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Freedom in the World 2025



header1 Overview

The Islamic Republic of Iran holds elections regularly, but they fall short of democratic standards due in part to the influence of the hard-line Guardian Council, an unelected body that disqualifies all candidates it deems insufficiently loyal to the clerical establishment. Ultimate power rests in the hands of the country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and the unelected institutions under his control. These institutions, including the security forces and the judiciary, play a major role in the suppression of dissent and other restrictions on civil liberties.

header2 Key Developments in 2024

- President Ebrahim Raisi was one of several people who died in a helicopter crash in May, while traveling from the opening ceremony for a dam in the northwest. Foreign

Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and East Azerbaijan provincial governor Malek Rahmati were also killed in the incident.

- A presidential election to determine Raisi's successor was held in two rounds in June and July, though the Guardian Council disqualified many candidates ahead of the vote and both rounds were marred by low turnout. Reformist candidate Masoud Pezeshkian defeated Saeed Jalili, a prominent conservative, in the runoff.
- In December, the Pezeshkian administration paused implementation of a 2023 bill that would have imposed heavier penalties on women who do not wear the hijab. The bill drew intense criticism from human rights defenders for its severity and the possibility that it would be violently enforced.

PR Political Rights

A Electoral Process

A1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Was the current head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections?	0.000
	4.004

The supreme leader, who has no fixed term, is the highest authority in the country. He is the commander in chief of the armed forces and appoints the head of the judiciary, the heads of state broadcast media, and the Expediency Council, which mediates disputes between the Guardian Council and the parliament. He also appoints six members of the Guardian Council; the other six are jurists nominated by the head of the judiciary and confirmed by the parliament, all for six-year terms. The supreme leader is appointed by the Assembly of Experts, which monitors his work. However, in practice his decisions appear to go unchallenged by the assembly, whose proceedings are kept confidential. The current supreme leader, Ali Khamenei, succeeded Islamic Republic founder Ruhollah Khomeini in 1989.

The president, the second-highest-ranking official in the Islamic Republic, appoints a cabinet that must be confirmed by the parliament. He is elected by popular vote for up to two consecutive four-year terms. In July 2024, reformist Masoud Pezeshkian was elected in a runoff vote that was boycotted by a significant number of ordinary citizens. Pezeshkian defeated Saeed Jalili, a prominent conservative, in the runoff, winning 54.8 percent of the vote. The election followed the death of then-President Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash in May. The Guardian Council disqualified many candidates ahead of the vote, including the former parliament speaker Ali Larijani. Turnout in the June and July rounds was low, respectively standing at 39.9 percent and 49.6 percent and highlighting popular disillusionment.

A2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?	1.001
	4.004

Members of the 290-seat parliament are elected to four-year terms. Elections for the body were held in March 2024, with most seats going to hard-liners loyal to the supreme leader. Ahead of the vote, the Guardian Council disqualified many reformists and moderates from running. Voter turnout was 41 percent, the lowest recorded for parliamentary elections in the history of the Islamic Republic.

Elections for the Assembly of Experts, a group of 88 clerics elected by popular vote to serve eight-year terms, were also held in March 2024, with many hard-liners dominating the body. Ahead of the vote, the Guardian Council banned prominent centrist candidates, including former President Hassan Rouhani.

A3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies?	1.001 4.004
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Iran's electoral system does not meet international democratic standards. The Guardian Council, controlled by hard-line conservatives and ultimately by the supreme leader, vets all candidates for the parliament, the presidency, and the Assembly of Experts. The council typically rejects candidates who are not considered insiders or deemed fully loyal to the clerical establishment. No woman has been allowed to run for president in the Islamic Republic. As a result, Iranian voters are given a strictly limited choice of candidates.

B Political Pluralism and Participation

B1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system free of undue obstacles to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?	0.000 4.004
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Only political parties and factions loyal to the establishment and to the state ideology are permitted to operate.

B2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there a realistic opportunity for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections?	1.001 4.004
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While some space for shifts in power between approved factions within the establishment has existed in the past, the unelected components of the constitutional system represent a permanent barrier to opposition electoral victories and genuine rotations of power.

Opposition figures face restrictions on their movement. Mir Hossein Mousavi, Zahra Rahnava, and Mehdi Karubi—leaders of the reformist Green Movement, whose protests were violently suppressed following the disputed 2009 presidential election—have been under house arrest without formal charges since 2011. In December 2024, Mousavi was sent to a hospital after suffering an allergic reaction to medication; he has reportedly received poor medical care in previous years.

