

PROPERTY OF
GEOGRAPHIC BRANCH
LIBRARY



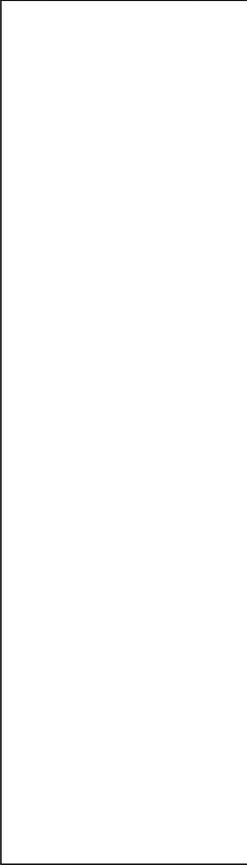
NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SURVEY

IRAQ

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: OCT 2005

(b) (1)
(b) (3)
(c)

SECTION 41
POPULATION



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Washington, D. C.

D
RECORDED

CHAPTER IV

~~RESTRICTED~~

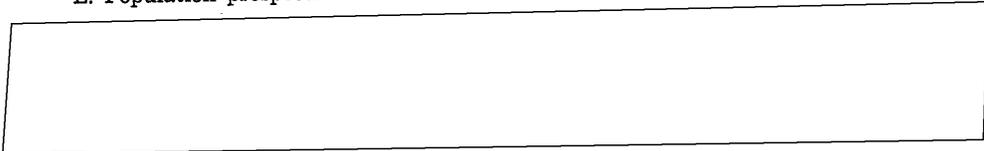
NND 011466
RG 263
Box 156
Tab 1

- Army
- ◉ CIA
- DEA
- DIA
- DOE
- DOJ
- DSWA
- FEMA
- FBI
- HOUSE
- NASA
- NAVY
- NSC
- NRC
- NSA
- OSD
- STATE
- SENATE
- TREAS
- USAF
- USMC

NND 011466 -86

TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR SECTION 41

	<i>Page</i>
A. General	41 - 1
B. Size and geographical distribution	41 - 1
C. Population structure	41 - 2
D. Population change	41 - 2
1. Historical growth	41 - 2
2. Vital statistics	41 - 3
3. Migration	41 - 4
E. Population prospects	41 - 4



LIST OF FIGURES

			<i>Page</i>
Fig. 41-1	Chart	Comparative Near East populations, 1947	41 - 1
Fig. 41-2	Table	Area, population, and density per square mile by <i>lwo's</i> and territories, Iraq, 1947	41 - 2
Fig. 41-3	Table	Sex distribution in Iraq, 1947	41 - 2
Fig. 41-4	Map	Distribution of cities, towns and villages in Iraq, prior to World War II	41 - 3

This Section was prepared for the NIS by the Office of Intelligence Research, Department of State.

~~RESTRICTED~~

NND 011466

RG 263

Box 156

Tab 1

Army
 CIA
 DEA
 DIA
 DOE
 DOJ
 DSWA

FEMA
 FBI
 HOUSE
 NASA
 NAVY
 NSC
 NRC

NSA
 OSD
 STATE
 SENATE
 TREAS
 USAF
 USMC

NND 011466 -87

41. Population

A. General

Iraq occupies a unique position among Arab countries inasmuch as it has ample supplies both of potentially fertile land and of water for irrigation. Because of these features Iraq could support a much larger population than the approximately five million that it now has. On the other hand, the growth potential of the Iraqi population is large. Both birth and death rates are high at present, but the death rate could be substantially lowered by comparatively inexpensive health measures.

B. Size and geographical distribution

Iraq has an area of 168,000 square miles and a population, according to the 1947 census, of 4,800,000, making a density of 29 persons per square mile.

The country is slightly larger than California, but two-fifths of its total area is taken up by the Al Bādiya ash Shimāliya and Al Bādiya al Junūbiya (desert areas). Land suitable for cultivation is officially estimated (*Source 4*) as 36,000 square miles, or only a little more than one-fifth of the total.

