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Country Policy and Information Note

Iran: Women fearing ‘honour’-based violence

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Contents

Executive summary	3
Assessment	4
About the assessment	4
Points to note	4
1. Material facts, credibility and other checks/referrals	4
1.1 Credibility	4
1.2 Exclusion	5
2. Convention reason(s)	5
3. Risk	6
4. Protection	7
5. Internal relocation	9
6. Certification	9
Country information	10
About the country information	10
7. Legal context	10
7.1 Penal code	10
7.2 Legal framework relating to women and children	12
8. Cultural and societal attitudes towards women	15
9. Honour-based violence	16
9.1 Definition and motives	16
9.2 Locations	17
9.3 Prevalence and perpetrators	19
10. Access to justice	24
11. Support and internal relocation	26
11.1 Shelter and support	26
11.2 Freedom of movement	30
11.3 Conditions faced by single and divorced women	32
Research methodology	34
Terms of Reference	35
Bibliography	36
Sources cited	36
Sources consulted but not cited	40
Version control and feedback	42
Feedback to the Home Office	42
Independent Advisory Group on Country Information	42

Executive summary

Gender discrimination is deeply embedded in Iranian society and law, meaning women and girls are regarded as inferior to men and boys. The Islamic Penal Code does not specifically criminalise 'honour' crimes and offers leniency towards perpetrators of honour killings. Most honour killings are punishable by 3 to 10 years' imprisonment, while non-honour-related killings are punishable by the death penalty.

Estimates on the number of 'honour' killings vary, with some sources stating that at least 450 'honour' killings occur each year. Figures are likely to be higher due to under-reporting, false reporting, and mis-recording.

Women form a PSG in Iran within the meaning of the Refugee Convention.

If a woman or girl can show she will be subjected to honour-based violence, then this would amount to persecution. Whether a woman or girl is at risk of being subjected to honour-based violence will depend on her particular circumstances, including her age, family background, ethnicity, place of residence, education, and her socio-economic status.

A woman or girl who has a well-founded fear of being subjected to honour-based violence is unlikely to obtain protection from the state. In general, the state is able but not willing to offer effective protection due to discriminatory laws and practices against women and girls, including legislation that provides leniency towards most perpetrators of honour killings.

Where a woman or girl has a well-founded fear of being subjected to honour-based violence, whether she is likely to be able to internally relocate to escape that risk will depend on her particular circumstances. These will include her level of financial dependence (or independence), whether she has the support or permission of a male guardian to relocate, the extent of her support network (such as that of her extended family), and whether her potential persecutor(s) hold(s) a position of influence over the state authorities and mechanisms.

Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

All cases must be considered on their individual facts, with the onus on the person to demonstrate they face persecution or serious harm.

[Back to Contents](#)

Assessment

Section updated: 20 June 2025

About the assessment

This section considers the evidence relevant to this note – that is the [country information](#), refugee/human rights laws and policies, and applicable caselaw – and provides an assessment of whether, **in general**:

- a person faces a real risk of persecution/serious harm by non-state actors because the woman or girl is at risk of an early or forced marriage
- the state (or quasi state bodies) can provide effective protection
- internal relocation is possible to avoid persecution/serious harm
- a claim, if refused, is likely or not to be certified as ‘clearly unfounded’ under [section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002](#).

Decision makers **must**, however, consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case’s specific facts.

[Back to Contents](#)

Points to note

An ‘honour’ crime is an act of violence or abuse, including killing, which has been or may be committed to protect or restore the honour of an individual, family and/or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and/or community’s code of behaviour.

Although ‘honour’ crimes may be committed against both men and women, this note is confined to ‘honour’ crimes against women and girls only and should not be relied upon in the consideration of any ‘honour’ crimes claims which may arise from men and boys.

Decision makers should also refer to the instruction on [Gender issues in the asylum claim](#) and [Processing children’s asylum claims](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

1. Material facts, credibility and other checks/referrals

1.1 Credibility

- 1.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).
- 1.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).
- 1.1.3 Decision makers must also consider making an international biometric data-sharing check, when such a check has not already been undertaken (see [Biometric data-sharing process \(Migration 5 biometric data-sharing process\)](#)).
- 1.1.4 In cases where there are doubts surrounding a person’s claimed place of

origin, decision makers should also consider language analysis testing, where available (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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[Back to Contents](#)

1.2 Exclusion

- 1.2.1 Decision makers must consider whether there are serious reasons to apply one (or more) of the exclusion clauses. Each case must be considered on its individual facts.
- 1.2.2 If the person is excluded from the Refugee Convention, they will also be excluded from a grant of humanitarian protection (which has a wider range of exclusions than refugee status).
- 1.2.3 For guidance on exclusion and restricted leave, see the Asylum Instruction on [Exclusion under Articles 1F and 33\(2\) of the Refugee Convention](#), [Humanitarian Protection](#) and the instruction on [Restricted Leave](#).

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[Back to Contents](#)

2. Convention reason(s)

- 2.1.1 Actual or imputed membership of a particular social group (PSG).
- 2.1.2 Women form a PSG in Iran within the meaning of the Refugee Convention because they share an innate characteristic or a common background that cannot be changed, or share a characteristic or belief that is so fundamental to identity or conscience that a person should not be forced to renounce it **and** have a distinct identity in Iran because the group is perceived as being different by the surrounding society.
- 2.1.3 Although women form a PSG, establishing such membership is not sufficient to be recognised as a refugee. The question to be addressed is whether the woman or girl has a well-founded fear of persecution on account of her membership of such a group.
- 2.1.4 Although relating to forced marriage and not ‘honour’ crimes as such, in the reported case, [TB \(PSG, women\) Iran \[2005\] UKIAT 00065 \(09 March 2005\)](#), heard 30 November 2004 and promulgated 9 March 2005, the IAT noted, in

relation to the appellant having fled her father's attempts to forcibly marry her:

'The real risk of this appellant suffering serious harm on return to Iran is primarily for non-Convention reasons (the vindictiveness and retribution of the appellant's father and the Mullah). However, as we consider there would also be a failure of state protection against that serious harm, we find that there is a causal nexus between the persecution (accepting that: Persecution = failure of state protection + serious harm) and her membership of a particular social group namely: "Young Iranian Women who refuse to enter into arranged marriages".' (paragraph 69 iv) See also paragraphs 67 to 69 of [TB](#) in which the IAT's full reasoning was explained.

- 2.1.5 For further guidance on the 5 Refugee Convention grounds, see the Asylum Instruction, [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

3. Risk

- 3.1.1 Women and girls, in general, are unlikely to be at risk of becoming a victim of an honour-based crime. However, honour-based crimes against women and girls in Iran do occur. If a woman or girl can show there is a real risk she has been, or will be, subject to honour-based violence, this would amount to persecution or serious harm. Whether a woman or girl is at risk of being subjected to honour-based violence will depend on her particular circumstances, including her:
- age
 - family background
 - ethnicity
 - place of residence
 - education; and
 - socio-economic status
- 3.1.2 In general, the risk of becoming a victim of an honour-based crime is greater for girls and young women in traditional, poor, and rural areas of Iran, particularly the Kurdish region. Honour-based crimes can, however, also occur in urban areas, and are most reported in the Tehran province.
- 3.1.3 The onus is on a woman or girl to show she would be subjected to an honour-based crime on her return to Iran.
- 3.1.4 Islamic law gives individuals the right to demand retaliation in kind (the death sentence) for a murder. However, the Islamic Penal Code (IPC) does not specifically criminalise 'honour' crimes. It also includes exemptions from the right to retribution in certain cases, such as when the perpetrator is the father or paternal grandfather of the victim, when a man kills his wife and/or her adulterous partner, or when the victim has committed an offence punishable by death. Instead, they may be punishable by 3 to 10 years' imprisonment and ordered to pay 'blood money' (see [Penal Code](#)).
- 3.1.5 An 'honour' crime may be committed or ordered by a husband, a father, a brother or another relative as a punishment to a family member, most commonly a female, because they have gone against social or cultural

norms and are perceived to have damaged the family's reputation by their actions. This may be, for example, by: having extramarital sex, refusing an arranged marriage, getting divorced, engaging in a romantic relationship or choosing one's own spouse without the family's approval, committing adultery, becoming a victim of sexual assault, choosing a career, or travelling without permission (see [Definition and motives](#)).

- 3.1.6 For an assessment of risk in relation to extramarital sex, refusing an arranged marriage and having same-sex relations, see the Country Policy and Information Notes on [Iran: 'Zina' \(sex outside of marriage and adultery\)](#), [Iran: Women – Early and forced marriage](#), and [Iran: Sexual orientation and gender identity or expression](#).
- 3.1.7 There are no precise or reliable statistics on the number of 'honour' crimes or killings in Iran. A party in opposition to the current Iranian regime indicates that there has been an increase in 'honour' killings in recent years and that approximately 20% of all murders in Iran are 'honour' killings. Estimates on the number of 'honour' killings vary, with some sources stating that at least 450 'honour' killings occur each year (~0.001% of the 2024 female population of Iran, approximately 43.5 million, estimated by the [CIA World Factbook](#)). However, actual numbers of 'honour' killings are likely to be higher due to families not reporting such incidents to the authorities, falsely reporting them as suicides or accidents, or due to them being recorded by authorities as 'family disputes'. Some women are also pressured or forced into taking their own lives though such incidents are not captured in the estimated numbers. Husbands are recorded to be the perpetrators in most honour killings, followed by fathers and brothers, then other male family members. Sources reported that fathers or husbands, who have the power to decide if and how killers of their female family members should be punished, may also hire a third party to commit the crime (see [Prevalence and perpetrators](#) and [Access to justice](#)).
- 3.1.8 Several sources indicate that honour-based violence occurs mostly in rural areas of Iran, such as in the Kurdish region in the northwest of Iran, and the Sistan-Baluchistan province in the southeast. These areas are also, in general, poorer, and more traditional. However, actual numbers of honour killings, or femicide more generally, reported by a state-affiliated Iranian daily newspaper and 2 human rights organisations, between 2021 and 2024, indicate that the province with the highest recorded number was Tehran, representing approximately one quarter of all such murders. This apparent recent shift may be connected to instances of honour killings in rural areas increasingly being falsely reported as suicides (see [Locations](#)).
- 3.1.9 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

4. Protection

- 4.1.1 A woman or girl who has a well-founded fear of being subjected to honour-based violence is unlikely to obtain protection from the state.
- 4.1.2 This is because in general, the state is able but may not be willing to offer effective protection due to discriminatory laws and practices against women and girls, including legislation that provides leniency towards most

perpetrators of honour killings.

