routine immunization and health care. The Health cluster reports that whereas identity documentation may not always be needed for outpatient treatment at Primary Health Care Centers (PHCC) it is usually required for admission at hospitals. Similarly, children who do not have any identity documents are often prevented from being registered by schools under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, both in areas of displacement and returns. While a few school administrations allow children in such a situation to access education facilities, they are usually prevented from participating in public exams due to their lack of valid documentation.

‘...The submission of claims for compensation related to the damage, loss or destruction of housing, land and property to government Compensation Committees – an essential financial entitlement for IDPs and returnees whose homes have often been totally or partially destroyed during the conflict - also require the applicant to provide a valid identity document. Lastly, benefiting from various social protection schemes such as the Public Distribution System (PDS) – the PDS Card being a key civil document itself – also require having a valid identity document.’⁸²

6.18.2 The EASO November 2021 report, citing various sources, stated:

‘Paperless Iraqi families in urban areas formerly under ISIL control were not only limited in essential services but also in “their ability to recover and rebuild their lives” after the war due to their lack of necessary documents. ... they had limited access to formal employment, government compensation schemes for damaged housing, and opportunities to own or rent property.

⁸¹ Dr Rebwar Fateh, ‘[Inspection report on Country Of Origin Information, Iraq](#)’, January 2023

⁸² PCI via UNOCHA, ‘[Protection Analysis Report – Right to... documentation](#)’ (page 11-13), Oct 2021

People without civil documents were barred from accessing a significant portion of Iraq's recovery and reconstruction efforts.

'...Moreover, people without documents also faced a considerably higher risk of arbitrary detention and arrest. Especially, IDPs and returnees were reported to be severely impacted by a lack of documentation. Marginalised [and/or stateless] groups such as Faili Kurds, Bidoons, the Dom (Roma) and Palestinian refugees also had been barred access to civil documents, such as the ID card or the nationality certificate, or have faced difficulties in accessing them.

'...Children without legal documents faced a high risk of being condemned to spend their lives on the margins of society. They were not able to travel within the country, attend formal schools or obtain educational certificates and had no access to health-care or state social-welfare programs. If this issue is not resolved before they reach adulthood, these children are at risk of not having their marriages state-recognized, not being able to own or rent property, and lacking a fair chance at formal employment. Moreover, not owning civil documents puts children at increased risk of statelessness.'⁸³

6.18.3 The UNOCHA report published in 27 March 2022 stated:

'The lack of identity and civil documents affects all aspects of a person's life, and the impact is multidimensional. People without an official recognition of nationality and identity have limited access to essential services and are often unable to exercise their fundamental rights. Without documents to prove identity, IDPs' and returnees' physical safety is at risk due to potential arbitrary arrests and detention, rights violation at checkpoints, and limited freedom of movement.'⁸⁴

6.18.4 On 12 January 2023, Human Rights Watch (HRW), published its annual report on the human rights situation in Iraq, covering events in 2022. The report stated that 'Difficulty accessing civil documentation is closely linked to persistent perceptions among Iraqi authorities and segments of the public that the displaced were or are affiliated with ISIS.'⁸⁵

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Section updated: 20 October 2023

7. Entry requirements in central and southern Iraq

7.1 Country Guidance

7.1.1 The UT in [SMO2](#) held the following regarding Baghdad: 'There are no on-entry sponsorship requirements for Baghdad but there are sponsorship requirements for residency [see [Residency requirements](#)]. A documented individual of working age is likely to be able to satisfy those requirements.' [Paragraph 144 (25).

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7.2 Entry requirements

7.2.1 On 11 January 2021 the UNHCR published a report entitled 'Ability of Persons Originating from Formerly ISIS-Held or Conflict-Affected Areas to

⁸³ EASO, '[Iraq – Key socio-economic indicators for Baghdad...](#)' (page 57), 25 November 2021

⁸⁴ UNOCHA, '[Iraq Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022](#)', (page 28), 27 March 2022

⁸⁵ Human Rights Watch, '[World Report 2023: Iraq](#)' (Civil Documentation), 12 January 2023

Legally Access and Remain in Proposed Areas of Internal Relocation' which stated:

'An individual's ability to pass checkpoints and be admitted to the proposed area of relocation will require the individual to hold valid identity documentation (such as an ID card, nationality certificate or passport).

'... At the time of writing, persons from formerly ISIS [Islamic State of Iraq and Syria] -held or conflict-affected areas (including persons who returned to Iraq from a third country) do not require a sponsor to **enter** Babel, Baghdad, Basrah, Dhi-Qar, Diyala, Kerbala, Kirkuk City, Missan, Muthanna, Najef, Qadissiyah, and Wassit Governorates. Sponsorship requirements in order to enter Missan and Muthanna Governorates were lifted in January 2020 [however there are various requirements for them to remain in each of the Governorates. For more information see [Residency requirements](#)].'⁸⁶

7.2.2 The EASO report, citing various sources, published in November 2021 stated the following regarding the legal and administrative requirements to enter Baghdad:

'A person is required to hold a valid identity document (e.g., Civil Status ID card, Iraqi Nationality Certificate, or passport) in order to be allowed to pass checkpoints and be admitted into Baghdad.

'As of January 2021, individuals originating from areas formerly held by ISIL or affected by conflict (including returnees from a third country) do not need a sponsor to **enter** Baghdad governorate.'⁸⁷

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Section updated: 20 October 2023

8. Residency requirements

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8.1 Baghdad

8.1.1 The EASO report 2021 stated the following regarding the legal and administrative requirements to settle in Baghdad:

'IDPs seeking to stay in Baghdad are required to hold identity documentation in order to be able to obtain security clearance from the local security forces. This security clearance relating to the conflict with ISIL is the prerequisite for obtaining residency. Once clearance [see [Security clearance permit](#)] has been obtained, the individual can apply for residency documentation.