Of this fifth, it is estimated that about half is located in the north where rainfall is reasonably adequate and half in the south, where irrigation is necessary for agriculture. This estimate is

based on Sir Ernest Dowson's report of 1932 (*Source 1*). A more recent authority (*Source 6*) estimates the amount of cultivable land in the rainfall and irrigation zones to be approximately 16,000 and 31,000 square miles respectively. The remainder of the country, consisting for the most part of rugged hills and semidesert, supports a pastoral economy.

The first census of Iraq was taken in October 1947. To help to insure a complete enumeration, a curfew was imposed in the major cities; it is not known whether this measure was extended to smaller towns and villages. In any event, the sex ratio (Subsection C) suggests that complete coverage was not achieved.

FIGURE 41-1 compares graphically the population of Iraq with that of other countries in the Near East. The figure for Saudi Arabia is that claimed by its government and is almost certainly an overestimate. It is entirely possible that Iraq actually outranks it and has the second largest population among the Arab countries.

The density of 29 persons per square mile is based on the total area, including deserts and other wastelands. If only the area suitable for cultivation is considered, the density is 100-150 persons per square mile. The corresponding figure for Egypt is about 1,400 per square mile of settled area.

Iraq is administratively divided into 14 *liwā's* (provinces) which vary widely in area and population. In addition, there are two territories, Al Bādiya ash Shimāliya and Al Bādiya al Junūbiya, which are both virtually uninhabited (FIGURE 41-2). The varying density of population from *liwā' to liwā'* is due mainly to the uneven distribution of cultivated land. Dense settlement is generally found along the rivers and canals of the alluvial plain and in the more fertile valleys of the northern mountains. The distribution of towns and villages follows this pattern, as shown by the accompanying map, FIGURE 41-4.

The 1947 census did not divide the population into urban and rural segments, nor did it give population data for minor administrative divisions from which such a distribution could be assembled. Any dividing line between urban and rural inhabitants based on the size of the community in which they reside would be unrealistic, since in the smaller towns a large part of the population consists of peasants. However, it is assumed that at

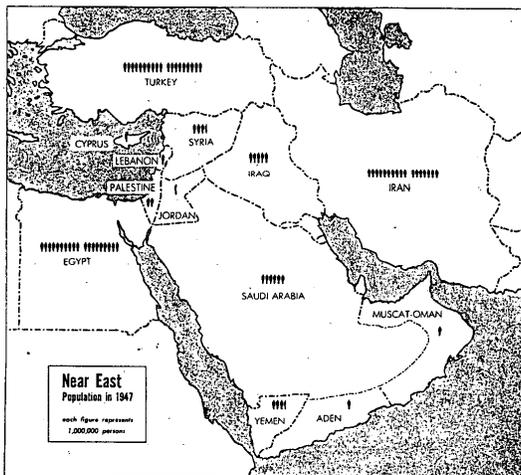


FIGURE 41-1. COMPARATIVE NEAR EAST POPULATIONS, 1947

~~RESTRICTED~~

PAGE 41-1

NND 011466

RG 263

Box 156

Tab 1

Army	FEMA	NSA
① CIA	FBI	OSD
DEA	HOUSE	STATE
DIA	NASA	SENATE
DOE	NAVY	TREAS
DOJ	NSC	USAF
DSWA	NRC	USMC

NND 011466 -88

FIGURE 41-2. AREA, POPULATION, AND DENSITY PER SQUARE MILE BY LIWA'S AND TERRITORIES, IRAQ, 1947

ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS	AREA	POPULATION	DENSITY PER SQUARE MILE
	square miles	thousands	
LIWA'S:			
Mosul	19,490	608*	31
Erbil	6,363	234*	37
Sulaimaniya	3,619	223	62
Kirkuk	7,672	286	37
Diyala	6,154	273	44
Dulaim	17,488	193	11
Baghdad	7,730	805	104
Karbala	2,275	277	122
Kut al Imara	6,188	225	36
Hilla	2,041	262	128
Diwaniya	5,765	384	67
'Amara	7,247	308	43
Muntafiq	5,463	370	68
Basra	4,758	352	74
TERRITORIES:			
Al Badiya ash Shimaliya	36,558	insig	insig
Al Badiya al Janubiya	29,227	insig	insig
Total	168,039**	4,800	29

Data from Source 4.

* Figures differ from those given in source, which erroneously includes the population of Zibar qada' (district) in Erbil liwa'.