- 4.1.3 Decision makers must consider each case on its facts. The onus is on the person to demonstrate why they would not be able to seek and obtain state protection.
- 4.1.4 Although women are protected by law in theory, this is not enforced in practice because of deep-rooted patriarchal, social and cultural barriers and prejudices. Women are regarded both legally and culturally as inferior to and of less worth than men (see [Legal framework relating to women and children](#) and [Cultural and societal attitudes towards women](#)).
- 4.1.5 The Penal Code does not specifically criminalise 'honour' crimes and the law allows for punishments for such crimes to be reduced for grandfathers and fathers who kill their children. The law also provides a defence for a husband if he kills his wife for committing zina (adultery), although cases in which the provision is applied in practice are rare due to high evidentiary standards (see [Penal Code](#) and the Country Policy and Information Note on [Iran: 'Zina' \(sex outside of marriage and adultery\)](#)).
- 4.1.6 A national law protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and adolescents against violence, including abuse or exploitation, was ratified in May 2020. As a result, state officials have the authority to relocate a child where their situation seriously threatens their safety. However, the law still does not address child protection concerns such as child marriage. A draft bill which, it is claimed, will protect women against harm and abuse remains unpassed after almost 15 years. Furthermore, the bill does not criminalise child marriage or marital rape, nor does it define domestic violence as an offence, nor ensure proportionate punishments for men who murder their female relatives (see [Legal framework relating to women and children](#)).
- 4.1.7 In the male-dominated justice system, discriminatory attitudes towards women and girls prevail. A woman and her testimony are valued at half that of a man. While the state claims that legal assistance and support is provided for the protection of women and girls by special offices in all judicial complexes, the judicial system fails to protect girls and women against honour-based violence and killings (see [Access to justice](#), [Shelter and support](#), and the Country Policy and Information Note on [Iran: Women – early and forced marriage](#)).
- 4.1.8 Support in the form of hotlines and intervention centres, health and support centres, and safe houses, exist though sources generally report such support services to be insufficient. Safe houses are not present throughout the whole country and the situation is exacerbated by the government's closure of charitable organisations and non-governmental organisations providing support for women against violence. Given that some women require the permission of a male guardian to leave the home alone, access to existing support services may be limited. The police are rarely willing to intervene in domestic violence incidents, and government-affiliated support services often focus instead on persuading abused women to return to their abusive households (see [Shelter and support](#)).
- 4.1.9 For further guidance on assessing the availability of state protection, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#), [Gender issues in the asylum claim](#), [Processing children's asylum claims](#) and the [Country Policy and Information Note on Iran: Actors of Protection](#).

5. Internal relocation

- 5.1.1 Where the woman or girl has a well-founded fear of being subjected to honour-based violence, whether she is likely to be able to internally relocate to escape that risk will depend on her particular circumstances, including:
- the degree to which she is financially dependent (or independent)
 - whether she has the support or permission of a male guardian to relocate
 - the extent of her support network, such as that of her extended family; and
 - whether her potential persecutor(s) hold(s) a position of influence over the state authorities and mechanisms
- 5.1.2 Internal relocation may be viable if the woman is financially independent, has the support or permission of a male guardian and/or the support of her extended family or network, and where the appellant's potential persecutor(s) does not hold a position of influence over the state authorities and mechanisms.
- 5.1.3 Whilst there are no legal barriers to a woman resettling elsewhere in Iran, official and societal discrimination may impede women from doing so. For example, some women may face difficulties obtaining employment with an income sufficient to meet the cost of living. Given that some women require the permission of a male guardian to leave the home and travel alone, and that women require the support of their families to settle away from her husbands, particularly in rural areas, internal relocation is likely to be an unreasonable option in such cases (see [Freedom of movement](#) and [Conditions faced by single and divorced women](#)).
- 5.1.4 When assessing internal relocation, in the reported case of [TB \(PSG, women\) Iran \[2005\] UKIAT 00065 \(09 March 2005\)](#), the Tribunal took into account the position in Iranian society of the persons feared. In the case of [TB](#), the appellant feared her father and intended husband (a Mullah), both of whom were members of the Niru-Entezami (Law Enforcement Forces – LEF). The Tribunal concluded that an internal relocation alternative was not realistically available due to the influence of the appellant's potential persecutors on the state authorities and mechanisms (paras 68 and 69.v).
- 5.1.5 For further guidance on considering internal relocation and factors to be taken into account see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

6. Certification

- 6.1.1 Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
- 6.1.2 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#).

Country information

About the country information

This section contains publicly available or disclosable country of origin information (COI) which has been gathered, collated and analysed in line with the [research methodology](#). It provides the evidence base for the assessment which, as stated in the [About the assessment](#), is the guide to the current objective conditions.

The structure and content follow a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to the scope of this note.

This document is intended to be comprehensive but not exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned this does not mean that the event did or did not take place or that the person or organisation does or does not exist.

The COI included was published or made publicly available on or before **30 April 2025**. Any event taking place or report published after this date will not be included.

Decision makers must use relevant COI as the evidential basis for decisions.

[Back to Contents](#)

7. Legal context

7.1 Penal code

- 7.1.1 The Iran Human Rights Documentation Centre (IHRDC), a non-profit organisation of human rights scholars and lawyers, which focuses on human rights in Iran¹, published English translations of the Iran Penal Code, including [Book One and Book Two](#) (Articles 1 to 288), amended in January 2012², and [Book Five](#) (Articles 498 to 728), 'adopted permanently in 1996 and not subject to the January 2012 revisions.'³ The IHRDC noted 'Book Three and Book Four address qisas (retaliation) and diyat (monetary compensation for deaths and bodily injuries).'⁴ CPIT was unable to source an English translation of Book Three and Book Four at the time of writing of the CPIN.
- 7.1.2 The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) published an 'Iran Country Information Report' on 24 July 2023 which stated: 'The Penal Code does not specifically criminalise honour crimes and, in line with sharia principles, provides for reduced sentences for those who commit them. For example, Article 630 includes provisions on the husband's right to kill his wife and her lover if they are caught in the act, while Article 303 states that judges cannot issue a "retribution crime" punishment [qisas⁵] against fathers or grandfathers who kill their children.'⁶
- 7.1.3 Briefing notes about Iran's death penalty, published by the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), 'an umbrella organization of human rights NGOs'⁷, in November 2023, stated:

¹ IHRDC, [Mission](#), no date

² IHRDC, [Islamic Penal Code of the Islamic Republic of Iran - Book One and Book Two](#), 4 April 2014

³ IHRDC, [Islamic Penal Code of the Islamic Republic of Iran - Book One and Book Two](#), 4 April 2014

⁴ IHRDC, [Islamic Penal Code of the Islamic Republic of Iran - Book One and Book Two](#), 4 April 2014

⁵ IHRNGO and ECPM, [Annual Report on the Death Penalty in Iran 2023](#) (page 30), 2024

⁶ DFAT, [Iran Country Information Report](#) (paragraph 2.134), 24 July 2023

⁷ Eci.net, [Source description: International Federation for Human Rights ...](#), updated 16 July 2020

'Honor killings have always targeted women as a result of the application of Article 301 of the IPC [Iran Penal Code], which provides a reprieve from death penalty for "fathers and paternal grandfathers" for the killing of their female children or grandchildren. Article 302(e) of the IPC allows men to kill their wives without fearing the death penalty, as it stipulates: "A husband who catches his wife and her lover in the act of adultery and kills them, shall not be sentenced to retribution (qisas) and payment of blood money."'⁸

- 7.1.4 On 23 April 2024, the US Department of State (USSD) published '2023 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Iran' (2023 Human Rights report) which stated:

'The law provided lesser penalties for fathers and other family members who were convicted of murder or physically harming children in domestic violence or "honor killings." ... If a man was found guilty of murdering his daughter, the punishment was three to 10 years in prison rather than the normal death sentence [retribution in kind ("qisas")⁹] or payment of diya (blood money) for homicide cases, because fathers (but not mothers) were considered legal guardians and were exempt from capital punishment for killing their children.'¹⁰

- 7.1.5 On 16 September 2024, Deutsche Welle (DW), a German independent, international, media outlet¹¹, published an article entitled 'Femicide in Iran: Tradition and law enable killing of women', which stated: 'Iranian law is based on Islamic Sharia rules and practices. Those rules often give fathers and husbands the power to decide if and how people who kill women in their family should pay for the crime, allowing for lenient punishments if those deciding on the punishment are involved in or condoning the killing.'¹²

- 7.1.6 An 'Annual Report on the Death Penalty in Iran 2023' was published in 2024 by Iran Human Rights (IHRNGO), a Norway-based non-profit human rights organisation¹³, and Together Against the Death Penalty (ECPM), an organisation which campaigns for the universal abolition of the death penalty¹⁴. The report stated: 'In practice, men who have murdered their wives are exempted from qisas more than vice versa. The law also discriminates against followers of "unrecognised" religions. Article 301 states: "Qisas shall be established (...) if the victim is sane and has the same religion as the culprit. Note: If the victim is Muslim, the non-Muslim status of the culprit shall not prevent qisas."'¹⁵

- 7.1.7 The same annual report also stated:

'... [T]he law provides immunity from qisas for the following individuals:

- 'The father and paternal grandfather of the victim (Article 301)
- 'A man who kills his wife and/or her lover in the act of adultery (Article 302)

⁸ FIDH, [The Iran Notes on death penalty ...](#) (page 3), November 2023

⁹ IHRNGO and ECPM, [Annual Report on the Death Penalty in Iran 2023](#) (page 30), 2024

¹⁰ USSD, [2023 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Iran](#) (page 64), 23 April 2024

¹¹ DW, [Who We Are](#), no date

¹² DW, [Femicide in Iran: Tradition and law enable killing of women](#), 16 September 2024

¹³ IHRNGO, [About Us](#), no date

¹⁴ ECPM, [History](#), no date

¹⁵ IHRNGO and ECPM, [Annual Report on the Death Penalty in Iran 2023](#) (page 31), 2024

- ‘Muslims, followers of recognised religions, and “protected persons” who kill followers of unrecognised religions or “unprotected persons” (Article 310)
- ‘Killing a person who has committed a hadd offence [an offence mandated by Sharia law, which attracts a fixed punishment¹⁶] punishable by death (Article 302)
- ‘Killing a rapist (Article 302)’¹⁷

7.1.8 On 12 March 2025, the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) published a report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran, covering the period from January to December 2024. The report, which cited various sources, stated:

‘The Penal Code of the Islamic Republic of Iran provides several legal protections for male perpetrators of femicide. The country’s legal system treats honour-related killings as premeditated murder, subjecting the perpetrators to qisas, unless exceptions apply. Under article 301, fathers and paternal grandfathers who kill their children or grandchildren are exempt from qisas, although they may need to pay diya to the victim’s heirs. Article 630 exempts husbands from punishment for killing their wives for suspected adultery under certain circumstances. In addition, article 302 exempts killers from qisas if their victim had allegedly committed an offence that is punishable by hadd. In such circumstances, under article 612, the judge may hand down a prison sentence of between 3 and 10 years.

