

Geographical analysis of the gender and age composition of the displaced population in Iraq

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine the gender and age composition of the displaced population in Iraq, using it as a single study area. The study focuses on gender and age composition for the period 2005–2018. To achieve this objective, the study is divided into two sections: the first examines the gender composition of the displaced population, and the second examines the age composition. In addition to conclusions and recommendations, the study relies on studies, reports, and surveys issued by the Iraqi Ministries of Migration and Displacement and Planning and Development Cooperation, as well as reports from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other international organizations specializing in this humanitarian field. The study also employs statistical methods, including numerical and relative distributions, and utilizes tables, figures, and maps to facilitate comparison and the drawing of conclusions. The study arrives at several findings, including the existence of two waves of displacement in Iraq. The first wave occurred after the bombing of the holy shrines in Samarra in 2006, with the number of displaced persons reaching 1,938,792, of whom (969,518) were males. (50%), and females (969,274) at a rate of (50%), and the percentage of the young age group (0-14) reached (36%), and the percentage of the group (15-64) years (59%), and the percentage of the elderly (65 and over) years (5%), and the second wave after the terrorist organization (ISIS) took control of some Iraqi governorates in 2014, the number of displaced persons reached (5,694,766) displaced persons, the number of males (2,825,469) at a rate of (49.6%), and females (2,869,297) at a rate of (50.4%), while the percentage of young age reached (45.4%), and at a rate of (52.2%) for the second group, and the percentage of the elderly constituted (2.4%).

Keywords: gender composition, age, displaced persons, Iraq

Introduction: Undoubtedly, the political, security and economic conditions that Iraqi society has witnessed during recent decades, especially the last two decades, have resulted in large internal or external population movements, most of which were forced. These movements have been linked to the concept of population displacement, which has created a large spatial movement of the population between the governorates of the country. Studying displacement is of great importance as it is a serious population phenomenon, and it is one of the most important variables affecting the characteristics of the population, in terms of growth and distribution according to gender and age, as well as the social and economic structure. The demographic characteristics of displaced persons in Iraq during the study period (2005–2018) constitute a subject of great importance, reflecting the social, economic, political and security changes that the country witnessed after the repeated waves of displacement. This population category was characterized by its diversity, as it included displaced males and females of different ages, belonging to different ethnic and religious cultures and communities, which made the challenges multiple and varied according to their needs. The demographic characteristics that must be taken into consideration include the gender composition (males and females), and the age composition according to (age groups).

- Problem of the study: The research problem is defined as a question whose purpose is to guide the researcher to study solutions. The question has spatial and temporal limits, and defining them is a necessary prerequisite for the scientific researcher to carry out the research. The problem is a question that revolves in the researcher's mind and is answered through the research hypothesis. The main problem of the study can be defined by the question: Is there population displacement in Iraq for the period (2005 - 2018)? Are there factors and reasons that led to the variation in the distribution of displaced persons according to gender and age spatially and temporally? What are the most affected areas that witnessed the highest rates of population displacement? What are the areas that received the most displaced persons? Naturally, a number of secondary problems arise from the main problem, namely:

- 1- What is the population distribution of displaced persons according to their demographic characteristics?
- 2- How has the phenomenon of population displacement affected the demographic and age composition of the population?
- 3- What are the reasons that contributed to the exacerbation of the displacement phenomenon and directly affected the characteristics of the population?
- 4- Is there a variation in the geographical distribution of displaced persons according to gender and age in Iraq, both spatially and temporally?

- Study hypothesis: The escalation of terrorist acts in Iraq during the study period led to an increase in the phenomenon of displacement. Since displacement is a variable and unstable demographic phenomenon, like other demographic phenomena, the researcher assumed that there is a spatial and temporal variation in the phenomenon of displacement, according to a number of social, economic, political and security factors. These factors produced a reality that included large areas of the country, the control of terrorist groups or the intensification of their terrorist operations in terms of time and space, and the launch of military operations to cleanse the occupied territories from these groups, which exacerbated the processes of population displacement. As a result of these data, large displacement of the population occurred. Security instability is the main factor in the process of displacement, and it entails a number of social and economic effects not only on the displaced but also extending to the environment that receives the displaced.

Study objective:

- 1- Understanding the demographic characteristics of displaced persons in Iraq.
- 2- Understanding the spatial and temporal variation in the age and gender composition characteristics of displaced persons according to governorates.
- 3- Identifying the effects of the population displacement phenomenon in order to estimate the size of the phenomenon and the level of its impact on the population structures of the displaced, in order to develop effective and sustainable solutions.

- Importance of the study: The importance of the study lies in highlighting an important topic in Iraq, namely the gender and age composition of the displaced. The study aims to examine the gender and age composition of the displaced according to the governorates, in order to identify the effects of the population displacement phenomenon and its consequences on the displaced population and its spatial and temporal variations in the governorates of Iraq, in order to estimate the size of this phenomenon on their demographic characteristics, in order to develop appropriate solutions for it.

- Study methodology: Methodology refers to the approach or set of steps that a researcher follows in an organized manner to arrive at accepted practical facts when studying a particular phenomenon or identifying and addressing specific problems, depending on the nature of the subject being studied by the researcher. (Al-Othman, 2009) The researcher relied on the descriptive, analytical, and deductive approach supported by statistical methods to determine the spatial variation of the phenomenon under study, then to explain the reasons for its existence through analysis to reach specific results, as well as searching for variables through which the researcher can explain the spatial variation of population characteristics in the study area.

- **Boundaries of the study area:** The boundaries of the study area can be divided into two sections as follows:

1- Spatial boundaries: The boundaries of the study area are represented by the geographical location of Iraq, which is located in the southwest of the Asian continent, and the southern part of the northern temperate zone, occupying the northeastern part of the Arab homeland, and extending between latitudes (29.6 - 37.2) north, and longitudes (38.29 - 48.36) east, and the administrative boundaries of the Iraqi governorates are represented on it, and its area is (438,317) km², bordered to the north by Turkey, to the west by Syria and Jordan, to the east by Iran, while it is bordered to the south by the Arabian Gulf and Kuwait, and to the southwest by Saudi Arabia.

2- Time limits: The study focuses on the extended time period (2005-2018), during which there was a remarkable escalation of terrorist acts, during which waves of population displacement extended to different regions of Iraq.

- Definition of some concepts and terms:

- **The concept of displacement:** The term displacement refers to forced population movements involving pressure and coercion, including fear of persecution and threats to life and livelihood, regardless of the reasons, whether armed conflicts, wars, nuclear disasters, development projects, or natural and environmental disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and hurricanes. This population movement occurs within the internationally recognized borders of a state and does not cross the borders of another state. (United Nations, 2015).

- **Displacement in language:** The word displacement comes from the verb "nazaha," meaning to be displaced or to move away. It refers to the act of moving or relocating from one place to another. In a demographic context, it means the movement of individuals or groups of people from their original place of residence to other locations, under various circumstances and factors. (Ibn Manzur, 1994).

