



مركز البيان للدراسات والتخطيط
Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies

Al Bayan Observatory



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A periodical bulletin to monitor Iraqi affairs in international think tanks

About the Center

Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies is an independent, nonprofit think tank based in Baghdad, Iraq. In addition to other issues, its primary mission is to offer an authentic perspective on public and foreign policy issues related to Iraq in particular and the Middle East region in general. BCPS pursues its vision by conducting autonomous analysis and proposing workable solutions for complex issues that concern the political and academic fields.

Note:

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Since 2014

AMERICAN THINK TANKS AND MEDIA



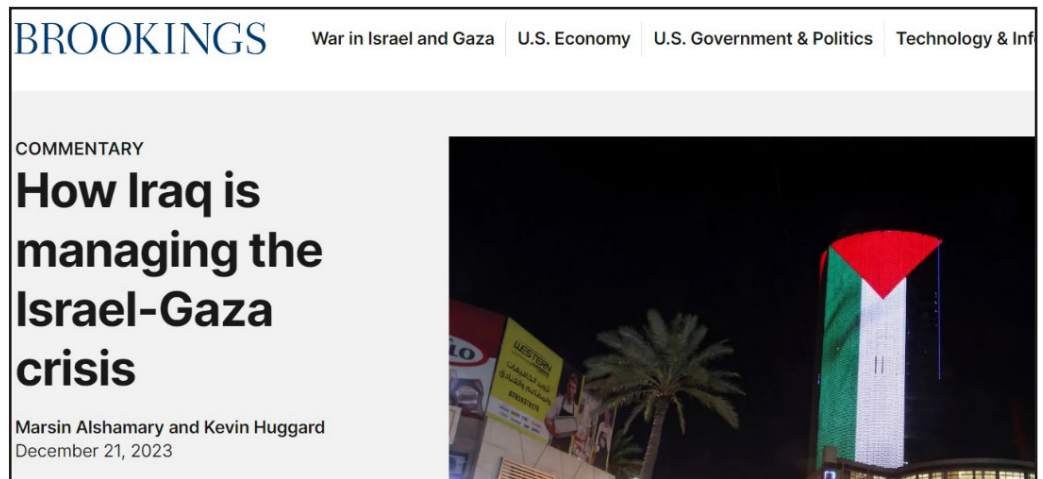
How Iraq is managing the Israel-Gaza crisis

Marsin Alshamary and Kevin Huggard

BROOKINGS

BROOKINGS

<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-iraq-is-managing-the-israel-gaza-crisis/>



In an interview with Kevin Huggard, Marsin Alshamary provides her answers about the Iraq’s approach to the Gaza war. For her, “across ethnic and religious lines, Iraqis are appalled by the Israeli bombardment of Gaza and the violence against civilians, especially children, resulting in a death toll that has rivaled some of the worst months of violence Iraqis have experienced in the last two decades. Perhaps due to this familiarity with war and occupation, Iraqis empathize with the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. Speaking more broadly, Iraqi political, religious, and civil society leaders have consistently been supportive of the Palestinian cause for statehood and sovereignty, which is not the same as support for Hamas. Official statements from Iraq have neither condemned nor condoned Hamas specifically and have only mentioned the Palestinian people and the Palestinian cause. Moreover, the events of October 7 have largely been forgotten in Iraq due to the events in Gaza that followed.”

Iraq's Disputed Territories and the Potential Impact of the Upcoming Provincial Elections



Hiwa Abdullah Hussein, an Iraqi Kurdish journalist and a fellow of Iraq Leaders Fellowship Program (Political Track) at the Institute of International Regional Studies, writes about the elections in Iraq and that believes that “these elections will directly affect the future of the disputed territories, and political parties must be careful to avoid deepening sectarian divides, both in this case and in future elections.” He concludes “If Iraq, with its different ethnic and religious groups, can have an open, fair, and nonviolent election cycle, this will significantly strengthen its international standing. This would allow it to host dozens of diverse cultural and religious events annually and enhance its position vis-a-vis neighboring countries. Iraq’s multi-ethnic and multi-religious character could be one of its greatest assets, positioning the country as a beacon of coexistence. In order to successfully project this image however, federal and local actors must ensure that the upcoming elections are inclusive and free of harmful sectarian rhetoric.”

