

Jews are an indigenous people of the Middle East having lived in the region continuously for millennia, fully one thousand five hundred years before the advent of Islam.

In the 20th century, the breadth and scale of the near-total displacement of Jews from eleven Muslim countries in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Gulf region ranks among the more significant cases of mass displacement in modern history.

For over 75 years, the world has ignored the uprooting of Jews from the Arab totalitarian regimes, dictatorships and monarchies. Under Muslim rule, Jews were subjected to a widespread pattern of persecution. Official decrees enacted by Arab regimes denied human and civil rights to Jews and other minorities; expropriated their property; stripped them of their citizenship; and means of livelihood. Jews were often victims of murder; arbitrary arrest and detention; torture; and expulsions.

From the 1,000,000 Jews in 1948 based in 10 Arab countries plus Iran, to-day, less than 1% remain. Most fled to Israel, the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people for millennia.

The legitimate call to secure rights and redress for Jewish refugees from Arab countries is not to negate the suffering or the rights of Palestinian refugees. Their claims, however, do not supersede the fact that Palestinians were not the only Middle East refugees.

For peace in the Middle East, truth and justice must prevail.

To that end, eleven Country Reports have been prepared to document the history and heritage, as well as the individual and communal assets lost by Jews displaced from 10 Arab countries and Iran. This second Report is on the Jews of Iraq.

In the spirit of the Abraham Accords, at a time of historic breakthroughs in political and economic ties between Muslim countries and Israel/Jews, the time has come for nations to unite in promoting peace and reconciliation among all peoples in the Region.

History of the Jewish Community of Iraq

Jewish settlement in Mesopotamia dates back to 586 BCE, following the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem. Over centuries, Babylonian Jews played a central role in Judaism, producing the Babylonian Talmud and influencing Jewish communities worldwide.

Under Ottoman rule (1831–1917), Jews faced fluctuating conditions, from oppression to limited reforms under the *Tanzimat*. Despite some economic success, they remained vulnerable to discrimination and violence. British rule (1917–1932) brought economic prosperity and political inclusion, with Jews holding key roles in banking, commerce, and government.

With Iraq's independence in 1932, Arab nationalism and Nazi influence intensified anti-Jewish sentiment. The 1941 *Farhud* pogrom, incited by pro-Nazi Iraqi leaders and the Jerusalem mufti, resulted in widespread murder, rape, and looting. Following Israel's establishment in 1948, systematic persecution—including arrests, economic restrictions, and executions—escalated.

In 1950–1951, over 100,000 Jews emigrated in *Operation Ezra and Nehemiah* after the Iraqi government allowed them to leave under the condition of renouncing citizenship. The remaining Jews faced increasing oppression under the Baath regime, culminating in public executions in 1969. By the early 1970s, nearly all Iraqi Jews had fled, marking the end of a 2,500-year-old Jewish presence.

Economic Analysis of The Jews of Iraq

One purpose of this project is to provide a detailed and comprehensive appraisal and valuation of individual and communal property left behind by Jews displaced from Arab countries.

JJAC compiled the best evidence available on the scope of lost Jewish assets. This process included a thorough and comprehensive review of available documentation, discussions with community leaders and subject-matter experts, the collection of testimonial data, an analysis of each Jewish community's place within their respective country, and a consideration of previous valuation attempts.

This project's goal was to consider the totality of Iraqi Jews' financial losses, including their rural assets, urban assets, employment losses, moveable assets and private property, business losses and communal losses. The final result below is an aggregate valuation of Jewish individual and community losses from the Jewish community of Iraq:

Total Value per Asset Type According to Valuation Base Year (\$,1948)

| Asset Type | Total Value |
|---|--------------------|
| Rural Assets | 2,906,148 |
| Urban Assets | 302,179,511 |
| Employment Losses | 23,218,650 |
| Moveable Assets & Private Property | 139,486,354 |
| Business Losses | 173,299,125 |
| Communal Losses | 15,521,264 |
| Total | 656,611,052 |

Using a detailed, multi-step methodology involving, among other factors, inflation, interest rates, currency exchange, etc., the Jewish losses were actualized to show a present day value of all assets under consideration, reflected in 2024 US dollars (USDs).

On the basis of the combined total value of each asset category under consideration and the application of the methodology, the total value for all assets as of December 31, 2024 USD equals **\$34,239,408,861**.