B3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are the people's political choices free from domination by forces that are external to the political sphere, or by political forces that employ extrapolitical means?	0.000 4.004
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The choices of both voters and politicians are heavily influenced and ultimately circumscribed by Iran's unelected state institutions and ruling clerical establishment.

B4 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do various segments of the population (including ethnic, racial, religious, gender, LGBT+, and other relevant groups) have full political rights and electoral opportunities?	1.001 4.004
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Men from the Shiite Muslim majority population dominate the political system. However, several Sunnis were appointed to political positions in 2024. In August, Abdolkarim Hosseinzadeh, a Sunni lawmaker, was appointed Pezeshkian's deputy for rural development and underprivileged areas, marking the first time that a Sunni was appointed to the cabinet. The parliament notably blocked Hosseinzadeh's resignation from the body in September, temporarily delaying his accession to the cabinet, though lawmakers refrained from objecting again in an October vote. In September, Pezeshkian appointed a Sunni as governor of Iran's Kurdistan Province.

Women remain significantly underrepresented in politics and government. Women held only 4.8 percent of the parliament's seats after the March 2024 elections. President Pezeshkian appointed three women to his government after taking office. No women candidates have ever been allowed to run for president.

Five seats in the parliament are reserved for recognized non-Muslim minority groups: Jews, Armenian Christians, Assyrian and Chaldean Christians, and Zoroastrians. However, members of non-Persian ethnic minorities and especially non-Shiite religious minorities are rarely awarded senior government posts, and their political representation remains weak.

C Functioning of Government

C1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government?	0.000 4.004
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The elected president's powers are limited by the supreme leader and other unelected authorities. The 2024 presidential election was tightly controlled by the regime, although Pezeshkian, a previously little-known reformist, was allowed to run.

The powers of the elected parliament are similarly restricted by the supreme leader and the unelected Guardian Council, which must approve all bills before they can become law.

C2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are safeguards against official corruption strong and effective?	0.000 4.004
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Corruption remains endemic at all levels of the bureaucracy, despite regular calls by authorities to tackle the problem. Powerful actors involved in the economy, including the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and *bonyads* (endowed foundations), are above scrutiny in practice, and restrictions on the media and civil society activists prevent them from serving as independent watchdogs to ensure transparency and accountability. While Khamenei has criticized corruption in the past, high-ranking officials and those closely affiliated with the regime have been implicated in corrupt activity.

In March 2024, Tehran's Friday prayer leader, Ayatollah Kazem Sedighi, was accused of transferring valuable real estate in the capital from a seminary. He rejected the accusations amid public anger, though he publicly apologized to the supreme leader later that month.

C3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Does the government operate with openness and transparency?	0.000 4.004
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The transparency of Iran's governing system is extremely limited in practice, and powerful elements of the state and society are not accountable to the public. A 2009 access-to-information law grants broadly worded exemptions allowing the protection of information whose disclosure would conflict with state interests, cause financial loss, or harm public security, among other

stipulations. The ruling establishment has actively suppressed or manipulated information on important topics.

Authorities tightly restricted access to information on their response to the protests triggered by the death of Jina Mahsa Amini—most often referred to as Mahsa Amini—in 2022. Authorities also restricted access to information about 16-year-old Armita Geravand, who fell into a coma and later died after an alleged confrontation with a hijab-law enforcer in 2023. Authorities were slow to disclose the whereabouts of Roshanak Molaie Alishah, who was arrested in November 2024 and disappeared in Tehran for allegedly violating the hijab law. She was ultimately subjected to corporal punishment and released later that month.

CL Civil Liberties

D Freedom of Expression and Belief

D1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are there free and independent media?	0.000 4.004
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Media freedom is severely limited both online and offline. The state broadcasting company is tightly controlled by hard-liners and influenced by the security apparatus. News and analysis are heavily censored, while critics and opposition members are rarely if ever given a platform on state-controlled television, which remains a major source of information for many Iranians. State television has a record of airing confessions extracted from political prisoners under duress, and it routinely carries reports aimed at discrediting dissidents and opposition activists.