Hiwa Abdullah Hussein



The Washington Institute for Near East Policy

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/ar/policy-analysis/athr-alantkhabat-almhlyt-ly-almnatq-almtnaz-lyha-fy-araq>

The Case of Iraq Underscores the Need for an International Anti-Corruption Court

Aram Mahmood



**The Washington Institute
for Near East Policy**

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/ar/policy-analysis/halt-iraq-twkd-alhajt-almhht-aly-ansha-mhkmt-dwlyt-lmkafht-alfsad>

Policy Analysis / Fikra Forum

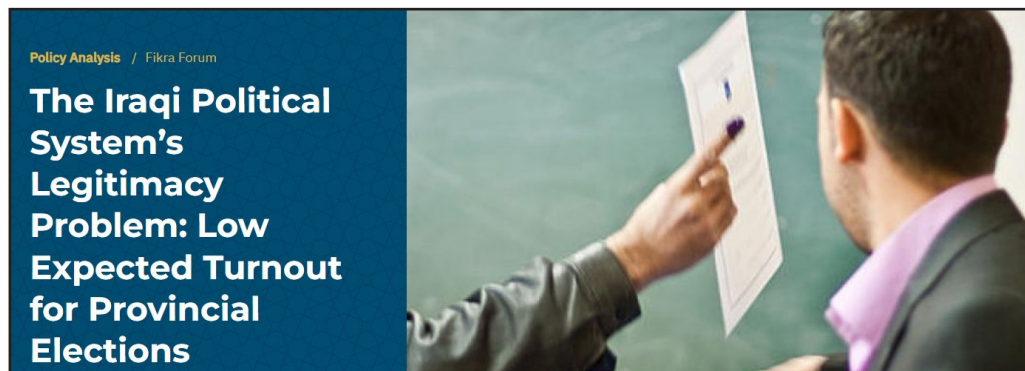
The Case of Iraq Underscores the Need for an International Anti-Corruption Court



Most of this text is selected from the first and last paragraph of the English text. It has also an Arabic translation (look at the link below). You can use the original Arabic text for translation

Aram Mahmood (Aram Kokoy), a Ph.D. candidate in economics and a former advisor to President of Iraq Barham Salih, writes that “Given the inability—or unwillingness—of Iraqi institutions to adequately combat corruption, the need for an international entity to step in becomes evident. That is why supporting the global campaign for the creation of an International Anti-Corruption Court (IACC) is necessary in order to hold kleptocrats accountable when national court fails to do so.” He concludes that “sadly, corruption in Iraq remains the primary trigger for conflicts, sectarian divisions, and governmental dysfunction. The deep-rooted corruption in the Iraqi government cripples the state’s capabilities and contributes to poverty, climate change, mass migration, and violence. In lieu of a domestic solution, it is imperative that an international court be permitted to prosecute those corrupt individuals who, through their actions, imperil the future or everyday civilians.”

The Iraqi Political System's Legitimacy Problem: Low Expected Turnout for Provincial Elections



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Hiwa Abdullah Hussein, an Iraqi Kurdish journalist and a fellow of Iraq Leaders Fellowship Program (Political Track) at the Institute of International Regional Studies, believes that “predicted low voter turnout for Iraq’s first provincial elections in a decade signals the lack of popular trust in Iraq for the country’s political system.” Writing before the election, he concludes “But beyond this election cycle, they [candidates] must work to develop a clear and mature political program based on the candidates’ political and professional experience, proposing actionable solutions rather than empty promises. Nevertheless, the main goal of these forces should ultimately be to bring about real democratic change in Iraq, and to end the rule of power and money. Continuing the status quo will mean that Iraqi citizens’ faith in electoral change or the possibility of reform through new political movements will only continue to erode.”

Hiwa Abdullah Hussein



**The Washington Institute
for Near East Policy**

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/ar/policy-analysis/alnzam-alsyasy-alraqy-washkalyt-df-alshryt-trajmtwq-fy-nsbt-almsharkt-fy-antkhabat>

After ‘Green Talk’ at COP28, Where Should Iraq Begin?