** Individual figures in this and other tables do not add to total because of rounding.

least one-fifth, and perhaps as much as one-fourth, of the population of Iraq could be classified as urban if this category is defined to include the population of towns of less than 10,000 inhabitants.

The four major cities of Iraq are Baghdad (Baghdad), Mosul (Al Musil), Basra (Al Basrah), and Kirkuk (see Figure 41-3). Population figures, which are from the 1947 census, probably include only small percentages of rural population. Baghdad is the capital; Mosul and, especially, Kirkuk are important as centers of the petroleum industry; and Basra, on the Shatt al Arab (Shaft al 'Arab), is the only major port.

The combined population of these four cities in 1947 was 730,000, or 15% of the total population.

Data for smaller cities are very scanty and are based entirely on estimates made by local officials at various times during the past 15 years. There are probably (Source 2), about a dozen cities with 10,000 to 50,000 inhabitants: 'Amara, An Najaf, An Nāsiriya, Erbil, Hilla, Karbalā, Sulaimaniya, Suq ash Shuyūkh, Tall 'Afar, and a few others. Of these, the holy cities of An Najaf and Karbalā are said to be larger than the rest.

C. Population structure

According to the census of 1947 there were 88 males per 100 females in Iraq. This is a highly improbable sex ratio which could be explained only by major war losses or large-scale emigration. Since Iraq had not actively participated in a major war and since there had been no large-scale emigration, it appears that males were grossly under-enumerated. It is probable that some males were not counted because they were out tending their flocks. It is even more likely that many others evaded the enumeration because they suspected it to be a registration for military service.

As shown in Figure 41-3, the reported ratio of males to females is highest in the large cities and lowest in the rural communities. This pattern has also been observed in other Asiatic countries, where men tend to migrate to the city in search of employment, leaving their families behind in the village.

Nothing is known about the age distribution of the population of Iraq. In those countries of the Near East for which statistics are available, the proportion of children under 15 years of age is generally high, amounting to 40% or more of the total population. The proportion of persons over 65, on the other hand, is small, rarely over 4% or 5%. It is believed that this pattern of age distribution, which results from a combination of high fertility and high mortality, applies to Iraq.

FIGURE 41-3. SEX DISTRIBUTION IN IRAQ, 1947

CITIES AND AREAS	TOTAL POPULATION	SEXES		MALES PER 100 FEMALES
		MALES	FEMALES	
	thousands	thousands		
Total of four largest cities:	730	382	348	110
Baghdad	364	189	175	107
Mosul	203	107	96	111
Basra	94	48	46	104
Kirkuk	69	38	31	126
All other liwa' capitals*	555	277	278	99
Remainder of country (rural)	3,514	1,594	1,919	83
Total	4,800	2,253	2,546	88

* Including a considerable amount of rural territory.

D. Population change

1. Historical growth

No accurate information is available on the population of the Tigris-Euphrates valley in antiquity or under the Caliphate, but it is believed that there were times when the population was greater than at present.

NND 011466

RG 263

Box 156

Tab 1

- Army
- CIA
- DEA
- DIA
- DOE
- DOJ
- DSWA
- FEMA
- FBI
- HOUSE
- NASA
- NAVY
- NSC
- NRC
- NSA
- OSD
- STATE
- SENATE
- TREAS
- USAF
- USMC

