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The war in Iraq

The most deadly one for the media since Vietnam

56 journalists and media assistants killed
29 kidnapped

- Who were they?
- Who did they work for?
- How were they killed or kidnapped?

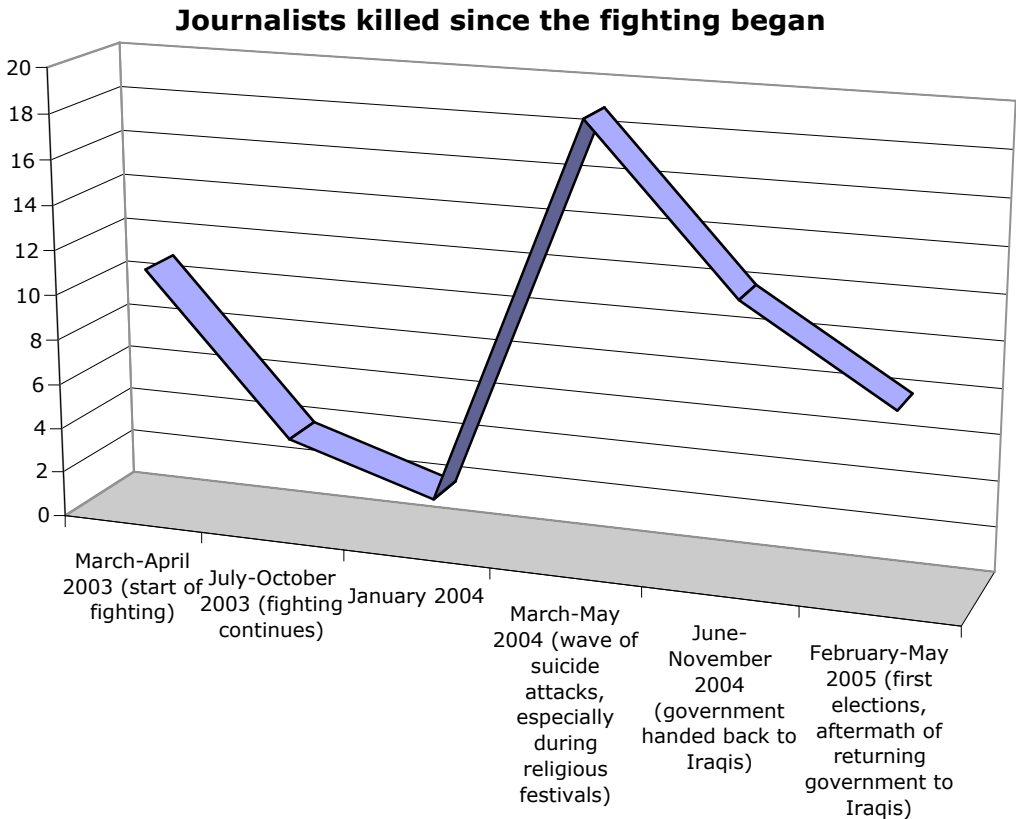
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Iraq is the world’s most dangerous country for journalists and the place where the most are kidnapped. 56 journalists and media assistants¹ have been killed there since the fighting began on 22 March 2003 and 29 kidnapped.

The Iraq conflict is the deadliest inter-state war for journalists since the one in Vietnam, when 63 were killed, but over a period of 20 years (1955-75).² During the fighting in the former Yugoslavia (1991-95), 49 journalists were killed doing their job.

57 journalists and 20 media assistants were killed in Algeria between 1993 and 1996 but this was during an internal (civil) war.



The media was targeted from the first day of the fighting in Iraq, when cameraman Paul Moran, of the Australian TV network ABC, was killed by a car bomb on 22 March 2003. Eleven journalists and media assistants were killed in March and April that year. The situation then gradually improved until early the following year, when bomb blasts and attacks by armed groups increased throughout the country, with nine killed in May 2004. Almost every month since then, one or two journalists have been killed, nine of them so far this year.

¹ Media assistants are all the people employed by media organisations who are not directly involved in producing editorial content, such as technicians, drivers, interpreters/translators and security guards). They also include fixers, local people without whom foreign journalists could not work and whose indispensable role was highlighted during the Iraq war, when two of them -- Mohammed al-Jundi and Hussein Hanoun al-Saadi – were kidnapped with French journalists they were working with.