'Meanwhile, former Baghdad residents who have a Housing Card [[Residency \(Housing\) Card: Central and Southern Iraq](#)] ('Information Card') issued in Baghdad and intend to take up residency again in the same neighbourhood do not need sponsors or a support letter from the mukhtar.

⁸⁶ UNHCR, '[Ability of Persons... to Legally Access and Remain](#)' (page 2), 11 January 2021

⁸⁷ EASO, '[Iraq – Key socio-economic indicators for Baghdad...](#)' (page 14), 25 November 2021

The housing card indicates the address at which the household head owns or rents a house or flat and is issued by the General Directorate for Nationality within the Ministry of the Interior.

‘It has also been noted that movement restrictions do not apply for IDPs who are in possession of required residency documentation and that “no extra security measures are reportedly taken in IDP populated areas” in Baghdad. Once an IDP has residency documentation, he or she is considered a “resident” and can seek housing and move around within Baghdad. However, IDPs are not allowed to purchase or own property in the city.’⁸⁸

8.1.2 The UNHCR report published in November 2022 stated:

‘Individuals who do not originate from Baghdad Governorate, irrespective of their religious/ethnic profile, require two sponsors from the neighbourhood in which they intend to reside as well as a support letter from the mukhtar (or the local council or mayor). The two sponsors need to accompany the individual to the mukhtar (or the local council or mayor). The issuance of the support letter incurs a small fee of around 2,000 to 5,000 Iraqi Dinars [£1.17⁸⁹ - £2.92 GBP⁹⁰], depending on the mukhtar. The support letter does not have a specified period of validity and does not need to be renewed.

‘...In order to have access to the full range of rights and basic services, the individual / family is required to either transfer their Housing Card from the previous location to the new location in Baghdad, or to obtain a new Housing Card in the location in which they seek to reside in Baghdad.’⁹¹

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8.2 Diyala Governorate

8.2.1 The UNHCR November 2022 report stated:

‘Individuals who do not originate from Diyala Governorate, irrespective of their religious/ethnic profile, require a sponsor from the neighbourhood in which they intend to reside as well as a support letter from the mukhtar. The sponsor needs to accompany the individual to the mukhtar (or local council or mayor). The support letter does not have a specified period of validity and does not need to be renewed.

‘Those seeking to reside in villages in northern Muqdadiyah District and Saadiyah Sub-District in Khanaqin District, as well as villages located in the north of Al-Udhim Sub-District in Khalis District require support letters from three different administrative and security entities, namely from the local mukhtar’s office (or local council or mayor), the National Security and the Iraqi National Intelligence Service (INIS).

‘Concerning the transfer or issuance of the Housing Card and related access to rights and basic services, the same requirements as described for [Baghdad](#) apply.’⁹²

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8.3 Kirkuk City

⁸⁸ EASO, ‘[Iraq – Key socio-economic indicators for Baghdad...](#)’ (page 16-17), 25 November 2021

⁸⁹ XE.com, ‘[2000 Iraqi Dinar to British Pound conversion](#)’, 18 July 2023

⁹⁰ XE.com, ‘[5000 Iraqi Dinar to British Pound conversion](#)’, 18 July 2023

⁹¹ UNHCR, ‘[...Ability of Iraqis to Legally Access and Settle...](#)’ (page 10), November 2022,

⁹² UNHCR, ‘[...Ability of Iraqis to Legally Access and Settle...](#)’ (page 11), November 2022,

8.3.1 The UNHCR November 2022 report stated that:

'Individuals who do not originate from Kirkuk City, irrespective of their religious/ethnic profile, require a support letter from the mukhtar (or local council) in the neighbourhood in which they intend to reside. The support letter needs to be submitted to the nearest police station and be checked and stamped by the Ministry of Interior Intelligence Department in that neighbourhood. The support letter contains the basic biodata of each family member seeking to reside in Kirkuk. The support letter is free of charge; however, a small fee may be requested by the mukhtar (or local council). The support letter is generally valid for one year (sometimes only six months, depending on the purpose of stay) and renewable.

'Iraqis from other parts of Iraq are normally not able to transfer their Housing Card to Kirkuk. This is related to Kirkuk's particular status as an area disputed between the Federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG)...

'Individuals not originating from Kirkuk City (even if they obtained a Housing Card from Kirkuk) cannot issue/renew their CSID/UNID in Kirkuk City (instead, they would have to return to the place of origin), nor can they transfer their PDS card to Kirkuk City and need to collect their food rations in the place of origin.'⁹³

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8.4 Mosul City

8.4.1 The UNHCR November 2022 report stated:

'Individuals who do not originate from Mosul City and seek to reside there, irrespective of their religious/ethnic profile, must obtain security clearance from the concerned security forces, primarily the Ninewa Directorate of Intelligence and Counterterrorism, prior to relocating to Mosul City. The security clearance must be applied for in the area of origin. Persons currently outside Iraq would thus only be able to get security clearance for Mosul City by first returning to their area of origin.

'Iraqis approved to relocate to Mosul City do not require a sponsor. They must however register with the mukhtar or the local council in the neighbourhood in which they seek to reside. This registration process only needs to be done once and does not involve any costs...

'Once all of the above steps have been followed, persons wishing to settle in Mosul City are required to request the transfer of the Housing Card to Mosul City. The process to obtain or transfer the Housing Card to Mosul City and related access to rights and basic services.'⁹⁴

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8.5 Southern Governorates

8.5.1 The UNHCR November 2022 document states that:

'Individuals who do not originate from the governorate in which they intend to settle, irrespective of their religious/ethnic profile, require a local sponsor as well as a support letter from the local mukhtar (or local council or mayor) in

⁹³ UNHCR, '[...Ability of Iraqis to Legally Access and Settle...](#)' (page 11), November 2022,

⁹⁴ UNHCR, '[...Ability of Iraqis to Legally Access and Settle...](#)' (page 12), November 2022,

order to legally reside in Babel, Basra, Dhi-Qar, Kerbala, Missan, Muthanna, Najef, Qadissiyah and Wassit Governorates. The sponsor needs to accompany the individual to the mukhtar (or local council or mayor). The issuance of the support letter incurs a small fee of around 2,000 to 5,000 [£1.17⁹⁵ - £2.92 GBP⁹⁶] Iraqi Dinars, depending on the mukhtar.