‘The law’s differentiation between honour-related killings and other forms of murder creates a dangerous hierarchy of violence, legitimizing honour-related killings as more acceptable than other types of homicide.’¹⁸

[Back to Contents](#)

7.2 Legal framework relating to women and children

7.2.1 The Iran Data Portal, an online portal which hosts social science data on Iran in both English and Persian¹⁹, published an English translation of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which states: ‘Article 20 (Equality Before Law): All citizens of the country, both men and women, equally enjoy the protection of the law and enjoy all human, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, in conformity with Islamic criteria.

Article 21 (Women’s rights): The government must ensure the rights of women in all respects, in conformity with Islamic criteria ...’²⁰

7.2.2 On 2 December 2024, a Factsheet published by Impact Iran, ‘a coalition of 19 non-governmental organizations committed to advocating for human rights and driving positive change in Iran’²¹, stated:

‘Iran is one of just six UN member states that are not party to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Under the Constitution, the rights of women and girls are only equal to men

¹⁶ IHRNGO and ECPM, [Annual Report on the Death Penalty in Iran 2023](#) (Glossary), 2024

¹⁷ IHRNGO and ECPM, [Annual Report on the Death Penalty in Iran 2023](#) (pages 30 to 31), 2024

¹⁸ UNHRC, [... Report of the Special Rapporteur on ...](#) (paragraphs 38 to 39), 12 March 2025

¹⁹ Iran Data Portal, [About Us](#), no date

²⁰ Iran Data Portal, [The Constitution ...](#) (page 10), 2/3 December 1979, amended 28 July 1989

²¹ Impact Iran, Mission, no date

and boys when these are deemed in conformity with the “Islamic criteria,” a vague requirement with no definition under Iranian law that has led to the adoption and implementation of laws and practices that discriminate directly or indirectly against women and girls in Iran.

‘Under Iranian law, women and girls’ rights are not equal to those of men and boys when it comes to the age of criminal responsibility, rights to marriage, divorce, the custody of children, participation in public and political life, in sports and in arts, work, freedom of movement, the transmission of their nationality to their children, and more.’²²

7.2.3 Human Rights Watch (HRW) published its ‘World Report 2025’ on 16 January 2025. Covering events of 2024, the report stated: ‘... Iran has no law on domestic violence to prevent abuse and protect survivors.’²³

7.2.4 An article published on 28 November 2024 by the Women’s Committee of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), which advocates for gender equality and describes itself as the democratic alternative to Iran’s ruling regime, citing various sources, stated:

“Elimination of Violence against Women,” “Provision of Security for Women against Violence,” “Protection, Dignity, and Provision of Security for Ladies Against Violence,” “Protection of Dignity and Support for Women Against Violence,” and now “Preventing Women from Harm and Improving Their Security Against Abuse,” are all iterations of a single proposed bill in Iran. For more than 13 years, this bill has remained stalled. It occasionally resurfaces to pacify public opinion, only to be passed from one government body to another with no meaningful progress.

‘... Despite this protracted and exhausting process, the bill’s details and implementation remain unclear.

‘... The bill fundamentally does not acknowledge the existence of violence against women, including domestic violence. The term violence is notably absent from the text ... The bill [also] reiterates provisions from the mullahs’ Penal Code, notorious for its discriminatory treatment of women.’²⁴

7.2.5 On 14 April 2023, IranWire, an Iranian news website²⁵, published an article entitled ‘Iran’s Islamic Republic Claims to “Protect” Women with New Bill’ which stated: ‘Now that its [the bill’s] general outline has been approved, many supporters of women’s rights believe that it has deviated from its original goals. The drafters of the bill claim that one of its most important goals is to criminalize certain misogynic and “wrong” traditions.’²⁶

7.2.6 In June 2024, the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) published a Country of Origin Information report entitled ‘Iran – Country Focus’ which covered the period from 1 January 2023 to 17 April 2024. The report cited various sources including email communications the EUAA received from Leila Alikarami, an expert on Iranian law²⁷, in March 2024. The report stated: ‘As noted by [Leila] Alikarami ... there is a “lack of legal instruments

²² Impact Iran, [Factsheet: Women and Girls’ Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran](#), 2 December 2024

²³ HRW, [World Report 2025](#) (Women’s and Girl’s [sic] Rights), 16 January 2025

²⁴ NCRI Women’s Committee, [... A Bill That Never Gets Passed](#), 28 November 2024

²⁵ IranWire, [About IranWire](#), no date

²⁶ IranWire, [Iran’s Islamic Republic Claims to “Protect” Women with New Bill](#), 14 April 2023

²⁷ EUAA, [Iran - Country Focus](#) (footnote 977 on page 92 and page 109), June 2024

protecting women” in Iran, which “has created a climate of impunity for acts of violence against women perpetrated by the state and non-state actors”.²⁸

- 7.2.7 An undated webpage entitled ‘Prevention of Violence against Children’ published by UNICEF stated: ‘Children’s rights in Iran are regulated by a blend of sharia law, national legislation, and international legal instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child.’²⁹
- 7.2.8 An article published on 23 June 2020 by Human Rights Watch (HRW), shortly after the Guardian Council approved the Protection of Children and Adolescents Act on 7 June 2020, stated:
- ‘Iran’s recently approved law to protect children and adolescents is a small positive step forward but falls short of the fundamental reforms needed to meaningfully protect children’s rights ...
- ‘It includes new penalties for certain acts that harm a child’s safety and well-being, including physical harm and preventing access to education. The law also allows officials to relocate a child in situations that seriously threaten their safety. But the law fails to address some of the most serious threats against children in Iran, such as child marriage and imposition of the death penalty.
- ‘... Article 9 of the new law defines a set of punishments, which include imprisonment and “blood money,” for negligence by anyone, including parents, that results in death, disability, bodily harm, and sexual harassment. The Guardian Council, however, removed provisions to punish parents’ use of “corporal punishment” with imprisonment. Iranian law does not consider corporal punishment by parents or guardians for “chastisement” within a customary limit as a crime.
- ‘... In a positive development, article 33 of the new law requires social workers from that State Welfare Organization to promptly investigate the situation of children in “extreme danger” from abuse, exploitation, or being out of school, among other things. Under the law, they have the authority to remove a child from a household and put them under the state’s supervision until the prosecutor becomes involved in the case.’³⁰
- 7.2.9 An blog post published by the Atlantic Council, a US international affairs think tank³¹, on 24 June 2020 stated: ‘In some articles of the new legislation, the conflict between the best interest of the child and the power of the family, especially the father, make it difficult or close to impossible to protect children from all forms of abuse ... Furthermore, punishments in the bill for child abuse ... are not a sufficient deterrence.’³²
- 7.2.10 On 29 April 2025, Amnesty International (AI) published its annual report, ‘The State of the World’s Human Rights’, covering 2024, which stated: ‘The bill Preventing Harm to Women and Improving Their Security Against Misconduct remained pending before parliament. The draft failed to define domestic violence as an offence, criminalize marital rape or child marriage, or ensure that men who murder their female relatives face proportionate

²⁸ EUAA, [Iran - Country Focus](#) (section 4.11.9), June 2024

²⁹ UNICEF, [Prevention of Violence against Children](#), no date

³⁰ HRW, [Iran: Child Protection Law Positive, but Insufficient](#), 23 June 2020

³¹ Library of Congress, [Atlantic Council](#), no date

³² Atlantic Council, [The new Iranian child protection law is holistic, but discriminatory](#), 24 June 2020

punishments.’³³

[Back to Contents](#)

8. Cultural and societal attitudes towards women

- 8.1.1 The NCRI Women’s Committee published an article on 27 June 2023, covering what it described as a ‘surge’ of domestic violence and honour killings in Iran. The article stated:

‘While knives, sickles, or any other weapon in all their forms are in the hands of a father, brother, husband, or another family member, preventing more murders of women requires ... misogynist thought to be condemned and destroyed. Under the current regime, the prevailing medieval view is that officially and in all laws, women are second-class citizens and subservient to men. This idea is part of the mullahs’ ideological pillar in all its policies. For example, in the case of compulsory veiling, violation of the law of compulsory veiling is considered a matter of national security and carries the heaviest penalties.’³⁴

- 8.1.2 The EUAA country guidance note, published in January 2025, stated:

‘Gender discrimination is institutionalised in Iran. Women face significant legal and social restrictions that deeply impact their lives, particularly in areas such as employment, education, and personal freedoms.

‘... Women are ... prohibited from entering the workplace without wearing a hijab, dancing in public, riding bicycles, joining the army, participating in public sports, and becoming president.

‘... [W]omen and girls in Iran ... may need the support of a male family member in order to access different services and to exercise certain rights ... A husband can determine where the couple lives and can prevent his wife from taking certain jobs that he considered contrary to “family values”.’³⁵

- 8.1.3 On 6 March 2025, the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI), a New York-based organisation of journalists, researchers and human rights advocates who document and report on human rights conditions in Iran³⁶, published an article which stated:

‘In Iran, women are second-class citizens - systematically oppressed by laws and policies that serve only one purpose: to entrench the power of the government. For over four decades, the Islamic Republic has restricted women’s rights in marriage, divorce, inheritance, child custody, work, the courts, political office, travel, lifestyle, and clothing - using their bodies and freedoms as tools of domination - and has blatantly failed to protect women from gender-based violence.

