

Three Iraqi women explain how and why they stay anonymous online | Rest of World

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June 20, 2021

Ever since social media was introduced in Iraq, women here have turned to online anonymity in order to voice their opinions, thoughts, and feelings. For many, creating anonymous social media accounts on sites like Facebook and Instagram isn't simply an extension of their offline lives — it's a window into a public sphere and world they are often excluded from.

In-home internet access in Iraq became widespread after the toppling of former dictator Saddam Hussein in 2003, which ushered in an era of [unprecedented](#) internet freedom. The percentage of citizens with internet access climbed from just 0.6% in 2003 to 75% in 2018, according to World Bank figures. By 2021, DataReportal recorded that over 30 million of Iraq's nearly 40 million residents had internet access.

[...]

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