Noam Raydan, Harry Istepanian



**The Washington Institute
for Near East Policy**

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/ar/policy-analysis/mn-ayn-yjb-ybda-alaq-bd-almhadthat-alkhdra-fy-mwtmr-alam-almthdt-almny-btghyr>

Policy Analysis / Articles & Up-Eds

After 'Green Talk' at COP28, Where Should Iraq Begin?

by Noam Raydan, Harry Istepanian

Dec 27, 2023 Also available in العربية

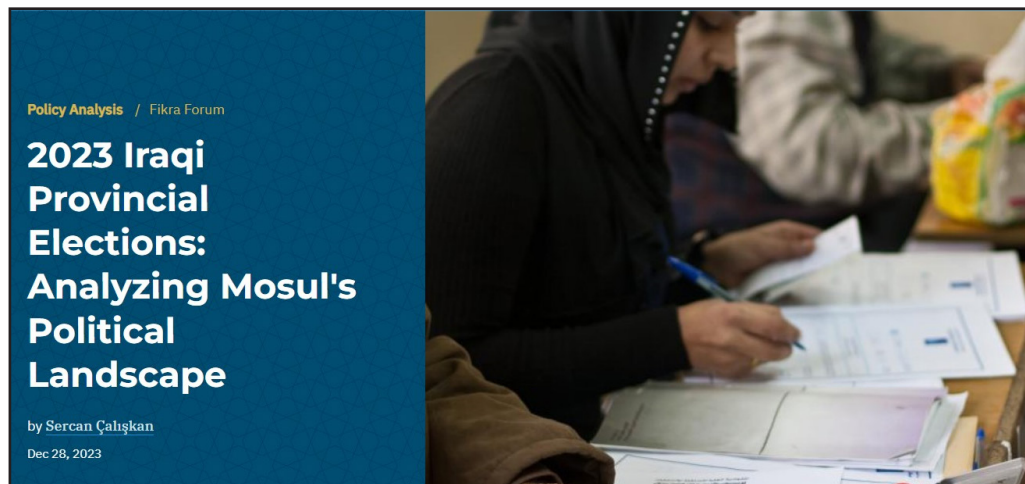
Also published in Amwaj



Most of this text is selected from the first and last paragraph of the English text. It has also an Arabic translation (look at the link below). You can use the original Arabic text for translation

Noam Raydan, a Senior Fellow at The Washington Institute and Harry Istepanian, a Washington-based energy and water expert and a senior fellow with the Iraq Energy Institute believes that Iraq as “OPEC’s second-biggest oil producer must demonstrate how it will balance its goals of reducing emissions, increasing crude production, and continuing the use of high-sulfur liquid fuels in the power sector.” They conclude that “Iraq’s opposition to the immediate phasing out of fossil fuels is rooted in its heavy dependence on hydrocarbons. Iraq’s push against phasing out fossil fuels is also part of OPEC’s stance on the need for the world to focus on cutting emissions and not choosing energy sources. Iraq should not be expected to move away from its vast natural resources, including giant gas fields that remain untapped. But to show its seriousness about the energy transition, the country needs to take the first major step in that direction”

2023 Iraqi Provincial Elections: Analyzing Mosul's Political Landscape



Sercan Çalışkan



The Washington Institute for Near East Policy

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/2023-iraqi-provincial-elections-analyzing-mosul-political-landscape>

Sercan Çalışkan, a researcher at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies (ORSAM) in Ankara, believes that “Political results are clearly divided along identity politics, yet intra-communal political rifts are also evident. Despite their growing influence in the area, Shia parties—like other political groups—will need to forge alliances with other factions in order to effectively exert influence and manage the city.” He concludes that “Although Shia Arabs participated in the elections with various political groups, the most effective political list proved to be the National Contract Alliance, supported by the President of the PMF Faleh al-Fayyad, which received 87,391 votes. The political group ‘National Identity’ became the second most important Shia Arab group with 54,791 votes. However, these results should not be viewed as a success for the Shia Arab bloc, especially as Mosul has experienced a demographic change after 2017. Shia parties likely expected to gain more seats in the province in this context.”

Tragedies Born of Negligence in Iraq More Enforcement of Safety Regulations Needed

Sarah Sanbar



Human Rights Watch

<https://www.hrw.org/ar/news/2023/12/18/tragedies-born-negligence-iraq>



Sahar Sanbar writes that “122 killed by a fire in a wedding hall. 82 killed by a fire in a Covid-19 hospital. Three months later, another hospital fire claimed the lives of 92 more. Though they may seem to be freak accidents, these fires were preventable tragedies sharing one common theme: gross negligence. Government investigations into these fires found that local authorities were negligent in their failure to enforce safety regulations and conduct inspections. Contractors used cheap, highly flammable construction materials to cut costs. Corruption allowed violators to act with impunity.” She adds that “The Iraqi government imprisoned, fired, or fined those whose negligence was found to be responsible for these tragedies, as it should. But, just as importantly, authorities must take steps to prevent these tragedies in the first place by enforcing rules on fire safety, construction standards, and reliable transport.”

