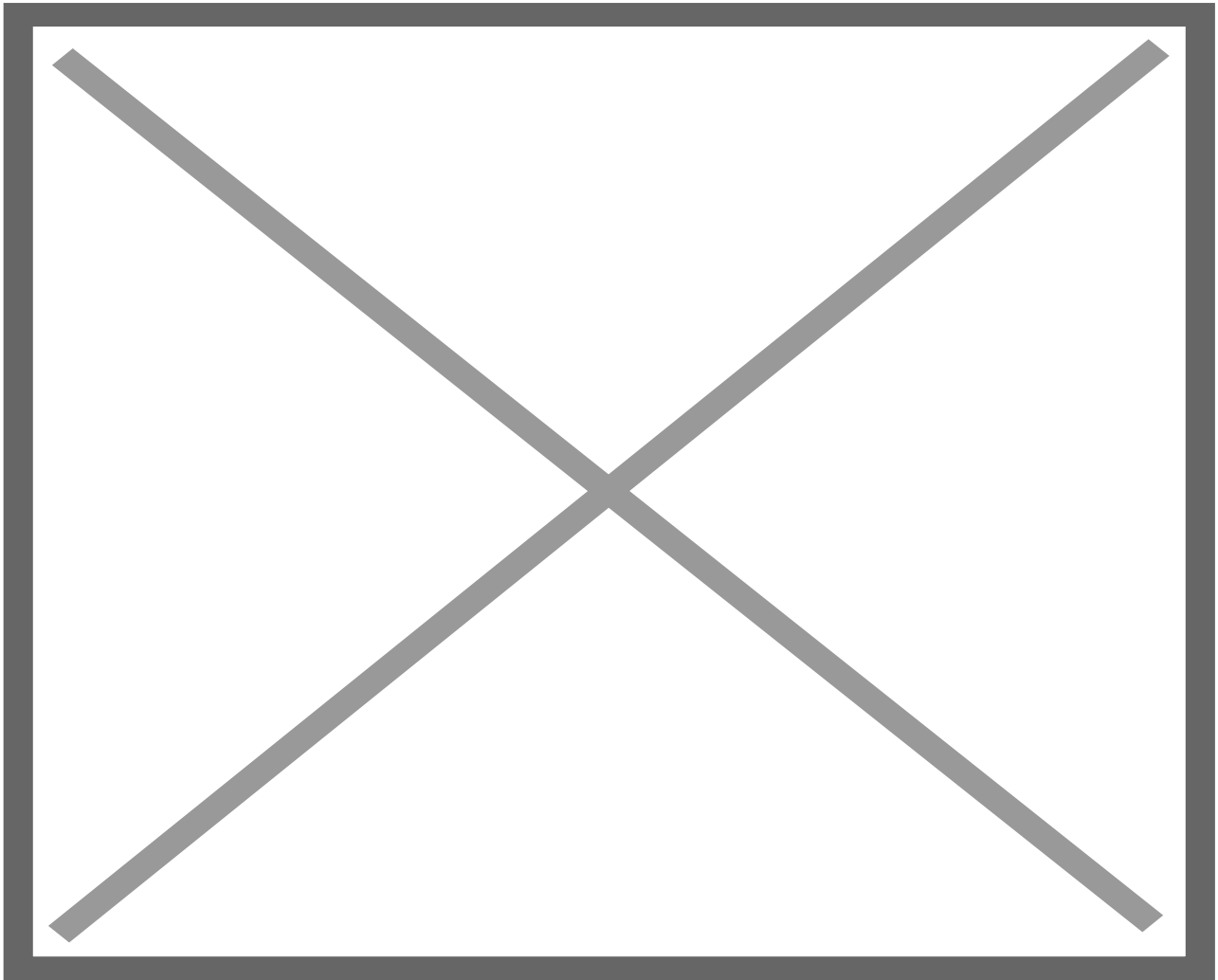


# Babil/Babylon

*COMMON ANALYSIS*

*Last updated: January 2021*

Babil governorate is located in the central part of Iraq, south of Baghdad governorate and has borders with Baghdad, Anbar, Kerbala, Qadissiya, and Wassit governorates. Babil governorate is divided into the following districts: Al Musayab, Al Mahaweel, Al Hilla, and Al Hashimiya. The governorate's capital is Hilla. For 2019, the governorate's population was estimated at 2 119 403, the majority being Shia Arab. Babil is of strategic importance as it is situated along a main highway used by Shiite pilgrims from northern and central Iraq into Karbala and Najaf.



In 2014, ISIL seized control of Jurf al Sakhr town in Babil. ISIL was driven out of Jurf al-Sakhr town in 2014 and Shiite militias were accused of targeting Sunnis, displacing and driving out families, destroying homes, and preventing returns. In 2017, it was reported that the Iraqi military's Babil Operations Command (BabOC) was responsible for Babil governorate. Shia militias presence in Jurf al-Sakhr and in Al Hilla towns was reported, with Kata'ib Hezbollah strongly consolidating a 'no go' zone in which displaced Sunni residents cannot return and where only KH forces operate. In May 2019 it was also reported that ISIL reorganised cells and increased their operations and attacks in Babil.

Babil has not been a priority for the ISIL insurgency in recent years, however Jurf al-Sakhr area is the target of ISIL threats and attacks. Attacks against PMU have taken the form of IED and car bombs. According to the same source, there were seven ISIL attacks in Babil during May 2020, the most in the governorate since August 2019, and all attacks took place in Jurf al-Sakhr district. Babil has also been the site of protests against the government occurring, for example, in March 2019 and in October 2019, during which private militias reportedly used live

ammunition against protesters to stop them from entering political and government buildings.

ACLED reported a total of 51 security incidents (average of 0.6 security incidents per week) in Babil governorate in the reference period, the majority of which coded as incidents of remote violence/explosions. Security incidents occurred in all districts of the governorate, with the largest overall number being recorded in the district of Al Mahaweel. UNAMI recorded 2 armed conflict related incidents, 1 taking place in 2019 and 1 from 1st January until 31st July 2020.

In the reference period, UNAMI recorded a total of 32 civilian casualties (1 death and 31 injuries). More specifically, all 32 casualties were reported in 2019 and no casualties were reported by UNAMI from 1st January until 31st July 2020. Compared to the official figures for the population in the governorate, this represents 2 civilian casualties per 100 000 inhabitants for the full reference period.

As of 30 June 2020, there were 17 004 IDPs in Babil governorate. It was also indicated that Babil had no returns, or very low returns to some parts of the north, mainly because of blocked returns. PMU militias have prevented Arab Sunni IDPs from returning to their places of origin in Babil and specifically, both Jurf al-Sakhr and Musayib had been cleared out of their residents and a ban on returns has been in place.

Damage to housing assets has been reported.

Looking at the indicators, it can be concluded that indiscriminate violence is taking place in the governorate of **Babil** at such a low level that **in general there is no real risk** for a civilian to be personally affected by reason of indiscriminate violence within the meaning of [Article 15\(c\) QD](#). However, individual elements always need to be taken into account as they could put the applicant in risk-enhancing situations.

Main COI reference: [Security situation 2020](#), 2.2

---