‘... Severe, systematic, and institutionalized gender-based discrimination pervades all aspects of life for women in Iran, from the personal to the public, regardless of age, background, or status. This discrimination is codified in law and entrenched in practice.’³⁷

³³ AI, [The State of the World's Human Rights; Iran 2024](#), 29 April 2025

³⁴ NCRI Women’s Committee, [... Domestic Violence and Honor Killings in Iran](#), 27 June 2023

³⁵ EUAA, [Country Guidance: Iran; Common analysis and ...](#) (pages 14, 44 and 64), January 2025

³⁶ CHRI, [Who We Are](#), no date

³⁷ CHRI, [Gender Apartheid in Iran is Crushing Women's Lives and Futures](#), 6 March 2025

- 8.1.4 An article dated 24 March 2025 published by the Women’s Committee of the NCRI stated: ‘Hassan Ahmadi, a legal expert within Iran’s judiciary, identified key factors contributing to domestic violence, including cultural attitudes that treat women as property ...’³⁸
- 8.1.5 The USSD International Religious Freedom report, covering events of 2023 and published in June 2024, stated:
- ‘The government continued to require all women to adhere to “Islamic dress” standards in public, including covering their hair and fully covering their bodies in loose clothing – an overcoat and a hijab or, alternatively, a chador (a full body-length piece of fabric worn over both the head and clothes). “Un-Islamic dress” was punished with arrests, imprisonment, lashings, fines, mandatory psychiatric treatment, closure of businesses which did not enforce dress codes, and dismissal from employment ... According to press reports, judges also sentenced women convicted of not wearing the hijab to public service, including work in morgues or street cleaning, in lieu of prison time. Protests against the mandatory hijab under the slogan “Zan, Zendegi, Azadi” (“Woman, Life, Freedom”) continued into the year, originally prompted by Mahsa Amini’s death in custody [for “improper hijab”^{39 40}] in 2022.
- ‘... Analysis published by the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) stated that as of September [2023], regular citizens were being compelled to assist law enforcement efforts regarding the wearing of the hijab. USIP reported citizens were required to deny services to women who did not adhere to hijab regulations, blocking access to banks, shops, and restaurants, and that business owners who failed to comply risked fines or even closure of their establishments.’⁴¹
- 8.1.6 The Amnesty International report, published on 29 April 2025 stated:
- ‘Authorities continued to treat women as second-class citizens, including in relation to marriage, divorce, child custody, employment, inheritance and political office.’⁴²

[Back to Contents](#)

9. Honour-based violence

9.1 Definition and motives

- 9.1.1 The DFAT Iran Country Information Report 2023 described an honour killing as a killing ‘in which a husband, brother, male cousin or other male relative murders a woman for a perceived insult to the family’s “honour”’.⁴³
- 9.1.2 The same Country Information Report went on to state: ‘Perceived insults to honour might include a woman being a victim of rape, having consensual sex outside marriage or getting divorced.’⁴⁴
- 9.1.3 On 3 January 2025, an independent body called Stop Honor Killings, which campaigns to change the law and culture in Iran with the aim of ending

³⁸ NCRI Women’s Committee, [Escalating Violence Against Women in Iran ...](#), 24 March 2025

³⁹ Reuters, [Iran steps up internet crackdown one year after Mahsa Amini death](#), 14 September 2023

⁴⁰ BBC News, [Iran: A really simple guide to the protests](#), 15 September 2023

⁴¹ USSD, [2023 Report on International Religious Freedom](#) (pages 41 to 42 and 43), 26 June 2024

⁴² AI, [The State of the World's Human Rights; Iran 2024](#), 29 April 2025

⁴³ DFAT, [Iran Country Information Report](#) (paragraph 2.134), 24 July 2023

⁴⁴ DFAT, [Iran Country Information Report](#) (paragraph 2.134), 24 July 2023

honour killings⁴⁵, published its fourth quarterly report of 2024 on honor killings. The report stated:

“Honor killings” are a severe form of femicide and one of the most violent expressions of gender-based violence. They typically involve a family member, often a woman or a transgender individual, being murdered by relatives who claim the victim has brought shame or dishonor upon the family, tribe, or community. These killings are often motivated by cultural, social, or religious beliefs that prioritize “family honor” over individual rights, including the fundamental right to life.

‘Triggers for such murders may include refusing an arranged marriage, engaging in a romantic relationship disapproved by the family, seeking a divorce, choosing a career, traveling without permission, or even becoming a victim of sexual assault. Many such killings are based on mere suspicion, with no evidence to justify the accusations.’⁴⁶

- 9.1.4 An article published by Iran International, a London-based media outlet that provides news for Iranians both in and outside of Iran⁴⁷, on 5 June 2023 stated: ‘Honor killings are prevalent in some parts of Iran mostly due to societal beliefs and the Islamic Republic’s lax laws and light sentences that encourage the behavior.’⁴⁸
- 9.1.5 A Middle East Institute (MEI) article, published on 26 August 2021, mentioned ‘engaging in adultery’ as another potential cause of ‘Honor killings [to] punish women for bringing “disgrace” upon their families ...’⁴⁹
- 9.1.6 The EUAA Country Focus COI report, citing information from Leila Alikarami, stated: ‘At times “honour crimes take the form of forced self-immolation, allowing the woman’s death to be reported as suicide or an accident”.’⁵⁰

[Back to Contents](#)

9.2 Locations

- 9.2.1 The article published by the Women’s Committee of the NCRI on 27 June 2023, citing the Shargh daily [a state-affiliated newspaper⁵¹] 2 days earlier, stated: ‘The available statistics show a significant increase in honor killings in Iran’s western provinces in 2021-2022. This year [2023], the occurrence of honor killings in the western part of the country has shown a growing trend.’⁵²
- 9.2.2 On 6 July 2023, the Middle East Eye (MEE), an independently funded digital news organisation which predominantly covers stories from the Middle East and North Africa⁵³, published an article which stated:

‘The Shargh daily, in an investigative report, probed ... cases and wrote that most murders [of women killed by their male family members in Iran, in so called honour killings] took place in the Tehran province, contrary to popular

⁴⁵ Stop Honor Killings, [About Us](#), no date

⁴⁶ Stop Honor Killings, [Fourth Quarterly Report on “Honor Killings” in 2024 ...](#), 3 January 2025

⁴⁷ Iran International, [About Us](#), no date

⁴⁸ Iran International, [Iranian Teenager Murdered By Brother In Honor Killing](#), 5 June 2023

⁴⁹ MEI, [Iranian women campaign to stop the rise in “honor killings”](#), 26 August 2021

⁵⁰ EUAA, [Iran - Country Focus](#) (section 4.11.8), June 2024

⁵¹ NCRI Foreign Affairs Committee, [Iran News ...](#), 1 April 2025

⁵² NCRI Women’s Committee, [... Domestic Violence and Honor Killings in Iran](#), 27 June 2023

⁵³ MEE, [About us](#), no date

belief that femicides are more common in rural areas and small cities.

‘On Wednesday [5 July 2023], the [Shargh] daily reported that during the past two years, 41 murders took place in Tehran province.’⁵⁴

- 9.2.3 In September 2023, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (BZ, Dutch abbreviation) published a ‘General Country of Origin Information Report on Iran’ (the BZ COI report). The report, citing various sources, noted that honour-based violence is prevalent ‘... especially in economically disadvantaged and traditional rural areas, such as the Kurdish region in the northwest and Sistan-Baluchistan province in the southeast of the country.’⁵⁵
- 9.2.4 An article published on 21 May 2024 by Worldcrunch, a Paris-based, independent, digital media outlet⁵⁶, stated: ‘An attorney living in Tehran has told Kayhan-London that the cause of honor killings should be sought in the socio-cultural conditions of those parts of Iran where tribal, clan or religious identifications are strongest ... In January 2021, Masuma Tamimi, an Iran-based writer and translator, observed how public reports of honor killings had become rare in rural districts and villages, often being reported as female suicides.’⁵⁷
- 9.2.5 The January 2025 Stop Honor Killings fourth quarterly report of 2024 included the below table, showing the number of honour-based killings, by province, it documented in the fourth quarter of 2024⁵⁸:

Province	Count of Province
East Azerbaijan	4
West Azerbaijan	2
Ardabil	1
Isfahan	3
Alborz	3
Ilam	2
Tehran	18
Khorasan Razavi	2
Khuzestan	2
Fars	6
Kermanshah	3
Lorestan	2
Markazi	3
Total	51

- 9.2.6 In January 2025, the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) published

⁵⁴ MEE, [Iranian press review: One honour killing happening every four days, says report](#), 6 July 2023

⁵⁵ BZ, [General Country of Origin Information Report on Iran](#) (paragraph 3.3.5), September 2023

⁵⁶ Worldcrunch, [About us](#), no date

⁵⁷ Worldcrunch, [How Honor Killings In Iran Are Protected By Culture And Fear ...](#), 21 May 2024

⁵⁸ Stop Honor Killings, [Fourth Quarterly Report on “Honor Killings” in 2024 ...](#), 3 January 2025

an Iran country guidance note in which it stated:

‘The risk of honour-based violence as well as of domestic violence is dependent on how the (extended) family, including the husband, perceive the traditional gender norms ... Women and girls originating from (more) conservative areas are at higher risk [from the different forms of violence and discrimination to which women and girls are subjected]. In rural areas, control over women is stricter due to close-knit community surveillance, while in larger cities like Mashhad, Isfahan, and Tehran, the higher education levels and open-minded attitudes afford women more freedom, including the dress-code.’⁵⁹

[Back to Contents](#)

9.3 Prevalence and perpetrators

9.3.1 The article published by the Women’s Committee of the NCRI on 27 June 2023, citing the Shargh daily 2 days earlier, stated:

‘In recent years, there has been a surge of domestic violence against women and honor killings in Iran.

‘... [W]omen are more often the victims of domestic homicides and honor killings in Iran than men.