² According to the Freedom Forum Journalists Memorial.

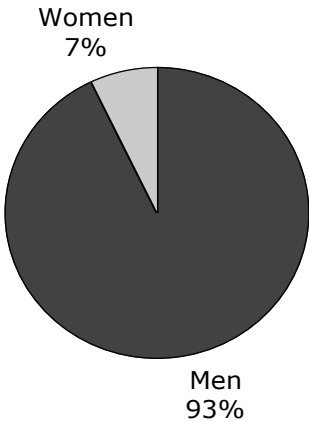
This report highlights these journalists, who were murdered for simply doing their job. What media outlets did they work for and what were the circumstances of their death?

It also gives an update on those who have been kidnapped (more than in any other war), who include nationals of many countries, some of which are not involved in the fighting.

WHO WERE THE JOURNALISTS KILLED?

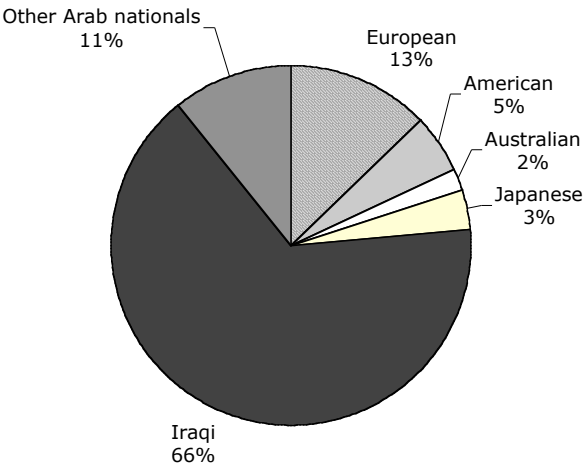
Most were men (93 %) but four were women. Their average age was 36, with the youngest 22 and the oldest 61.

Gender of journalists killed

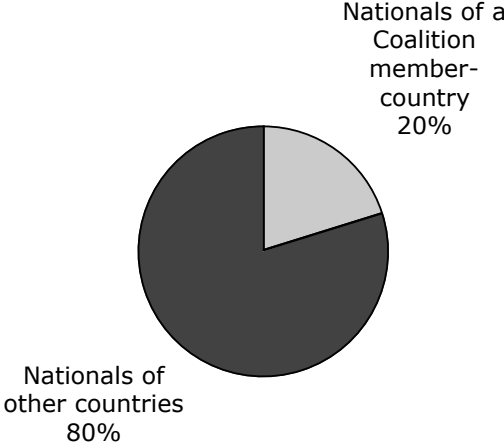


Most journalists and media assistants killed were Iraqis (66 %). Nearly all the foreign journalists were killed in the first days of the war, in March and April 2003, with the latest two in September 2004 (a Palestinian reporter and an American interpreter). Since then, all those killed have been Iraqis.

Nationality of journalists killed



Eleven of the journalists and media assistants killed since the fighting began were nationals of the US-led coalition forces, so nationality is unimportant and provides no protection whatever for journalists.

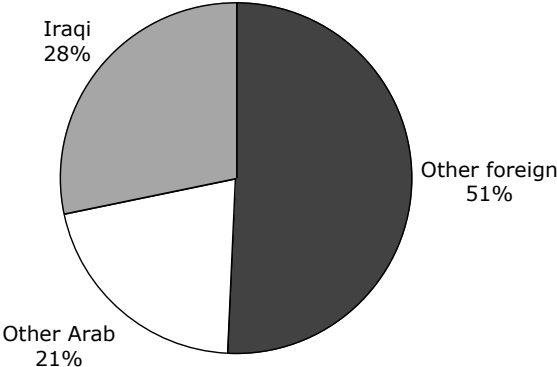


WHAT MEDIA OUTLETS DID THEY WORK FOR?

More than two-thirds (72 %) of the journalists killed worked for TV stations or a broadcasting agency, and the rest for the written media. Radio journalists were surprisingly spared.

