

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



Al-Bayan Monitor

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In international, regional and Arab think tanks

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



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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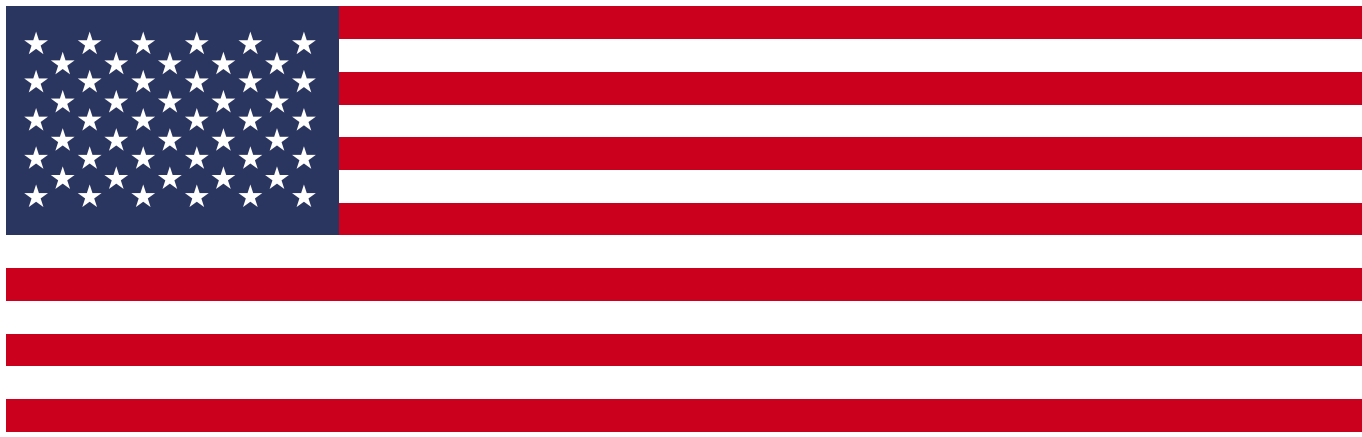
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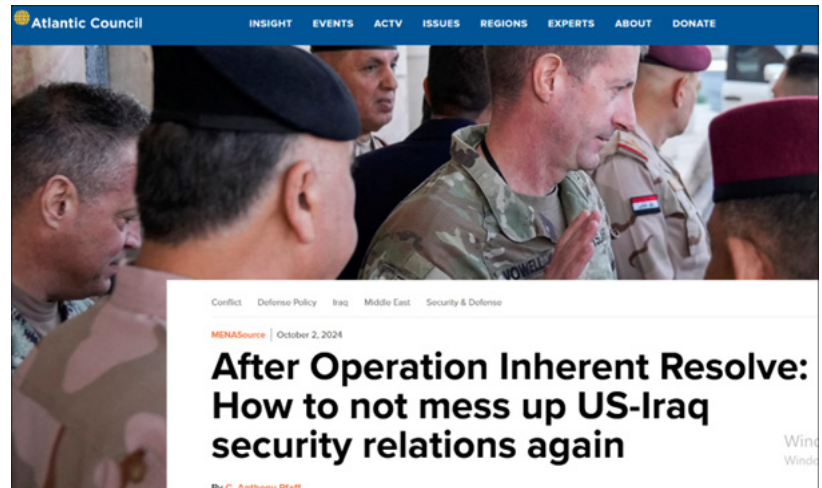
AMERICAN THINK TANKES



After Operation Inherent Resolve: How to not mess up US-Iraq security relations again

C. Anthony Pfaff

Atlantic Council



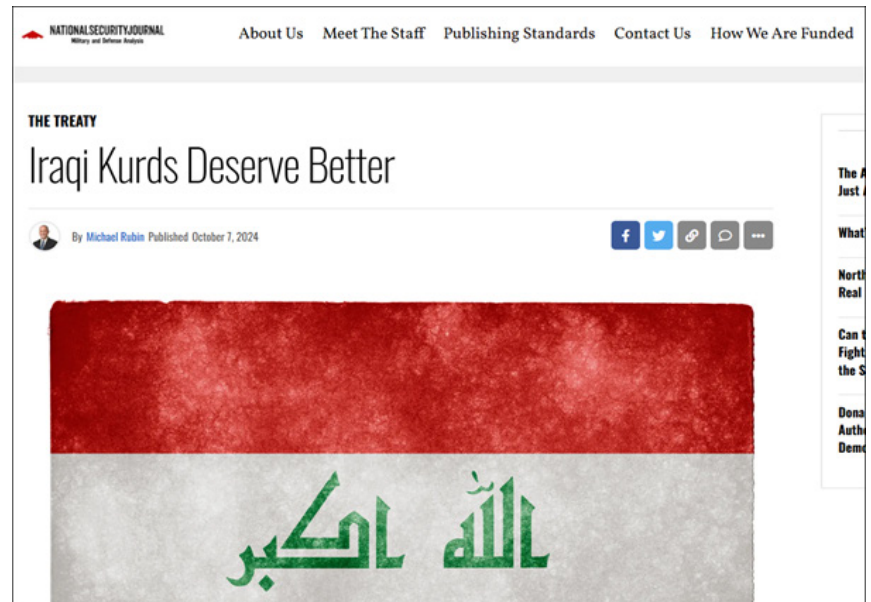
According to the author, “while Tehran is undoubtedly delighted at the withdrawal of US forces, it is also likely time for Operation Inherent Resolve to end.” He concludes that “fortunately, twenty years of security cooperation and success against both al-Qaeda and ISIS provide an ample base for a transition to a sustainable bilateral security relationship. As Sudani said when the transition was announced, Iraq is interested in economic and security cooperation with the United States. Perhaps more importantly, Sudani signed over a dozen memorandums of understanding with US companies during his visit to Washington, emphasizing the point. Whether the United States can take advantage of the opportunity presented by the agreement depends on its ability to transition its security relationship from advisor and provider to facilitator. It will also depend on efforts to bolster Iraqi sovereignty to remain resilient against malign influences and capable of the domestic reforms necessary to ensure stability lasts.”