‘... Approximately 20% of all murders in the country are honor killings, and 40% of the total murders are domestic homicides ... The occurrence of approximately 10% of honor killings worldwide in our country, Iran, is a warning sign...’

‘... [O]n average, every year in Iran, at least 450 women are victims of honor-killing and domestic murders by their husbands, fathers, or brothers.’⁶⁰

9.3.2 The MEE article that was published on 6 July 2023, also citing the Shargh daily, stated:

‘Since July 2021, at least 165 women have been killed by their male family members in Iran, putting the average number of so-called honour killings in this period at an alarming one murder every four days.

‘... The report added that these numbers only revealed the official case data, as experts believe the actual numbers are much higher.

“This number does not include the several cases in which women were forced by their family members to commit suicide or the cases in which women decided to end their lives to end domestic violence or child marriages,” wrote the daily.’⁶¹ CPIT noted that while 2 other sources, namely IranWire and Human Rights Watch, reported the same figure (165 women to have been killed by male family members) from Shargh, they each related the statistic to slightly different time periods. IranWire noted that the ‘official statistic’ related to a period of ‘less than two years’⁶², while HRW cited Shargh’s figure as relating to the period from March 2021 to the end of June 2023⁶³.

⁵⁹ EUAA, [Country Guidance: Iran ...](#) (page 45), January 2025

⁶⁰ NCRI Women’s Committee, [... Domestic Violence and Honor Killings in Iran](#), 27 June 2023

⁶¹ MEE, [Iranian press review: One honour killing happening every four days, says report](#), 6 July 2023

⁶² IranWire, [Father Shoots Teenage Daughter in Alleged Honor Killing](#), 28 August 2024

⁶³ HRW, [World Report 2024](#) (Women’s and Girls’ Rights), 11 January 2024

- 9.3.3 The same MEE article also stated: ‘The report added that 108 of these women [the 165 women killed by their male family members between July 2021 and July 2023] were killed by their husbands, 17 by their brothers, 13 by their fathers, nine by their sons, and 18 were killed by other family members such as their in-laws and cousins.’⁶⁴
- 9.3.4 An article published by IranWire on 11 July 2023 stated: ‘The exact number of murders known as “honor killings” in Iran is unknown, but in December 2019, the state-run ISNA news agency reported that between 375 and 450 such killings occur annually across the country.’⁶⁵ It was not clear from the article what data the ISNA news agency’s reported number of ‘honour’ killings was based upon.
- 9.3.5 The DFAT Iran Country Information Report 2023 stated: ‘At least several hundred women a year are killed in so-called “honour” killings ...’⁶⁶ CPIT noted that it was unclear whether DFAT may also have drawn its approximate number from the ISNA news agency’s December 2019 reported figure (see paragraph 9.3.4), and the report did not state whether DFAT had independently corroborated the number it reported.
- 9.3.6 Citing various sources, the BZ COI report, published in September 2023, stated: ‘Honour-based violence is prevalent in Iran ... There are no reliable and comprehensive figures about the scale on which this occurs. Some estimates put the total at approximately four hundred honour killings a year.’⁶⁷ CPIT noted that it was unclear whether BZ may also have drawn its approximate number from the ISNA news agency’s December 2019 reported figure (see paragraph 9.3.4), and the report did not state whether BZ had independently corroborated the number it reported.
- 9.3.7 The USSD 2023 Human Rights report stated: ‘There were reports of killings motivated by “honor” or other harmful traditional practices during the year. There were no official statistics kept in the country concerning “honor killings,” but according to academic estimates cited by the daily newspaper Ebtekar, every year between 375 and 450 such killings occurred, mostly women killed by their male relatives in the name of preserving the family’s “honor.”’⁶⁸ CPIT noted that no further information was provided about how the estimated number of annual honour killings was reached, however it is noted that IranWire cited the same estimated numbers that were reported by the state-run ISNA news agency in December 2019 (see paragraph 9.3.4).
- 9.3.8 On 30 July 2024, Stop Femicide Iran (SFI), an organisation that seeks to combat femicide in Iran⁶⁹, published a press release, providing a summary of key findings from a report on 149 recorded cases of lethal violence against women and girls in Iran, which took place in 2023 and the first half of 2024. The press release stated:
- ‘Honor emerges as a ... significant motive, with 39 cases [~26%] attributed to perceived breaches of family honor, highlighting the deeply entrenched cultural norms and social ex family surrounding family honor and shame in

⁶⁴ MEE, [Iranian press review: One honour killing happening every four days, says report](#), 6 July 2023

⁶⁵ IranWire, [15-Year-Old Iranian Girl Killed by Father in Latest “Honor” Killing](#), 11 July 2023

⁶⁶ DFAT, [Iran Country Information Report](#) (paragraph 2.134), 24 July 2023

⁶⁷ BZ, [General Country of Origin Information Report on Iran](#) (paragraph 3.3.5), September 2023

⁶⁸ USSD, [2023 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Iran](#) (page 64), 23 April 2024

⁶⁹ SFI, [About Stop Femicide Iran \(SFI\)](#), no date

Iranian society and the way it can drive individuals to commit heinous crimes. Other motives, such as requests for divorce, rejection of marriage proposals, or refusal of second marriages, are cited (9 cases), further emphasizing the role honor considerations are motivating perpetrators.⁷⁰

- 9.3.9 The same SFI press release that was published on 30 July 2024 included a 2024 mid-year report of femicides in Iran, which stated: 'In the first half of 2024, StopFemicideIran (SFI) documented 93 acts of femicide in Iran, compared to 55 acts during the same period in 2023 ... At least 11 cases are specifically attributed to "honor."⁷¹
- 9.3.10 On 28 August 2024, IranWire published an article which stated: 'Since March 21, 2024, at least 70 women across Iran have been killed by close individuals and family members, according to Hengaw. Of these, 12 cases have been categorized as "honor-related" murders.'⁷²
- 9.3.11 On 26 December 2024, the Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA), 'a non-political and non-governmental organization comprised of advocates who defend human rights in Iran'⁷³, published 'Annual Analytical and Statistical Report on Human Rights in Iran for the year 2024'. The report noted 2 cases of honour killings of children and 37 cases of honour killings of women in 2024, according to its Department of Statistics and Publications of the Human Rights Activists in Iran (HRA)⁷⁴.
- 9.3.12 On 31 December 2024, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (Germany) (BAMF) published a 'Briefing Notes Summary', covering the period from June to December 2024. The summary stated: 'According to the Persian-language edition of BBC News ... there are no precise statistics on murders committed for honour-related reasons within the family.'⁷⁵
- 9.3.13 The annual report on the death penalty in Iran that was published by IHRNGO and ECPM in 2024 stated: 'Experts believe ... that Articles 301 and 302 [of the IPC] might be contributing to the increased number of honour killings in Iran.'⁷⁶ The report did not provide any numbers for honour killings in Iran, nor did it provide any further context, or a timeframe, for the increase in honour killings that it referred to.
- 9.3.14 On 6 January 2025, the CHRI published an article about violence against women in Iran. The article stated: 'Skyrocketing intimate partner violence and so-called "honor killings" are taking the lives of an average of a woman every other day in Iran - and that represents only the small fraction of cases that are publicly reported.'⁷⁷ CPIT noted that the article did not breakdown how many of these were incidents of 'intimate partner violence' compared with how many were incidents of 'honour killings', nor did it provide any further details regarding what this statistic was based upon.
- 9.3.15 On 16 January 2025, the Kurdistan Human Rights Network (KHRN), a France-based, independent, non-profit organisation that focuses on human

⁷⁰ SFI, [... 18-month Report on Lethal Violence Against Women and Girls ...](#) (page 3), 30 July 2024

⁷¹ SFI, [... 18-month Report on Lethal Violence Against Women and Girls ...](#) (page 4), 30 July 2024

⁷² IranWire, [Father Shoots Teenage Daughter in Alleged Honor Killing](#), 28 August 2024

⁷³ HRANA, [About Us](#), no date

⁷⁴ HRANA, [Annual Analytical and Statistical Report on Human Rights ... 2024](#), 26 December 2024

⁷⁵ BAMF, [Briefing Notes Summary](#) (page 6), 31 December 2024

⁷⁶ IHRNGO and ECPM, [Annual Report on the Death Penalty in Iran 2023](#) (page 31), 2024

⁷⁷ CHRI, [Killed Because You Are a Woman ... in Iran Reaches New Heights](#), 6 January 2025

rights issues in Kurdistan and Iran⁷⁸, published its 'Annual Report – 2024' which stated: 'Reports and statistics indicate that the killing of women by male family members under the pretext of "honour and dignity" continued in 2024 ... In 2024, at least 19 Kurdish women were victims of femicide ... In most cases, the perpetrators were male relatives of the victims.'⁷⁹ The report did not specify how many of the Kurdish victims of femicide were killed for honour-related reasons.

9.3.16 An article entitled 'The Fight Against Violence: Iran's Struggle for Women's Safety', published on 31 January 2025 by the Omid Foundation, a foundation which aims to empower marginalised young women and girls⁸⁰, stated: 'Cultural stigma and victim-blaming ... discourage women from reporting violence. Survivors often fear social ostracization, retaliation, or being dismissed by authorities.'⁸¹

9.3.17 On 3 February 2025, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) published an article about honour killings in Iran, which stated:

'According to an analysis by RFE/RL's Radio Farda, at least 133 women and girls were killed in the last year for "honor" or other reasons by their husbands, fathers, and brothers – meaning that every two days one female becomes a victim of femicide in the country.

'The review of reported cases in Iran within the last year of the Iranian calendar ... consists of 318 days ...

'... There are no official statistics on domestic murders in Iran, and according to the NGO Iran Human Rights, murders of women are often not reported or are falsely reported as suicides or accidents.

'... The one year total of 133 for 2024 found by RFE/RL indicates an increase in cases [compared with the 165 reported by the Shargh newspaper as having occurred between 2021 and 2023, see also paragraph 9.3.2].

