



## Middle East :: Iran

### Introduction :: Iran

#### Background:

Known as Persia until 1935, Iran became an Islamic republic in 1979 after the ruling monarchy was overthrown and Shah Mohammad Reza PAHLAVI was forced into exile. Conservative clerical forces led by Ayatollah Ruhollah KHOMEINI established a theocratic system of government with ultimate political authority vested in a learned religious scholar referred to commonly as the Supreme Leader who, according to the constitution, is accountable only to the Assembly of Experts - a popularly elected 86-member body of clerics. US-Iranian relations became strained when a group of Iranian students seized the US Embassy in Tehran in November 1979 and held embassy personnel hostages until mid-January 1981. The US cut off diplomatic relations with Iran in April 1980. During the period 1980-88, Iran fought a bloody, indecisive war with Iraq that eventually expanded into the Persian Gulf and led to clashes between US Navy and Iranian military forces. Iran has been designated a state sponsor of terrorism for its activities in Lebanon and elsewhere in the world and remains subject to US, UN, and EU economic sanctions and export controls because of its continued involvement in terrorism and its nuclear weapons ambitions. Following the election of reformer Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad KHATAMI as president in 1997 and a reformist Majles (legislature) in 2000, a campaign to foster political reform in response to popular dissatisfaction was initiated. The movement floundered as conservative politicians, through control of unelected institutions, prevented reform measures from being enacted and increased repressive measures. Starting with nationwide municipal elections in 2003 and continuing through Majles elections in 2004, conservatives reestablished control over Iran's elected government institutions, which culminated with the August 2005 inauguration of hardliner Mahmud AHMADI-NEJAD as president. His controversial reelection in June 2009 sparked nationwide protests over allegations of electoral fraud. The UN Security Council has passed a number of resolutions calling for Iran to suspend its uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities and comply with its IAEA obligations and responsibilities. In mid-February 2011, opposition activists conducted the largest antiregime rallies since December 2009, spurred by the success of uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt. Protester turnout probably was at most tens of thousands and security forces were deployed to disperse protesters. Additional protests in March 2011 failed to elicit significant participation largely because of the robust security response, although discontent still smolders. Deteriorating economic conditions due primarily to government mismanagement and international sanctions prompted at least two major economically based protests in July and October 2012.

### Geography :: Iran

#### Location:

Middle East, bordering the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, and the Caspian Sea, between Iraq and Pakistan

#### Geographic coordinates:

32 00 N, 53 00 E

#### Map references:

Middle East

#### Area:

**total:** 1,648,195 sq km

**country comparison to the world:** 18

**land:** 1,531,595 sq km

**water:** 116,600 sq km

#### Area - comparative:

slightly smaller than Alaska

#### **Land boundaries:**

**total:** 5,440 km

**border countries:** Afghanistan 936 km, Armenia 35 km, Azerbaijan-proper 432 km, Azerbaijan-Naxcivan exclave 179 km, Iraq 1,458 km, Pakistan 909 km, Turkey 499 km, Turkmenistan 992 km

#### **Coastline:**

2,440 km; note - Iran also borders the Caspian Sea (740 km)

#### **Maritime claims:**

**territorial sea:** 12 nm

**contiguous zone:** 24 nm

**exclusive economic zone:** bilateral agreements or median lines in the Persian Gulf

**continental shelf:** natural prolongation

#### **Climate:**

mostly arid or semiarid, subtropical along Caspian coast

#### **Terrain:**

rugged, mountainous rim; high, central basin with deserts, mountains; small, discontinuous plains along both coasts

#### **Elevation extremes:**

**lowest point:** Caspian Sea -28 m

**highest point:** Kuh-e Damavand 5,671 m

#### **Natural resources:**

petroleum, natural gas, coal, chromium, copper, iron ore, lead, manganese, zinc, sulfur

#### **Land use:**

**arable land:** 10.05%

**permanent crops:** 1.08%

**other:** 88.86% (2011)

#### **Irrigated land:**

87,000 sq km (2009)

#### **Total renewable water resources:**

137 cu km (2011)