- **Displacement, by definition:** International jurisprudence also addresses the movement of individuals or groups who are forced to flee or leave their homes against their will due to an external factor threatening their lives, such as armed conflicts, widespread violence, human rights violations, or natural disasters that compel displaced persons to leave their location for another in order to escape those conditions. (Ali Sadiq Abu Al-Hadaf, 1999).

- **Displaced person:** It is the individual who was forced or compelled to leave his permanent or habitual place of residence, to another place within the borders of the state, to avoid the effects of armed conflict, or situations of general violence, or exposure to human rights violations. Or due to natural disasters or man-made disasters (Ministry of Planning, 2015). The Ministry of Migration and Displacement defined internally displaced persons (IDPs) as Iraqis who were forced or compelled to flee their homes or leave their usual place of residence within Iraq to avoid the effects of armed conflict, general violence, human rights violations, natural or man-made disasters, arbitrary actions by the authorities, or development projects. It also defined returnees as Iraqis returning to Iraq from abroad or from areas of internal displacement to their former original areas or birthplace in Iraq, or to a place they chose to reside within the borders of the country after being subjected to forced migration. (Ministry of Migration and Displacement, 2010). According to the United Nations definition, internally displaced persons (IDPs) are individuals or groups of individuals who have been forced or compelled to flee or leave their homes or areas of habitual residence to avoid the effects of armed conflict, generalized violence, human rights violations, natural disasters, or man-made disasters. They are known as internally displaced persons if they do not cross international borders, and as international IDPs if they cross the internationally recognized borders of a country. (Abdul Qadir Slawi, 1979) By delving into the definitions of population displacement and its terminology, population displacement can be defined as a form of geographical movement, or forced spatial movement of the population, in which displaced individuals lack the freedom to choose the time and place, and according to which the usual permanent place of residence of an individual or a group of individuals is changed by moving to another place suddenly, due to the impact of armed conflict, systematic violations of human rights, or natural or man-made disasters, within the political borders of the state and they have not crossed the borders of any other internationally recognized state.

- **Introduction to the study:**

The age structure represents the number or proportion of the population in different age groups, while the gender structure represents the classification of the population into males and females. It is one of the most important types of population structure in demographic studies in general, and is fundamental to most demographic studies and analyses. This is because age and gender are among the most important characteristics that are closely linked to human behavior, needs, and activities. In particular, a person's age is related to how they think and how they work, which is reflected in their reproductive behavior and consumption of goods and services. (Rashoud bin Mohammed Al-Kharif, 2008). Population displacement is a highly complex humanitarian issue that has affected numerous countries worldwide, including Iraq, which has witnessed multiple and successive waves of displacement as a result of armed conflicts and political and security crises. Displaced persons represent a large segment of society that has been severely impacted. To understand the challenges they face and to develop effective humanitarian responses, analyzing the age and gender composition of this group is crucial. The age composition reveals the proportions of children, young adults, and the elderly, helping to identify the specific needs of each age group. The gender composition highlights the distribution of females and males, revealing differences in roles, needs, and levels of risk exposure between genders in the context of displacement. This includes protection from gender-based violence, women's empowerment, and ensuring access to basic services for all groups without discrimination. Understanding these demographic dynamics is not merely about statistics; it is the foundation for developing coherent and targeted support programs and planning long-term relief and recovery efforts that safeguard the dignity and safety of the most vulnerable groups and contribute to reconstruction. Affected communities.

First - The gender composition of the displaced population (males - females): The classification of the population into males and females is called gender structure, and it is one of the easiest and simplest elements of population composition because it contains only two elements, which greatly reduces the obstacles to the level of classification. (Mohammed Jassim Mohammed, 2017) It is defined as the ratio of the number of males to (100) females. One of the essential things to know when studying any country or region in the world is the number of males and females and the extent of the difference between them; because the numerical difference between them can have effects on the nature of economic and social problems, on marriage, the labor force, birth and death rates, as well as migration and occupational distribution. Demographic studies have concluded that (105-106) males are born for every (100) females. If a difference is found, then there are factors that have affected this ratio, and the relationship between them is expressed as the sex ratio. (sex ratio) We obtain this ratio by dividing the number of males by the number of females and multiplying the result by (100). (Abd Ali Al-Khaffaf, 2007)
$$\text{Sex ratio} = \times 100 \frac{\text{men}}{\text{woman}}$$

One of the clear issues in population studies is that males, especially young people, migrate more frequently in order to find work or for other reasons. However, in the case of forced population movement (displacement), there is no selection for migration, a situation completely opposite to what happens in some other types of migration. This is the most prominent characteristic that distinguishes it from other types of migration. (Hussein Karim Hamad, 2009) To clarify the gender composition of the displaced population in light of available data, which indicates that the large numbers of displaced persons were distributed between males and females, with an increase in the number of children and women in some cases, according to... The nature of displacement and the reasons that led to it; however, specialized research has shown

diversity in the gender composition of the displaced, with large numbers of both sexes in displacement centers. Which included all the governorates of Iraq, and given their differences and variations over different time periods depending on the influential security and political factors, which created two waves of displacement that can be divided into two time phases due to the specific characteristics of each phase, as was done in all phases of the study, which are as follows:

1- The first phase for the period (2005 – 2013)

There are no accurate and detailed statistics regarding the gender composition of displaced persons (males and females) in Iraq after 2006, due to a lack of statistics from relevant departments as a result of the prevailing conditions at that time; however, there are statistics indicating that the number of displaced persons is large, reaching (1938792) Displaced persons in Iraq, distributed between males and females, with a tendency at times to increase the numbers of women and children in some governorates, due to the nature of the displacement and the terrorist operations and violence that overwhelmed society after the Samarra bombings in 2006. However, specialized research has shown diversity in the gender composition according to the governorates, with large numbers of both sexes in the displacement centers. We will rely on the data of the International Organization for Migration in its 2009 report. Which indicates that the ratio of males to females is equal (50%) with a slight difference. The sex ratio reached (100) males per (100) females, which is slightly lower than the national average for Iraq. It reached (50.3%) for males and (49.7%) for females, and the average sex ratio is (101.2) according to the Iraqi Ministry of Planning for the year 2006.

The data in Table (1) and Figures (1 and 2) indicate that there is a slight difference between the number of displaced males and females in the 2006 displacement, as the number of males reached (969518) And females (969274), bringing the total number of displaced persons in Iraq to (1938792). However, their distribution across the governorates shows a clear disparity in their numbers between the governorates. Due to the influence of a number of political, security, economic and social factors, the natural rate of the sex ratio has been affected; Data indicates that Nineveh Governorate recorded the highest percentage of displaced males (53.3%) of the total displaced population in the governorate, numbering 176,304. Consequently, it recorded the lowest percentage of displaced females (46.7%), totaling 154,344. Kirkuk Governorate came in second place with males comprising 53% of the total displaced population in the governorate, numbering 37,143, which means it recorded the second lowest percentage of displaced females (47%), totaling 32,937. Najaf Governorate ranked third with males (52.9%) (31,240) and recorded the third lowest percentage of displaced females (52.9%) (27,800). Maysan Governorate ranked fourth with males (51.3%) (20,790) and recorded the fourth lowest percentage of displaced females (48.7%) (19,728). Sulaymaniyah and Duhok Governorates came in fifth place. With the same percentage (51.2%) for males of the total displaced persons in each governorate, and the number of males in these governorates (15173, 20740) respectively, this has recorded the fifth lowest percentage for females (48.8%) with a number of (14461, 19766) respectively.