'... A breakdown of the 133 family murder cases in 2024 also shows that 51 of them were categorized as "family disputes," something that rights groups say fits a broader trend in Iran of authorities looking to hide honor killings from official statistics by misreporting them.'⁸²

9.3.18 On 8 March 2025, the Hengaw Organization for Human Rights (Hengaw), an organisation that covers human rights violations across Iran, including in the Kurdish region of Iran⁸³ ⁸⁴, published a report about what it described as 'systematic violations' of women's rights in Iran throughout 2024. The report stated: 'Hengaw recorded at least 29 honor killings in 2024 [of 191 recorded cases of femicide during the same period⁸⁵], though the actual number may be higher, as many cases classified as "family disputes" by state media are suspected to be honor-related murders.'⁸⁶ The report went on to note that

⁷⁸ KHRN, [About us](#), no date

⁷⁹ KHRN, [Annual Report – 2024](#), 16 January 2025

⁸⁰ Omid Foundation, [Our Work](#), no date

⁸¹ Omid Foundation, [... Iran's Struggle for Women's Safety](#), 31 January 2025

⁸² RFE/RL, [Inside Iran's Epidemic Of "Honor" Killings ...](#), 3 February 2025

⁸³ Hengaw, [About us](#), no date

⁸⁴ Hengaw, [Eight Years of ... Commitment to Advocacy](#), 9 October 2024

⁸⁵ Hengaw, [... Report on Systematic Violations of Women's Rights ...](#) (page 21), 8 March 2025

⁸⁶ Hengaw, [... Report on Systematic Violations of Women's Rights ...](#) (page 22), 8 March 2025

Hengaw recorded 106 cases of femicide due to “family disputes” in 2024⁸⁷. The report did not state how many of those family dispute cases it believed to be honour-related murders.

- 9.3.19 Like other sources, Hengaw reported a lack of accurate statistics on femicide in Iran and noted that: ‘... it can be stated with certainty that the hidden statistics of femicide are far greater than the recorded cases documented by Hengaw.’⁸⁸
- 9.3.20 The January 2025 Stop Honor Killings fourth quarterly report of 2024 documented 51 honour killings in the reporting period (winter 2024), bringing the total number of recorded honour killings in 2024 to 186⁸⁹.
- 9.3.21 The Stop Honor Killings fourth quarterly report of 2024 also included the below table, showing the relationships between the perpetrators and the victims in the 51 honour-based killings it documented in the fourth quarter of 2024⁹⁰:

Relationship to Victim	Count of Relationship to Victim
Masked Individuals	2
Brother	3
Brother and Husband	1
Father	4
Son	2
Son-in-law	1
Husband's Nephew	1
Son-in-law (husband's son)	1
Son-in-law	3
Former Son-in-law	2
Friend	2
Brother-in-law	1
Unknown	1
Fiancé	3
Husband	20
Temporary Husband (Sigheh)	1
Mother's Husband	1
Former Husband	3
Total	51

- 9.3.22 Stop Honor Killings added: ‘In previous quarterly reports, most killings were

⁸⁷ Hengaw, [... Report on Systematic Violations of Women's Rights ...](#) (page 22), 8 March 2025

⁸⁸ Hengaw, [... Report on Systematic Violations of Women's Rights ...](#) (page 26), 8 March 2025

⁸⁹ Stop Honor Killings, [Fourth Quarterly Report on “Honor Killings” in 2024 ...](#), 3 January 2025

⁹⁰ Stop Honor Killings, [Fourth Quarterly Report on “Honor Killings” in 2024 ...](#), 3 January 2025

carried out by husbands, and in this report, 22 cases, or 43% of honor killings, were committed by husbands. Even former husbands, after separation, still felt a sense of ownership over their former wives, and 3 cases, or 6% of the 51 honor killings, were committed by ex-husbands.⁹¹ It should be noted that CPIT was unable to find any information to suggest that ex-husbands, like husbands, are exempt from qisas under the Penal Code and, on 19 May 2025, IHRNGO reported that a man was hanged after he was sentenced to qisas for the killing of his ex-wife⁹².

- 9.3.23 An article published on 1 February 2025 (converted from the Iranian to the Gregorian calendar⁹³) by Radio Farda, the Middle East-focused site of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)⁹⁴, originally in Persian and translated using a free online translation tool, stated: ‘The newspaper “Ham-Mihan” quoted Osman Mazin, a lawyer, stating that “the lack of punishment for fathers due to the murder of their children has led to an increase in murders by fathers, even in cases where the father is not the murderer and, for example, the brother or husband is the killer; the father falsely presents himself as the murderer so that the actual killer remains immune from punishment.”⁹⁵ The report did not provide any numbers for murders committed specifically by fathers, nor did it provide any further context, or a timeframe, for the increase in murders by fathers that it referred to.

[Back to Contents](#)

10. Access to justice

- 10.1.1 The Iran International article that was published on 5 June 2023 stated: ‘Perpetrators of honor killings are often not brought to justice as most families do not demand harsh punishment for them, particularly if the perpetrator is the victim’s father.’⁹⁶
- 10.1.2 The DFAT Iran Country Information Report 2023 stated:
- ‘In cases where authorities have attempted to stop the phenomenon of honour killings by sentencing some perpetrators to long prison terms (as has reportedly occurred in Khuzestan Province), new strategies have quickly evolved to circumvent these punishments, including through hiring third parties to commit the murder. In cases of honour killings, it is extremely unlikely for the head of the victim’s family to demand punishment. Most perpetrators of honour killings therefore serve only a short prison sentence or avoid punishment altogether.’⁹⁷
- 10.1.3 Citing various sources, the BZ COI report, published in September 2023, stated: ‘Legal protection in such matters [honour-based violence] is very limited, as the “blood owner” or person “to whom the victim belongs”, often a husband or father, fulfils a key role in the criminal prosecution.’⁹⁸
- 10.1.4 The same BZ COI report also stated: ‘... [A] number of people on social media ... point[ed] ... out that the punishment for a man who beheads his

⁹¹ Stop Honor Killings, [Fourth Quarterly Report on “Honor Killings” in 2024 ...](#), 3 January 2025

⁹² IHRNGO, [Unidentified Man Hanged for Murder in Sabzevar](#), 19 May 2025

⁹³ Iran Chamber Society, [Iranian Calendar Converter](#), no date, accessed 7 March 2025

⁹⁴ RFE/RL, [Sites by region](#), no date

⁹⁵ Radio Farda, [The phenomenon of “femicide” in Iran ...](#), 1 February 2025

⁹⁶ Iran International, [Iranian Teenager Murdered By Brother In Honor Killing](#), 5 June 2023

⁹⁷ DFAT, [Iran Country Information Report](#) (paragraph 2.134), 24 July 2023

⁹⁸ BZ, [General Country of Origin Information Report on Iran](#) (paragraph 3.3.5), September 2023

daughter is an eight-year prison sentence, while a woman who speaks out against the dress code risks a 24-year prison sentence.⁹⁹

10.1.5 The USSD 2023 Human Rights report stated:

‘Women sometimes received disproportionate punishment for crimes such as adultery, including death sentences. The judiciary’s interpretation and application of Islamic law retained provisions that equated a woman’s testimony in a court of law to one-half that of a man’s and valued a woman’s life as one-half that of a man’s life. The amount paid in “blood money” for the intentional or unintentional physical harm to a woman was one-half that paid for harm to a man, but a publicly funded trust paid the difference.’¹⁰⁰

10.1.6 The Worldcrunch article, published on 21 May 2024, stated: ‘... [T]he Tehran jurist [see paragraph 9.2.4] adds, “judges dealing with ... [honour killings] are themselves influenced by ... [a] cultural shield ... effectively downgrading these killings that are often perpetrated in the most horrific way ... and increasing their frequency.”’¹⁰¹

10.1.7 The EUAA Country Focus COI report, covering January 2023 to April 2024, stated: ‘Domestic violence can be criminalised as a physical assault; however, two male witnesses are required to the violence ... As noted by Leila Alikarami, “women are treated differently in many aspects of Iranian law and the judicial system, solely on account of their gender”.’¹⁰²

10.1.8 The DW article, published in September 2024, stated: ‘Lawyer and human rights expert Saeed Dehghan criticized the law in an interview with DW. “According to this article [630 of the IPC], this kind of “honor killing” is not punishable and the presiding judges usually use the phrase “the existence of an honorable motive to preserve honor” during trial of such murders,” he said.’¹⁰³

10.1.9 The Impact Iran Factsheet, published in December 2024, stated: ‘Women’s and girls’ testimonies in courts have no legal value for certain categories of crimes, while weights only the value of half that of a man’s in other cases.’¹⁰⁴

10.1.10 The CHRI article, published on 6 January 2025, stated:

‘... [T]here is significant under-reporting, as domestic violence is typically suffered in silence, in a judicial context that provides no redress or support to women ... Iran’s laws not only fail to provide women with the necessary protections against violence, they encourage the killing of women through lenient or sometimes nonexistent penalties for femicides.

‘... Male family members are ... shielded from the punishment of qisas (retributive justice) for their murders of daughters or granddaughters ... Judges can still sentence a murderer to up to 10 years in prison, but in most femicide cases, the families and the prosecutors do not seek the harshest penalties, and judges often release the perpetrators after only a few years in prison.

⁹⁹ BZ, [General Country of Origin Information Report on Iran](#) (paragraph 3.3.5), September 2023

¹⁰⁰ USSD, [2023 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Iran](#) (page 68), 23 April 2024

¹⁰¹ Worldcrunch, [How Honor Killings In Iran Are Protected By Culture And Fear ...](#), 21 May 2024

¹⁰² EUAA, [Iran - Country Focus](#) (sections 4.11.8 and 4.11.9), June 2024

¹⁰³ DW, [Femicide in Iran: Tradition and law enable killing of women](#), 16 September 2024

¹⁰⁴ Impact Iran, [Factsheet: Women and Girls’ Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran](#), 2 December 2024

‘... Standard judicial mechanisms such as orders of protection or restraining orders aimed at preventing contact between abusers and their victims - not only after they have been explicitly threatened by family members but also even after severe domestic violence has occurred - are not available in Iran.