Iraq's Provincial Council Elections: The Way Forward in Nineveh Province



Osama Gharizi and Yomnna Helmi



United States Institute of Peace

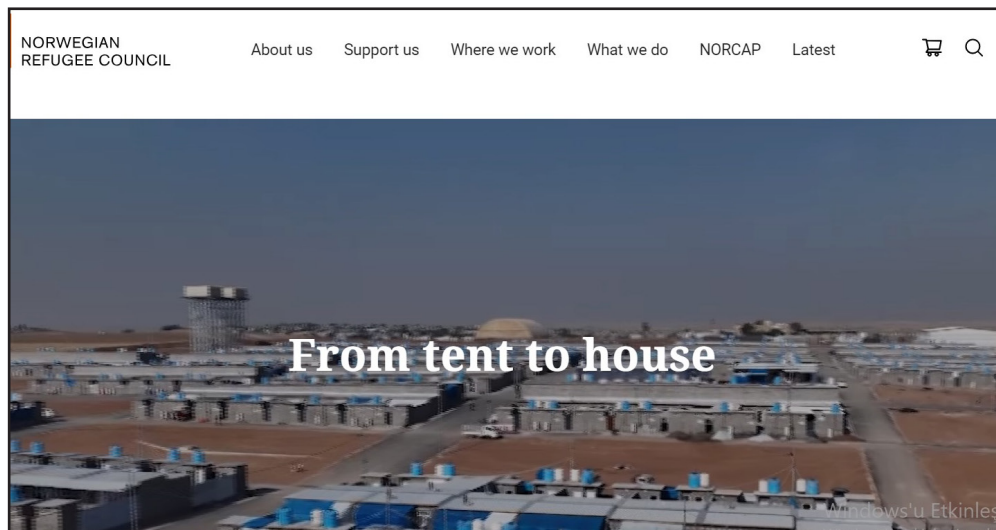
<https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/12/iraqs-provincial-council-elections-way-forward-nineveh-province>

Osama Gharizi and Yomnna Helmi write that “The elections are the first at the provincial level in over a decade and come in the wake of the 2019 anti-government protests that resulted in the dissolution of the provincial councils following demands from the protesters who accused them of corruption. Recent findings from the U.S. Institute of Peace’s Conflict and Stabilization Monitoring Framework in Nineveh Province reveal that candidates are facing a distrustful electorate that is lacking confidence in state institutions.” They conclude that “ In summary, while entrenched factors inhibit more responsive and inclusive governance processes from fully materializing, including the disputed territories issue, there remain spaces for political and governing actors to engage in that would help steer Nineveh Province’s governing outcomes in a better direction. Should such actors and their supporters seize upon these chances in the post-election period, then Nineveh may indeed be entering a more responsive and inclusive phase in its governance history.”

EUROPEAN THINK TANKS AND MEDIA



From tent to house



Norwegian Refugee Council

<https://www.nrc.no/feature/2023/from-tent-to-house/>

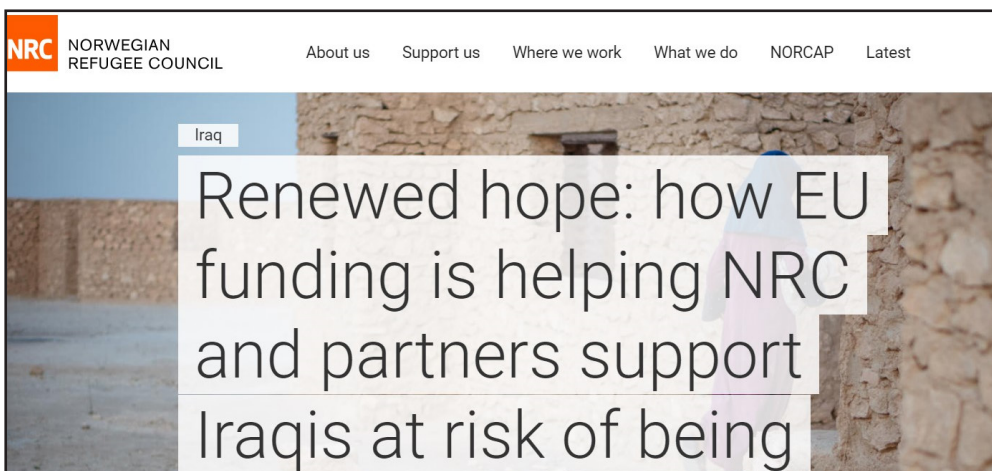
Norwegian Refugee Council has provided a report on its activities to help the refugee in Iraq. According to it, “for the past ten years, 260,000 refugees from war-torn Syria have been living in cramped refugee camps in the neighbouring Kurdistan Region of Iraq. In collaboration with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) has now built a new village, with permanent homes to provide safety and security for these refugees. We met two of these families while they were still living in their tents in Bardarash. Then we visited the same families after they had moved into their new homes in Galiwan. Since 2010, NRC has worked closely with UNHCR and authorities to support Syrian refugees and host communities in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. As refugees mark 12 years away from home, we continue to provide safe and dignified shelters, access to education, legal assistance, and livelihoods opportunities to foster greater self-reliance.”