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/operation-inherent-resolve-us-iraq-ties/>

Iraqi Kurds Deserve Better

Michael Rubin

National Security Journal



According to the author, “[among the Kurds] throughout the centuries, adversaries have sought to divide and conquer. Kurds may blame outsiders for their misfortune, but their leaders willingly allowed their own cooption, often sacrificing principle for personal power or fortune.” He concludes that “while Masrour’s, Nechirvan’s, Bafel’s, and Qubad’s media create a bubble and lie outright about their economy and their diplomatic position, ordinary Kurds know how bad their governance has become which is why so many now flee, risking their life to cross Belarussian forests and the English channel, rather than stay in Erbil or Sulaymani. The Iraqi Kurdish leaders may believe they are indispensable to Washington, but they are wrong. The Kurdish leaders will soon discover that neither foreign nor military aid are entitlements. Just ask the Turks: Reality matters more than lobbyist spin in Washington. Kurds must reform, rise up, or fail.”

<https://nationalsecurityjournal.org/iraqi-kurds-deserve-better/>

Carnegie endowment for international peace

Ali Ayad Thamer

Iraq's Displacement Crisis



According to the author, “Internal displacement in Iraq is one of the most significant humanitarian crises the country has faced in decades, and in the absence of political stability in some areas, the situation worsens.” As recommendations to address the displacement problem, he concludes that “the Iraqi government and the international community must first strengthen security efforts in areas that have witnessed significant displacement. This involves reinforcing local security forces with the proper oversight and creating a stable, safe environment that allows for the return of displaced persons. Additionally, focus should be placed on reconstruction efforts in the destroyed areas from which people have been displaced. By providing essential infrastructure such as housing, schools, and hospitals, the return of displaced persons will be encouraged. Furthermore, efforts should be concentrated on promoting national reconciliation among the different components of Iraqi society, ensuring that the return is safe and sustainable for all Iraqis, regardless of their religious or ethnic background.”

<https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/2024/10/iraqs-displacement-crisis?lang=en>

Situation Report - Lebanese Refugees influx in Iraq



MERCY HANDS
ORGANIZATION
جمعية ايادي الرحمة

SITUATION REPORT - LEBANESE REFUGEES INFLUX IN IRAQ

09/10/2024

ReliefWeb

Mercy Hands is an Iraqi non-governmental organization established in 2004, committed to operating in conflict-ridden and disaster-affected regions, delivering both humanitarian and developmental assistance. Our mission begins with saving lives and extends toward establishing a thriving, conflict-free community. We are dedicated to providing emergency aid, reconstructing infrastructure, enhancing living standards, advancing human rights and democracy, advocating for women's rights, fostering environmental improvements, and actively participating in peacebuilding initiatives. Although Mercy Hands is headquartered in Baghdad, it has a remarkable presence throughout the country. The NGO relies on four additional regional offices in Erbil, Basra, Fallujah, and Mosul, as well as mobile teams that cover the entire country. Through its field offices and mobile teams, Mercy Hands implements activities across the country.

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<https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/situation-report-lebanese-refugees-influx-iraq-09102024>

National Conference Paves Pathways to Formalizing Iraq's Informal Economy

International Labour
Organization



International
Labour
Organization



Funded by the European Union
تمويل من الاتحاد الأوروبي

National Conference Paves Pathways to Formalizing Iraq's Informal Economy

Baghdad, 16 October 2024

In the face of growing economic challenges, Iraq's informal economy, which encompasses over half of the nation's workforce, has come into sharper focus. As revealed by the 2021 Labour Force Survey, 5.73 million Iraqis—two-thirds of the country's workers—are employed in informal jobs. Key sectors such as construction, agriculture, and manufacturing remain dominated by informal labour arrangements, leaving workers without the protections of formal contracts or social security. This informality hampers the development of a sustainable, resilient economy and threatens efforts toward equitable growth.