Broadcast journalists are more exposed to danger because they have to film and record events as they happen. They can also be much more easily identified because of the equipment they carry. This increases the risk in a situation like Iraq, where journalists are often deliberately targeted.

Geographical origin of media outlets



Half of all the journalists killed worked for non-Arab foreign media and 29 different media outlets were hit. The two worst hit (four killed each) were the Iraqi TV stations Kurdistan Satellite TV (of the Kurdistan Democratic Party – KDP) and Al-Iraqiya (a US-funded Arab-language station).

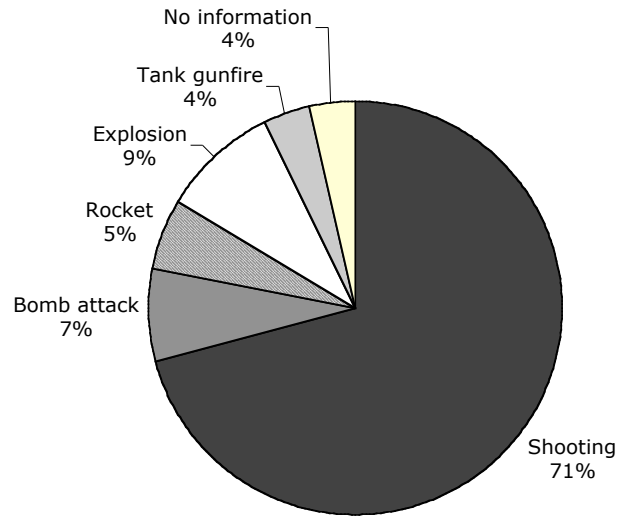
HOW WERE THEY KILLED?



Most of the journalists killed died in Baghdad (18, or 32%) or the Baghdad area (21, or 38%). The next most dangerous area for the media was Kurdistan (13, or 23%), especially the cities of Mosul and Kirkuk. More than two-thirds were killed by gunfire and the rest in bombings or explosions.

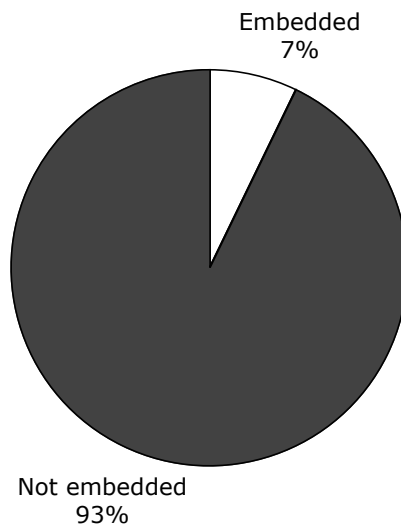
In 25 cases (45%), Reporters Without Borders is sure they were deliberately killed, a much higher rate than in earlier wars, when journalists were usually the victims of indiscriminate attacks and stray bullets. Both foreign and Iraqi journalists are targeted in Iraq. The huge media coverage of the conflict puts journalists to the fore as key players, which also makes them targets of those trying to destabilise the US-led coalition and the new Iraqi authorities.

Cause of death



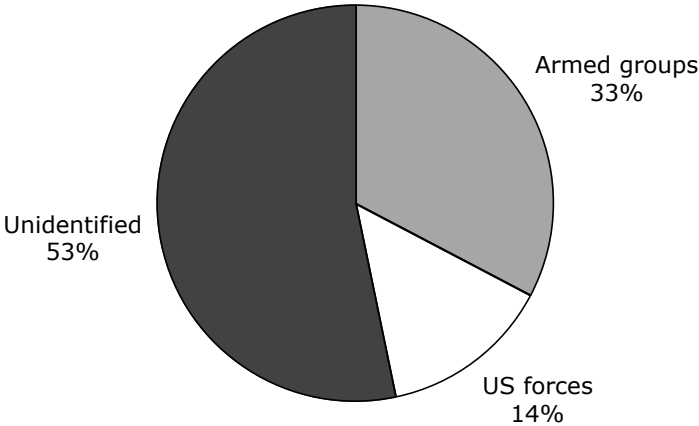
Only four journalists (7%) of the several hundred “embedded” in US or British military units were killed, which showed they were well protected in this position. However, media outlets must obviously send as many independently-working journalists as possible to cover the fighting so as to ensure balanced reporting of freely chosen subjects and events.

