



### Overview

Situated in central Iraq just south of Baghdad, Babil is part of the so-called "Cradle of Civilisation". The governorate is located on the site of the ancient Babylonian civilization, which dates back to the beginning of the second millennium BC. King Nebuchadnezzar II built the famous Hanging Gardens of Babylon around 600 BC, but the gardens were destroyed by successive earthquakes around 400 years later. The tomb of the ancient prophet Ezekiel is believed to be located 20km south of the capital, Hilla.

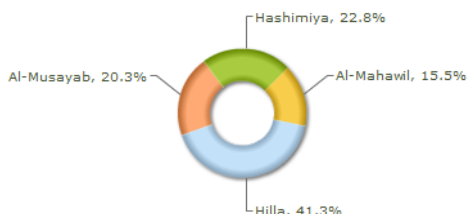
Agriculture is the most important sector in the Babil's economy, accounting for 42% of the governorate's GDP and providing 44% of jobs. The success of the sector is due to the availability of arable land for dates, maize and legumes and plentiful irrigation from the Euphrates. The provincial government is aiming to expand the sector by encouraging investment, usage of modern farming techniques and skills development. However, 50% of Babil's cropland has suffered a reduction in crop coverage two years in succession due to drought. Industry, commerce and tourism have been identified as potential areas for expansion.

In spite of the economic potential of the governorate, poverty and child labour are widespread, particularly outside Hilla, the governorate capital. 41% of the population is poor, and 11% of all children aged 5-14 work, rising to 19% among rural girls. While unemployment is below the national average of 15%, under half (46%) of all those employed in Babil receive wages for their work, the lowest proportion in Iraq. The vast majority of these unwaged workers are employed in agriculture. The informality of the agricultural sector, weakness of other sectors and relatively low percentage of workers employed in the public sector (16%) may be contributing to the high poverty rates and prevalence of child labour.

Households in Babil often lack access to essential services. Access to safe water is a problem in all districts except Hilla, and electricity supplies are poor in all districts. The governorate has a high infant mortality rate (55 for every 1,000 live births). Just 55% of rural girls aged 6-11 are enrolled in primary education. The priority needs of IDPs displaced during the violence of 2006-2007 are access to job opportunities, food and shelter. 82% of IDP families have no wage income.

### Demographics

- Governorate Capital:** Hilla
- Area:** 5,119 sq km (1.2% of Iraq)
- Population:** 1,651,565 (6% of total)  
*Source: GoI COSIT (est. for 2007)*
- Gender Distribution:** Male: 50% Female: 50%
- Geo Distribution:** Rural: 53% Urban: 47%  
*Source: GoI COSIT (est. for 2007)*



### Iraq Millennium Development Goals

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Proportion of population below National Poverty Line (\$2.2 per day) (%)	22.9	41.2							
Poverty gap ratio at National Poverty Line (%)	4.5	9.0							
Prop. of pop. below min. level of dietary energy consumption (%)	7.1	n/a							
Net enrollment ratio in primary education (%)		84.8	78.2						
Net enrollment ratio in secondary education (%)		36.7	24.1						
Enrollment ratio of females to males in primary education (%)			84.8	83.2					
Share of women in wage emp. in non-agricultural sector (%)			7.4	6.8					
Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (%)			27.3	27.3					
Under-five mortality rate (for every 1,000 live births)				41.0	30.0				
Proportion of 1 year-old children immunised against measles (%)				81.0	85.2				
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)					88.5	90.6			
Proportion of TB incidence for every 100,000 of the population						12.4	45.0		
Proportion of detected TB cases cured under direct observation treatment (%)						86.0	77.0		
Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source (%)							79.0	63.9	
Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility (%)							83.9	80.6	
Cellular subscribers per 100 population (%)								78.0	78.2
Proportion of families owning a personal computer (%)								11.8	4.8

■ Current National [Total] ■ Current Sub-National [Babil]