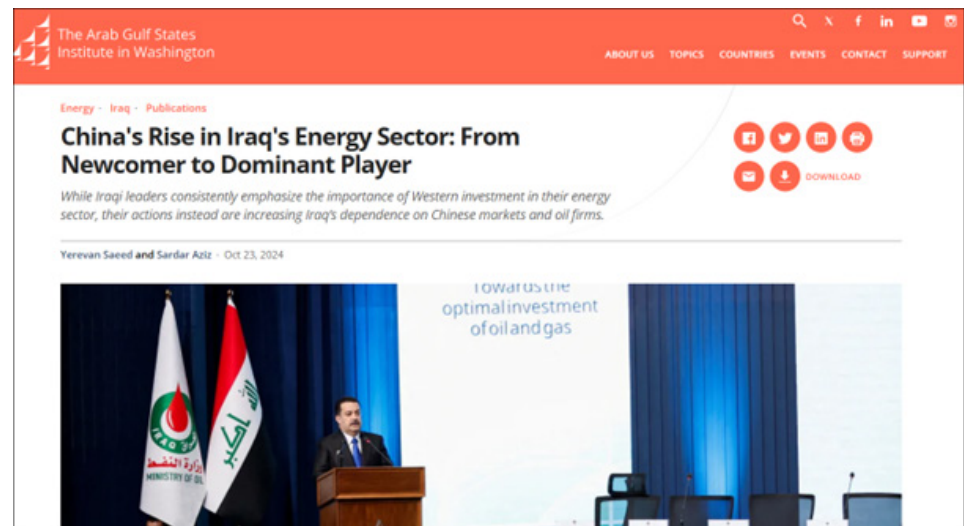
Baghdad, 16 October 2024. In the face of growing economic challenges, Iraq's informal economy, which encompasses over half of the nation's workforce, has come into sharper focus. As revealed by the 2021 Labour Force Survey, 5.73 million Iraqis—two-thirds of the country's workers—are employed in informal jobs. Key sectors such as construction, agriculture, and manufacturing remain dominated by informal labour arrangements, leaving workers without the protections of formal contracts or social security. This informality hampers the development of a sustainable, resilient economy and threatens efforts toward equitable growth. Against this backdrop, Yesterday's National Conference on "Informal Work and Pathways to Decent Work in Iraq" marked a critical step in addressing these challenges. Organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in collaboration with the Government of Iraq and funded by the European Union, the conference brought together national and international stakeholders to foster a unified approach to formalizing Iraq's economy.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/national-conference-paves-pathways-formalizing-iraqs-informal-economy-enar>

Iraqi Parliament and Child Marriage: Iraqi Child Rights from One Tight Spot to Another

Yerevan Saeed and Sardar Aziz

Arab Gulf States Institute
in Washington



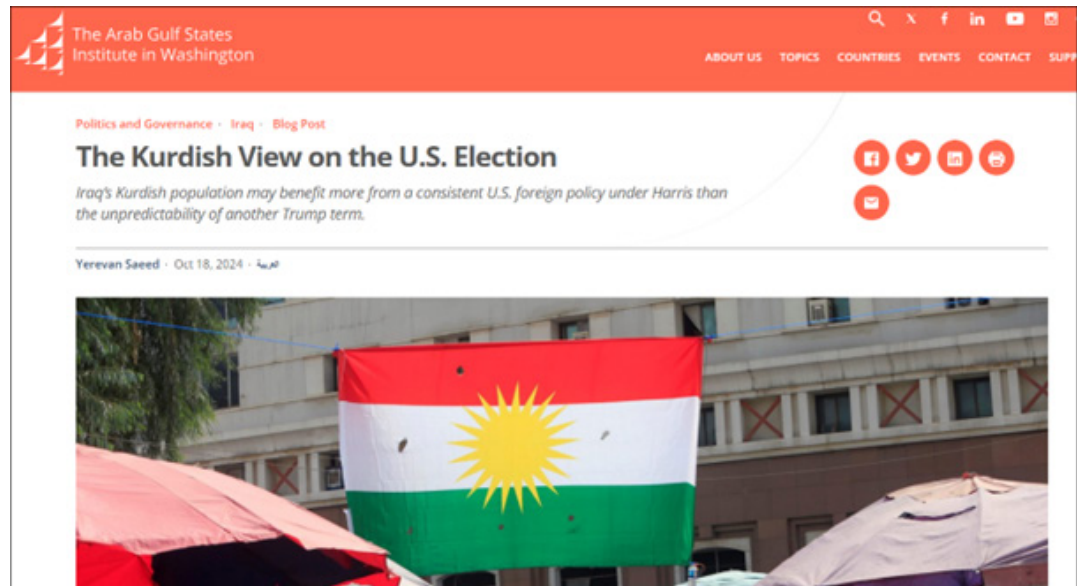
According to the authors, “while Iraqi leaders consistently emphasize the importance of Western investment in their energy sector, their actions instead are increasing Iraq’s dependence on Chinese markets and oil firms.” He concludes that “Chinese energy companies emerged as dominant players in the Iraqi Oil Ministry’s May licensing rounds to auction 29 oil and gas blocks, securing 10 out of 13 oil and gas blocks. Shell was the only Western international oil company to participate, and it did not win any bids...The increasing Chinese dominance comes amid a seemingly contradictory development: In April, Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed al-Sudani signed numerous memorandums of understanding with U.S. energy companies, particularly focusing on gas development and power generation. This focus aligns with Washington’s strategic goals of diminishing Iran’s political influence in Iraq and, by extension, blunting China’s push to dominate Iraq’s hydrocarbon sector. The stark contrast between the memorandums of understanding signed by U.S. companies and the contracts awarded to China demonstrates a significant mismatch between the aspirations of Washington and the realities of the investment environment in Iraq.”

<https://agsiw.org/chinas-rise-in-iraqs-energy-sector-from-newcomer-to-dominant-player/>

The Kurdish View on the U.S. Election

Yerevan Saeed

Arab Gulf States Institute
in Washington



The author believes that “Iraq’s Kurdish population may benefit more from a consistent U.S. foreign policy under Harris than the unpredictability of another Trump term.” He concludes that “while the Republicans have been pivotal in altering the Kurdish reality, it is often the Democrats who have played a vital role in ensuring the durability and continuity of these developments... In an unstable Middle East, a stable U.S. foreign policy would provide Iraq’s Kurdish population with a reassuring sense of certainty. This could empower the Kurds to navigate the challenging dynamics of the region, where their autonomy is often subject or vulnerable to the fluctuating political terrain and actions of their neighbors. In this context, placing more stress on conserving the core remnants of hard-fought political gains over the possibility of gains from the creative chaos of an impulsive, potentially isolationist Trump administration leads to the conclusion that a Harris administration would be a surer bet for Iraq’s Kurds.”