Renewed hope: how EU funding is helping NRC [Norwegian Refugee Council] and partners support Iraqis at risk of being forgotten



Norwegian Refugee Council

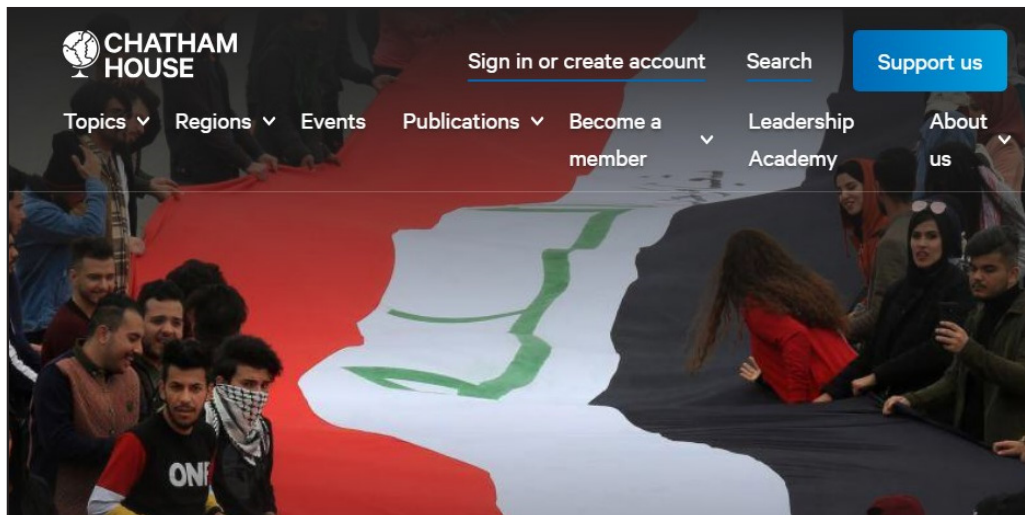
<https://www.nrc.no/perspectives/2023/renewed-hope-how-eu-funding-is-helping-nrc-and-partners-support-iraqis-at-risk-of-being-forgotten/>



Ahmed Kaka and Noor Taher have written a report on the activities of Norwegian Refugee Council in Iraq. According to them, “in the six years since the defeat of the self-proclaimed Islamic State (IS) in 2017, millions of Iraqis have returned home and started rebuilding their lives. However, for some, normalcy has been put on hold. Today, an estimated 1.2 million Iraqis are still displaced, approximately 430,000 of whom might be without key civil documents. Often, the lack of documents prolong displacement, and families are unable to return home, relocate elsewhere, or integrate into the communities they are currently displaced in. Supported by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), the Protection Consortium of Iraq (PCI) is helping these individuals and families restart their lives. The PCI is led by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and brings the expertise and experience of Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and International Rescue Committee (IRC) to support and advocate for durable solutions to displacement.”

Tackling Iraq's unaccountable state

A networked approach to mobilizing reformers



Renad Mansour, Senior Research Fellow at Middle East and North Africa Programme; Project Director, Iraq Initiative of Chatham House, has provided a long report on reform in Iraq. He introduces this report: “In a focus group conducted in 2023 by Chatham House in Iraq, participants debated the merits of international support for such a network, reflecting on the experiences of 20 years of international development programming.¹⁷⁴ While views from across the spectrum – both pro- and anti-international support – were expressed, the group ultimately agreed that the current strategies were not working. Instead, participants concluded that only certain targeted external support strategies can enhance the development and activities of such a network over time. This could include an external actor offering financial support discreetly to an Iraqi organization that could then facilitate networking and strategic follow-up. Or it could include helping find international expertise or success stories on selected reform areas from other contexts globally.”