‘In addition, the relevant Operations Command at the governorate level must grant specific security clearance. Security clearance by local security actors (e.g. the PMF) may also be required.

‘Concerning the issuance or transfer of the Housing Card to any of the southern governorates and related access to rights and basic services, the same process as described for [Baghdad](#) applies.’⁹⁷

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Section updated: 20 October 2023

9. Entry and residency requirements in the Iraqi Kurdish Region (IKR)

9.1 Country Guidance

9.1.1 The UT in [SMO2](#) held:

‘Once at the IKR border (land or air) P would normally be granted entry to the territory. Subject to security screening, and registering presence with the local mukhtar, P would be permitted to enter and reside in the IKR with no further legal impediments or requirements. There are no sponsorship requirements for entry or residence in any of the three IKR Governorates for Kurds.

‘... There are no sponsorship requirements for entry or residence in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, although single Arab and Turkmen citizens require regular employment in order to secure residency. Arabs from former conflict areas and Turkmen from Tal Afar are subject to sponsorship requirements to enter or reside in Dohuk...’ [Paragraph 144 (30) and (35)]

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9.2 Entry requirements

9.2.1 The January 2021 UNHCR report stated the following regarding entry requirements for the IKR:

‘An individual’s ability to pass checkpoints and be admitted to the proposed area of relocation will require the individual to hold valid identity documentation (such as an ID card, nationality certificate or passport).

‘... Iraqis not originating from the KR-I [Kurdistan Region of Iraq], including persons from formerly ISIS-held or conflict-affected areas, do not require a sponsor in order to enter Dohuk, Erbil or Sulaymaniyah Governorates. Upon entry to the KR-I (at either an internal border checkpoint or the airports in Erbil or Sulaymaniyah) and following security screening, the Asayish (Kurdish security agency) generally provides such persons with a temporary entry authorization valid for 30 days. This authorization is issued for short-term visits (for the purposes of medical care, business, shopping or similar reasons). It enables the holder to enter and remain in the KR-I within the

⁹⁵ XE.com, [‘2000 Iraqi Dinar to British Pound conversion’](#), 18 July 2023

⁹⁶ XE.com, [‘5000 Iraqi Dinar to British Pound conversion’](#), 18 July 2023

⁹⁷ UNHCR, [‘...Ability of Iraqis to Legally Access and Settle...’](#) (page 12), November 2022

validity period of the authorization. The holder of such authorization is unable to rent a house or secure regular employment.⁹⁸

- 9.2.2 Dr Fatah in a review of the previous CPIN on civil documentation and returns stated:

‘It should be noted that there are some defacto barriers to Kurds relocating from the “disputed territories” to the IKR. This is because some of the policies which the KRG pursues are arbitrary in the treatment of Kurds from disputed areas. It is not entirely clear what the requirements are to move between the governorates. According to a field worker in the IKR, the border with Iraq remains open, but people are not really moving between the IKR and the rest of Iraq.’⁹⁹

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9.3 Sulaymaniyah Governorate

- 9.3.1 In the report published in November 2021, EASO detailed the following regarding the legal and administrative requirements to settle in Sulaymaniyah:

‘In order to obtain residency permission, they need security clearance. While this permit, which is issued in the form of an ID card proving legal registration with the Asayish, is commonly called “residency permit”, it is in fact a security clearance permit that is issued by the Asayish.

‘According to IOM, these protocols apply for any person from outside the KRI seeking to reside there, regardless of their displacement status. The residency permits are normally valid for a year and can generally be renewed reportedly at any Asayish office.’¹⁰⁰

- 9.3.2 The UNHCR report published in November 2022 stated:

‘All Iraqis, irrespective of their place of origin and ethnic/religious profile, have access to public education and health services in Sulaymaniyah. In order to access regular employment, rent an apartment, and access other rights and basic services, they must regularize their stay with the Asayish and transfer their Housing Card, with requirements varying depending on their place of origin, ethnic/religious profile and family status...

‘Iraqis who originate from another KR-I governorate, irrespective of their ethnic/religious background, and who seek to settle in Sulaymaniyah Governorate need to request a new Asayish code and either transfer their Housing Card from the governorate of origin to Sulaymaniyah Governorate, or obtain a new Housing Card in Sulaymaniyah Governorate. This process involves the following steps:

⁹⁸ UNHCR, ‘[Ability of Persons... to Legally Access and Remain](#)’ (page 2-3), 11 January 2021

⁹⁹ Dr Rebwar Fateh, ‘[Inspection report on Country Of Origin Information, Iraq](#)’, January 2023

¹⁰⁰ EASO, ‘[Iraq – Key socio-economic indicators for Baghdad...](#)’, (page 17-18), 25 November 2021

'The process to take up permanent residency involves an interview by the General Asayish Directorate of Sulaymaniyah. They will then be issued with a new Asayish code to confirm that the individual/family is known by the General Asayish in Sulaymaniyah. Based on the Asayish code, the individual can start the process of renting a house; however, s/he will need to transfer the Housing Card or obtain a new Housing Card before being able to sign the rental contract. Once the Housing Card has been transferred/issued, they have access to regular employment and can also transfer their PDS card. They are however not able to obtain/renew their CSID/UNID [another term for the INID] in Sulaymaniyah (instead they have to return to their place of origin).'