Table (1)

Numerical and proportional distribution by gender of displaced persons in Iraq after 2006

Gender ratio	the total	females		Males		Governorate	T
		Percentage %	number	Percentage %	number		
97.7	570144	50.6	288419	49.4	281725	Baghdad	1
98.4	72156	50.4	36362	49.6	35794	Babylon	2
77.6	79386	56.3	44694	43.7	34692	Wasit	3
97.3	39966	50.7	20256	49.3	19710	Basra	4
112.7	70080	47	32937	53	37143	Kirkuk	5
100.4	64614	49.9	32242	50.1	32372	Karbala	6
112.4	59040	47.1	27800	52.9	31240	Najaf	7
102	70428	49.5	34860	50.5	35568	Saladin	8
114.2	330648	46.7	154344	53.3	176304	Nineveh	9
90.5	285936	52.5	150116	47.5	135820	Diyala	10
96	83034	51	42354	49	40680	Anbar	11
103.7	25860	49.1	12697	50.9	13163	Al-Qadisiyah	12
100.8	14652	49.8	7296	50.2	7356	Al-Muthanna	13
101.6	48258	49.6	23935	50.4	24323	Dhi Qar	14
105.4	40518	48.7	19728	51.3	20790	Maysan	15
98.8	13932	50.3	7007	49.7	6925	Erbil	16
104.9	29634	48.8	14461	51.2	15173	Sulaymaniyah	17
104.9	40506	48.8	19766	51.2	20740	Duhok	18
100	1938792	50%	969274	50%	969518	the total	

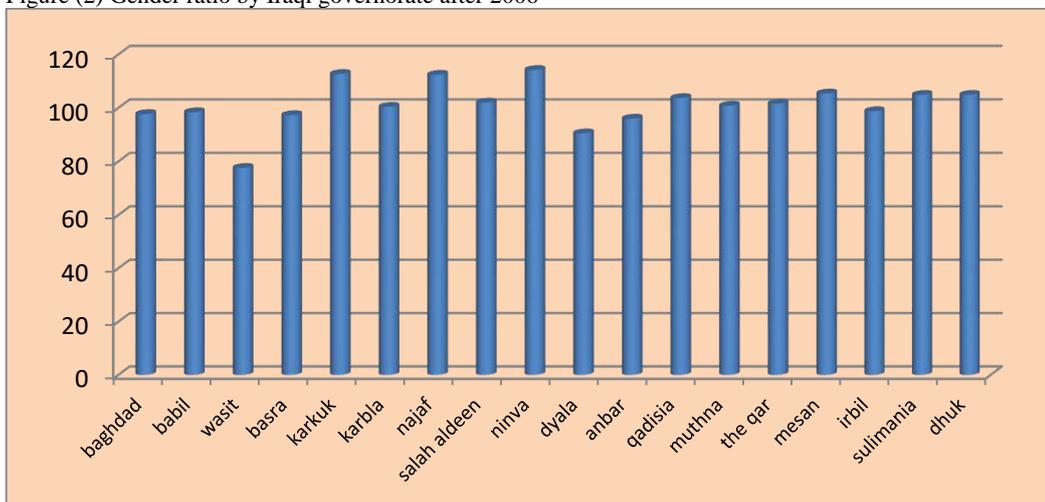
Source: Researcher's work based on:

- 1- Republic of Iraq, Ministry of Migration and Displacement, Information and Development Department, Programming Section, Tracking the movement of displacement in (15) governorates, Displacement in Iraq 2006-2014.
- 2- United Nations, International Organization for Migration, Emergency Needs Assessments in the 2006 Displacement, April 2009, pp. 3-22.

Figure (1) he relative distribution of gender composition according to the governorates of Iraq after 2006



Source: The researcher's work based on Table (1)
 Figure (2) Gender ratio by Iraqi governorate after 2006



Source: The researcher's work based on Table (1)

The highest percentage of females was recorded in Wasit Governorate (56.3%) of the total displaced population in the governorate, totaling 44,694. This corresponds to the lowest percentage of males (43.7%), totaling 34,692. Diyala Governorate came in second place with females comprising 52.5% of the total displaced population (150,116), and thus recorded the second lowest percentage of males (47.5%), totaling 135,820. Anbar Governorate ranked third with females representing 51% of the total displaced population (42,354), and the third lowest percentage of males (49%), totaling 40,680. Basra Governorate came in fourth place with females representing 50.7% of the total displaced population (20,256), and the fourth lowest percentage of males (49.3%), totaling 19,710. Baghdad Governorate ranked fifth with females representing 50.6% of the total displaced population (20,256). The number of females in the governorate is (288,419), which is the fifth lowest percentage for displaced males (49.4%), with a number of (281,725). The percentages of the remaining governorates were between the highest and lowest percentages, with a slight variation in some governorates, whether for the percentages of displaced males or females.

It appears that the reality of displacement in Iraq has imposed a clear disparity in the sex ratio between governorates, depending on the number of males to females, influenced by a number of security, political, and social factors. Nineveh Governorate recorded the highest sex ratio (114.2 males per 100 females), followed by Kirkuk Governorate with a rate of (112.7 males per 100 females), and in third place came Najaf Governorate with a rate of (112.4 males per 100 females). Maysan Governorate came next with a rate of (105.4 males per 100 females), and Sulaymaniyah and Dohuk Governorates came in fifth place with the same rate of (104.9 males per 100 females). Thus, these governorates exceeded the national average for the sex ratio in Iraq by a varying margin, which recorded (101.2 males per 100 females). As for the governorates that recorded the lowest sex ratio, Wasit Governorate ranked first. The last one had a rate of (77.6) males per (100) females, followed successively by the governorates of (Diyala, Anbar, Basra, Baghdad, Babylon and Erbil), which recorded a rate respectively of (90.5, 96, 97.3, 97.7, 98.4, 98.8) males per (100) females. Thus, these governorates recorded a sex ratio rate lower than the national average for Iraq. As for the rest of the governorates, the sex ratio rate was varied and was confined between the highest and lowest rates, as some governorates had recorded a rate higher than the national average, while other governorates had recorded a rate lower than the national average for the sex ratio. After 2006, Iraq witnessed a significant disparity in the number of displaced men and women, a disparity that was subject to several security, political and social factors imposed by the reality on the ground. Among these factors were direct targeting and killing based on identity. The conflict that followed the Samarra bombings primarily targeted males, subjecting them to kidnapping and extrajudicial killings. This led to two distinct patterns: first, the displacement of men alone, fleeing to secure their lives with the support of their families; and second, a loss of balance. The killings and kidnappings resulted in a decrease in the number of men actually able to flee, causing statistics to skew in favor of women and children. The political repercussions of the decision to dissolve the army and repressive security institutions led to the displacement of a large number of them, including members of the banned Ba'ath Party, all of whom were male, fearing reprisals and persecution, especially after the rise in sectarian tensions. Forced conscription and demographic cleansing: Some