Newspapers and magazines face censorship and warnings from authorities about which topics to cover and how. Tens of thousands of foreign-based websites are filtered, including news sites and major social media services. Satellite dishes are banned, and Persian-language broadcasts from outside the country are regularly jammed. Police periodically raid private homes and confiscate satellite dishes. Iranian authorities have intimidated journalists working for Persian-language media outside the country, in part by threatening their families in Iran.

According to a late-2023 report from the International Federation of Journalists, at least 100 journalists were imprisoned in the year since Jina Mahsa Amini died in custody, with over 20 being charged with disseminating antistate propaganda or harming national security. Several female journalists remained in prison for their protest-related reporting at year's end, including Vida Rabbani, while other journalists continue to face pressure and intimidation over their work.

In January 2024, journalists Elahe Mohammadi and Niloofar Hamed, who separately reported on Amini's death, were bailed after more than a year in custody. But in July, they received effective five-year sentences for "propaganda against the state" and national-security offenses. In October, a judge ordered them to report to prison to serve their sentences. In December, former Radio Farda journalist Reza Valizadeh received a 10-year prison sentence for "collaborating with a hostile government." Also in December, authorities arrested Italian journalist Cecilia Sala amid reports that Tehran wanted to use her for "political leverage."

In June 2024, authorities arrested activist and literary editor Hossein Shanbehzadeh, who was later charged with "propaganda in favor of Israel," "blasphemy," "propaganda against the Islamic Republic," and "spreading falsehoods" for his online activism. In August, Shanbehzadeh was sentenced to 12 years in prison, of which he must serve 5.

D2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are individuals free to practice and express their religious faith or nonbelief in public and private?

0.000
4.004

Iran is home to a majority Shiite Muslim population and Sunni Muslim, Baha'i, Christian, and Zoroastrian minorities. The constitution recognizes only Zoroastrians, Jews, and certain Christian communities as non-Muslim religious minorities, and these small groups are relatively free to worship. The regime cracks down on Muslims who are deemed to be at variance with the state ideology and interpretation of Islam.

Sunni Muslims say that they have been prevented from building mosques in major cities and face difficulty obtaining government jobs. In recent years, there has been increased pressure on the Sufi Muslim order Nematollahi Gonabadi, including destruction of its places of worship and the jailing of some of its members.

The government also subjects some non-Muslim minority groups to repressive policies and discrimination, including Baha'is and unrecognized Christian groups. Baha'is are systematically persecuted, sentenced to prison, and banned from access to higher education. The clerical establishment is continuing to crack down on the Baha'i faith, arresting and imprisoning Baha'is, demolishing homes, and confiscating property, especially in the northern province of Mazandaran. In March 2024, authorities reportedly destroyed more than 30 graves at a Baha'i cemetery in Tehran. In November, the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI) and the Baha'i International Community said that 1,200 Baha'is were facing court proceedings or prison sentences and that 93 have been summoned to court or prison in 2024 to date.

D3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there academic freedom, and is the educational system free from extensive political indoctrination?

0.000
4.004

Academic freedom remains limited in Iran. Khamenei has warned that universities should not be turned into centers for political activities. Students have been prevented from continuing their studies for political reasons or because they belong to the Baha'i community. Foreign scholars visiting Iran are vulnerable to detention on trumped-up charges.

Between November 2022 and March 2023, more than 1,200 schoolgirls at nearly 100 schools were poisoned in what UN experts called "targeted" and "deliberate" attacks. Human rights organizations condemned Tehran for dismissing and downplaying the seriousness of attacks, which continued sporadically through late 2023. Many ordinary citizens speculated that religious extremists or hard-line regime supporters may have carried the attacks out in retaliation for schoolgirls' participation in the Woman, Life, Freedom protest movement.

University professors have been dismissed in large numbers for supporting the Woman, Life, Freedom protests or for other political reasons. In late 2023, the CHRI reported that "dozens" of professors were dismissed or forced to retire for allegedly supporting the protests, being replaced with individuals more supportive of the regime. In August 2024, the *Shargh* newspaper reported that Pezeshkian instructed ministers to review the dismissal of professors and expulsion of students. At least one professor, Ali Sharifi Zarchi, reported later in August that he was allowed to teach again, but many others said they remained banned. In September, Health and Medical Education Minister Mohammad Reza Zafarghandi rescinded suspensions of students issued in 2022 and 2023.

D4 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are individuals free to express their personal views on political or other sensitive topics without fear of surveillance or retribution?