'Single men and women face restrictions on the locations and types of rental accommodation. For instance, they are not permitted to rent apartments in Sulaymaniyah City Centre, unless the apartment is part of an apartment complex.'¹⁰¹

9.3.3 The same source additionally stated:

'For individuals of Kurdish or Yazidi background who originate from a governorate outside the KR-I, the same process as described above...applies.

'Once their Housing Card has been transferred to or issued in Sulaymaniyah, they have access to regular employment and can request the transfer of the PDS card to Sulaymaniyah (unless they originate from the disputed areas). They are however not entitled to obtain/renew their CSID/UNID in Sulaymaniyah (instead they have to return to their place of origin). Single men and women face restrictions on areas and types of rental accommodation...

'Arab and Turkmen families originating from outside the KR-I must approach the local Asayish in the neighbourhood in which they seek to reside in order to obtain a residency card ("Information Card"). The residency card is valid for one year and renewable. They do not require a sponsor.

'Based on the one-year residency card, Arab and Turkmen families from outside the KR-I can rent an apartment and access informal employment (without formal work contract, primarily in the construction and hospitality sectors).

'Families that hold a one-year residency card can request the transfer of their Housing Card to Sulaymaniyah, or obtain a new Housing Card ([using the] same process as described above for Iraqis from another KR-I governorate). Once the Housing Card has been transferred or issued, they can access regular employment based on a work contract. They can also request the transfer of their PDS card to Sulaymaniyah. They are however not entitled to obtain/renew their CSID/UNID [another term for INID] in Sulaymaniyah (instead they have to return to their place of origin).

'Single Arab and Turkmen men and women normally receive only a one-month renewable residency permit. Exceptionally, if they can secure regular employment (with work contract) and submit a support letter from their prospective employer, they obtain a one-year, renewable residency card from the Asayish. In practice, holders of a one-month residency card face

¹⁰¹ UNHCR, '[...Ability of Iraqis to Legally Access and Settle...](#)' (page 15), November 2022,

difficulties to finding regular employment due to the short duration of their permits. Single men and women face restrictions on the locations and types of rental accommodation.¹⁰²

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9.4 Dohuk Governorate

9.4.1 The UNHCR November 2022 report stated:

‘Iraqis from any of the other KR-I governorates have access to public education and health services once they enter Dohuk Governorate. They can also access employment and rent or buy an apartment in Dohuk. Access to other rights and basic services requires that they regularize their stay with the Asayish and the local authorities and transfer their Housing Card.

‘In order to remain in Dohuk beyond the initial 30 days, Iraqis from another KR-I governorate need to obtain a “proof of residence letter” from the local mukhtar in the neighbourhood in which they intend to settle.

‘...Once the Housing Card has been transferred or issued, the individual / family can request the transfer of their civil records to Dohuk and subsequently obtain/renew their CSID/UNID in Dohuk. They can also request the transfer of the PDS card to Dohuk.

‘Iraqis from outside the KR-I are entitled to rent a house and access regular employment once they enter Dohuk. They also have access to public health and education. Access to other rights and basic services requires that they regularize their stay with the Asayish and the local authorities and transfer or obtain the Housing Card in Dohuk.

‘Individuals who originate from a governorate outside the KR-I and who wish to stay in Dohuk Governorate beyond the initial one-month period, must approach the local Asayish office in the neighbourhood in which they seek to reside. They must be accompanied by a sponsor from Dohuk Governorate and apply for a residency permit issued by the Asayish. For individuals holding a regular work contract, the employer can serve as sponsor. The employer will normally have to submit the work contract to the Asayish. For those renting an apartment, the lease contract can be submitted in lieu of presenting a sponsor. If approved, they will be provided with a (renewable) Asayish-issued residency permit valid for up to six months, depending on the purpose of stay.

‘Kurds and Yazidis from outside the KR-I (including from the “disputed areas”) are permitted to transfer the Housing Card to Dohuk Governorate. For this purpose, they first need to initiate the cancellation of the Housing Card in the place of origin, which must be done in person (no proxy allowed)...

‘Once Kurds or Yazidis have transferred or obtained the Housing Card, they can access basic services. However, they cannot obtain/renew their CSID/UNID in Dohuk (instead they must return to their area of origin) nor can they request a transfer of their PDS card to Dohuk.

‘Individuals of other profiles from outside the KR-I (including Arabs, Turkmen, Christians, Shabak, Kaka’i, Sabaeen-Mandaeen, etc.) cannot transfer their Housing Card to Dohuk Governorate. Also, they cannot

¹⁰² UNHCR, [...Ability of Iraqis to Legally Access and Settle...](#) (page 15-16), November 2022,

obtain/renew their CSID/UNID in Dohuk Governorate (instead they must return to their area of origin), nor can they transfer their PDS [Public Distribution System] card to Dohuk. They are however entitled to access basic services such as education and health services.¹⁰³

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9.5 Erbil Governorate

9.5.1 The UNHCR report published in November 2022 stated:

‘Iraqis from any KR-I governorate have access to basic services such as health and education, can access employment, and rent an apartment in Erbil. They are required to regularize their stay with the Asayish and the local authorities.

‘Iraqis originating from another KR-I governorate seeking to settle in Erbil are required to register with the local Asayish in the neighbourhood in which they seek to reside (within 48 hours following entry via Erbil International Airport, 30 days following entry by road). Following this, they need to register with the mukhtar of the neighbourhood.

‘Iraqis from any of the other KR-I governorates can request the transfer of the Housing Card to Erbil or request its issuance in Erbil. Once the Housing Card has been transferred or issued, the individual / family can obtain/renew their CSID/UNID in Erbil and request the transfer their PDS registration to Erbil.

‘Arabs and Turkmen from outside the KR-I holding a “Security Guarantee Card” (also known as “residency permit”) are allowed to rent a house, seek regular employment and have access to public health and education. They need to regularize their stay with the Asayish by extending the “Security Guarantee Card”. They cannot transfer their Housing Card from the governorate of origin to Erbil Governorate and hence do not have access to other rights and basic services.

