

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000638/25
to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Željana Zovko (PPE)
(12 February 2025)

Subject: Political representation of religious minorities in Iraq

Christians in Iraq have formal representation in both the federal Iraqi Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government. However, the representation mechanism lacks effectiveness, as seats reserved for religious minorities are allocated to major parties without genuine minority representation (including to the Babylon Movement led by US-sanctioned Rayan Al-Kildani ⁽¹⁾).

In February 2024, the Iraqi Federal Supreme Court decided to reduce the number of parliamentary seats in the Kurdistan Regional Government from 111 to 100 and the minority quota seats from 11 to 5. Christian parties had previously threatened to boycott the Kurdistan parliamentary elections in October 2024 due to the court ruling, and the election results show that the minority quota seats were won by candidates backed by majority parties. This seriously undermines the participation of Iraqi religious minorities in public life.

1. What action has the EU taken to ensure that religious minorities are given a genuine political voice in both national and provincial decision-making bodies in Iraq?
2. Does the Delegation of the European Union to Iraq engage with representatives of religious minorities and human right defenders in Iraq and, if so, what is the concrete outcome of that engagement?

Submitted: 12.2.2025

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(11 June 2025)

The EU supports the different Iraqi institutions in strengthening democratic and inclusive governance, with the full participation of all components of the Iraqi society, including women and youth, as well as ethnic and religious minorities.

The need to protect and improve the situation of minorities is raised regularly by the EU on its interactions with the authorities, notably in the ongoing electoral period ahead of the 11 November 2025 legislative elections.

Most recently, this was also conveyed by the EU side at the recent 8th EU-Iraq Inter-Parliamentary meeting held on 14 May 2025 in Brussels.

The EU supports, empowers and is in regular contact with Iraqi civil society organisations and human rights defenders as important components of the society. In recent weeks, the EU Delegation in Iraq has held conversations with Christian, Yazidi and Mandaean-Sabaeen representatives from all across Iraq.

These discussions revealed some degree of frustration about the current minority quota seats process not resulting in better representation.

The concrete outcome of EU engagement with civil society representatives is to improve their capacity and political participation as well as understanding of the positions of the different communities to better tackle and raise their case when interacting with both the national and regional authorities.

¹ <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm735>.