‘... [M]any women without any reasonable legal recourse who are repeatedly abused and are clearly under the threat of lethal violence, kill their husbands in a desperate act of self-defense. (They then receive no judicial consideration for the context in which their crimes were committed, but are instead sentenced to long prison sentences or execution.)’¹⁰⁵

10.1.11 The report of the Special Rapporteur, published on 12 March 2025 stated: ‘The distinction [between honour-related killings and other forms of murder] becomes more pernicious when coupled with gender-based disparities in punishment, where male perpetrators receive lenient treatment. The State effectively sanctions lethal violence against women, particularly in cases framed as honour-related.’¹⁰⁶

10.1.12 The 24 March 2025 NCRI Women's Committee article stated: ‘Despite obtaining forensic medical reports as evidence, victims of domestic abuse face significant legal obstacles, as Iranian courts do not criminalize domestic violence against women due to legal loopholes within the country's judicial system.’¹⁰⁷

[Back to Contents](#)

11. Support and internal relocation

11.1 Shelter and support

11.1.1 An undated webpage published by Find A Helpline, which partners with helpline organisations and crisis centers globally to provide free emotional support¹⁰⁸, stated: ‘Abuse and domestic violence hotlines are available in Iran ... If you're looking for support, there are 2 abuse and domestic violence hotlines in Iran.’¹⁰⁹ The webpage noted the 2 hotlines to belong to ‘Iran Crisis Text Line’, a non-governmental organisation, and ‘Yara's Voice’, though it did not provide any information about the type of organisation for Yara's Voice. Find A Helpline also stated: ‘Other services and websites provide long lists of out-of-date information, but we work daily to keep our information accurate and easy to use – both for the people who need immediate support and for the partners who rely on us.’¹¹⁰

11.1.2 Citing a confidential source from April 2023, the BZ COI report, published in September 2023, stated: ‘A system of shelters for women fleeing domestic violence is almost completely absent.’¹¹¹

11.1.3 Citing another confidential source, from March 2023, the BZ COI report went on to state:

‘... [B]enefactors and foundations in Iran are generally not allowed to engage in such activities [the funding of shelters supporting women fleeing domestic

¹⁰⁵ CHRI, [Killed Because You Are a Woman ...](#), 6 January 2025

¹⁰⁶ UNHRC, [... Report of the Special Rapporteur on ...](#) (paragraphs 38 to 39), 12 March 2025

¹⁰⁷ NCRI Women's Committee, [Escalating Violence Against Women in Iran ...](#), 24 March 2025

¹⁰⁸ Find A Helpline, [About](#), no date

¹⁰⁹ Find A Helpline, [Helplines in Iran for abuse & domestic violence](#), no date

¹¹⁰ Find A Helpline, [About](#), no date

¹¹¹ BZ, [General Country of Origin Information Report on Iran](#) (paragraph 3.1.5.10), September 2023

violence] unless the institutions operate under the supervision of the SWO [State Welfare Organisation]. The activities of some charities and individuals aimed at helping women who were the victim of violence have been discontinued because they were not aligned with the government.

‘According to the same source, the SWO’s guidelines specify that an abused woman can stay in a shelter for two to four months. If a specialist team determines that conditions are not conducive for the woman to return home and she is still physically and mentally vulnerable, this period will be extended. The SWO’s website states that a woman is allowed to stay in a shelter for two periods of four months, subject to a judge’s ruling. A woman affected by domestic violence is first introduced to shelter through the emergency social services, the police or the judiciary. She is then examined by a medical officer. Her condition is then assessed by a social worker, a psychologist, a doctor and a legal advisor in an interview. According to this source, this process is not always carried out correctly. It is therefore difficult to determine how the police or the courts perform their duties in this area.’¹¹² It was not clear whether a woman who is perceived to have been the subject of abuse due to her having caused dishonour to her family (as opposed to a woman who has been subjected to abuse for non-honour related reasons) would be able to access this support.

11.1.4 In March 2024, CHRI published a fact sheet entitled ‘Women’s Rights in Iran’. The fact sheet noted that shelters for abused women were absent in one-third of Iran and that services and shelters were inaccessible to women with disabilities¹¹³.

11.1.5 The IRI submission for the UPR, published by the UNHRC on 5 November 2024, stated:

‘In relation to dealing with violence against women, in addition to the general approval of the bill “Preventing Women’s Harms and Improving Their Safety against Abuse[”], the most important measures are as follows:

- ‘Providing legal assistance and support by special offices for the protection of women and children in all judicial complexes;
- ‘Holding training courses by the National Committee for the Prevention of Violence stationed in the Judiciary;
- ‘launching 31 safe houses and five centers to deal with perpetrators of violence in the country;
- ‘Establishing 430 clinics across the country to provide services to women in need;
- ‘Providing mobile social emergency services to women in need;
- ‘Having 153 active hotlines throughout the country;
- ‘... 27 support and rehabilitation centers for socially disadvantaged women and girls in 24 provinces;
- ‘... 52 health centers for girls exposed to social harm in the country.’¹¹⁴

¹¹² BZ, [General Country of Origin Information Report on Iran](#) (paragraph 3.1.5.10), September 2023

¹¹³ CHRI, [Fact Sheet: Women’s Rights in Iran](#) (page 3), March 2024

¹¹⁴ IRI, published by UNHRC, [National report submitted ...](#) (paragraph 77), 5 November 2024

11.1.6 CPIT noted that it was not clear from the submission whether the government of Iran was claiming to have itself provided the above measures, or whether it was referring to support provided by non-state organisations within Iran. Notwithstanding the support provisions referred to by the COI in the rest of this sub-section of the CPIN, and the below articles published between 2018 and 2021 (3 of which were published by state bodies), about:

- emergency social services provided (including mobile units)^{115 116}
- the setting up of one support center for socially disadvantaged women and girls¹¹⁷; and
- the existence of 31 support centres for supporting girls at risk of social harm¹¹⁸,

CPIT has been unable to find information to corroborate the above claims made by the government of Iran. It was also not clear whether a woman who is perceived to have been the subject of abuse due to her having caused dishonour to her family (as opposed to a woman who has been subjected to abuse for non-honour related reasons) would be able to access this support.

11.1.7 In September 2024, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Germany published a 'Country Fact Sheet 2024' that looked at the situation for returnees from Germany to Iran. The fact sheet, which was funded by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (Germany) (BAMF), stated:

'Women who are exposed to domestic violence and are in a life-threatening situation, can call Social Emergency by dialing 123. A group of specialists together with the police, also in coordination with judicial authorities, will visit the address provided by the caller. The social worker analyzes the situation and if domestic violence is confirmed, the woman and her children will be referred to intervention centers.

'Once initial admission is done in intervention centers, the situation of the abused woman will be assessed and if there will be any life-threatening issue at home, which makes the return of the abused woman and her children impossible in short-term, they will be referred to Safe Houses (Khaneh Amn) together with their children (boys until the age of 12).

'Direct admission is not available in Safe Houses. These shelters, which are limited in the country, look like any other houses, have no signboard and their addresses are only available to Behzisti [the Welfare Organisation¹¹⁹], judicial authorities and the police. Women who live in these houses have a normal life. Even the neighbors are not aware that these houses are under the supervision of Behzisti, and victims of domestic violence are living there. Women who are victims of violence can extend their stay in these accommodations if the team of specialists determines that the condition is not suitable for them to return home.'¹²⁰

11.1.8 The article published by the Women's Committee of the NCRI on 28 November 2024 stated: 'Police are rarely willing to intervene in cases of

¹¹⁵ Tehran Times, [Iran to increase emergency social services centers](#), 8 June 2018

¹¹⁶ SWO, [An introduction on Social Emergency Services\(123\)](#), 1 July 2020

¹¹⁷ SWO, [Support and empowerment of Socially vulnerable girls and women](#), 28 April 2021

¹¹⁸ SWO, [Supporting from the girls at risk of social harm](#), 28 April 2021

¹¹⁹ IOM Germany, [The Islamic Republic of Iran; Country Fact Sheet 2024](#) (page 6), September 2024

¹²⁰ IOM Germany, [The Islamic Republic of Iran; Country Fact Sheet 2024](#) (page 11), September 2024

domestic violence ... Abused women receive minimal support from government-affiliated organizations. In many cases, instead of addressing the violent circumstances of these women's lives, these organizations focus on persuading them to return to their abusive households.'¹²¹

11.1.9 The CHRI article, published on 6 January 2025, stated:

'... [T]here are grossly insufficient services for victims or women at risk. Shelters and safe houses are absent in much of the country - a situation exacerbated by the government's closure of facilities that address violence against women and the state's persecution of relevant independent NGOs and charitable organizations.

'For example, the Mehre Shams Afarid NGO safe house, which supported vulnerable women and children in Orumiyeh, in Iran's West Azerbaijan province, was closed, and previously, NGOs in Iran such as the above-mentioned Imam Ali's Popular Student Relief Society (IAPSRs), Khaneh Khorshid, and the Omid-e-Mehr Foundation, which also supported vulnerable women and children, were shut down. At the same time, activists advocating to protect vulnerable women and children are targeted by the state with bogus prosecutions and harsh sentencing.'¹²²

11.1.10 The Omid Foundation article, published on 31 January 2025, stated:

'Amid systemic and societal challenges, organizations like the Omid Foundation provide critical support to women affected by violence. By addressing the immediate needs of survivors and empowering them to reclaim their lives, these organizations offer a lifeline to countless women.

'1. Providing Safe Spaces

'For women fleeing violence, safety is often the first priority. Omid Foundation creates safe and supportive environments where survivors can heal and rebuild their lives.

'Shelters: Temporary housing provides women and their children with security and stability.

'Counseling Services: Trauma-informed therapy helps survivors process their experiences and regain confidence.

'2. Legal Support

'Navigating Iran's legal system can be daunting, especially for survivors of violence. Omid Foundation offers legal assistance to help women:

'File complaints against perpetrators.

'Seek protective measures or custody of their children.

'Access justice in a system often biased against them.

'3. Education and Economic Empowerment

'Financial independence is a crucial step toward breaking the cycle of violence. Omid Foundation empowers women by providing:

'Vocational Training: Courses in tailoring, technology, and business equip

¹²¹ NCRI Women's Committee, [... A Bill That Never Gets Passed](#), 28 November 2024

¹²² CHRI, [Killed Because You Are a Woman ...](#), 6 January 2025

women with marketable skills.

‘Language Classes: Learning English opens doors to international opportunities and resources.

‘Entrepreneurship Support: Small grants and mentorship help women start their own businesses.