‘Within the period of validity of the “Security Guarantee Card” (48 hours or 30 days), Arabs and Turkmen not originating from the KR-I and seeking to reside in Erbil Governorate must approach the local Asayish in the neighbourhood in which they seek to reside to extend the validity of the “Security Guarantee Card”. The “Security Guarantee Card” will be extended for up to one year (renewable), if the individual holds a work or rental contract. Those who do not hold a work or rental contract will have their “Security Guarantee Card” renewed for only 30 days, following which they have to request another extension.

‘Single Arab and Turkmen men and women generally only receive a one-month renewable “Security Guarantee Card”. Given the short validity, they generally face difficulties finding regular employment. Single Arab and Turkmen men who have proof of regular employment and a support letter from their employer can apply for a one-year “Security Guarantee Card”, but few applications are granted.

‘...Iraqi Arabs and Turkmen, even if they hold a “Security Guarantee Card” valid for a year, cannot transfer the Housing Card from their governorate of origin to Erbil, or obtain a Housing Card in Erbil. As a result, they cannot

¹⁰³ UNHCR, [‘...Ability of Iraqis to Legally Access and Settle...’](#) (page 12), November 2022,

request the transfer of their PDS card to Erbil nor can they obtain/renew their CSID/UNID in Erbil (instead they must return to their area of origin).

'Members of minority groups not originating from the KR-I are permitted to reside in Erbil without the need to obtain a "Security Guarantee Card". They however need to register with the Asayish in the neighbourhood in which they seek to reside. Following this, they need to register with the mukhtar of the neighbourhood. Following this process, they do not face restrictions to rent an apartment, take up regular employment and access basic services such as health and education.

'Persons of this profile cannot transfer their Housing Card from their governorate of origin to Erbil or obtain a new Housing Card in Erbil. As a result, they cannot transfer their PDS card to Erbil nor can they obtain/renew their CSID/UNID [another term for the INID] in Erbil (instead they must return to their area of origin).'¹⁰⁴

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Section updated: 20 October 2023

10. Freedom of movement

10.1.1 On 20 March 2023, the United States Department of Stated (USSD) published its annual report on human rights practices in Iraq (covering events in 2022) which stated:

'The constitution and law mostly provide for the freedom of internal movement, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, but the government did not consistently respect these rights. Law and custom generally do not respect freedom of movement for women. For example, the law prevents a woman from applying for a passport without the consent of her male guardian or a legal representative. Women could not obtain a Civil Status Identification Document, required for access to public services, food assistance, health care, employment, education, and housing, without the consent of a male relative.

'In some circumstances authorities restricted movements of displaced persons, and authorities did not allow some IDP camp residents to depart without specific permission, thereby limiting access to livelihoods, education, and services. Many parts of the country liberated from ISIS control suffered from movement restrictions due to checkpoints of PMF [Popular Mobilisation Forces] units and other government forces. In other cases local authorities did not always recognize security permits of returnees or comply with the central government's orders to facilitate, but not force, returns.

'The law permits security forces to restrict internal movement and take other necessary security and military measures in response to security threats and attacks. There were numerous reports government forces, including the ISF [Iraqi Security Forces] and PMF, selectively enforced regulations, including for ethnosectarian reasons, as well as criminal extortion, requiring residency permits to limit entry of persons into areas under their control.

'Multiple international NGOs reported PMF units prevented civilians, including Sunni Arabs and members of ethnic and religious minority groups, from returning to their homes after government forces ousted ISIS.

¹⁰⁴ UNHCR, '[...Ability of Iraqis to Legally Access and Settle...](#)' (page 13-14), November 2022,

'In September [2022] Basrah Governor Asaad al-Eidani announced the Ministry of Interior had agreed, at the governor's behest, to stop approving requests by individuals from other provinces to move to Basrah. The decision, issued by the Directorate of General Nationality, without reference to coordination with the province, came after an abnormal increase in such requests from other provinces for individuals to move to Basrah. Eidani justified the prohibition on moving to Basrah as necessary for the security and economic health of the province. In August [2022] Imtidad Movement member of parliament Dheaa al-Hindi of Karbala sent a letter to the Ministry of Interior demanding it not allow citizens to move from other regions to Karbala. Activists criticized the prohibition of internal movement as a violation of the constitution, which provides for freedom of movement. Activists stated internal movement limitations were driven by corruption and a lack of opportunities.

'KRG authorities restricted movements in certain areas for nonresidents. Both residents and nonresidents were required to register with the local Asayish office. Citizens of all ethnosectarian backgrounds, including Kurds, crossing into the IKR from central or southern regions were obligated to cross through checkpoints and undergo personal and vehicle inspection. The government imposed similar restrictions on IDPs from Ninewa Province and the disputed areas.'¹⁰⁵

10.1.2 The Freedom House annual report on political rights and civil liberties covering events in 2022, published on 13 April 2023 stated:

'Freedom of movement has improved somewhat as areas formerly controlled by IS [Islamic State] were brought back under government control. However, large-scale destruction of housing and infrastructure, the presence of sectarian or partisan militias, and the ongoing threat of violence has made it difficult for many displaced people to return home. The renewed IS insurgency and the Iraqi Security Forces' corresponding response in 2021 has constrained the freedom of movement of residents in rural western and northern Iraq.

'The KRG also continues to prevent Arab families from returning to villages on the border with Syria, from which they fled during fighting between the Peshmerga and IS in 2014.