Renad Mansour



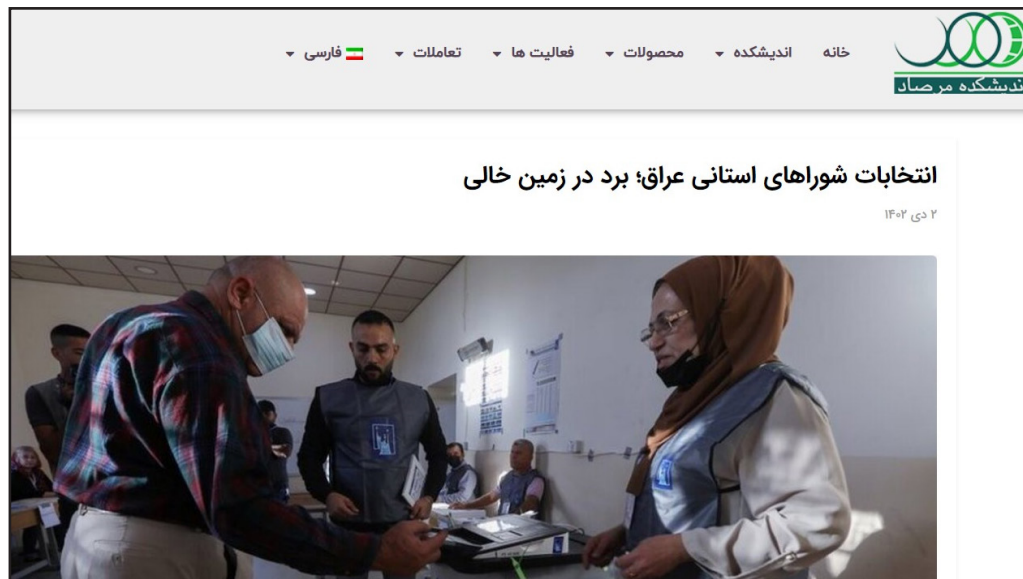
Chatham House

<https://www.chathamhouse.org/2023/11/iraq-shows-political-settlement-without-accountability-cannot-deliver-peace>

IRANIAN THINK TANKS AND AND MEDIA



Iraqi provincial council elections; Win in an empty field



Mohammad Bagher Sedaghat



Mersad Think Tank

<https://tinyurl.com/yq7xtfco>

In this article, the author has focused on the decrease in the participation of participants in the recent Iraqi elections. Referring to the victory of the Nabni coalition and the Dowlat al-Ghanun in this election, the author believes that the current victory is a fragile one and in fact shows a dangerous fault for the future of the political system in Iraq. According to the author, the Iraqi political system after 2003 has not been able to gain the trust of the Iraqi people, thus the coming years are the last chance for Islamist parties in Iraq to prove their effectiveness to the people. Otherwise, the Iraqi people will find a way other than elections to express their anger about the corruption ruling the country and the lack of services and in the case, neither the Shia authority nor the Sadr movement will be able to resist the fury of the people.

Investigating the effective factors of Iraq's geopolitics and its impact on the national security of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Abdolreza Faraji Rad

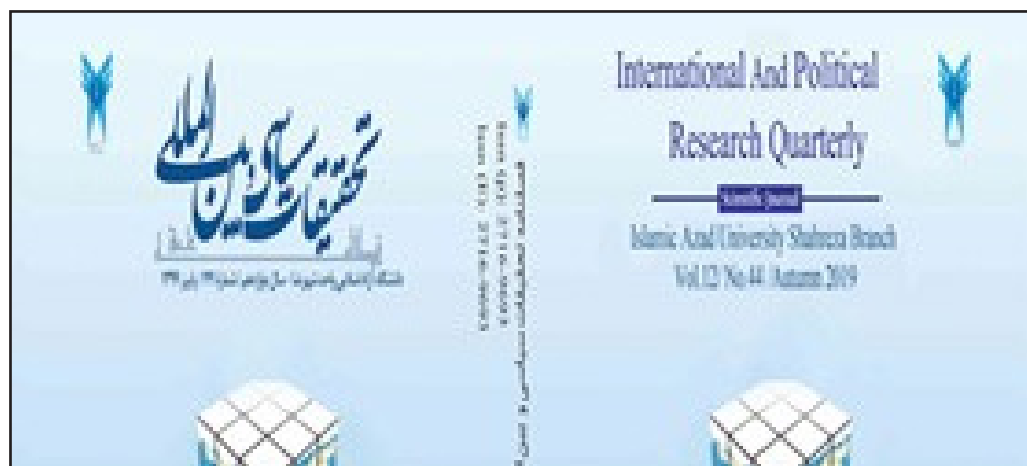
Seyed Mostafa Hashemi

Rahim Sarwar



**International and Political
Research Quarterly**

[www.sanad.iau.ir/fa/Article/522845?
FullText=FullText](http://www.sanad.iau.ir/fa/Article/522845?FullText=FullText)



