



### Overview

Najaf is located between Anbar and Muthanna governorates on Iraq's southern border with Saudi Arabia. Its landscape is dominated by desert, particularly towards the border with Saudi Arabia. Najaf city hosts the shrine of Ali Ibn Abi Talib, who is regarded by Shi'a Muslims the first Imam and by Sunni Muslims the fourth Caliph. The city is therefore one of the most holy sites in Shi'a Islam, attracting high numbers of religious tourists from within Iraq and abroad, and a centre for religious scholarship. Other religious sites in the governorate include Wadi A-Salaam (Valley of Peace), and Kufa Mosque.

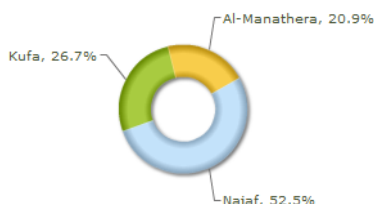
Tourism is the most important sector for the governorate's economy, contributing 30% of its gross domestic product (GDP). Najaf specializes in the manufacturing of construction materials such as cement and glass. Industry contributes 14% of Najaf's GDP. The expansion of the tourism and industry sectors is hindered by poor private sector investment and infrastructure and restrictive regulation on religious tourism. Najaf's agriculture, which contributes 15% of the GDP, is based on wheat, rice, dates, and vegetables. The Provincial Council aims to improve agricultural skills and irrigation systems to expand the sector. Unemployment in the governorate is just below the national average at 14%, and almost half (45%) of jobs are unwaged, mostly in the agriculture and trade. Female labour force participation is very low at 12%, with similar rates across urban and rural areas. The underdevelopment of the governorate's economy may be contributing to poverty and child labour: almost a quarter of the population (24%) lives below the national poverty line; and 7% of boys aged 5-14 work.

Najaf performs relatively well according to some development indicators, but poverty, poor education and infrastructure remain major issues. Primary school enrolment rates among boys are among the lowest in the country at 75% with little difference between urban and rural areas. Girls' primary school enrolment rates are higher in urban areas (90%) than in rural areas (67%). Sanitation and access to safe water are poor in Kufa and Al-Manathera districts.

Najaf's IDP population is of average size compared to other governorates. 84% of Najaf's IDPs are originally from Baghdad, and almost all are Shi'a. Conditions for these IDPs remain difficult, with lack of employment opportunities exacerbated by rising housing rents and irregular Public Distribution System (PDS) access. Over a quarter of IDPs never receive the food ration, and a further 68% only sporadically. 59% of households have no member in employment. Only 3% of post-2006 IDPs in Najaf wish to settle in their current location.

### Demographics

- Governorate Capital:** Najaf
- Area:** 28,824 sq km (6.6% of Iraq)
- Population:** 614,997 (4% of total)  
*Source: GoI COSIT (est. for 2007)*
- Gender Distribution:** Male: 50% Female: 50%
- Geo Distribution:** Rural: 31.4% Urban: 68.4%  
*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	24.4						
Poverty gap ratio at National Poverty Line (%)	4.5	1.0						
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 (%)		21.2	22.1					
Enrollment ratio of females to males in primary education (%)			94.2	110				
Share of women in wage emp. in non-agricultural sector (%)			7.4	6.0				
Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (%)			27.3	22.2				
Under-five mortality rate (for every 1,000 live births)				41.0	42.0			
Proportion of 1 year-old children immunised against measles (%)				81.0	72.9			
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)					88.5	97.9		
Proportion of TB incidence for every 100,000 of the population						12.4	36.0	
Proportion of detected TB cases cured under direct observation treatment (%)						86.0	88.0	
Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source (%)							79.0	88.1
Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility (%)							83.9	90.3
Cellular subscribers per 100 population (%)								78.0
Proportion of families owning a personal computer (%)								80.2
								88.3
								88.8

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