Embedded journalists



A third of the deaths can be attributed to armed groups fighting the US-led Coalition forces and the new Iraqi authorities. But in eight cases (14%), US forces were to blame. In some of these, the Pentagon admitted they were at fault, saying mistakes had been made and accidental damage caused. Repeated statements by the US military command in Iraq saying troops had acted in accordance with “the rules of engagement” or in “legitimate self-defence” are not enough. Families of six journalists killed by US forces wrote to the US Congress last year complaining about the situation and demanding justice. They have had no reply.

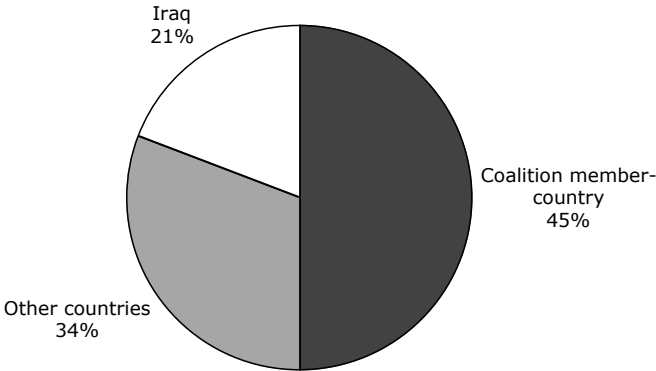
Who was responsible?



29 JOURNALISTS KIDNAPPED

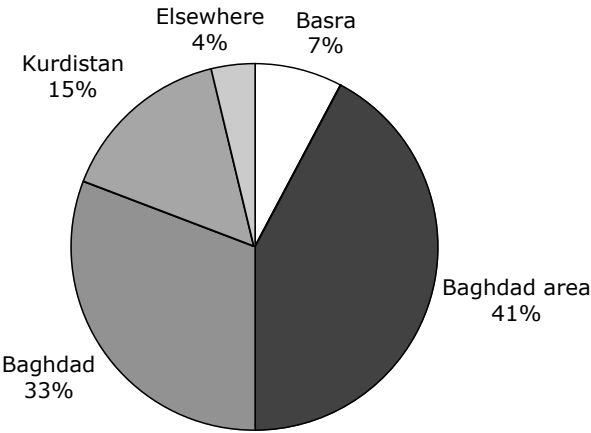
29 journalists and media assistants (23 men and 6 women) have been kidnapped since the fighting began. Twenty were freed unharmed, four were executed (Enzo Baldoni, Raeda Wazzan, Hussam Hilal Sarsam and Ahmed Jabbar Hashim) and five are still being held (Florence Aubenas, Hussein Hanoun al-Saadi, Marie-Jeanne Ion, Sorin Dumitru Miscoci and Eduard Ovidiu Ohanesian).

Nationality of kidnapped journalists



Half the kidnapped journalists came from countries that are members of the US-led Coalition forces, much more than the 20 % of such nationals among the journalists killed. However, the hardest-hit country, France, is not a Coalition member. Six French journalists have been seized since March 2003 and one of them, Florence Aubenas, has been held since 5 January this year.

Where they were kidnapped



Once again Baghdad and the Baghdad area are shown to be the most dangerous places for the media. Nearly all the kidnappings happened this year and last, when virtually all journalists in Iraq were based in the capital and moved around very little because of the danger. One foreign and three Iraqi journalists were kidnapped in Kurdistan, Mosul and Kirkuk.

CONCLUSION

Contrary to what everyone thought at the start of the fighting, US and British journalists have not been the major target of violence in Iraq against the media, though they might have been but for the dozens of heavily-armed bodyguards protecting their hotels, their armoured vehicles and their hotel rooms strengthened to withstand mortar and rocket attacks. US, European and other foreign media have gone to extraordinary lengths to ensure their employees' safety in Iraq.

These measures clearly affect coverage of the news. Movements are reduced to the very minimum, contacts with local people are only through Iraqi assistants and large expanses of Iraq are not reported on by foreign journalists. But the very tense situation perhaps leaves little choice and these precautions are probably necessary to maintain an indispensable foreign media presence in Iraq.