armed groups targeted adult males for forced conscription or to carry out ethnic cleansing operations in specific areas, prompting mass exodus of men or resulting in their disappearance from displacement records as victims of these practices. Social restrictions and family structures: Some areas imposed restrictions on women's movement, increasing the proportion of displaced men in cases requiring individual displacement to secure alternative locations. In cases of widespread violence, families were displaced as a single unit, which helped maintain the balance. The basic demographic in some governorates, where the goal was not a specific type but rather to evacuate the entire area. The challenges of documentation and data collection: Displacement data in conflict environments often lacks complete accuracy, as it is difficult to track males who fled alone or are missing, while it is easier to register women and children within family units in displacement camps or assistance centers, which shows a statistical disparity that may not accurately reflect the reality on the ground. In conclusion, the phenomenon of displacement after 2006 reflects the bitter reality that males were exposed to, as they faced multiple dangers (killing, arrest, recruitment) that directly affected their numerical distribution patterns compared to females during the waves of displacement. This phenomenon was the most influential in changing the demographic map of Iraq, as entire cities were transformed from mixed areas to areas of a single sectarian color, and males were the first to be affected by this change as a result of being responsible for spatial movement, securing the protection of the family, and providing its needs.

2- The second phase for the period (2014 – 2018)

The phenomenon of displacement is not new in Iraq, which has a long history of displacement linked to insecurity, sectarian violence, and armed conflict. Iraq witnessed a new wave of displacement after the ISIS terrorist organization seized control of some provinces in 2014, which resulted in large-scale military operations to curb the terrorist organization and liberate the provinces from its grip, forcing hundreds of thousands to flee. From the population to the displacement to all governorates of Iraq in varying numbers in search of security and stability, which led to changes in the demographic composition of the governorates, according to the number of displaced persons and their gender composition, which appears to be unbalanced between the governorates, which was reflected in the rate of the gender ratio of the displaced population in the governorates and its fluctuation between higher and lower than the national rate of the gender ratio in Iraq, which recorded the percentage of males (51%) with a number of (19,261,253), compared to the percentage of (49%) for females with a number of (18,862,929), and the rate of the gender ratio (102.1) males per (100) females, according to the Iraqi Ministry of Planning for the year 2018.

While the data indicates that the number of displaced persons during this period reached (5,694,766) displaced persons, and they were distributed between males and females, with a clear increase in the number of females to reach (2,869,297) at a rate of (50.4%) compared to (2,825,469) at a rate of (49.6%) for males, and the sex ratio reached (98.5) males per (100) females, which is lower than the national average for Iraq for the sex ratio, and it appears that there is a clear difference in the ratio of males to the ratio of females between the governorates, due to the influence of a number of security, political and social factors.

The data in Table (2) and Figures (3 and 4) indicate that Maysan Governorate has recorded the highest percentage of displaced males (51%) of the total number of displaced persons in the governorate, with a number of (3158). Thus, the lowest percentage of females (49%) was recorded with a number of (3040), followed by the governorates of (Wasit and Dhi Qar) with the same percentage (50.6%) with a number of (14454, 5142) respectively, which is the second lowest percentage of females (49.4%) with a number of (14096, 5022), and Anbar Governorate came in third place with a percentage of (50.4%) of the total displaced persons in the governorate, and the number of males reached (411358), which is the third lowest percentage of females (49.6%) with a number of (404826).

Table (2)

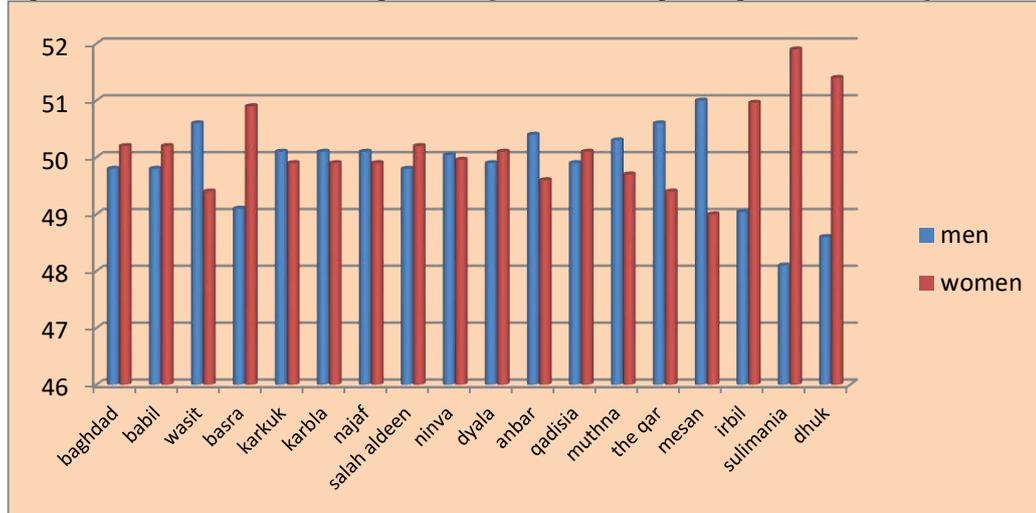
Numerical and proportional distribution by gender of displaced persons in Iraq after 2014

Gender ratio	the total	females		Males		Governorate	T
		Percentage %	number	Percentage %	number		
99.3	576015	50.2	288962	49.8	287053	Baghdad	1
99.4	69184	50.2	34698	49.8	34486	Babylon	2
102.5	28550	49.4	14096	50.6	14454	Wasit	3
96.6	16390	50.9	8338	49.1	8052	Basra	4
100.4	584204	49.9	291514	50.1	292690	Kirkuk	5
100.3	68497	49.9	34191	50.1	34306	Karbala	6
100.4	68898	49.9	34382	50.1	34516	Najaf	7
99.2	210282	50.2	105537	49.8	104745	Saladin	8
100.2	1105891	49.96	552471	50.04	553420	Nineveh	9
99.5	238738	50.1	119614	49.9	119124	Diyala	10
101.6	816184	49.6	404826	50.4	411358	Anbar	11
99.5	20658	50.1	10353	49.9	10305	Al-Qadisiyah	12
101.3	6265	49.7	3113	50.3	3152	Al-Muthanna	13
102.4	10164	49.4	5022	50.6	5142	Dhi Qar	14
103.9	6198	49	3040	51	3158	Maysan	15
96.2	725819	50.96	369845	49.04	355974	Erbil	16
92.8	327404	51.9	169842	48.1	157562	Sulaymaniyah	17
94.4	815425	51.4	419453	48.6	395972	Duhok	18
98.5	5694766	50.4%	2869297	49.6%	2825469	the total	

Source: Researcher's work based on:

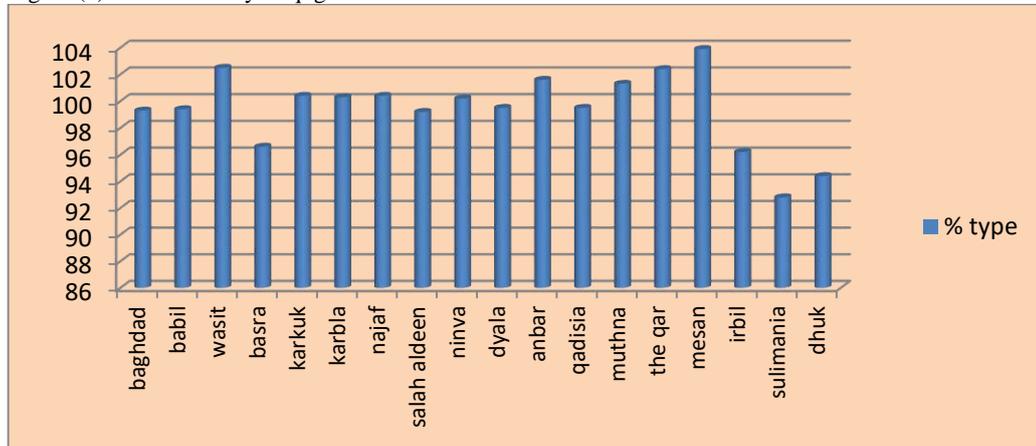
- 1- Republic of Iraq, Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, Central Statistical Organization and Information Technology, Population Estimates for 2018.
- 2- Republic of Iraq, Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, Central Statistical Organization and Information Technology, National Survey of Displaced Persons in Iraq for the year 2014, Baghdad 2015, Table (1), p. 65.
- 3- Republic of Iraq, Kurdistan Region Statistics Authority, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations Population Fund, Population Analysis Report for the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Erbil, 2021, p. 23.

Figure (3) The relative distribution of gender composition according to the governorates of Iraq after 2014



Source: The researcher's work based on Table (2)

Figure (4) Gender ratio by Iraqi governorate after 2014



Source: The researcher's work based on Table (2)

In fourth place was Al-Muthanna Governorate with a percentage of (50.3%) with a number of (3152), which is the fourth lowest percentage for females (49.7%) with a number of (3113). The governorates of (Kirkuk, Najaf and Karbala) came in fifth place and recorded the same percentage (50.1%) with a number respectively of (292690, 34516, 34306). Thus, these governorates recorded the fifth lowest percentage for females (49.9%) with a number of (291514, 34382, 34191). The highest percentage of females was recorded in Sulaymaniyah Governorate, representing 51.9% of the total displaced persons in the governorate, numbering 169,842. This corresponded to the lowest percentage of males at 48.1%, totaling 157,562. Duhok Governorate came in second with 51.4% (419,453), while the second lowest percentage of males was 48.6% (395,972). The governorates of Babylon, Baghdad, and Salah al-Din tied for third place, each recording 50.2% (34,698, 288,962, and 105,537 respectively), thus registering the third lowest percentage of males at 49.2% (34,486, 287,053, and 104,745 respectively). Diyala and Qadisiyah Governorates came in fourth place, each with 50.1%. (119614, 10353), to record the fourth lowest percentage for males (49.9%) with a number of (119124, 10305). The percentages of the remaining governorates were between the highest and lowest percentages, which appear to be varied and are dominated by the imbalance between the governorates, whether for the percentages of males or females displaced. It appears that the displacement phenomenon during this period was no different from the previous period. Data indicates a clear imbalance and disruption of the sex ratio compared to the national average for Iraq, which recorded (102.1) males per (100) females and (98.5) males per (100) females. There is a clear variation between governorates depending on the number of males relative to the number of females, influenced by a number of security, political, and social factors. Maysan Governorate recorded the highest sex ratio at (103.9) males per (100) females, followed by Wasit Governorate at (102.5) males per (100) females, and in third place came Dhi Qar Governorate at (102.4) males per (100) females. Thus, these governorates exceeded the national average for sex ratio in Iraq by varying margins. As for the governorates that recorded the lowest sex ratio, Sulaymaniyah Governorate came in last place at (92.8) males per (100) females. After that, Duhok Governorate had a rate of (94.4) males per (100) females, and the third lowest rate was in Erbil Governorate with a rate of (96.2) males per (100) females, and Basra Governorate came in fourth place with a rate of (96.6) males per (100) females. Thus, these governorates recorded a rate lower than the national average for Iraq. As for the rest of the governorates, the rate of the sex ratio was varied and was confined between the highest and lowest rates, as some governorates had recorded a slight lower rate than the national average, while other governorates had recorded a significant and clear lower rate than the national average.

This disparity is attributed to a number of reasons: the involvement of a large number of males in the ranks of the Iraqi security forces, who were identified by terrorist organizations, and some of them were killed or arrested; the involvement of other numbers in the ranks of the Popular Mobilization Forces to liberate their cities from terrorism; in addition to the fact that males are more likely to be killed by ISIS terrorist gangs; some males were associated with terrorist groups of their own free will, and some were forced to be so; in addition, there are those whose family members were associated with terrorist groups and were identified by the security forces, which led to their reluctance to move to other areas; and even if they were displaced, they did not give their data and did not register among the displaced for fear of being abused by the displaced or being arrested by the security forces, which took strict measures against those affiliated with terrorist organizations.

In conclusion, the phenomenon of displacement after 2014 reflects the bitter reality experienced by the inhabitants of the areas controlled by the terrorist organization (ISIS), where they faced multiple dangers (murder, arrest, recruitment), and women were subjected to rape, enslavement, and then being sold in the (slave market) of religious and ethnic minorities, such as what happened to the Yazidis and Christians, and some of them were burned alive after being assaulted for sectarian reasons, especially Shiite women, which prompted large numbers of women to be displaced from various sects and religions, while men were subjected to murder, arrest, or forced recruitment into terrorist organizations, and some of them became attached to the ideologies of these organizations and their extremist thought, as well as some of them joined the ranks of the security forces in their various branches to liberate what had been seized from the land, which directly affected the patterns of their numerical distribution compared to females during the waves of displacement, and this phenomenon was considered the most influential and widespread on Iraqi society.

Second - The age structure of the displaced population (according to age groups):

The data concerning the age structure of the population, and knowing the number and percentage of the population distributed according to different age groups, is no less important than the gender structure. The mortality rate depends on the number and percentage of each of these age groups; it is higher in younger age groups, in contrast to the youth groups whose percentage is lower, then it rises again in older age groups. (Musa Samha, 2009)Therefore, population is the driving force that accelerates or slows down population growth, and the mirror that reflects the reality of the population in any society, in terms of age groups (adolescence, youth, and old age). Countries are considered young when they have a large number of people under 15 years old and few elderly people (65 years and older), and they are considered aging if their composition is the opposite. The world is divided into rich and poor countries, and demographically, it can be divided into young and aging countries.(Ali Labib, 2004)Population age groups are generally divided into five-year categories, which is the most commonly used in data from most countries and is the primary method used in population censuses. However, demographic studies, when examining the age structure of a country's or region's population, often resort to the common classification based on three broad age groups.(Fathi Muhammad Abu Ayana, 1978)These are:

- The first category is young people (less than 15 years old), who are unproductive consumers and are a real guarantee for society.
- The second category is middle-aged (15-64 years old), and they are productive, involved in work, and the most active and involved in population growth. They bear the responsibility of supporting the first and third categories.
- The third category is the elderly (65 years and over), and they are consumers like the first category. This division is used to show the dependency ratio, which is calculated as: $\text{Dependency ratio} = \frac{\text{Elderly}}{\text{Middle-aged}} \times 100$. It appears that the second category supports the first and third categories, and when the result is high, it will bear significant economic and social

Studying the age structure of the displaced population in Iraq during the study period (2005-2018) is an important and fundamental entry point for understanding the demographic and social changes left by the successive waves of displacement. The country did not witness a single population displacement, but rather successive waves, starting with sectarian violence after 2006, until the crisis reached its peak after 2014 as a result of the terrorist organization (ISIS) taking control of some Iraqi governorates. It is divided into two time phases according to the characteristics of each phase.