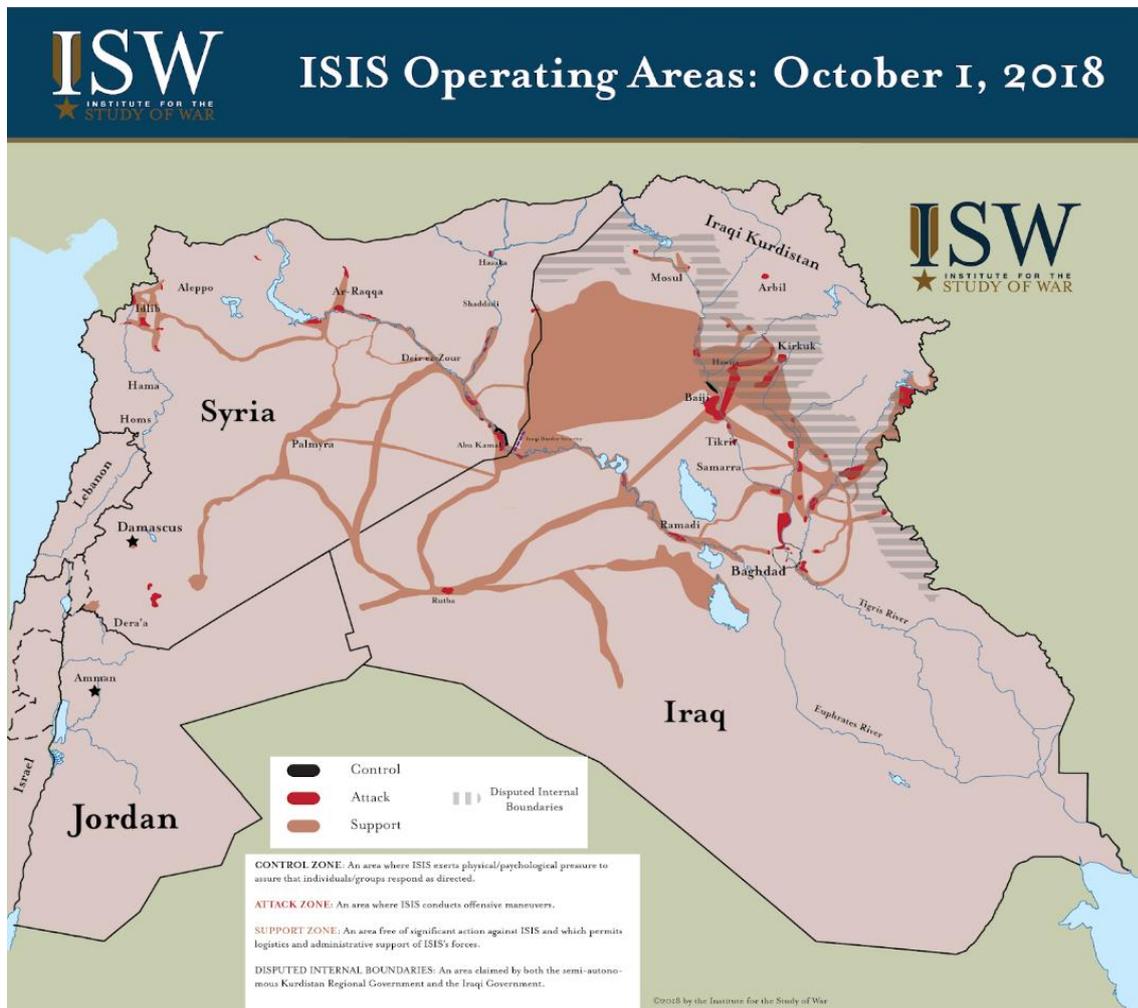
'The movement of women is limited by legal restrictions. Women require the consent of a male guardian to obtain a passport and the Civil Status Identification Document, which is needed to access employment, education, and many social services.'¹⁰⁶

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¹⁰⁵ USSD, '[2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Iraq](#)' (section 2d), 20 March 2023

¹⁰⁶ Freedom House, '[Freedom in the World 2022 – Iraq](#)', (Section G1), 13 April 2023

Annex A: Institute for the Study of War Map of ISIL's Operating Areas – used in the case of SMO1



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Annex B: Information obtained from the Home Office's Returns Logistics Department – April 2020

Failed Asylum Seekers (FAS)

Laissez Passers (LPs)

- 1) Please can you describe the process of obtaining a Laissez Passer for a failed asylum seeker from the Iraqi Embassy in London in as much detail as possible (please include details of what documents are required, if they have to undergo an interview, timescales etc).

For the enforced return of a FAS there is no interview requirement. However, they will need to hold at least one of the following (copy or original, valid or expired) in order for the Iraqi Embassy to issue a Laissez Passer:

- **Passport**
- **Birth Certificate**
- **Marriage Certificate**
- **Civil Status ID (CSID)**
- **Iraqi Nationality Certificate (INC)**
- **Iraq National Identity Card (INID)**
- **Iraq residency card**
- **Registration Document (1957)**

The embassy verification process tends to take 10-14 days. We only currently have agreement to enforce the return of single males.

All categories of voluntary cases will be considered (including those without documents) but they will usually require an interview face to face or by phone.

- 2) Can an individual obtain LPs for the rest of their family (i.e. spouses, children etc)? **Voluntary cases only. For enforced cases see answer to Q1.**
- 3) What documents do family members in Iraq have to present to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to prove the FAS's nationality? **Any from the list in response to Q1. Phone numbers or signed affidavits from family members in Iraq are also useful to the verification process.**
- 4) What happens once a FAS's nationality is verified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Iraq? i.e. does this verification get sent to the Iraqi Embassy in London to issue a LP? **Yes but most of the straight forward verification of documents can be done locally by the embassy.**
- 5) How long does this verification take? **10-14 days locally, up to 30 days+ if enquiries are required in-country.**

- 6) Are these processes the same for individuals who originate in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq?
Yes

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Annex C: Returns Logistics statement on returns to Iraq and the IKR – January 2023

DISCLAIMER: ANNEX C CONTAINS MISLEADING INFORMATION AND SHOULD BE IGNORED

I, Mairead Peronius of the Home Office, will say as follows:

1. I am a Country Manager and I have been employed by the Home Office since 2004. I have been in Returns Logistics since February 2019, and have a longstanding understanding of the work. My main duties include managing a team within RLO who engage with diplomatic missions in the UK and representatives of overseas governments to obtain travel documentation and agree returns processes to facilitate returns.
2. Failed asylum seekers and foreign national offenders can now be returned to any airport in Federal Iraq and the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, as stated in section 3.1.1 of the Home Office's *Country Policy and Information Note: internal relocation, civil documentation and returns, Iraq, July 2022*.
3. Between 30/09/2020 and 05/10/2022 the Home Office successfully enforced the removal of 8 Iraqi nationals to Erbil and 9 to Sulaymaniyah. There were no flights between the UK and Iraq from 17/03/2020 to March 2021 due to the Covid pandemic.
4. The contents of this statement are derived from Home Office records and minutes, save as otherwise appears, and are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings for contempt of court may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.



Signature:

Date: 04/01/2023

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Annex D: Iraqi Embassy email to Returns Logistics - Renewing lost INIDs – January 2023

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk>
Sent: 19 January 2023 10:09
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk>; ALAR SAT Country Guidance <[REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Iraq: Replacement INIDs

[REDACTED]

I received a response from the Iraq Embassy on this matter.

A- As for the INID issue:

- 1- The Iraqi citizen shall report the loss to the local police and an official notification report shall be issued, and submit it to the Iraqi Consulate to be certified by the Consul.
- 2- The Iraqi Consul organizes an official lost report that includes the citizen's signature and fingerprint.
- 3- A written undertaking shall be made by the Iraqi citizen that he did not give up the Iraqi nationality.
- 4- The application has to be sent to MOFA.
- 5- A Power of attorney shall be made for someone to follow up with competent authority to issue a new INID.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

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Annex E: British Embassy in Baghdad email to Returns Logistics - CSID issuing offices – February 2023

From: Legal Returns - IRAQ embassy - UK <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 27 February 2023 17:24
To: [REDACTED]>
Cc: [REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Query - CSID OFFICES

[REDACTED],
Good morning,
1- The information is confirmed "there are no longer any CSID offices in Iraq and that only INID offices now exist".

[REDACTED]

Best regards

[REDACTED]

On Thu, Feb 23, 2023 at 5:41 PM [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
wrote:

[REDACTED]

I hope you are well. I wondered if we could make some enquiries regarding CSID issuing offices. Our Country Policy & Information Team (CPIT) have approached us with a query which they have asked us to seek clarification on.

CPIT have been informed that there are no longer any CSID offices in Iraq and that only INID offices now exist. This has come from an unconfirmed source, so they wanted to ascertain directly with the Embassy if this is the case. I would appreciate any information you can provide on this matter.

[REDACTED]

Thank you in advance and look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

SEO Country Manager

Returns Logistics Operations – Team 3

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Annex F: Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs Baghdad email to Returns Logistics – CSID issuing offices – August 2023

From: [REDACTED]@mofa.gov.iq>
Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2023 11:35:13 AM
To: [REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk>
Subject: List

Do you trust this email? This email originated from outside the Home Office, or came from a Home Office system that has not been certified. Please exercise caution before opening attachments or clicking on links within this email or any suspicious email, particularly from unknown senders.

Dear [REDACTED]

I hope this email finds you well and everything going good.

Please find the attached new list for all departments belonging to the Ministry of Interior, all departments are issuing the Iraqi identification cards and **no department issues the civil status identity**.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
Minister Office / MOFA - Baghdad

Email [REDACTED]

Mobile Iraq [REDACTED]

Uk + [REDACTED]

A list of departments belonging to the Ministry of Interior that are issuing INIDs is available upon request.

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Annex G: UNHCR email to CPIT – Checkpoints – March 2023

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@unhcr.org>
Sent: 08 March 2023 10:22
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@unhcr.org>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@unhcr.org>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@unhcr.org>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@unhcr.org>
Subject: RE: UK HO- IRQ civil documentation

Do you trust this email? This email originated from outside the [Home Office](#), or came from a Home Office system that has not been certified. Please exercise caution before opening attachments or clicking on links within this email or any suspicious email, particularly from unknown senders.

Dear [REDACTED],

I hope this finds you well and you had a nice leave.

Kindly find our responses to your questions below in blue.

Please let me know if you require any further clarification.

Kind regards,
[REDACTED]

Point II.A says “An individual’s ability to pass checkpoints and be admitted to the proposed area of relocation will require the individual to hold valid identity documentation (such as the CSID/UNID, nationality certificate, or passport)”

Looking at the sources for this DRC and OCHA only refer to “identity documents” without specifying the type, and Protection cluster [says](#) “The need to show one’s Civil Status ID Card”. In our SMO2 [is](#) was decided that Passports are not an accepted form of documentation to pass through checkpoints. My suspicion is that this is due to issues with the series number of passports and ISIS forged passports. Do you have reports that Iraqi passports can be used to cross checkpoints?

The Iraqi passport is in principle recognized at checkpoints and in case of suspicions, the [details](#) of the individual is checked in the security databases to see if he/she is wanted or not. Further, at times, and due to concerns over the series number of passports, some checkpoints may require an additional valid document besides the passport. The practice differs across various checkpoints and officers.

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Annex H: UNHCR email to CPIT – Checkpoints 2 – August 2023

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@unhcr.org>
Sent: 14 August 2023 09:05
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@unhcr.org>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@unhcr.org>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@unhcr.org>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@unhcr.org>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@unhcr.org>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@unhcr.org>
Subject: RE: UK HO- IRQ civil documentation

Do you trust this email? This email originated from outside the [Home Office](#), or came from a Home Office system that has not been certified. Please exercise caution before opening attachments or clicking on links within this email or any suspicious email, particularly from unknown senders.