Iraqis are the main victims of violence in their country. Foreign journalists were widely targeted in the first weeks of the fighting but fewer are being killed now. However kidnappings of them have soared, and 28 of the 29 since the start of the fighting have been in the last year. Eleven journalists have been kidnapped so far this year and three have been executed by their captors.

The nationality of those seized shows that politics is not the kidnappers' only motive and that money also plays a part, as well as the aim of some groups to keep the country in turmoil.

One foreign journalist, Enzo Baldoni, was executed by his captors and his family immediately criticised the Italian government and the international community for not doing enough to free him. His death is now in everyone's minds and support has been huge and widespread in support of French, Indonesian, Iraqi and Romanian journalists kidnapped since then.

Reporters Without Borders completes this grim report by noting that two journalists are still missing in Iraq. They are French cameraman Frédéric Nérac, who was working for the British *ITN* TV network and vanished on the first day of the war, 22 March 2003, near Basra, and Isam Muhsin Al-Shumary, an Iraqi cameraman for the German TV station *Suedostmedia*, who has not been heard of since 15 August 2004.

JOURNALISTS KILLED

	Name	Nationality	Media outlet	Date
1	Paul Moran	Australian	ABC	22 March 2003
2	Terry Lloyd	British	ITN	23 March 2003
3	Kaveh Golestan	Iranian	BBC	2 April 2003
4	Michael Kelly	American	Washington Post	4 April 2003
5	Christian Liebig	German	Focus	7 April 2003
6	Julio Anguita Parrado	Spanish	El Mundo	7 April 2003
7	Tarek Ayoub	Jordanian	Al-Jazeera	8 April 2003
8	Taras Protsyuk	Ukrainian	Reuters	8 April 2003
9	José Couso	Spanish	Telecinco	8 April 2003
10	Ahmad Karim	Iraqi	Kurdistan Satellite TV	2 July 2003
11	Mazen Dana	Palestinian	Reuters	17 August 2003
12	Ahmed Shawkat	Iraqi	Bila Ittijah	28 October 2003
13	Ali Al-Khatib	Iraqi	Al-Arabiya	19 March 2004
14	Ali Abdel-Aziz	Iraqi	Al-Arabiya	18 March 2004
15	Nadia Nasrat	Iraqi	Diyala	18 March 2004
16	Burhan al-Louhaybi	Iraqi	ABC News	26 March 2004
17	Assad Kadhim	Iraqi	Al-Iraqiya	19 April 2004
18	Waldemar Milewicz	Polish	TVP	7 May 2004
19	Mounir Bouamrane	Algerian	TVP	7 May 2004
20	Kotaro Ogawa	Japanese	freelance	27 May 2004
21	Shinsuke Hashida	Japanese	freelance	27 May 2004
22	Sahar Saad Muami	Iraqi	Al-Mizan	3 June 2004
23	Hossam Ali	Iraqi	freelance	15 August 2004
24	Mahmud Abbas	Iraqi	ZDF	15 August 2004
25	Enzo Baldoni	Italian	Diario della Settimana	26 August 2004
26	Mazen al-Tomaizi	Palestinian	Al-Arabiya	12 September 2004
27	Ahmad Jassem	Iraqi	Al-Iraqiya	7 October 2004
28	Dina Hassan	Iraqi	Al-Hurriya	14 October 2004
29	Karam Hussein	Iraqi	EPA	14 October 2004
30	Liqaa Abdul-Razzak	Iraqi	Al-Iraqiya	27 October 2004
31	Dhia Najim	Iraqi	Reuters	1 November 2004
32	Abdel Hussein Khazaal	Iraqi	Al-Hurra	9 February 2005
33	Raeda Wazzan	Iraqi	Al-Iraqiya	25 February 2005
34	Laik Ibrahim	Iraqi	Kurdistan Satellite TV	10 March 2005
35	Hussam Hilal Sarsam	Iraqi	Kurdistan Satellite TV	14 March 2005
36	Ahmed Jabbar Hashim	Iraqi	Al Sabah	1 April 2005
37	Shamal Abdallah Assad	Iraqi	Kurdistan Satellite TV	15 April 2005
38	Ali Abraham Aissa	Iraqi	Al-Hurriya	14 April 2005
39	Fadel Hazem Fadel	Iraqi	Al-Hurriya	14 April 2005
40	Saleh Ibrahim	Iraqi	AP	23 April 2005