NND 011466 - 89

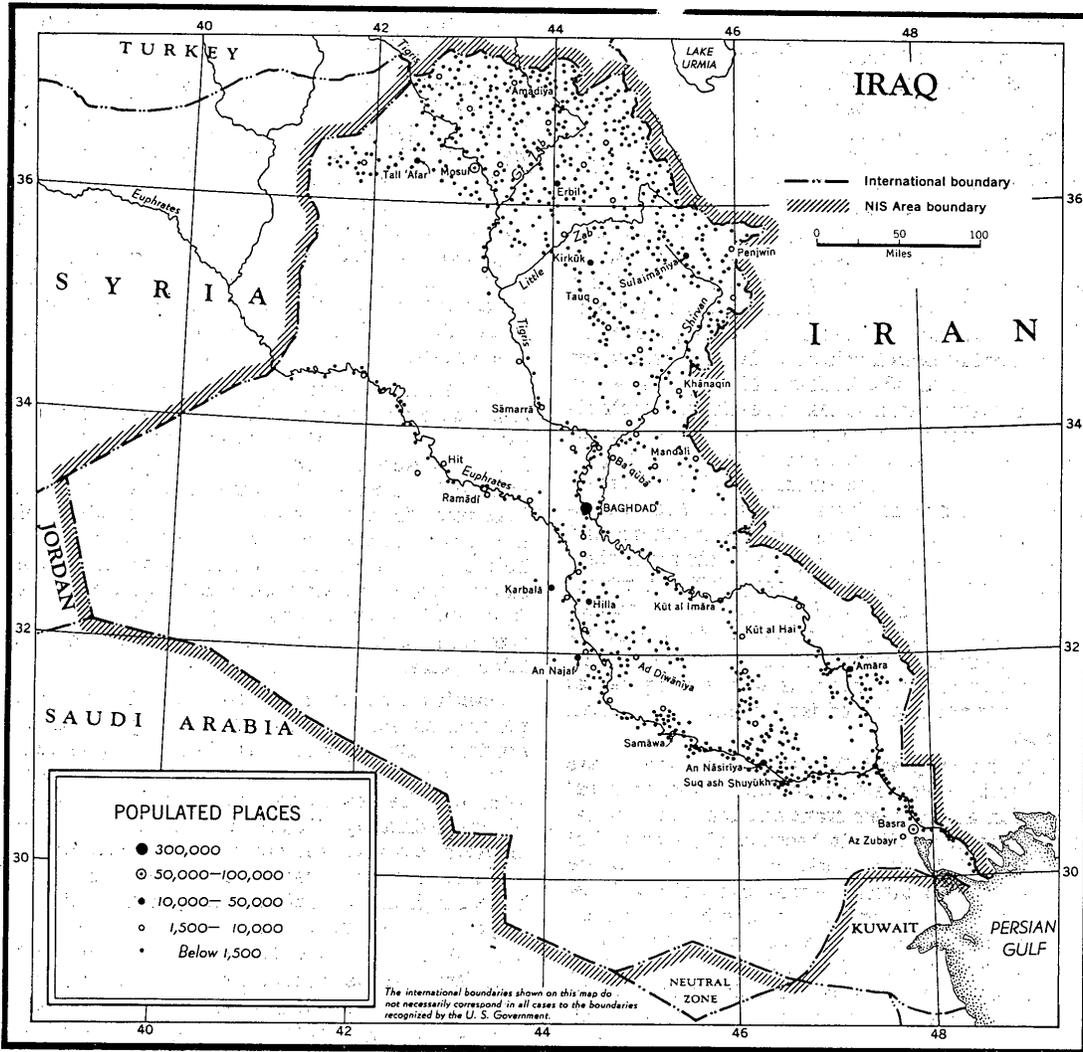


FIGURE 41-4. DISTRIBUTION OF CITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES IN IRAQ, PRIOR TO WORLD WAR II

The earliest population estimate for modern Iraq is 2,850,000 in 1920. This estimate implies an annual rate of growth between 1920 and 1947 of 2%, appreciably more than has been observed over comparable periods in Egypt (1.5%) and Turkey (1.7%). Since Iraq is less developed than either of these countries and its mortality is presumably higher, with little difference in birth rate, it would seem that the 1920 estimate was too low.

2. Vital statistics

Vital statistics are virtually nonexistent. Numbers of births and deaths for health department areas, in which 1,500,000 of the population live,

have recently been published (Source 3), but registration is woefully inadequate, and vital rates computed from these figures do not represent actual conditions. No factual information is available for the remainder of the country. Birth and death rates therefore can only be estimated on the basis of known rates in comparable countries in the Near East and elsewhere.

Fertility and mortality are probably very high. The birth rate is estimated to be at least 45 per thousand population and may be higher than 50. The annual death rate is probably between 30 and 35 per thousand, reflecting the poor health conditions generally prevailing in the country.