0.000
4.004

Vaguely defined restrictions on speech, harsh criminal penalties, and state monitoring of online communications are among several factors that deter citizens from engaging in open and free private discussion. Self-censorship is prevalent online, though Iranians do express dissent on social media, in some cases circumventing official blocks on certain platforms. In 2022, the SCC quietly implemented three articles of a draft bill under consideration by the parliament, establishing a reorganized regulatory commission that included representatives of the security forces and had extensive authority over online content and services.

Authorities have taken steps to limit the availability and usage of circumvention tools. In February 2024, the Supreme Council of Cyberspace (SCC) banned the use of circumvention tools such as virtual private networks. The SCC directive was endorsed by the supreme leader. In August, Khamenei called on Pezeshkian's government to further regulate the internet.

After mass protests began in September 2022, authorities arrested thousands of people, including celebrities, human rights defenders, and others who had expressed support for the movement through posts on social media or by publicly disobeying the hijab requirements that had led to Amini's arrest and death. The WhatsApp messaging service and the Google Play app store were also banned as part of the government's crackdown, though the SCC lifted the ban on those services in December 2024.

E Associational and Organizational Rights

E1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there freedom of assembly?	0.000 4.004
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The constitution states that public demonstrations may be held if they are not “detrimental to the fundamental principles of Islam.” In practice, only state-sanctioned demonstrations are typically permitted, while other gatherings have been forcibly dispersed by security personnel, who detain and use lethal violence against participants.

Protesters mounted mass demonstrations in more than 100 cities beginning in September 2022. Antigovernment protests evolved into the Woman, Life, Freedom movement, which saw protesters call for freedom and denounce state violence against women in response to the death of Amini, a 22-year-old Kurdish woman who had been arrested and beaten by the so-called morality police in Tehran for allegedly wearing her hijab improperly. Authorities responded harshly, using lethal force and allegedly using rape and other forms of sexual violence to suppress the protests. In March 2024, a UN fact-finding mission reported that at least 551 protesters were killed by the authorities.

Ahead of the two-year anniversary of the protests in September 2024, authorities arrested several relatives of protesters killed in 2022 and prevented Amini's family from leaving their home and holding a memorial for their daughter. Authorities closed all the roads leading to the cemetery in Saqqez where Amini was buried.

E2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations, particularly those that are engaged in human rights– and governance-related work?	0.000 4.004
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Nongovernmental organizations that seek to address human rights violations are generally suppressed by the state. For example, the Center for Human Rights Defenders remains banned, with several of its members imprisoned. Groups that focus on apolitical issues have also faced crackdowns in recent years.

E3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there freedom for trade unions and similar professional or labor organizations? | 1.001 4.004

Iranian authorities do not permit the creation of labor unions; only state-sponsored labor councils are allowed. Labor rights groups have come under pressure in recent years, with key leaders and activists sentenced to prison on national security charges. Workers who strike are vulnerable to dismissal and arrest. Despite such reprisals, labor protests have increased in recent years due to growing economic hardship.

In August 2024, nurses in several locations were arrested after health-care workers held nationwide protests over working conditions and wages. In July, authorities sentenced labor activist Sharifeh Mohammadi to death after charging her with “armed rebellion against the state” based on her alleged membership in Komala, a Kurdish political group that maintains an armed wing. Mohammadi was instead part of a labor group. In October, the Supreme Court overturned the death sentence against Mohammadi, who reportedly faces another trial.

F Rule of Law

F1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there an independent judiciary? | 1.001 4.004

While the courts have a degree of autonomy within the ruling establishment, the judicial system is regularly used as a tool to silence regime critics and opposition members. The head of the judiciary is appointed by the supreme leader for renewable five-year terms. Deputy head Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei was named to the judiciary’s top post in 2021. Ejei previously served as an intelligence minister and prosecutor general.

Political dissidents and advocates of human and labor rights have continued to face arbitrary judgments, and the security apparatus’s influence over the courts has reportedly grown in recent years.

F2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Does due process prevail in civil and criminal matters? | 0.000 4.004

The authorities routinely violate basic due process standards, particularly in politically sensitive cases. Activists are arrested without warrants, held indefinitely without formal charges, and denied access to legal counsel or any contact with the outside world. Many are later convicted on vague security charges in trials that sometimes last only a few minutes. Individuals accused of national security offenses are only allowed to select legal counsel from a preapproved list, further limiting their due process rights.