#### **Freshwater withdrawal (domestic/industrial/agricultural):**

**total:** 93.3 cu km/yr (7%/1%/92%)

**per capita:** 1,306 cu m/yr (2004)

#### **Natural hazards:**

periodic droughts, floods; dust storms, sandstorms; earthquakes

#### **Environment - current issues:**

air pollution, especially in urban areas, from vehicle emissions, refinery operations, and industrial effluents; deforestation; overgrazing; desertification; oil pollution in the Persian Gulf; wetland losses from drought; soil degradation (salination); inadequate supplies of potable water; water pollution from raw sewage and industrial waste; urbanization

#### **Environment - international agreements:**

**party to:** Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Marine Dumping, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands

**signed, but not ratified:** Environmental Modification, Law of the Sea, Marine Life Conservation

#### **Geography - note:**

strategic location on the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz, which are vital maritime pathways for crude oil transport

### **People and Society :: Iran**

#### **Nationality:**

**noun:** Iranian(s)

**adjective:** Iranian

#### **Ethnic groups:**

Persian 61%, Azeri 16%, Kurd 10%, Lur 6%, Baloch 2%, Arab 2%, Turkmen and Turkic tribes 2%, other 1%

#### **Languages:**

Persian (official) 53%, Azeri Turkic and Turkic dialects 18%, Kurdish 10%, Gilaki and Mazandarani 7%, Luri 6%, Balochi 2%, Arabic 2%, other 2%

#### **Religions:**

Muslim (official) 98% (Shia 89%, Sunni 9%), other (includes Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian, and Baha'i) 2%

#### **Population:**

79,853,900 (July 2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 19

#### **Age structure:**

**0-14 years:** 23.8% (male 9,733,762/female 9,251,929)

**15-24 years:** 19.8% (male 8,116,169/female 7,671,139)

**25-54 years:** 45.3% (male 18,380,525/female 17,766,409)

**55-64 years:** 6.1% (male 2,383,360/female 2,472,140)

**65 years and over:** 5.1% (male 1,902,743/female 2,175,724) (2013 est.)

#### **Dependency ratios:**

**total dependency ratio:** 41 %

**youth dependency ratio:** 33.6 %

**elderly dependency ratio:** 7.5 %

**potential support ratio:** 13.4 (2013)

#### **Median age:**

**total:** 27.8 years

**male:** 27.5 years

**female:** 28.1 years (2013 est.)

#### **Population growth rate:**

1.24% (2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 95

#### **Birth rate:**

18.4 births/1,000 population (2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 106

#### **Death rate:**

5.94 deaths/1,000 population (2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 167

#### **Net migration rate:**

-0.1 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 115

#### **Urbanization:**

**urban population:** 69.1% of total population (2011)

**rate of urbanization:** 1.25% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

#### **Major urban areas - population:**

TEHRAN (capital) 7.19 million; Mashhad 2.592 million; Esfahan 1.704 million; Karaj 1.531 million; Tabriz 1.459 million (2009)

#### **Sex ratio:**

**at birth:** 1.05 male(s)/female

**0-14 years:** 1.05 male(s)/female

**15-24 years:** 1.06 male(s)/female

**25-54 years:** 1.03 male(s)/female

**55-64 years:** 0.96 male(s)/female

**65 years and over:** 0.89 male(s)/female

**total population:** 1.03 male(s)/female (2013 est.)

#### **Maternal mortality rate:**

21 deaths/100,000 live births (2010)

**country comparison to the world:** 138

#### **Infant mortality rate:**

**total:** 40.02 deaths/1,000 live births

**country comparison to the world:** 56

**male:** 40.54 deaths/1,000 live births

**female:** 39.48 deaths/1,000 live births (2013 est.)

#### **Life expectancy at birth:**

**total population:** 70.62 years

**country comparison to the world:** 149

**male:** 69.09 years

**female:** 72.24 years (2013 est.)

#### **Total fertility rate:**

1.86 children born/woman (2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 146

**Contraceptive prevalence rate:**

73.3% (2002)

**Health expenditures:**

6% of GDP (2011)

**country comparison to the world:** 110

**Physicians density:**

0.89 physicians/1,000 population (2005)

**Hospital bed density:**

1.7 beds/1,000 population (2009)

**Drinking water source:****improved:**

urban: 97% of population

rural: 92% of population

total: 96% of population

**unimproved:**

urban: 3% of population

rural: 8% of population

total: 4% of population (2010 est.)