Dear [REDACTED],

I hope this finds you well and that you are having a nice summer.

Kindly find our responses below (in blue).

Please let me know if you need any further clarification.

Kindest regards,
[REDACTED]

1. Can the 30 day temporary entry authorization “visa” be used to pass through checkpoints in absence of other ID such as INID/CSID/Passport?
[In order to enter the KR-I or move within the KR-I the individual is required to hold valid identity documentation \(i.e., CSID, UNID, nationality certificate or passport\).](#)
2. You mentioned previously about issues with using Passports at checkpoints due to series | numbers; are the new electronic biometric passports more readily accepted? I guess the role out of this is still very recent but essentially what I am asking is if the new ePassport system will solve the need for having a INID or CSID to pass through checkpoints.
[The Iraqi passport \(including e-passports\) is generally accepted at checkpoints, and if there are any suspicions, the individual's information is verified against security databases to determine whether they are wanted or not. Travelers with passport or e-passports might still be asked to present an additional valid document alongside their passport at certain checkpoints. The specific requirements and practices vary among different checkpoints and officers.](#)
[Please note that the UNID is a documentary requirement to apply for the e-Passport \(as the biometric information for the passport will be taken from the UNID\). So unless someone already holds a UNID, s/he cannot apply for the e-passport.](#)
[Please also note that to date the implementation of e-passports in Iraq has been limited to specific regions, namely Baghdad, Basra, Najaf, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah. Other areas are yet to be included in this system \(as of July 2023\).](#)
3. Are biometrics checked at checkpoints- as in, are people at checkpoints asked to scan their fingerprints/ Irises to check against the database and their card? How easy would it be for someone to use someone else’s INID card to pass through a checkpoint? I suspect the answer to this is it depends on the checkpoint, but what I’m wanting to know is if they have the technical capabilities to scan at checkpoints?
[Not all checkpoints within Federal Iraq and the KR-I have the necessary technological capabilities to validate a person's identity through biometric records when presented with a UNID. Nevertheless, the process of issuing UNIDs is complicated, and instances of fraudulent activities are not common with the unified card.](#)

Glossary of key terms

Biometrics: A form of identification. Biometric indicators include fingerprints, Iris recognition and facial recognition

Checkpoint: A road block used by security forces to check the identification and purpose of the population moving through them. Located at the entry to most cities and along major roads.

Civil documentation: A form of official documenting confirming a person's identity.

Clan: Subunit of the Tribe usually including family and extended family

Civil Status Affairs (CSA) office: A local office where civil documentation may be obtained

Civil Status Identity Document (CSID): Personal identification card used to access services.

Daesh: Another name for ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) also known as ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant).

Family book: A generational record of a person's family tree. Contains a unique number that is linked to the family.

Formerly contested areas: The areas of Iraq and Syria previously under ISIS control.

Governorate: The largest Iraqi administrative division. It can be compared to a "county" in the UK and are generally in charge of local services

Housing card: Also known as a residency card. This is held by the head of the household and is proof that a person is allowed to live in that area.

Iraqi National Certificate (INC): Originally a separate document to the CSID to evidence nationality. The INC is now incorporated into the INID.

Iraqi National Identity Document (INID): Also known as the Unified National Card, Unified Card or Unified National Card. This card replaces the CSID and contains a person's biometric data

Kurdish Region of Iraq (KRI): Also known as the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR) is the autonomous Kurdish region of Iraq.

Laissez Passer: Also known as 'pass doc', 'passport laissez' or simply 'passport'. A single use document used to travel back to Iraq in the absence of a passport.

Minority groups: People of Iraqi nationality but not of the dominant Arab ethnicity and Sunni/Shia religion.

Mukhtar: Local authority. Head of the village or neighbourhood.

Public Distribution System (PDS) card: Also known as a ration card used to obtain a monthly food ration distributed by the government.

Security guarantee card: Also known as 'security clearance'. This is a card given to those who have been proven not to have links to ISIS and have had their names taken off an 'exit ban list' also known as a 'security list.

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Research methodology

The country of origin information (COI) in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual](#), 2024. Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion. Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources

Commentary may be provided on source(s) and information to help readers understand the meaning and limits of the COI.

Wherever possible, multiple sourcing is used and the COI compared to ensure that it is accurate and balanced, and provides a comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the issues relevant to this note at the time of publication.

The inclusion of a source is not, however, an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a footnote.

Full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

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Terms of Reference

A 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) is a broad outline of the issues relevant to the scope of this note and forms the basis for the [country information](#).

The Home Office uses some standardised ToR, depending on the subject, and these are then adapted depending on the country concerned.

For this particular CPIN, the following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Return of Iraqi nationals
 - Returns to Baghdad
 - Flights to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI)
- Documentation
 - Civil registration system
 - Iraqi National Identity Card (INID)
 - Civil Status ID Card (CSID)
 - Iraqi Nationality Certificate (INC)
 - Others
- Entry and residency requirements to the Central/Southern Iraq and the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR)
- Freedom of movement

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Version control and feedback

Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **15.0**
- valid from **28 October 2025**

Official – sensitive: Start of section

The information in this section has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use only.

Official – sensitive: End of section

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Changes from last version of this note

- Clarification that this CPIN does not reflect the position taken by the Home Office in the September 2025 Iraq Country Guidance hearing.
- Clarification that the Home Office was unable to remove individuals previously resident outside the KRI directly to the KRI prior to August 2025.
- Clarification that the information that has been included following the Independent Advisory Group on Country Information-commissioned review of February 2023 cannot be used to depart from the existing Country Guidance.

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Feedback to the Home Office

Our goal is to provide accurate, reliable and up-to-date COI and clear guidance. We welcome feedback on how to improve our products. If you would like to comment on this note, please email the [Country Policy and Information Team](#).

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Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The [Independent Advisory Group on Country Information](#) (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support them in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

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Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the [gov.uk website](#).

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