1- The first phase for the period (2005 – 2013)

Due to the lack of national surveys on displaced persons and their age characteristics after 2006, broken down by Iraqi governorate, and the difficulty in obtaining them even if they existed due to their scarcity because of the prevailing conditions at the time, there are statistics indicating that the number of displaced persons was large, reaching (1938792)Displaced persons in Iraq, distributed among age groups, with a tendency to increase the percentage of the second and first groups, according to the nature of the displacement and the terrorist operations and violence that overwhelmed society after the Samarra bombings. We will rely on the national survey of the Iraqi Ministry of Migration and Displacement for the year 2009 in 15 governorates.The data in Table (3) and Figure (5) indicate that the number of displaced persons within the young age category (0-14) reached (668102) displaced persons, constituting (36%) of the total number of displaced persons, which amounted to (1854720)Displaced persons in 15 governorates. This category includes children and students in need of support, from the second category (15-64), whose number reached (1,094,367) displaced persons, constituting (59%) of the total displaced persons, and this is the active category. As for the third category(65 and above) Their number reached (92,251) displaced persons, representing (5%) of the total displaced persons. This is a consumer category that includes retirees and the elderly, and they need support from the middle class. It appears that the active category has recorded the highest percentage of the total displaced persons, followed by the first category, the young, while the lowest percentage was for the last category, the elderly. Thus, the dependency ratio for displaced persons in Iraq has reached (69.5%), which is less than the national average. The dependency ratio in Iraq was 83% for the average period (2006-2010), due to high fertility rates and a stable proportion of young people (42.4%). The 15-64 age group accounted for 54.7% of the total and is responsible for supporting other age groups, while the elderly (65 and over) accounted for 2.9%.(Ministry of Planning, 2006-2010)The low dependency ratio among displaced persons is attributed to the waves of displacement that have increased among the population, negatively impacting their lifestyles after leaving their homes and affecting their health, especially that of children and the elderly. The change of residence and displacement to other areas, accompanied by trauma, fear, and terror, has led to some families losing their children or elderly members.(Firas Abbas Fadel Al-Bayati, 2020)In addition, the highest number of displaced people was in the (15-64) age group, which is due to their exposure to methods of violence and killing based on identity, or threats and torture to force them to join terrorist organizations when they took control of their areas, which forced them to leave their areas and move to other areas to preserve their lives.

Table (3)

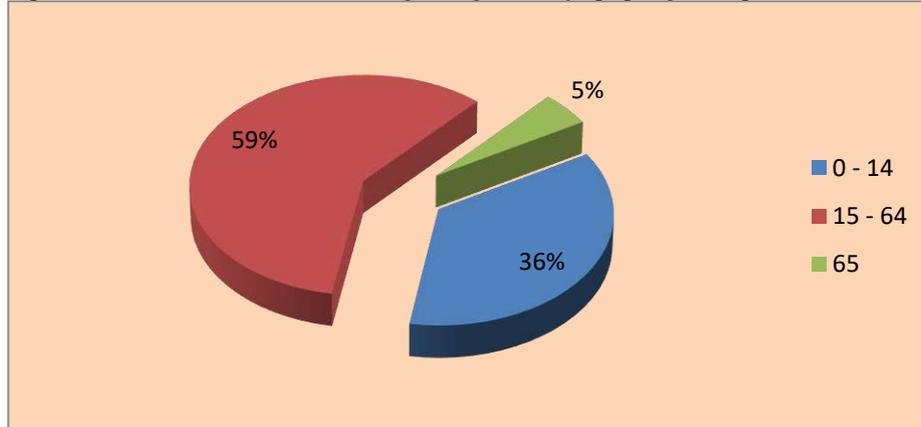
Numerical and proportional distribution by age group of displaced persons in 15 governorates after 2006

Percentage of the number of displaced persons	Number of displaced people	age groups	T
36	668102	0 - 14	1
31	574964	15-30	2
28	519403	31 - 64	3
5	92251	65 and over	4
100%	1854720	the total	

Source: Researcher's work based on:

1- Republic of Iraq, Ministry of Migration and Displacement, National Survey of Displaced Persons in Iraq excluding the Kurdistan Region, Baghdad, 2009, Table 3, p. 4.

Figure (5) The relative distribution of displaced persons by age group in 15 governorates after 2006



Source: The researcher's work based on Table (3)

2- The second phase for the period (2014 – 2018)

This period witnessed a large and widespread population displacement, which reached (5694766) Displaced people from some governorates, and all Iraqi governorates received displaced people in varying numbers, and the percentage of the first age group reached (45.4% of the total displaced population in Iraq are underage and their distribution across the governorates varies. This group is not productive but may be forced to engage in some work at an early age for economic and social reasons. The second group (52.2%) represents the economically active segment of the displaced population and is responsible for supporting the first and third groups. The third group (2.4%) consists of the elderly, who are also economically inactive. The dependency ratio for displaced persons reached 91.6%, a high percentage due to the large number of young displaced persons (2,586,465) and elderly displaced persons (135,746), whose support is the responsibility of the second group (2,972,555). Displaced person} Meanwhile, the dependency ratio in Iraq was recorded at (75.8%) for the average period (2014-2018). (World Bank, 2024). As for its distribution at the governorate level, the data in Table (4) and Figures (6 and 7) indicate its distribution among the governorates, and it can be discussed as follows: The highest percentage of displaced persons in the first category (0-14) was recorded in Anbar Governorate at 50.3%, totaling 410,358. This was followed by Qadisiyah and Dhi Qar Governorates, both recording 46.8%, with 9,670 and 4,756 displaced persons respectively. Muthanna and Maysan Governorates came in third place, each recording 46.5%, with 2,915 and 2,883 displaced persons respectively. The lowest percentage was recorded in Diyala Governorate at 41.2%, with 98,411 displaced persons. Baghdad Governorate came in second to last place at 42.5%, with 244,712 displaced persons, while Kirkuk Governorate had the highest percentage at 43.3%.