**Sanitation facility access:****improved:**

urban: 100% of population

rural: 100% of population

total: 100% of population

**unimproved:**

urban: 0% of population

rural: 0% of population

total: 0% of population (2010 est.)

**HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:**

0.2% (2009 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 99

**HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:**

92,000 (2009 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 43

**HIV/AIDS - deaths:**

6,400 (2009 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 33

**Major infectious diseases:**

**degree of risk:** intermediate

**food or waterborne diseases:** bacterial diarrhea

**vectorborne diseases:** Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever

**note:** highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza has been identified in this country; it poses a negligible risk with extremely rare cases possible among US citizens who have close contact with birds (2013)

**Obesity - adult prevalence rate:**

19.4% (2008)

**country comparison to the world:** 99

**Children under the age of 5 years underweight:**

4.6% (2004)

**country comparison to the world:** 91

**Education expenditures:**

4.7% of GDP (2010)

**country comparison to the world:** 88

**Literacy:**

**definition:** age 15 and over can read and write

**total population:** 85%

**male:** 89.3%

**female:** 80.7% (2008 est.)

**School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):**

**total:** 14 years  
**male:** 14 years  
**female:** 14 years (2011)

#### Unemployment, youth ages 15-24:

**total:** 23%  
**country comparison to the world:** 44  
**male:** 20.2%  
**female:** 33.9% (2008)

### Government :: Iran

#### Country name:

**conventional long form:** Islamic Republic of Iran  
**conventional short form:** Iran  
**local long form:** Jomhuri-ye Eslami-ye Iran  
**local short form:** Iran  
**former:** Persia

#### Government type:

theocratic republic

#### Capital:

**name:** Tehran  
**geographic coordinates:** 35 42 N, 51 25 E  
**time difference:** UTC+3.5 (8.5 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)  
**daylight saving time:** +1hr, begins fourth Tuesday in March; ends fourth Thursday in September

#### Administrative divisions:

31 provinces (ostanha, singular - ostan); Alborz, Ardabil, Azarbayjan-e Gharbi (West Azerbaijan), Azarbayjan-e Sharqi (East Azerbaijan), Bushehr, Chahar Mahal va Bakhtiari, Esfahan, Fars, Gilan, Golestan, Hamadan, Hormozgan, Ilam, Kerman, Kermanshah, Khorasan-e Jonubi (South Khorasan), Khorasan-e Razavi (Razavi Khorasan), Khorasan-e Shomali (North Khorasan), Khuzestan, Kohgiluyeh va Bowyer Ahmad, Kordestan, Lorestan, Markazi, Mazandaran, Qazvin, Qom, Semnan, Sistan va Baluchestan, Tehran, Yazd, Zanjan

#### Independence:

1 April 1979 (Islamic Republic of Iran proclaimed); notable earlier dates: ca. 625 B.C. (unification of Iran under the Medes); ca. A.D. 1501 (Iran reunified under the Safavids); 12 December 1925 (modern Iran established under the Pahlavis)

#### National holiday:

Republic Day, 1 April (1979)

#### Constitution:

previous 1906; latest adopted 24 October 1979, effective 3 December 1979; amended 1989

