

# IRAQ

الله أكبر



## History:

The history of Iraq is one of the longest in the world, dating back to ancient Mesopotamia, often referred to as the cradle of civilization. The region saw the birth of writing, agriculture, and law. Over the centuries, it was part of various empires, from the Akkadian, Babylonian, and Assyrian, to the Achaemenid, Greek, and Roman. The Islamic Golden Age saw Baghdad become a global center of education and culture. In the 20th century, Iraq was a British mandate post World War I and gained independence in 1932. The late 20th and early 21st centuries witnessed periods of conflict, including the Iran-Iraq War, Gulf War, and the 2003 US-led invasion, which significantly affected the country's socio-economic fabric.

## Geography:

Iraq is located in the Middle East, bordered by six countries: Iran to the east, Turkey to the north, Syria and Jordan to the west, and Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to the south. The country has a small coastline along the Persian Gulf. Covering an area of about 438,317 square kilometers, Iraq's terrain is diverse, ranging from desert in the west and south to mountainous regions in the north. The country is bisected by two major rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, creating fertile plains in the central region.

## Economy:

Iraq's economy is dominated by the oil sector, which contributes significantly to its GDP and provides a large portion of foreign exchange earnings. Despite its abundant natural resources, the economy has been hampered by decades of conflict, political instability, and corruption. Since 2003, Iraq has been attempting to rebuild its economy with international assistance. Agriculture and services sectors also play a significant role. Unemployment and underemployment rates remain high, particularly among the youth. The government has been working on several reforms to stimulate economic growth and reduce dependence on oil revenues.

## Business Opportunities:

Despite the challenges, Iraq presents multiple business opportunities, especially in sectors such as oil and gas, construction, telecommunications, and agriculture. The country's reconstruction needs are vast, providing opportunities for companies in infrastructure, healthcare, and education sectors. The government has been encouraging foreign investment through various incentives and has established free-trade zones offering tax and import duty exemptions. However, potential investors should be aware of the risks, including security concerns, weak governance, and an underdeveloped regulatory framework. It is crucial to thoroughly understand the business environment and seek local advice before venturing into the Iraqi market.

## Summary of Labor Law:

The labor law in Iraq encompasses several laws and regulations aimed at protecting the rights of workers. Here is a summary of the key aspects of labor law in Iraq:

- **Working Hours:** The standard working week in Iraq is defined as 40 hours, typically spread over 5 days. Any work over these hours is usually considered overtime.
- **Overtime:** Overtime is generally paid at a higher rate than normal hours, and should not exceed 4 hours a day, or 20% of annual work hours.
- **Holiday and Leave:** Employees are entitled to official holidays and annual leave. The annual leave varies depending on the length of service, starting from 20 days for those with less than 5 years of service, and reaching 30 days for those with more than 15 years of service.
- **Minimum Working Age:** The minimum legal working age in Iraq is 15 years, but there are restrictions on the type of work and working hours for those under 18.
- **Maternity and Paternity Leave:** Female employees are entitled to 72 days of paid maternity leave, during which they receive full pay. As of my last update, there is no specific provision for paternity leave in Iraq's labor law.
- **Termination of Employment:** Both the employer and employee can terminate the employment contract, but legal requirements for notice and severance pay must be met. An employee who is dismissed without a valid reason is entitled to compensation.

As this is a summary, do not hesitate to contact us at [contact@genta-international.com](mailto:contact@genta-international.com) for specific advice on labor law in Iraq.