‘4. Advocacy and Awareness

‘By amplifying the voices of survivors, Omid Foundation raises awareness about gender-based violence and challenges societal norms. Public campaigns and workshops educate communities about the importance of gender equality and the need to protect women’s rights.’¹²³

11.1.11 The 24 March 2025 NCRI Women’s Committee article stated:

‘... [W]omen facing domestic violence in Iran struggle with a severe shortage of safe shelters. According to Fatemeh Babakhani, director of the Mehr Shams-Afarid Safe Shelter, there are currently only 17 operational safe shelters for women nationwide, leaving half of Iran’s provinces without any refuge for victims of domestic violence.

‘Babakhani emphasized the essential role these shelters play in providing temporary housing and support services, including psychological counseling, legal assistance, and vocational training. The average age of women seeking shelter is between 18 and 34, but victims include minors as well.’¹²⁴

[Back to Contents](#)

11.2 Freedom of movement

11.2.1 The Civil Code of the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI), originally published on 23 May 1928, states:

‘Article 1114 - The wife must stay in the dwelling that the husband allots for her unless such a right is reserved to the wife.

‘Article 1115 - If the existence of the wife and husband in the same house involves the risk of bodily or financial injury or that to the dignity of the wife, she can choose a separate dwelling: and if the alleged risk is proved the court will not order her to return to the house of the husband and, so long as she is authorized not to return to the house, her cost of maintenance will be on the charge of her husband.

‘... Article 1117 - The husband can prevent his wife from occupations or technical work which is incompatible with the family interests or the dignity of himself or his wife.’¹²⁵

11.2.2 It should be noted that the source cited above is an unofficial English translation and that while the Code was last amended on 31 July 2006, the last amendment included in this translation was dated 29 December 1985.

11.2.3 The BZ COI report, published in September 2023, stated: ‘... [M]arried women need permission from their husband to travel, even within the country. Under Section 18 of the Passport Act, a married woman needs the

¹²³ Omid Foundation, [... Iran’s Struggle for Women’s Safety](#), 31 January 2025

¹²⁴ NCRI Women’s Committee, [Escalating Violence Against Women in Iran ...](#), 24 March 2025

¹²⁵ IRI, [Civil Code of the Islamic Republic of Iran](#) (Articles 1114, 1115 and 1117), 23 May 1928

written consent of her husband to apply for a passport.¹²⁶

- 11.2.4 In July 2023, HRW published a report about restrictions on the freedom of movement of women by male guardianship in the Middle East and North Africa, including in Iran. The report, which cited various sources, stated that male guardians are 'typically their fathers or brothers, and when married, their husbands'¹²⁷, and went on to state:

'Under Iran's Passport law, even if a husband initially grants permission for his wife to travel, he can always change his mind and prevent her from traveling abroad by notifying the authorities. Men can abuse this power including as bargaining tools to force women into giving up their financial or other rights during their marriage or when finalizing divorce ...

'Some women explicitly include their right to travel abroad in their marriage contract. However, officials may still require women to get their husbands' permission. Lawyers advise women to get their husbands to grant them power of attorney so they can complete the travel permit on their husbands' behalf. The law allows prosecutors to grant permission for women to travel without their husbands' permission in emergencies. However, this can be difficult to obtain. The authorities have intervened to allow a few women mainly women athletes representing Iran to travel abroad against their husbands' wishes following public outrage.'¹²⁸

- 11.2.5 Citing confidential sources between February and April 2023, the BZ COI report also stated: 'Women have few opportunities to escape violence or domestic violence. In some cases they can turn to their parents or other immediate family members. However, according to one source, it is rare for women to be able to settle with relatives elsewhere in Iran to escape violence or domestic violence. In a traditional context, the woman in question will often be forced by her family to return to her husband.'¹²⁹
- 11.2.6 The UN Human Rights Committee concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Iran, published in November 2023, stated: 'The Committee is ... concerned by discriminatory restrictions on the freedom of movement of women and girls, who are banned from certain public spaces, such as football stadiums, airports, university campuses and government offices.'¹³⁰
- 11.2.7 The EUAA country guidance note, published in January 2025, stated: 'Women's mobility and autonomy are ... restricted by the requirement of a male relative's permission or consent ... The Chastity and Mandatory Hijab Bill approved by the Guardian Council in September 2024 further intensified the State's control over women's ... movements ...'¹³¹
- 11.2.8 The same country guidance note stated: 'Iranian law guarantees freedom on internal movement, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation and these rights are generally respected by the authorities, albeit with certain exceptions concerning ... women ... Furthermore, administrative bodies deny women access to public institutions, including airports, if they do not

¹²⁶ BZ, [General Country of Origin Information Report on Iran](#) (paragraph 3.1.5.8), September 2023

¹²⁷ HRW, [... How Male Guardianship ... Restrict Women's Travel ...](#) (page 1 and 17), July 2023

¹²⁸ HRW, [Trapped; How Male Guardianship Policies Restrict Women's Travel ...](#) (page 39), July 2023

¹²⁹ BZ, [General Country of Origin Information Report on Iran](#) (paragraph 3.1.5.9), September 2023

¹³⁰ UN Human Rights Committee, [Concluding observations ...](#) (paragraph 37), 23 November 2023

¹³¹ EUAA, [Country Guidance: Iran; Common analysis and guidance note](#) (page 44), January 2025

cover their hair.’¹³²

11.2.9 The CHRI article, published on 6 January 2025, stated:

‘Iran’s Civil Code forbids a woman from leaving the matrimonial home without the husband’s permission unless she is able and willing to go to court to prove she is endangered (Article 1114). This leaves women deeply vulnerable to violence, especially given the requirement of witnesses, the fact that a female witness’s testimony is worth half that of a man’s, and the stipulation that if a woman leaves the marital home, she forfeits her right to financial maintenance (Article 1108).’¹³³

11.2.10 For more information about exit and entry procedures for women at airports and land borders, including required documentation, the ability of male guardians to prohibit the international travel of women and children, and the treatment of women and children who attempt to leave Iran without prior permission, see a [response to an information request published by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada \(IRBC\) on 7 March 2022](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

11.3 Conditions faced by single and divorced women

11.3.1 On 10 March 2024, the NCRI Women’s Committee published a report entitled ‘Robbed Riches: The Story of Iranian Women’s Stolen Wealth’. The report, which cited various sources, stated:

‘Female heads of households cover various groups of women in diverse situations ... divorcees ... often find themselves managing and providing for their families without the regular presence of a male figure in the traditional roles of husband or father, while the regime’s laws considers them as second-class citizens.

‘The data from the National Statistics Center in 2020 indicates that nearly 4 million women take on the role of household heads ... [O]f these women, approximately 1.5 million are self-supporting and live in one-person households ... Nearly half of the breadwinners in the family are among the poorest people in society, with about 45% of household heads being women in the poorest decile [10%¹³⁴] ...

‘... [F]emale-headed families are more susceptible to falling into poverty.

‘... In a report on the repercussions of the “inflationary wave on women heads of households,” the state news agency Rokna highlights that, under the current circumstances, a staggering 40 percent of women heads of households in Iran, equivalent to one million and 700 thousand people, find themselves below the poverty line.

‘Government statistics indicate that approximately one million and 500 thousand female heads of households are covered by the Welfare Organization and the Relief Committee. However, the significance of being covered by the regime’s welfare and aid committee is minimal in the current inflationary conditions. The subsidy provided is described as so insignificant that it “practically does not make any difference in the living conditions of

¹³² EUAA, [Country Guidance: Iran; Common analysis and guidance note](#) (page 62), January 2025

¹³³ CHRI, [Killed Because You Are a Woman ...](#), 6 January 2025

¹³⁴ Cambridge Dictionary, [Decile](#), no date

these women” and fails to alleviate their hardships.

‘... The exacerbation of social inequalities, a decrease in job opportunities, rising divorce rates, and a shift in the role of women toward household caregiving are contributing to the increasing feminization of poverty each day.’¹³⁵

11.3.2 The same NCRI Women’s Committee report went on to state: ‘In contrast to men, women face unequal access to job opportunities and incomes that match the cost of living.’¹³⁶

11.3.3 On 28 October 2024, the EUAA published a response to a COI query about the situation of divorced women, covering the period from January 2022 to 25 October 2024. The response, which cited various sources, stated:

‘According to Bonyad Vokala, an Iranian legal platform that provides information on different legal aspects in Iran, (informal translation) in Iran “more than 89 % of divorced women have not received any alimony, and because most women are not employed outside the home - even those with higher education degrees - many of them stop working after marriage for various reasons. After divorce, they face many difficulties in finding a suitable job and supporting themselves. Only 16 % of divorced women are employed.”’¹³⁷

[Back to Contents](#)

¹³⁵ NCRI Women’s Committee, [Robbed Riches ...](#) (pages 34 to 35), 10 March 2024

¹³⁶ NCRI Women’s Committee, [Robbed Riches ...](#) (page 47), 10 March 2024

¹³⁷ EUAA, [Iran; Situation of divorced women \[Q71-2024\]](#) (page 6), 28 October 2024

Research methodology

The country of origin information (COI) in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual](#), 2024. Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion. Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources

Commentary may be provided on source(s) and information to help readers understand the meaning and limits of the COI.

Wherever possible, multiple sourcing is used and the COI compared to ensure that it is accurate and balanced, and provides a comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the issues relevant to this note at the time of publication.

The inclusion of a source is not, however, an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a footnote.

Full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

Terms of Reference

The 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) provides a broad outline of the issues relevant to the scope of this note and forms the basis for the [country information](#).

The following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Legal context
 - Penal code
 - Laws protecting women and girls
- General position of women in society – cultural and societal attitudes
- Honour-related crimes
 - Definition and reasons
 - Regional differences, socio-economic factors, perpetrators
 - Prevalence
- Access to justice
 - Attitudes towards women and ability to seek protection
- Support and relocation opportunities

[Back to Contents](#)

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[Back to Contents](#)

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[Back to Contents](#)

Version control and feedback

Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **4.0**
- valid from **24 June 2025**

Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – Start of section

The information on this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use.

Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – End of section

[Back to Contents](#)

Changes from last version of this note

Updated COI and assessment.

[Back to Contents](#)

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[Back to Contents](#)

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[Back to Contents](#)