#### Legal system:

religious legal system based on sharia law

#### International law organization participation:

has not submitted an ICJ jurisdiction declaration; non-party state to the ICCT

#### Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

#### Executive branch:

**chief of state:** Supreme Leader Ali Hoseini-KHAMENEI (since 4 June 1989)  
**head of government:** President Hasan Fereidun RUHANI (since 3 August 2013); First Vice President Mohammad Reza RAHIMI (since 13 September 2009)  
**cabinet:** Council of Ministers selected by the president with legislative approval; the Supreme Leader has some control over appointments to the more sensitive ministries  
(For more information visit the [World Leaders website](#) 🌐)  
**note:** also considered part of the Executive branch of government are three oversight bodies: 1) Assembly of Experts (Majles-e Khoebregan), a popularly elected body charged with determining the succession of the Supreme Leader, reviewing his performance, and deposing him if deemed necessary; 2) Expediency Council or the Council for the Discernment of Expediency (Majma-ye- Tashkhis-e -Maslahat-e- Nezam) exerts supervisory authority over the executive, judicial, and legislative branches and resolves legislative issues when the Majles and the Council of Guardians disagree and since 1989 has been used to advise national religious leaders on matters of national policy; in 2005 the Council's powers were expanded to act as a supervisory body for the government; 3) Council of Guardians of the Constitution or Council of Guardians or Guardians Council (Shora-ye Negban-e Qanon-e Asasi) determines whether proposed legislation is both constitutional and faithful to Islamic law, vets candidates in popular elections for suitability, and supervises national elections  
**elections:** supreme leader appointed for life by the Assembly of Experts; president elected by popular vote

for a four-year term (eligible for a second term and additional nonconsecutive term); election last held on 14 June 2013 (next presidential election to be held in June 2017)

**election results:** Hasan Fereidun RUHANI 50.7%, Mohammad Baqer QALIBAF 16.6%, Saeed JALILI 11.4%, Mohsen REZAI 10.6%, Ali Akber VELAYATI 6.2%, other 4.5%

#### **Legislative branch:**

unicameral Islamic Consultative Assembly or Majles-e Shura-ye Eslami or Majles (290 seats; members elected by popular vote from single and multimember districts to serve four-year terms)

**elections:** last held on 2 March 2012 (first round); second round held on 4 May 2012; (next election to be held in 2016)

**election results:** percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - NA

#### **Judicial branch:**

**highest court(s):** Supreme Court (consists of a president and NA judges)

**judge selection and term of office:** Supreme Court president appointed by the head of the Supreme Judicial Council in consultation with judges of the Supreme Court; president appointed for a 5-year term; other judge appointments and tenure NA

**subordinate courts:** Penal Courts I and II; Islamic Revolutionary Courts; Courts of Peace; Special Clerical Court (functions outside the judicial system and handles cases involving clerics); military courts

#### **Political parties and leaders:**

**note:** formal political parties are a relatively new phenomenon in Iran and most conservatives still prefer to work through political pressure groups rather than parties; often political parties or coalitions are formed prior to elections and disbanded soon thereafter; a loose pro-reform coalition called the 2nd Khordad Front, which includes political parties as well as less formal groups and organizations, achieved considerable success in elections for the sixth Majles in early 2000; groups in the coalition included the Islamic Iran Participation Front (IIPF), Executives of Construction Party (Kargozaran), Solidarity Party, Islamic Labor Party, Mardom Salari, Mojahedin of the Islamic Revolution Organization (MIRO), and Militant Clerics Society (MCS; Ruhaniyun); the coalition participated in the seventh Majles elections in early 2004 but boycotted them after 80 incumbent reformists were disqualified; following his defeat in the 2005 presidential elections, former MCS Secretary General and sixth Majles Speaker Mehdi KARUBI formed the National Trust Party; a new conservative group, Islamic Iran Developers Coalition (Abadgaran), took a leading position in the new Majles after winning a majority of the seats in February 2004; ahead of the 2008 Majles elections, traditional and hardline conservatives attempted to close ranks under the United Front of Principlists and the Broad Popular Coalition of Principlists; several reformist groups, such as the MIRO and the IIPF, also came together as a reformist coalition in advance of the 2008 Majles elections; the IIPF has repeatedly complained that the overwhelming majority of its candidates were unfairly disqualified from the 2008 elections

#### **Political pressure groups and leaders:**

**groups that generally support the Islamic Republic:**

Ansar-e Hizballah-

Followers of the Line of the Imam and the Leader

Islamic Coalition Party (Motalefeh)

Islamic Engineers Society

Tehran Militant Clergy Association (MCA; Ruhaniyat)

**active pro-reform student group:**

Office of Strengthening Unity (OSU)

**opposition groups:**

Freedom Movement of Iran

Green Path movement [Mehdi KARUBI, Mir-Hosein MUSAVI]

Marz-e Por Gohar

National Front

various ethnic and monarchist organizations

**armed political groups repressed by the government:**

Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (KDPI)

Jundallah

Komala

Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization (MEK or MKO)