NND 011466

RG 263

Box 156

Tab 1

- Army
- CIA
- DEA
- DIA
- DOE
- DOJ
- DSWA
- FEMA
- FBI
- HOUSE
- NASA
- NAVY
- NSC
- NRC
- NSA
- OSD
- STATE
- SENATE
- TREAS
- USAF
- USMC

NND 011466 - 90

3. Migration

Quantitative information on internal migration is entirely lacking, although the population is known to include several hundred thousand nomads and seminomads. Historically, nomadism has varied inversely with control over the Tigris and Euphrates rivers for irrigation purposes. The first effective irrigation systems were instituted in the third millennium B.C. Since that time strong governments have built up such systems, while weak governments, lacking the ability to defend and maintain them, have been unable to prevent their destruction. In periods of decay, increased nomadism has been inevitable. In their search for grass and water, the Bedouin of Iraq follow the pastures from season to season, each tribe restricting its movement to lands assigned it by mutual agreement. In the course of their annual migrations, they often cross international boundaries, and the tribes from Syria and Saudi Arabia likewise often cross into Iraq. In the northern and northeastern regions of Iraq the Kurds graze their flocks in the valleys of the Iraqi hills in winter and in the hill country on both sides of the Iranian border in summer. The Iraqi Statistical Abstract gives data on the volume of frontier traffic, but no conclusions can be drawn from these figures as departures are registered far less completely than entries.

Both the Iraqi and Iranian Governments have occasionally taken action to limit seasonal tribal migration across their frontiers, but such limitations have been difficult because of geographical features. Following World War II Iraqi police were unable to control the movement of Kurds between Iraq and the province of Azerbaijan in Iran during the period of the revolt in Azerbaijan against Iranian rule. The delimitation in 1922 of the southern boundary with Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, was not meant to interfere with migration.

In 1929 the government took its first steps toward a program of tribal resettlement on newly irrigated lands. This program has already reduced nomadism considerably, although exact figures are not available. Economic necessity and governmental decrees backed by air power are gradually forcing the predatory Bedouin to lead a more settled existence cultivating the land or working for the oil companies.

Throughout the year Iraqis of the Shiah sect undertake religious pilgrimages to their holy shrines at Sāmarrā, Al Kādhimain, Karbalā and An Najaf in Iraq; the number of such pilgrims is not known. In addition, between 10,000 and 50,000 Iranians visit these shrines each year. Other Shiah pilgrims come from Afghanistan, India, and Syria. Large numbers of Iraqis of both the Shiah

and Sunni sects participate in the annual pilgrimages to Mecca.

Immigration to and emigration from Iraq in the present century have been largely by minority groups—Assyrians, Armenians, and Jews. During World War I about 40,000 Assyrians entered Iraq from Turkey and Iran. By 1930 most of these had been settled in the northern provinces. Following the Assyrian revolt in 1931 against the Baghdad government, 6,000 of these Assyrians crossed into Syria and were settled there. The remainder are reported to be discontented under Iraqi rule; as of 1949 a majority of them desired to emigrate.

The Armenian minority, numbering about 12,000, consists largely of refugees from Turkey who came to Iraq during and after World War I. In 1947 they were invited by the U.S.S.R. to be "repatriated" to Soviet Armenia, and in October of that year the first group of several hundred left the Mosul and Baghdad areas. At that time about half of the Armenians in Iraq considered themselves prospective emigrants, but adverse reports from the first contingent dampened their enthusiasm and no further emigration appears to have taken place.

Jewish migration to and from Iraq has involved political as well as economic and religious considerations. During World War II the Iraqi Government was opposed to large-scale Jewish immigration, and the Jewish community itself, composed of approximately 125,000 prosperous city merchants and others, was not in favor of making Iraq a haven for immigrant Jews. After the Arab-Israeli fighting in Palestine began in 1948, the Baghdad Government took action to prevent the departure of Iraqi Jews and to deny transit to foreign Jews. However, following continued clandestine emigration of Iraqi Jews, the Iraqi Government on March 6, 1950 enacted a law permitting Iraqi Jews to emigrate to Israel on the condition that they surrender their Iraqi nationality. It is expected that this law will eventually result in a considerable reduction in the size of the Jewish community in Iraq. As of April, 1950, only about 5,000 Arab refugees from Palestine had settled in Iraq, where the able-bodied among them are finding gainful work.