<https://agsiw.org/the-kurdish-view-on-the-u-s-election/>

Kurdistan's Pivotal Elections: A Defining Moment for the Region's Future

Nickolay Mladenov

The Washington Institute
for Near East Policy



According to the author, “disenfranchisement, party fragmentation, and external pressures are pushing Iraqi Kurdistan to a breaking point.” He concludes that “For Kurdish leaders, there is a delicate balance to maintain: demonstrating democratic stability to their Iraqi counterparts while addressing the growing demands for reform and accountability from their own people. This election is not just another cycle in the region’s political life—the future of Iraqi Kurdistan truly hangs in the balance. Its elected leaders must rise to the occasion and not only manage the political dynamics within the region but also maintain trust with the international community and Baghdad. For outside observers, this election also offers a glimpse into the challenges facing not just Kurdistan but the broader Middle East. Can democratic processes thrive in a region troubled by internal divisions and external pressures? The answer will reverberate far beyond the borders of Iraqi Kurdistan.”

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/kurdistans-pivotal-elections-defining-moment-regions-future>

In the Deadly Heat, Iraq's Hospitals Have Become the Ground-Zero Battlefield in the

Susan Schulman

Pulitzer Center



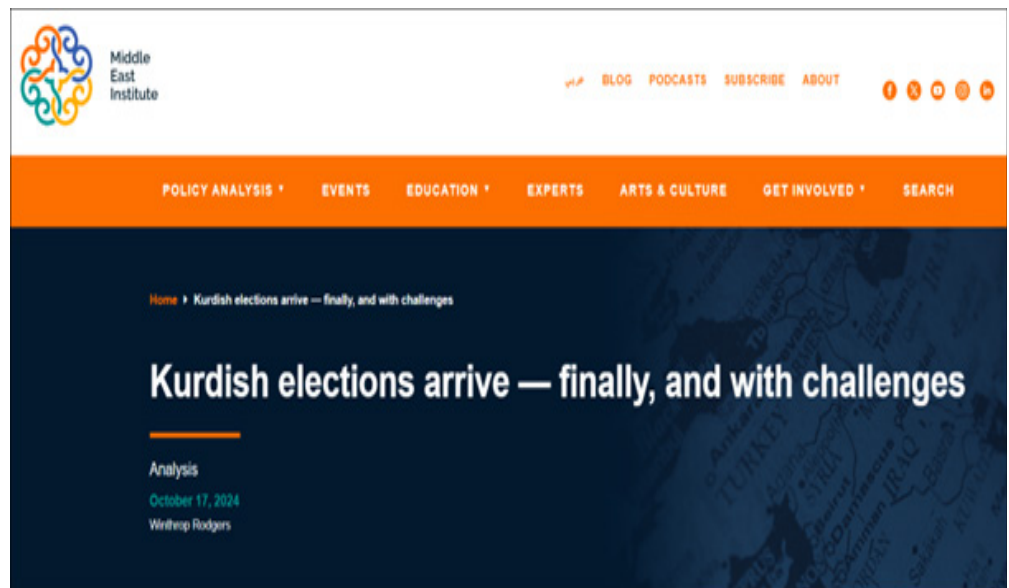
According to the author, “In Iraq, where the confluence of war, economic turmoil, and political instability has ravaged the health sector for decades, climate change is the newest and most formidable enemy.” He writes that “displacement swells patient numbers, power failures stifle cooling, and rising temperatures inflame tempers, creating a perfect storm where each problem fuels the next...It’s not just wires sparking fire. Transformers, subjected to extreme heat, are exploding ... recently, an oxygen cylinder exploded in the punishing heat of the sun.” She concludes that “...time is running out. The existential threat posed by climate change in Iraq is not just a distant possibility: it is already unfolding. The stakes are high. “We are talking about Mesopotamia, our history, our civilization, and the future of the next generation,” acknowledges Yusif. He pauses to let the words sink in. ”

<https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/deadly-heat-iraqs-hospitals-have-become-ground-zero-battlefield-countrys-climate-crisis#>