MEDIA ASSISTANTS KILLED

	Name	Nationality	Media outlet	Date
1	Hussein Osman	Lebanese	ITN	22 March 2003
2	Kamaran Muhamed	Iraqi	BBC	6 April 2003
3	Jeremy Little	American	NBC	7 July 2003
4	Yasser Khatab	Iraqi	CNN	27 January 2004
5	Duraid Isa Mohammed	Iraqi	CNN	27 January 2004
6	Mohamad Ahmad	Iraqi	Diyala TV	18 March 2004
7	Majid Rashid	Iraqi	Diyala TV	18 March 2004
8	Omar Hashim Kamal	Iraqi	Time	26 March 2004
9	Hussein Saleh	Iraqi	Al-Iraqiya	19 April 2004
10	Rashid Hamid Wali	Iraqi	Al-Jazeera	21 May 2004
11	(unknown)	Iraqi	(local media)	25 May 2004
12	(unknown)	Iraqi	(local media)	27 May 2004
13	Samia Abdeljabar	Iraqi	Al-Sabah Al-Jadid	29 May 2004
14	Mahmud Ismail Daud	Iraqi	Al-Sabah Al-Jadid	29 May 2004
15	Jamal Tawfiq Salmane	American	Gazeta Wyborcza	25 August 2004
16	Ismail Taher Mohsin	Iraqi	AP	2 September 2004

JOURNALISTS KIDNAPPED

	Name	Nationality	Media outlet	Kidnapped	Present Status
1	Carlos Raleiras	Portuguese	TSF	14 November 2003	Released
2	Soichiro Koriyama	Japanese	Shukan Asahi	8 April 2004	Released
3	Ivan Cerieix	French	Capa	11 April 2004	Released
4	Alexandre Jordanov	French	Capa	11 April 2004	Released
5	Junpei Yasuda	Japanese	Tokyo Shimbun	14 April 2004	Released
6	James Brandon	British	Sunday Telegraph	12 August 2004	Released
7	Micah Garen	American	Four Corners Media	14 August 2004	Released
8	Christian Chesnot	French	RFI	20 August 2004	Released
9	Georges Malbrunot	French	Le Figaro	20 August 2004	Released
10	Mohammed Al-Jundi	Syrian	RFI/ Le Figaro	20 August 2004	Released
11	Enzo Baldoni	Italian	Diario della Settimana	19 August 2004	Executed
12	Ammar Daham	Iraqi	AFP	4 September 2004	Released
13	Scott Taylor	Canadian	Esprit de corps	8 September 2004	Released
14	Zeynep Tugrul	Turkish	Sabah	8 September 2004	Released
15	Paul Taggart	American	World Picture News	10 October 2004	Released
16	John Martinkus	Australian	SBS	16 October 2004	Released
17	Corentin Fleury	French	Freelance	24 October 2004	Released
18	Raad Al-Azzawi	Iraqi	Sada Wasit	26 November 2004	Released
19	Florence Aubenas	French	Libération	5 January 2005	Still being held
20	Hussein Hanoun	Iraqi	Libération	5 January 2005	Still being held
21	Giuliana Sgrena	Italian	Il Manifesto	4 February 2005	Released
22	Meutya Hafid	Indonesian	Metro TV	15 February 2005	Released
23	Budiyanto	Indonesian	Metro TV	15 February 2005	Released
24	Raeda Wazzan	Iraqi	Al-Iraqiya	20 February 2005	Executed
25	Hussam Hilal Sarsam	Iraqi	Kurdistan Satellite TV	13 March 2005	Executed
26	Marie-Jeanne Ion	Romanian	Prima TV	28 March 2005	Still being held
27	Sorin Dumitru Miscoci	Romanian	Prima TV	28 March 2005	Still being held
28	Ovidiu Ohanesian	Romanian	Romania Libera	28 March 2005	Still being held
29	Ahmed Jabbar Hashim	Iraqi	Al Sabah	31 March 2005	Executed