People's Fedayeen

People's Free Life Party of Kurdistan (PJAK)

#### **International organization participation:**

CICA, CP, D-8, ECO, FAO, G-15, G-24, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC (national committees), ICRM, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, IFRCs, IHO, ILO, IMF, IMO, IMSO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO, ITSO, ITU, MIGA, NAM, OIC, OPCW, OPEC, PCA, SAARC (observer), SCO (observer), UN, UNAMID, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNITAR, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WFTU (NGOs), WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO (observer)

#### **Diplomatic representation in the US:**



none; note - Iran has an Interests Section in the Pakistani Embassy; address: Iranian Interests Section, Pakistani Embassy, 2209 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20007; telephone: [1] (202) 965-4990; FAX [1] (202) 965-1073

#### **Diplomatic representation from the US:**

none; note - the US Interests Section is located in the Embassy of Switzerland No. 39 Shahid Mousavi (Golestan 5th), Pasdaran Ave., Tehran, Iran; telephone [98] 21 2254 2178/2256 5273; FAX [98] 21 2258 0432

#### **Flag description:**

three equal horizontal bands of green (top), white, and red; the national emblem (a stylized representation of the word Allah in the shape of a tulip, a symbol of martyrdom) in red is centered in the white band; ALLAH AKBAR (God is Great) in white Arabic script is repeated 11 times along the bottom edge of the green band and 11 times along the top edge of the red band; green is the color of Islam and also represents growth, white symbolizes honesty and peace, red stands for bravery and martyrdom

#### **National symbol(s):**

lion

#### **National anthem:**

**name:** "Soroud-e Melli-ye Jomhuri-ye Eslami-ye Iran" (National Anthem of the Islamic Republic of Iran)

 [PLAY ANTHEM](#)

**lyrics/music:** multiple authors/Hassan RIAHI

**note:** adopted 1990

### **Economy :: Iran**

#### **Economy - overview:**

Iran's economy is marked by statist policies and an inefficient state sector, which create major distortions throughout the system, and reliance on oil, which provides a large share of government revenues. Price controls, subsidies, and other rigidities weigh down the economy, undermining the potential for private-sector-led growth. Private sector activity is typically limited to small-scale workshops, farming, some manufacturing, and services. Significant informal market activity flourishes and corruption is widespread. Tehran since the early 1990s has recognized the need to reduce these inefficiencies, and in December 2010 the Majles passed President Mahmud AHMADI-NEJAD's Targeted Subsidies Law (TSL) to reduce state subsidies on food and energy. This was the most extensive economic reform since the government implemented gasoline rationing in 2007. Over a five-year period the legislation sought to phase out subsidies that previously cost Tehran \$60-\$100 billion annually and mostly benefited Iran's upper and middle classes. Cash payouts of \$45 per person to more than 90% of Iranian households mitigated initial widespread resistance to the TSL program. However, inflation in 2012 reached its highest level in four years, eroding the value of these cash payouts and motivating the Majles to halt planned price increases for the second half of 2012 through at least March 2013. New fiscal and monetary constraints on Tehran, following international sanctions in January against Iran's Central Bank and oil exports, significantly reduced Iran's oil revenue, forced government spending cuts, and fueled a 20% currency depreciation. Economic growth turned negative for the first time in two decades. Iran also continues to suffer from double-digit unemployment and underemployment. Underemployment among Iran's educated youth has convinced many to seek jobs overseas, resulting in a significant "brain drain."

#### **GDP (purchasing power parity):**

\$988.4 billion (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 18

\$1.007 trillion (2011 est.)

\$977.7 billion (2010 est.)

**note:** data are in 2012 US dollars

#### **GDP (official exchange rate):**

\$541.2 billion (2012 est.)

#### **GDP - real growth rate:**

-1.9% (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 208

3% (2011 est.)

5.9% (2010 est.)

#### **GDP - per capita (PPP):**

\$13,000 (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 100

\$13,400 (2011 est.)

\$13,200 (2010 est.)

**note:** data are in 2012 US dollars

#### **Gross national saving:**

30.3% of GDP (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 24

36.6% of GDP (2011 est.)

34.7% of GDP (2010 est.)