Kurdish elections arrive — finally, and with challenges

Winthrop Rodgers

Middle East Institute



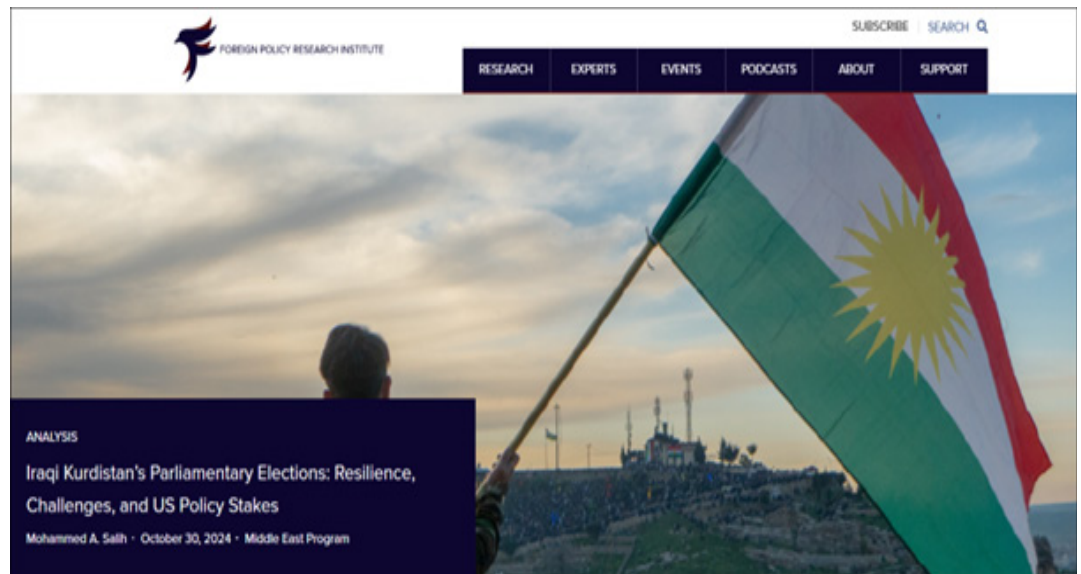
The author analyzes the results of the recent election in Iraq’s Kurdistan Region and concludes that “The KDP was the largest party in the 2018 election, with 45 seats, and is positioned to win the most this time as well. The 59 seats in its heartland of Duhok and Erbil governorates give it an advantage over other parties... As a result, the KDP’s floor is probably higher than the PUK’s ceiling. What is certain, however, is that the government formation process will be extremely difficult whatever the result. The deep acrimony between the two ruling parties will be hard to resolve. Each appears more concerned with pursuing its self-interest rather than any common program. While that may prove extremely damaging for the Kurdistan Region as an entity, the real losers will be ordinary people. Basic governance will suffer in a divided, dysfunctional Kurdistan Region, and the consequences will be felt most by the population, not the politicians.”

<https://www.mei.edu/publications/kurdish-elections-arrive-finally-and-challenges>

Iraqi Kurdistan's Parliamentary Elections: Resilience, Challenges and US Policy Stakes

Mohammed A. Salih

Foreign Policy
Research Institute



According to the author, “Kurdish-US relations have been mutually beneficial for the past three decades and Kurds continue to be a reliable US ally in a largely hostile region. Maintaining Kurdistan’s stability is critical amid escalating regional conflict and a region growing more unfriendly to the United States by the day... the US embassy in Baghdad should take an active role in mediating the government-formation process, but support and engagement from higher levels of the US government are equally crucial... Kurdish leaders must recognize the strategic value of maintaining strong ties with the United States and avoid jeopardizing the relationship for personal or factional gains. For Washington, this is a low-cost, high-reward opportunity to strengthen bilateral ties during a time of uncertainty. Ultimately, it would send a clear message to regional actors, in Baghdad and beyond, that the United States remains committed to its distinctive relationship with Kurds and will not allow the weakening of the KRG.”

<https://www.fpri.org/article/2024/10/>

EUROPEAN THINK TANKS

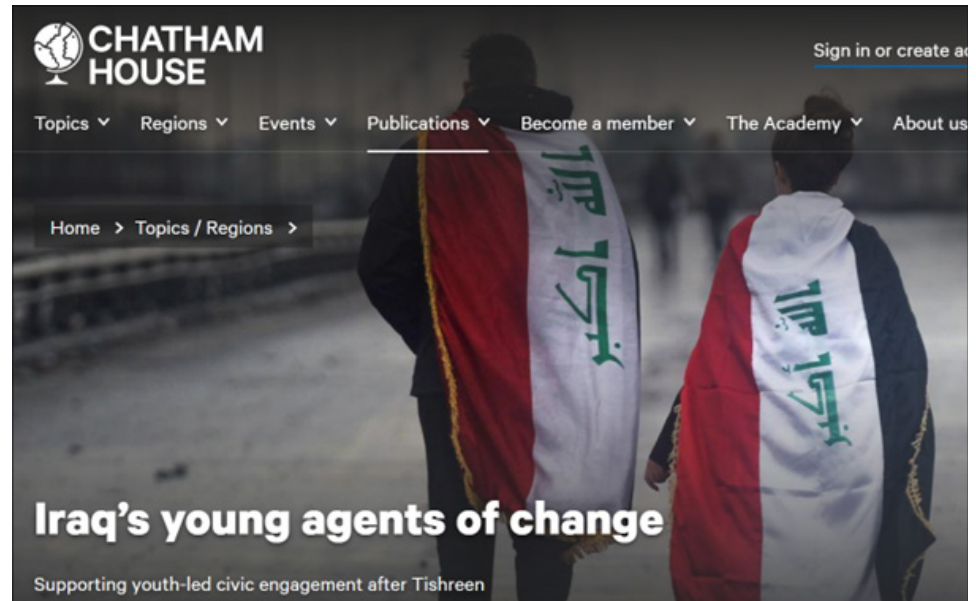


Iraq's young agents of change

Supporting youth-led civic engagement

Hayder Al-Shakeri

Chatham House



“The paper draws on a set of interviews with young people who are pushing for constructive change within Iraq’s political process, economy, and civil society. Their experiences and insights are presented through case studies that illustrate how young Iraqis are taking the initiative and, through their ‘everyday politics’, acting as forces for change within their communities in areas including politics, entrepreneurship, women’s rights, human rights, and climate and environmental activism. The current absence of a mass protest movement in Iraq should not be interpreted as a sign that young people’s appetite for change has diminished, or that they are more accepting of the status quo. The paper sets out recommendations for how reform-minded officials within Iraq, along with the country’s international partners, can better support the ambitions of the current generation of young political and civil society actors and entrepreneurs.”