Geopolitical sphere of Iraq has integrative and disintegrative forces which act under certain circumstances. These forces are continuously in competition with each other. Iraq has undergone great upheavals in recent years and these developments have led to change in power structure and identity. As a result there has been change in geopolitics and change in the approach of actors and regional players. Ethnic and religious groups, hydro politics, national identity and Arab identity, oil resources and the huge revenue coming from them and access to Persian Gulf have deep impact on Iraq developments. These factors have led to adoption of different geopolitical strategy. Depending on the conditions of Iraq, the type and the composition of government in power, Iran's national security will be affected and Iraq can become an enemy, strategic rival, strategic partner. The present article by examining political geography, interior space, history and geopolitical factors of Iraq, using a descriptive-analytical method deals with set of spatial, political and security compulsions.

Investigating The Geo-Economic Components Affecting Iran-Iraq Relations

zainab fakher jafar, mohsen janparvor, sajed bahrami jaf



First National Conference of the Role of Architecture and Urbanization on the Tourism of Iranian Border cities

<https://profdoc.um.ac.ir/articles/a/1096847.pdf>

Finding the importance and prominence of economic issues in the relations between countries has provided the basis for the formation and development of geo-economic issues and issues at different national, regional and global scales. In the meantime, due to the dependence and solidarity of neighboring countries such as Iraq and Iran from an economic point of view, the importance of geo-economic issues on the relations between the two countries is of great importance. Considering this importance, the current research has been carried out with the aim of understanding the geo-economic components affecting the relations between the two neighboring countries, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq. The results of this research show that the geoeconomic components affecting the relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq show that these components are in the form of two parts, direct (primary) and indirect (secondary) geoeconomic components, which include 3 items. They affect the relations between the two countries.

A phenomenological study of the lived experience of Iraqi buyers in the consumer markets of Khuzestan province

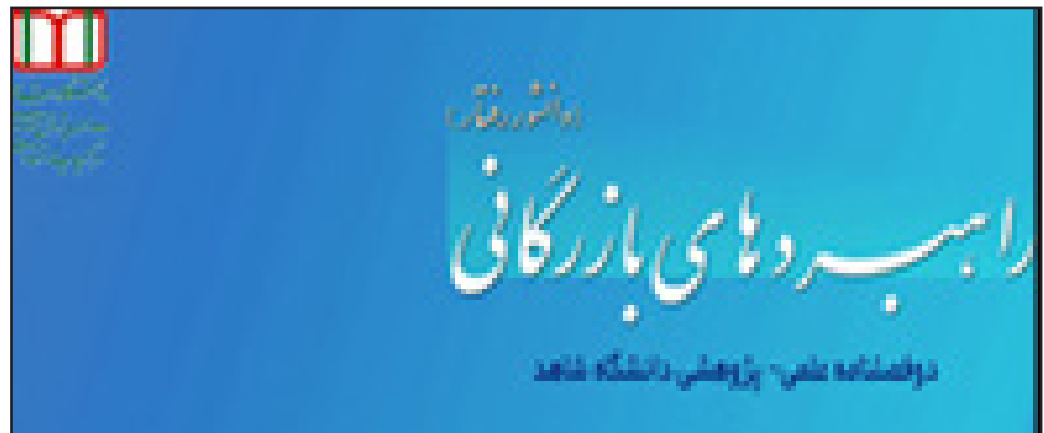
Maryam Darvishi and Jameelah

Ali Ata Allah Altamimi



Business Strategies

https://cs.shahed.ac.ir/article_4244.html



Considering the contribution of Iraqi buyers in the purchase and export of small and partial consumer goods in the country, especially in Khuzestan province, it is important to pay attention to this phenomenon as an important factor in the growth of exports, as well as reducing marketing costs and creating demand for Iranian products, which directly affects the country's production. It is in high strategic and commercial priorities. Consumer choice includes various dimensions such as financial, psychological, sociological and some other factors, so there is a wider scope for consumer research and analysis, identifying needs and purchasing behavior. The academic community as well as commercial companies have conducted a lot of research in the field of consumer behavior in different ways. The purpose of this study is to phenomenologically analyze the phenomenon of the lived experience of Iraqi buyers in the consumer markets of Khuzestan province, which leads to a deeper understanding of this phenomenon and reveals new