Some 19,200 people were arrested in connection with the Woman, Life, Freedom protests as of January 2023, and they reportedly faced widespread due process violations. In March 2024, a UN fact-finding mission reported that protesters faced arbitrary arrest and mistreatment by the authorities. In January, protester Mohammad Ghobadlou, who had a mental health condition, was executed. In November, a Tehran criminal court sentenced 6 protesters to death. In December, Amnesty International said that at least 10 people involved in the protests had been executed, while 10 were facing the death penalty.

Lawyers who take up the cases of dissidents have been jailed and banned from practicing, and a number have been forced to leave Iran to escape prosecution. During the 2022 protests, authorities arrested at least 44 lawyers, including defense attorneys who represented demonstrators. In December 2023, Saleh Nikbakht, the Amini family’s lawyer, received a one-year prison sentence for spreading antistate propaganda.

Dual nationals and those with connections abroad have also faced arbitrary detention, trumped-up charges, and denial of due process rights in recent years. In June 2024, Johan Floderus, a Swedish diplomat imprisoned over spying accusations, and Saeed Azizi, a Swedish Iranian citizen, were released in exchange for former Iranian prison official Hamid Noury, who had been sentenced to life in Sweden for his role in the 1988 execution of several hundred political prisoners. In October 2024, the Iranian judiciary claimed that dual Iranian-German national Jamshid Sharmahd had died before his scheduled execution was carried out, though it previously stated that his execution had occurred. Sharmahd, who was kidnapped in the United Arab Emirates in 2020, had been sentenced to death in 2023 over his alleged role in a deadly 2008 attack on a mosque.

F3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there protection from the illegitimate use of physical force and freedom from war and insurgencies?

0.000

4.004

Former detainees have reported being beaten during arrest and subjected to torture until they confess to crimes dictated by their interrogators. Some crimes can be formally punished with lashes in addition to imprisonment or fines. Political prisoners have repeatedly engaged in hunger strikes in recent years to protest mistreatment in custody. In 2022, Amnesty International reported that at least 88 prisoners had died in custody from torture, the use of firearms or tear gas, or other ill-treatment since 2010, while 96 prisoners had died from being denied adequate medical care. In August 2024, after a prisoner died in custody after allegedly being beaten to death in Gilan Province, several officers involved in the incident were arrested.

Prisons are overcrowded, and prisoners often complain of poor detention conditions, including denial of medical care.

Iran has generally been second only to China in the number of executions it carries out. The number of executions has increased in recent years. Convicts can be executed for offenses other than murder, such as drug trafficking, and for crimes they committed when they were younger than 18 years old. Executions for drug-related offenses disproportionately impact people from marginalized communities. In August 2024, Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported an “alarming” number in executions in the month following the June presidential round, with at least 87 people put to death during that period. According to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 901 people were executed by Iranian authorities in 2024, the highest figure recorded in nine years.

Among those sentenced to death in 2024 was Sharifeh Mohammadi, a labor activist, who was charged with “armed rebellion,” based on her alleged membership in an armed group; her death sentence was subsequently overturned. Dissident rapper Toomaj Salehi, who was first arrested during the 2022 protests, was sentenced to death in April 2024 on charges that included “corruption on earth.” His sentence was overturned in June and he was released from prison in early December. In November, Kurdish activist Varisheh Moradi was sentenced to death for “armed rebellion.”

In addition to the violence stemming directly from state repression, Iran faces a long-term security threat from terrorist and insurgent groups that recruit among disadvantaged Kurdish, Arab, and Sunni Muslim minority populations.

F4 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population?

1.001

4.004

Women do not receive equal treatment under the law and face widespread discrimination in practice. For example, a woman’s testimony in court is given half the weight of a man’s, and the monetary compensation awarded to a female victim’s family upon her death is half that owed to the family of a male victim.

A majority of the population is of Persian ethnicity, and members of ethnic minorities experience various forms of discrimination, including restrictions on the use of their languages. Some provinces with large non-Persian populations remain underdeveloped. Activists campaigning for the rights of ethnic minority groups and greater autonomy for their respective regions have come under pressure from the authorities, and some have been jailed. The Kurdish population played an important role in the 2022 protests triggered by the death of Amini, who was Kurdish, and the state crackdown was especially heavy in Kurdish areas. Disproportionate numbers of protest-related deaths were also reported in Sistan and Baluchistan Province, where Sunni Muslim, ethnic Baluch residents form a majority.