<https://www.chathamhouse.org/2024/10/iraqs-young-agents-change>

IRANIAN THINK TANKS



Common security issues of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraqi Kurdistan

Department of International
Studies of Iranian Ministry
of Science Research and
Technology

Research Center for
Strategic Studies



“In the last one year, there has been a significant political and security crisis between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kurdistan region of Iraq. This area has been a security concern for the Islamic Republic of Iran due to the fact that it is the location of several Iranian Kurdish armed groups opposed to the regime. Apart from that, concern about the movements and actions of the Zionist regime in this region, turning it into a bridge for anti-regime actions, the positions of the regional authorities, especially Barzani’s Democratic Party, and Iraq’s internal issues, and the relations of the Democratic Party with the Patriotic Union of Iraqi Kurdistan, which is with Iran. It has a closer relationship should be added to the set of these concerns. Any action to make political, security, and military decisions regarding Iraqi Kurdistan should be done with a full understanding of the common security issues of this region because the Iraqi central government does not have the first and last word in the region. The nature of the structure of the government in Iraq is not federal, which is practically confederal, and due to the specific policy of the great powers, this confederal nature and significant independence of the region will remain for an indefinite period of time in the future.”

<https://risstudies.org/%d9%85%d8%b3%d8%a7%d8%a6%d9%84-%d8%a7%d9%85%d9%86%d-b%8c%d8%aa%db%8c-%d9%85%d8%b4%d8%aa%d8%b1%da%a9-%d8%ac%d9%85%d9%87%d9%88%d8%b1%db%8c-%d8%a7%d8%b3%d9%84%d8%a7%d9%85%db%8c-%d8%a7%db%8c%d8%b1%d8%a7/>

TURKISH THINK TANKS



Reviving Turkish-Iraqi ties with the Development Road

Burak Elmali

Sabah



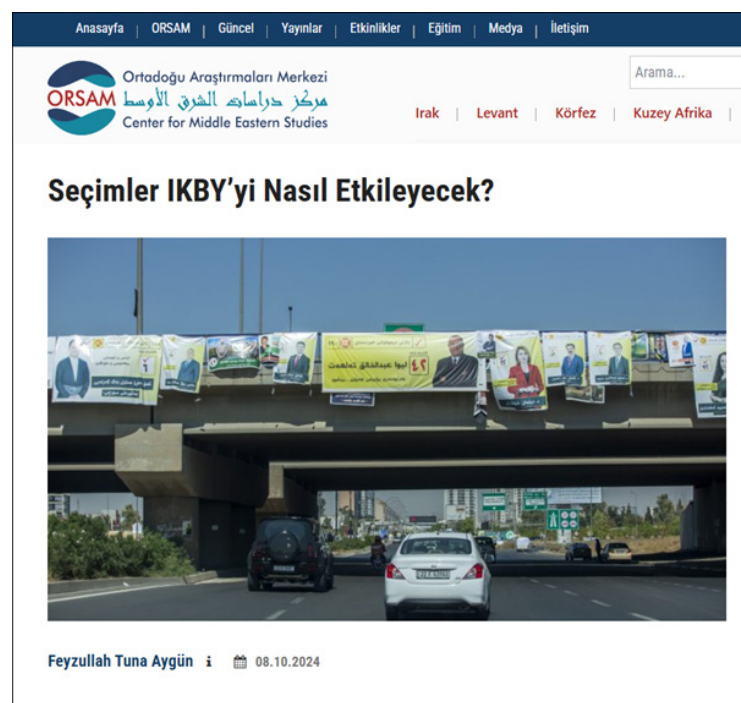
According to the author, “After decades of unstable relations, Türkiye and Iraq forge a new path for regional growth and security together. Turkish-Iraqi relations have gradually warmed over the past five years. In contrast to Iran’s approach, which relies heavily on a network of sectarian groups to exert influence, Ankara’s Iraq strategy focuses on fostering economic growth and enhancing development as a key prerequisite to improving regional security and prosperity.” He concludes that “the Turkish-Iraqi partnership, encompassing economic, political, cultural and security collaboration, serves as a model for peace and prosperity in the region. Central to this cooperation is the Development Road Project, which is set to transform regional dynamics through shared economic progress and security efforts. By prioritizing development over militarization, this partnership represents a pivotal shift toward sustainable stability. With their focus on connectivity and addressing security challenges, both Türkiye and Iraq are positioned to take leadership roles in shaping the region’s future economic and geopolitical landscape.”

<https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/op-ed/reviving-turkish-iraqi-ties-with-the-development-road>

How Will the Elections Affect the KRG?

Feyzullah Tuna Aygün

Center for Middle Eastern
Studies



The fact that the Erbil-Duhok region, where the KDP base is strong, has 59 out of 100 seats is a supporting factor for the KDP to emerge as the first party in the elections. However, it is expected that it will be difficult for the KDP to repeat the record of 45 seats it achieved in the 2018 elections. The KDP demonstrated a performance that could form a government on its own with the support of quota deputies elected from the Erbil-Duhok base in the 2018 elections. However, it has been commented that the power competition between Masrour and Nechirvan Barzani within the KDP may cause a decline in the party's influence.