horizons about the phenomenon of shopping in the consumer markets of Khuzestan province to be a guide for marketers in formulating marketing strategies. This study aims to develop an integrated conceptual framework of tourism experiences in the destination based on the theoretical and conceptual understanding of tourism experience as an emerging topic in tourism research and consumer behavior. This framework helps tourism organizations and policy makers in expanding their understanding of various factors and processes when considering the formation of the tourism experience. By doing so, tourism organizations and other tourism stakeholders can manage the prerequisites for enjoyable experiences for tourists, which are likely to encourage tourists to return to the destination and recommend it to others. The findings of this study revealed several issues related to the lived experience of Iraqi buyers in the consumer markets of Khuzestan province. One of the main topics was the importance of communication and social networks in facilitating trade between Iraq and Iran. Participants described how they advised their family members, friends and acquaintances to navigate the markets and find reliable sellers. Another key issue was the challenges faced by Iraqi buyers, including language barriers, cultural differences and discrimination. Participants described how they often feel like outsiders in markets and have to work hard to build trust with Iranian sellers. Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the life experience of Iraqi shoppers in the consumer markets of Khuzestan province. Findings can be used to inform policies and practices that support cross-border trade and promote greater understanding between Iraq and Iran.



Business Strategies

https://cs.shahed.ac.ir/article_4244.html

MIDDLE EASTERN THINK TANK

Local elections in Iraq: Framework forces control the provincial councils

Safinaz Muhammad Ahmed



Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies

<https://acpss.ahram.org.eg/News/21077.aspx#>

Safinaz Muhammad Ahmed believes that “the local elections witnessed the participation of many Shiite and Sunni political forces.” She concludes that “there are questions about the extent of the impact of the results of the local elections on the general political scene in Iraq. There are opinions that say that the absence of the Sadrist movement from the political scene, the loss of civil forces in the local elections, and the leadership of the Coordination Framework forces in the results, all indicate that the map of the upcoming parliamentary elections in 2025 will not produce results different from those results at the local level. Especially since the framework forces issued the results of the local elections, this means that they are now able to form a unified bloc with which to regain their dominance by possessing a majority.”

TURKISH THINK TANKS AND MEDIA



Provincial Council Elections and Turkmens in Kerkuk



Selçuk Bacalan



Center for Middle Eastern Studies

https://orsam.org.tr/d_hbanaliz/kerkukte-vilayet-meclisi-secimleri-ve-turkmenler.pdf

According to the author, “With the US military intervention in Iraq in 2003 and the end of the Saddam Hussein era, Iraq’s governance structure changed. The Kurds, who gained most of the members with the support of the USA, ruled the city in line with their political interests, ignoring the decisions and opinions of the Turkmens and Arabs in the Kirkuk provincial council. The Kirkuk provincial council, was dissolved along with the provincial and district councils throughout Iraq, with a decision taken by the prime ministry as a result of the parliamentary elections held in 2018 and the subsequent protests that broke out across Iraq in 2019 due to mismanagement. With this decision, the control of the governorship’s affairs was transferred to the deputies of the province. Turkmens were most negatively affected by this process. After the Kurds, the Arabs took over. At this point, the upcoming elections are very critical for Turkmens.”

Kirkuk Provincial Assembly Elections and Possible Alliances

Selcuk Bacalan



ADOLU AGENCY

<https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/analiz/gorus-kerkuk-secimleri-olasi-hukümet-senaryolari/3093489>



According to the author, “it would not be wrong to say that although Turkmen won few seats in the Kirkuk provincial council elections, they could play a key role in the establishment of the local government.” He adds that “When we remember the statement of Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani before the election, “The local elections in Kirkuk will be a national election among the components”, it is understood that all parties attach vital importance to the elections. This situation also shows that the rival parties advocate an ethnic-based policy. For this reason, it will serve the future of the city if the components of Kirkuk create a new model based on the “Kirkuk identity” as a super-identity rather than ethnic identity politics. The success of this model in Kirkuk can be reflected throughout the country and become an example of the super-identity of “Iraqiness”. Opposite scenarios mean that the chaos in Kirkuk and therefore in Iraq will not end.”