

Yazidi children: migrant children in need of special assistance and support*

The Sinjar region of northern Iraq is very close to the Syrian border. It is home to the majority of the world's Yazidis, a distinct religious community whose beliefs and practice span thousands of years, and whose adherents the so-called Islamic State (ISIS) publicly reviles as infidels ([Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, "They came to destroy": ISIS Crimes Against the Yazidis, 16 June 2016](#)).



Since the 3rd of August 2014 ISIS fighters have invaded the region of Sinjar. They have committed many atrocities against all members of the Yazidi community.

According to the [Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic](#):

- Men have been separated from women and children
- Men have been killed or forced to convert to Islam

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- Women have been sold as sex slaves
- Children have been victims of ill-treatment and separated from their families:
 - Girls aged nine and above have been sold at market and held in sexual slavery by ISIS fighters
 - Boys aged twelve and above have been taken away from their families and forced into ISIS training camps
- Children held with their mothers are often aware of their mothers' being the victims of prolonged and intense violence
- Children suffer poor living conditions including lack of food and water, and, during winter, sleeping in unheated rooms

Yazidi children who fled this atrocious situation and have arrived in Europe have an important need of special assistance and care. Identifying these children, addressing properly their needs and ensuring the full respect of their rights is of primary importance.