<https://orsam.org.tr/tr/secimler-ikbyyi-nasil-etkileyecek/>

Iraq's New Arms Deals and Their Meanings in Foreign Policy

Sercan Çalışkan

Center for Middle
Eastern Studies



Although Iraqi foreign policy has been seeking to stay away from conflicts and adopt a balanced approach in recent years, the magnitude of the threats posed by regional risks is pushing Al Sudani's government to purchase new weapons. This is not only due to regional risks; it is also the fact that terrorist threats in domestic security have not yet been completely eliminated. It is possible to say that the current Iraqi government will stay away from aggressive foreign policy steps in the regional equation despite all the risks and the armament that has emerged as a result of these risks. In this context, Iraq is a country that prioritizes negotiations and even positions itself as a mediator in the resolution of crises, while it is striving to maintain its stability instead of taking sides in the crises that have resonated in the Middle East between Iran, Israel, and the US. Considering that the current government was established with the support of the Iran-backed Shiite Coordination Framework, how successfully this can be sustained is a question mark. However, it would not be wrong to say that the Iraqi government has been pursuing a successful foreign policy in the sense that it aimed since the process that began on October 7. While Iraq's foreign policy is being shaped in this direction, the arms deals made in the last year can also be considered as part of the military measures taken against possible risks.

<https://orsam.org.tr/tr/irakin-yeni-silah-anlasmalari-ve-dis-politikada-tasidigi-anlamlar/>

How Might the KRG Elections Be Reflected in the Kirkuk Provincial Assembly?

Selçuk Bacalan

Center for Middle
Eastern Studies



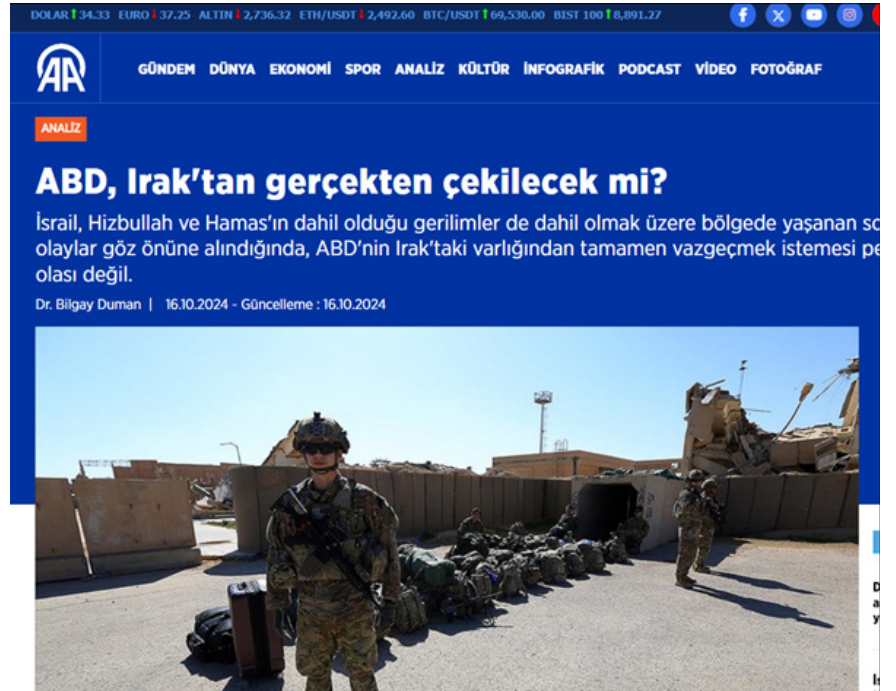
The author analyzes the result of the recent election in Iraq’s Kurdistan region and writes that “this situation has created internal and external pressure among the influential players in the Kurdish political arena, forcing the KDP and PUK leaders to compromise by considering the balance on the power-sharing issues in Baghdad and the KRG... Since none of the winning parties won an absolute majority due to the closeness of the results, there are the New Generation Movement and Islamist parties that can provide the number of deputies that the KDP needs for parliamentary support by joining the government. The presence of these parties is an important factor that will push the PUK to compromise with the KDP. It is possible that the PUK and its supporter Iran will change their policies on Kirkuk in order to be included in the new government to be formed in the KRG.”

<https://orsam.org.tr/tr/ikby-secimlerinin-kerkuk-vilayet-meclisine-yansimasi-nasil-olabilir/>

Will the US really withdraw from Iraq?

Dr. Bilgay Duman

Anadolu Agency



Dr. Bilgay Duman, Coordinator of Iraq Studies at the Center for Middle East Studies (ORSAM), wrote about the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq for AA Analysis. According to him, “Given recent events in the region, including tensions involving Israel, Hezbollah, and Hamas, it is unlikely that the US will want to completely abandon its presence in Iraq.” He concludes that “ultimately, while the U.S. has announced that it will formally withdraw its forces from Iraq by 2025, this will likely mean a shift to a different military engagement rather than a full withdrawal. The U.S. continues to use Iraq as a transit area to support Israel, limit the influence of China and Russia in the Middle East, counter Iranian influence, and prevent the resurgence of the terrorist organization ISIS. This makes it impossible for the US to leave the country completely in the near term.”

<https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/analiz/abd-iraktan-gercekten-cekilecek-mi/3363995>

What do the official results say about the KRG parliamentary elections?

Sercan Çalışkan

Anadolu Agency



According to the author, “election results may push the PUK into more aggressive politics”. In analyzing the result of this election, he writes that “while this situation pushed the PUK to the background in Sulaymaniyah politics, it strengthened the New Generation Movement, which emerged as an opposition voice. Indeed, after its success in the 2021 Iraqi Parliamentary Elections, the New Generation Movement increased its number of seats to 15 in the 2024 KRG Parliamentary Elections, proving that it is an important alternative force to the PUK in Sulaymaniyah politics. In fact, it can be said that the New Generation Movement emerged as an opposition force ... In short, it can be seen that the New Generation Movement benefits from the social opposition centered in Sulaymaniyah, but in general, it has been able to collect the votes of reaction as an alternative voice against the two-party establishment in the KRG.”