E. Population prospects

Iraq possesses ample resources of potentially fertile land and of water, but neither are fully or efficiently used. Great areas capable of productivity through irrigation are still barren, while land actually irrigated is wastefully and inefficiently exploited (Source 6). Although about three-

NND 011466

RG 263

Box 156

Tab 1

- Army
- ◉ CIA
- DEA
- DIA
- DOE
- DOJ
- DSWA
- FEMA
- FBI
- HOUSE
- NASA
- NAVY
- NSC
- NRC
- NSA
- OSD
- STATE
- SENATE
- TREAS
- USAF
- USMC

NND 011466 - 91

fourths of the cultivated land of Iraq is irrigated, yields per acre are low, generally lower than in other countries of the Near East and much lower than in Egypt. This low productivity is primarily attributed to the prevailing system of land ownership and land use, which leaves the peasant with little ambition and little capital to improve his methods of cultivation. With proper irrigation and drainage and improved agricultural practices,

the crop area could be greatly expanded and higher yields per acre could be obtained, thus enabling Iraq to support a much larger population.

Public health work in Iraq is in its infancy; a moderate expansion at low cost could quickly lead to a significant reduction in mortality. Since the birth rate is high and voluntary control is likely to remain at a minimum for several decades, an acceleration of population growth may be expected.

~~RESTRICTED~~

NND 011466
 RG 263
 Box 156
 Tab 1
 Army FEMA NSA
 CIA FBI OSD
 DEB HOUSE STATE
 DIA NASA SENATE
 DOE NAVY TREAS
 DOJ NSC USAF
 DSWA NRC USMC

NND 011466 -92

(BLANK)

NND 011466

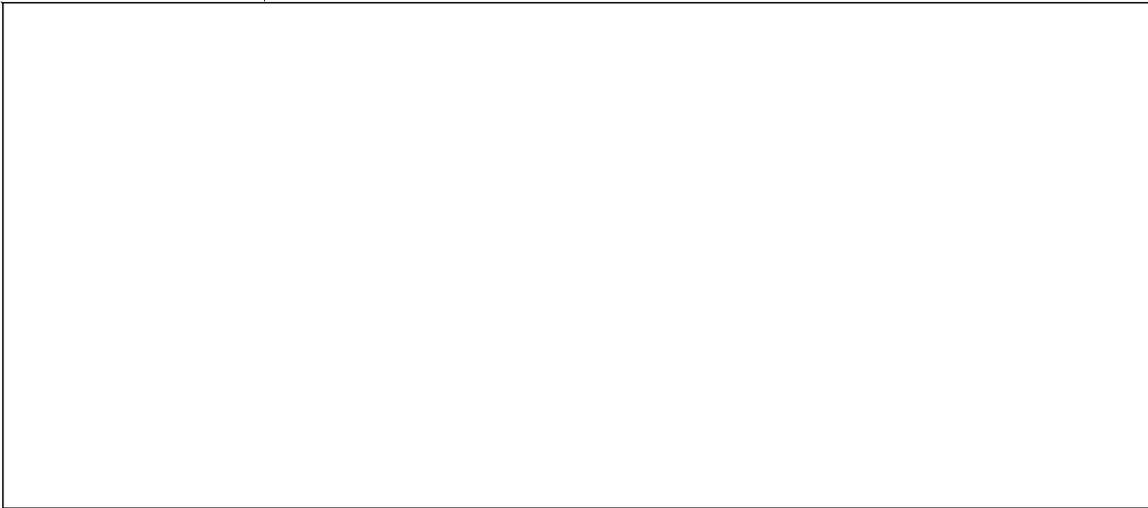
RG 263

Box 156

Tab 1

Army	FEMA	NSA
CIA	FBI	OSD
DEA	HOUSE	STATE
DIA	NASA	SENATE
DOE	NAVY	TREAS
DOJ	NSC	USAF
DSWA	NRC	USMC

NND 011466 - 93



~~RESTRICTED~~



PAGE 41-7

NND	011466	
RG	263	
Box	156	
Tab	1	
Army	FEMA	NSA
① CIA	FBI	OSD
DEA	HOUSE	STATE
DIA	NASA	SENATE
DOE	NAVY	TREAS
DOJ	NSC	USAF
DSWA	NRC	USMC

NND 011466 -94