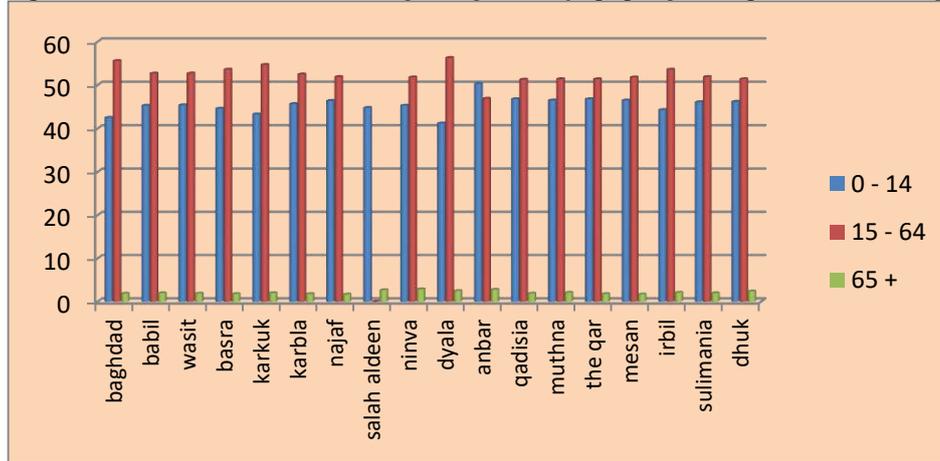
Table (4) Numerical and proportional distribution by age group of displaced persons in Iraq after 2014

the total		65 and over		15 - 64		0 - 14		Governorate	T
%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number		
100	576015	1.9	10992	55.6	320311	42.5	244712	Baghdad	1
100	69184	2	1376	52.7	36438	45.3	31370	Babylon	2
100	28550	1.9	547	52.7	15042	45.4	12961	Wasit	3
100	16390	1.8	292	53.6	8786	44.6	7312	Basra	4
100	584204	2	11839	54.7	319520	43.3	252845	Kirkuk	5
100	68497	1.8	1211	52.5	35963	45.7	31323	Karbala	6
100	68898	1.7	1138	51.9	35784	46.4	31976	Najaf	7
100	210282	2.7	5603	52.5	110461	44.8	94218	Saladin	8
100	1105891	2.9	31873	51.8	572598	45.3	501420	Nineveh	9
100	238738	2.5	5961	56.3	134366	41.2	98411	Diyala	10
100	816184	2.8	23132	46.9	382694	50.3	410358	Anbar	11
100	20658	1.9	395	51.3	10593	46.8	9670	Al-Qadisiyah	12
100	6265	2.1	132	51.4	3218	46.5	2915	Al-Muthanna	13
100	10164	1.8	186	51.4	5222	46.8	4756	Dhi Qar	14
100	6198	1.7	105	51.8	3210	46.5	2883	Maysan	15
100	725819	2.1	14936	53.6	389243	44.3	321640	Erbil	16
100	327404	2	6442	51.9	170,000	46.1	150962	Sulaymaniyah	17
100	815425	2.4	19586	51.4	419106	46.2	376733	Duhok	18
100%	5694766	2.4	135746	52.2	2972555	45.4	2586465	the total	

Source: Researcher's work based on:

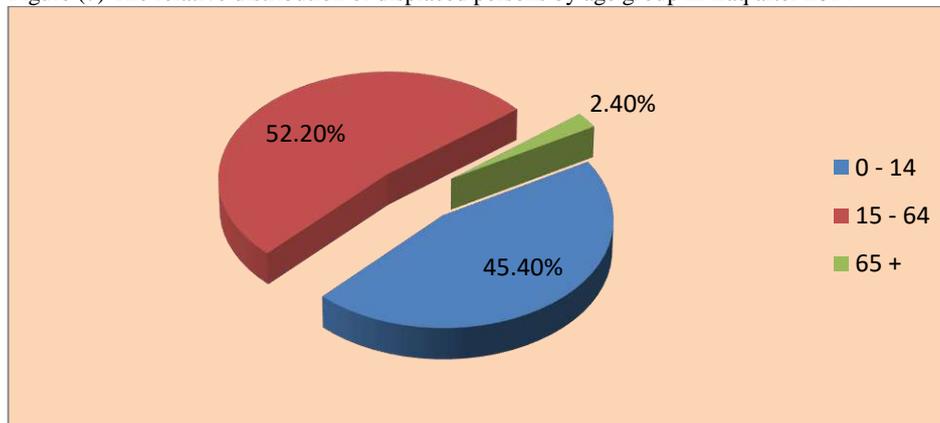
- 1- Republic of Iraq, Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, Central Statistical Organization and Information Technology, National Survey of Displaced Persons in Iraq for the year 2014, Baghdad 2015, Table (4), p. 10.
- 2- Republic of Iraq, Kurdistan Region Statistics Authority, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations Population Fund, Population Analysis Report for the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Erbil, 2021, p. 25.
- 3- United Nations, International Organization for Migration, Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) between the years (2014 – 2018).

Figure (6) The relative distribution of displaced persons by age group in the governorates of Iraq after 2014



Source: The researcher's work based on Table (4)

Figure (7) The relative distribution of displaced persons by age group in Iraq after 2014



Source: The researcher's work based on Table (4)

Their number reached (252,845) displaced persons, while the percentages of the rest of the governorates were between the highest and lowest percentages recorded for this age group, according to the nature of the displacement and the factors affecting the movement of the population and the average size of the displaced families.

The highest percentages for the second category (15-64) were recorded in Diyala Governorate at 56.3%, totaling 134,366 displaced persons. Baghdad Governorate came in second at 55.6%, with 320,311 displaced persons, followed by Kirkuk Governorate at 54.7%, totaling 319,520. Erbil and Basra Governorates tied for fourth place at 53.6%, with 389,243 and 8,786 displaced persons respectively. The lowest percentages within this category were recorded in Anbar Governorate at 46.9%, totaling 382,694 displaced persons. Qadisiyah Governorate ranked second to last at 51.3%, with 10,593 displaced persons. Dohuk and Muthanna Governorates shared the rank before that, both recording 51.4%, with 419,106 displaced persons respectively. (3218) displaced persons. Nineveh Governorate recorded (51.8%) to be the fourth lowest percentage for this age group with (572598) displaced persons. The percentages of the remaining governorates were between the highest and lowest percentages within this age group, whose percentages appear to be higher than the rest of the age groups in all governorates, except for Anbar Governorate, where the first category increased. This is attributed to the desert nature of the governorate and the vast lands that allowed terrorist organizations freedom of movement and threatened citizens with killing and forced them to join their organizations, especially this group, which led to some of them being forced to join these organizations or were subjected to killing, arrest or displacement to other governorates or outside Iraq.

The highest percentages for the third category (65 and over) were recorded in Nineveh Governorate with a percentage of (2.9%) and a number of (31,873) displaced persons. In second place came Anbar Governorate with a percentage of (2.8%) and a number of (23,132) displaced persons. In third place came Salah al-Din Governorate with a percentage of (2.7%) and a number of (5,603) displaced persons. As for the lowest percentages, they came in last place in the governorates of (Najaf and Maysan) with the same percentage (1.7%) and their number (1,138, 105) respectively. In second to last place came the governorates of (Karbala, Basra and Dhi Qar) with the same percentage (1.8%) and their number (1,211, 292, 186) displaced persons respectively. Before them came the governorates of (Baghdad, Wasit and Qadisiyah) with recording the same percentage (1.9%) and their number (10,992, 547, 395) displaced persons respectively.