<https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/analiz/ikby-milletvekili-secimlerinde-resmi-sonuclar-ne-soyluyor/3371232>

KRG elections: The beginning of transformation?

Bilgay Duman

Milliyet



Milliyet Son Dakika Gündem Yazarlar Ekonomi Dünya Resmi İlanlar **Suzmonp**

Yazarlar / Düşünenlerin Düşüncesi / İKBY Seçimleri: Dönüşümün Başlangıcı mı? (1)

by **TEO**

DÜŞÜNENLERİN DÜŞÜNCESİ

Düşünenlerin Düşüncesi

dusunce@milliyet.com.tr

Tüm Yazıları >

İKBY seçimleri: Dönüşümün başlangıcı mı? (1)

25 Ekim 2024

Bilgay Duman - Sadece Irak Kürt siyasetini değil hem ülke hem de bölge siyasetini etkileme potansiyeli barındıran Irak Kürdistan Bölgesel Yönetimi'ndeki (İKBY) seçimler, 4 kez ertelenmesinin ardından iki yıl gecikmeli de olsa 20 Ekim'de yapıldı. İKBY seçmeni Erbil, Süleymaniye, Duhok ve Halepçe olmak üzere 4 ayrı bölge sistematığında oy kullandı.

According to the author, “The elections in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, which have the potential to affect not only Iraqi Kurdish politics but also the politics of the country and the region, were held on October 20, albeit two years late after being postponed four times.” In the end, he concludes that “considering that most of the pressure the KDP is experiencing from Baghdad is carried out by political structures affiliated with Shiite groups and that these groups have a stance closer to the PUK, the presence of these representatives in the KRG parliament could produce results that could affect KRG politics in the balance between the KDP and the PUK. What these results will be, how they will be reflected in Ankara-Erbil politics, and scenarios for the establishment of the regional government will be the subject of the next article.”

ARAB THINK TANKS



Iraqi Kurdistan: Parliamentary Elections Amidst Internal and External Challenges

Safinaz Muhammad Ahmad

Al-Ahram Center for Political
and Strategic Studies

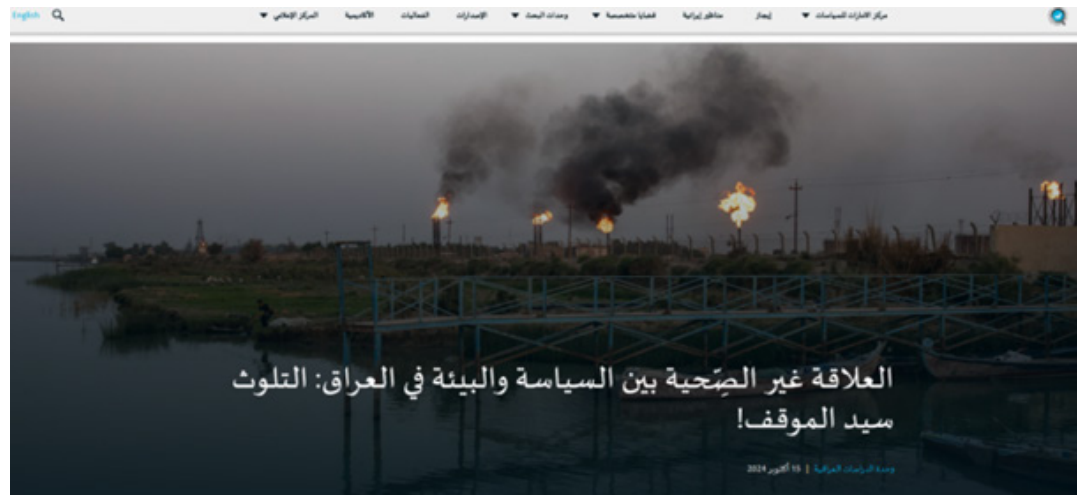


In her article, the researcher examines the Kurdistan Region elections in light of significant international challenges. The Kurdistan Region Presidency of Iraq decided to hold legislative elections on October 20, 2024—the sixth in its history, postponed since 2022 due to prolonged political disputes following the last legislative elections in 2018. This decision comes particularly after the Federal Supreme Court announced, in May 2023, the invalidity of the “Extension of the Kurdistan Parliament” law, which had been passed in October 2022. This electoral process in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq takes place amid a challenging regional situation that affects the entire country. It follows the “Al-Aqsa Flood” operation carried out by the Palestinian resistance in October 2023. Iraq is feeling the impact of this operation, especially given the support provided by Iraqi armed factions to the Palestinian resistance within the “Regional Resistance Axis.” One year after the “Al-Aqsa Flood” operation, and amid the ensuing Israeli aggression in Gaza, there has been significant military escalation, including reciprocal strikes between Iran and Israel. These developments have impacted Iraq’s security situation, including that of the Kurdistan Region. Moreover, the Kurdistan Region is affected by the complex relationships its two main traditional parties maintain with external actors: the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) has close ties with the United States, Turkey, and Israel, while the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) has established strong relations with Iran.

The Unhealthy Relationship between Politics and the Environment in Iraq

Iraq Studies Unit

Emirates Policy Center



Iraq ranked second worldwide for poor air quality. The country's annual average PM2.5 (airborne particles harmful to the lungs) reading was 80.1 micrograms per cubic meter. The reality in Iraq reveals significant challenges in achieving tangible, rapid environmental improvements due to the entangled system of economic and partisan interests that influence Iraq's budget allocations, government decisions, and legislative processes. Without tackling the root causes, environmental pollution in Iraq is likely to worsen, potentially leading to the recurrence of the October environmental crisis in the spring and fall of 2025.