LGBT+ people face harassment and discrimination, though the problem is underreported due to the criminalized and hidden nature of this community in Iran. The penal code criminalizes all sexual relations outside of traditional marriage, and Iran is among the few countries where individuals can be put to death for consensual same-sex conduct.

G Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights

G1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy freedom of movement, including the ability to change their place of residence, employment, or education?	1.001 4.004
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Freedom of movement is restricted, particularly for women and perceived opponents of the regime. Many journalists and activists have been prevented from leaving the country. Women are banned from certain public places and can generally obtain a passport to travel abroad only with the permission of their fathers or husbands. Women had been barred from attending soccer matches in stadiums since the 1979 revolution, but in recent years a limited number of women have been allowed into stadiums for international matches amid increased pressure on Iran to remove the ban.

G2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are individuals able to exercise the right to own property and establish private businesses without undue interference from state or nonstate actors?	1.001 4.004
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Iranians have the legal right to own property and establish private businesses. However, powerful institutions like the IRGC play a dominant role in the economy, limiting fair competition and opportunities for entrepreneurs, and bribery is said to be widespread in the business environment, including for registration and obtaining licenses. Women are denied equal rights in inheritance matters.

Authorities continued to shut down cafes, restaurants, and other businesses throughout 2024 for allegedly failing to comply with the mandatory hijab law.

G3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy personal social freedoms, including choice of marriage partner and size of family, protection from domestic violence, and control over appearance?	1.001 4.004
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Social freedoms are restricted in Iran. All residents, but particularly women, are subject to obligatory rules on dress and personal appearance, and those who are deemed to have violated the rules face state harassment, fines, and arrest.

Following Amini's death in 2022, an increasing number of women appeared in public without their headscarves as an act of civil disobedience. Dozens were arrested, including several prominent actresses. In September 2023, the parliament approved a bill that would impose heavier penalties,

including steeper fines and longer prison terms, on women who do not wear the hijab. The bill drew intense criticism from human rights defenders for its severity and the possibility that it would be violently enforced. Implementation of the bill, scheduled to take effect in December 2024, was put on pause that month by the Pezeshkian administration.

Authorities continued to crack down on women who did not fully observe the existing compulsory-hijab rule. In March 2024, Amnesty International reported that authorities engaged in widespread surveillance to force adherence, confiscating the cars of female drivers who did not comply. Women also faced the denial of services and mistreatment from authorities in public places. In July, a young woman in the north who may not have been complying with the hijab rule was seriously injured after police officers opened fire on her car. In November, the government announced that it would open a facility to offer “scientific and psychological treatment for hijab removal.”

Police have long conducted raids on private gatherings that breach rules against alcohol consumption and the mixing of unrelated men and women. Those attending can be detained and fined or sentenced to corporal punishment in the form of lashes.

Women do not enjoy equal rights in divorce and child custody disputes.

Abortion is permitted within the first four months of a pregnancy if a three-person panel decides that the mother’s life is at risk or if the fetus shows signs of severe disability. The judiciary has increased its efforts to restrict abortions in recent years. In 2021, the Guardian Council ratified a law strengthening enforcement of abortion restrictions and establishing a committee that includes judicial representatives, Islamic jurists, doctors, and legislators to develop new regulations. The law also bans voluntary sterilization and the distribution of free contraceptives. Many Iranian women reportedly seek abortions despite the law, using medication acquired on the black market along with other methods.

Stop Femicide Iran reported that at least 149 acts of femicide were committed in 2023 and 93 were committed in the first half of 2024.

G4 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from economic exploitation?	1.001
	4.004

The government provides no protection to women and children forced into sex trafficking, and both Iranians and migrant workers from countries like Afghanistan are subject to forced labor and debt bondage. The IRGC allegedly used coercive tactics to recruit thousands of Afghan migrants living in Iran—including children—to fight in Syria.

The population faces widespread economic hardship driven by a combination of US-led trade sanctions and mismanagement by the regime. The crisis has resulted in the rapid devaluation of the national currency and soaring prices for basic goods. In 2022, Alena Douhan, the UN special rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures, reported that sanctions on Iran affected most aspects of life in the country, and called for them to be lifted.