The variation in the proportions of age groups and the high dependency ratio of displaced persons after 2014 is attributed to the overlap of a set of security, demographic, social and economic factors. The displaced persons were not merely a reflection of the general Iraqi society; rather, its composition was affected as a result of the conditions of war and the control of terrorism over their areas and then displacement. The percentage of young people increased and the percentage of the youth group decreased significantly, and the percentage of the elderly group decreased slightly to (45.4, 52.2, 2.4%) respectively. While its distribution across Iraqi society in general was (40, 56.8, 3%) respectively for the average period (2014-2018). (Previous source) This led to an increase in the dependency ratio for displaced persons, as the displacement included families with all their members, with a relative decrease in the second category who were subjected to arrest, killing, or forced to join terrorist organizations, with a large number of them within the security forces and the Popular Mobilization Forces, in addition to the external migration movement after the open-door policy adopted by the German Chancellor (Merkel), not to mention the continued births within the areas of displacement.

Thirdly - Conclusions:

1- The study revealed that as a result of armed conflicts and political and security crises, a wide spectrum of society was severely affected, such as the displaced. Two waves of population displacement occurred during the study period. The first wave occurred after the bombing of the holy shrines in Samarra in 2006, and the number of displaced people reached (1938792) Displaced persons, and the second wave after the terrorist organization (ISIS) took control of some governorates, and the number of displaced persons reached (5694766) Displaced person,

2- The study revealed a slight difference between the number of displaced males and females in the 2006 displacement, with the number of males reaching (969518) And females (969274), and the percentage of each of them was (50%), and the percentage of the type was (100) For every (100) females, which is slightly lower than the national average for Iraq (50.3%) for males and (49.7%) for females, and the average sex ratio (101.2). There appears to be a clear disparity in the ratio of males to females between the governorates. Nineveh Governorate recorded the highest percentage of displaced males (53.3%), and thus recorded the lowest percentage of females (46.7%) with a number of (154,344). As for the highest percentages of females, they were recorded in Wasit Governorate (56.3%) with a number of (44,694), and thus recorded the lowest percentage of males (43.7%) with a number of (34,692).

3- The study showed changes in the demographic composition based on the number and gender composition of displaced persons in the 2014 displacement, with a clear increase in the number of females (2,869,297, representing 50.4%) compared to (2,825,469, representing 49.6%) for males. The sex ratio reached (98.5) males per (100) females, which is lower than the national average for Iraq, which recorded (51%) for males and (49%) for females, and an average sex ratio of (102.1) males per (100) females. There also appears to be a clear variation in the male-to-female ratio between the governorates. Maysan Governorate has the highest percentage of displaced males (51%) with a number of (3158) Thus, the lowest percentage of females was recorded (49%) with a number of (3040), while the highest percentage of females was in the Sulaymaniyah Governorate with a percentage of (51.9%) with a number of (169842), so that it recorded the lowest percentage of males (48.1%) with a number of (157562).

4- The study revealed that the number of displaced persons in the young age group (0-14) reached (668102), representing (36%) in 15 governorates, and the number in the (15-64) group reached (1094367), representing (59%), while the third group The number of those aged 65 and over reached 92,251, representing 5% of the total displaced population in 2006. It appears that the active age group constituted the highest percentage of the total displaced population, resulting in a dependency ratio of 69.5%, which is lower than the national average in Iraq (83%) for the period 2006-2010. This lower dependency ratio is attributed to the waves of displacement, which have significantly impacted the population's quality of life after leaving their homes. This has also affected their health, particularly that of children and the elderly. The trauma of displacement, accompanied by fear and terror, has led to some families losing their children or elderly members. Furthermore, the highest percentage of displaced persons was among those aged 15-64, due to their exposure to violence, targeted killings, threats, and torture aimed at forcing them to join terrorist organizations when these groups seized control of their areas, thus compelling them to flee. And displacement to other areas to preserve their lives.

5- The study showed that the displacement in 2014 witnessed a large and widespread population displacement, and the percentage of the first age group (The first category comprised 45.4%, while the second category (52.2%) comprised 52.2%, and the third category (2.4%) comprised the elderly. The dependency ratio for displaced persons reached 91.6%, a high percentage due to the large number of displaced persons in the first category (young people), which reached 2,586,465, and the number of displaced elderly persons (135,746). The responsibility for their support falls on the second category, which numbered 2,972,555. Displaced persons, while the dependency ratio in Iraq was recorded as (75.8%) for the average period (2014-2018).

6- The study revealed a clear disparity between Iraqi governorates in the distribution of displaced persons according to age groups. Anbar Governorate recorded the highest percentages for the first category (0-14) at (50.3%), with a number of (410,358) displaced persons, while Diyala Governorate recorded the lowest (41.2%) with a number of (98,411) displaced persons. As for the second category (15-64), Diyala Governorate recorded the highest percentage (56.3%), with a number of (134,366) displaced persons, while the lowest percentages within this category were recorded in Anbar Governorate at (46.9%), with a number of (382,694) displaced persons. The highest percentages for the third category (65 and over) were recorded in Nineveh Governorate at (2.9%) with a number of (31,873) displaced persons, while the lowest percentages were recorded in the governorates of (Najaf and Maysan) at the same percentage (1.7%), with a number of (1,138). 105) In succession, the variation in the proportions of age groups and the high dependency ratio of displaced persons after 2014 is attributed to the overlap of a set of security, demographic, social and economic factors. The displaced persons were not merely a reflection of the general Iraqi society; rather, its composition was affected as a result of the conditions of war and the control of terrorism over their areas and then displacement. The proportion of young people increased and the proportion of the middle group decreased significantly, and the elderly group decreased slightly, because the displacement was comprehensive for families with all their members, with a relative decrease in the second group who were subjected to arrest, killing or forced to belong to terrorist organizations, with a large number of them within the security forces and the Popular Mobilization Forces, in addition to the external migration movement, not to mention the continued births within the areas of displacement.

Fourthly - Recommendations:

1- The government must develop strategic plans for crisis management, involving all relevant state institutions, and form a dedicated body to address all emergency problems, with the necessary powers and a financial fund, to be able to contain any crisis that Iraq may face in the future.

2- Working to secure the state from internal and external dangers, by securing the borders and preventing the infiltration of terrorist groups, using the latest advanced technology to monitor the borders, while arming the security forces with modern weapons and information technology, and raising their combat capability with modern and contemporary training plans and programs, to prevent future displacement cases.

3- Implementing support programs for vulnerable groups, through support programs for children and the elderly in displacement areas, in order to ensure appropriate access to educational and health services, while empowering displaced women, especially widows or those who head families, by providing soft loans and skills development centers, to empower them economically.

4- Working to provide a unified database and continuously update it, specifically for displaced persons, through unified work between the Ministry of Migration and Displacement and the Ministry of Planning, by establishing a geographic information system (GIS is able to continuously track changes in the demographic composition of displaced persons, providing a more accurate database for this phenomenon, and using it to study the characteristics of displaced persons, as well as future plans to address the phenomenon of displacement.

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