#### **GDP - composition, by end use:**

**household consumption:** 45.9%

**government consumption:** 13.3%

**investment in fixed capital:** 30.6%

**investment in inventories:** 1.5%

**exports of goods and services:** 25.3%

**imports of goods and services:** -16.6%  
(2012 est.)

#### **GDP - composition, by sector of origin:**

**agriculture:** 9.8%

**industry:** 46.2%

**services:** 44.1% (2012 est.)

#### **Agriculture - products:**

wheat, rice, other grains, sugar beets, sugarcane, fruits, nuts, cotton; dairy products, wool; caviar

#### **Industries:**

petroleum, petrochemicals, fertilizers, caustic soda, textiles, cement and other construction materials, food processing (particularly sugar refining and vegetable oil production), ferrous and non-ferrous metal fabrication, armaments

#### **Industrial production growth rate:**

-5.8% (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 173

#### **Labor force:**

27.05 million

**country comparison to the world:** 23

**note:** shortage of skilled labor (2012 est.)

#### **Labor force - by occupation:**

**agriculture:** 25%

**industry:** 31%

**services:** 45% (June 2007)

#### **Unemployment rate:**

15.5% (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 147

14.1% (2011 est.)

**note:** data are according to the Iranian Government

#### **Population below poverty line:**

18.7% (2007 est.)

#### **Household income or consumption by percentage share:**

**lowest 10%:** 2.6%

**highest 10%:** 29.6% (2005)

#### **Distribution of family income - Gini index:**

44.5 (2006)

**country comparison to the world:** 45

#### **Budget:**

**revenues:** \$79.69 billion

**expenditures:** \$92.63 billion (2012 est.)

#### **Taxes and other revenues:**

14.7% of GDP (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 196

#### **Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):**

-2.4% of GDP (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 95

#### **Public debt:**



18.4% of GDP (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 131

13.9% of GDP (2011 est.)

**note:** includes publicly guaranteed debt

**Fiscal year:**

21 March - 20 March

**Inflation rate (consumer prices):**

19.9% (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 216

20.6% (2011 est.)

**note:** official Iranian estimate

**Central bank discount rate:**

NA%

**Commercial bank prime lending rate:**

11% (31 December 2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 70

11.25% (31 December 2011 est.)

**Stock of narrow money:**

\$42.91 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 50

\$40.06 billion (31 December 2011 est.)

**Stock of broad money:**

\$199.9 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 40

\$183.5 billion (31 December 2011 est.)

**Stock of domestic credit:**

\$77.74 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 59

\$77.6 billion (31 December 2011 est.)

**Market value of publicly traded shares:**

\$107.2 billion (31 December 2011)

**country comparison to the world:** 43

\$86.62 billion (31 December 2010)

\$63.3 billion (31 December 2009)

**Current account balance:**

\$-9.307 billion (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 174

\$59.38 billion (2011 est.)

**Exports:**

\$67.04 billion (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 53

\$144.9 billion (2011 est.)

**Exports - commodities:**

petroleum 80%, chemical and petrochemical products, fruits and nuts, carpets

**Exports - partners:**

China 22.1%, India 11.9%, Turkey 10.6%, South Korea 7.6%, Japan 7.1% (2012)

**Imports:**

\$70.03 billion (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 43

\$77.81 billion (2011 est.)

**Imports - commodities:**

industrial supplies, capital goods, foodstuffs and other consumer goods, technical services

**Imports - partners:**

UAE 33.2%, China 13.8%, Turkey 11.8%, South Korea 7.4% (2012)

**Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:**

\$74.06 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 29

\$84.06 billion (31 December 2011 est.)

#### **Debt - external:**

\$14.84 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 86

\$19.11 billion (31 December 2011 est.)

#### **Stock of direct foreign investment - at home:**

\$37.31 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 57

\$32.44 billion (31 December 2011 est.)

#### **Stock of direct foreign investment - abroad:**

\$3.345 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 67

\$2.915 billion (31 December 2011 est.)

#### **Exchange rates:**

Iranian rials (IRR) per US dollar -

12,175.5 (2012 est.)

10,616.3 (2011 est.)

10,254.18 (2010 est.)

9,864.3 (2009)

9,142.8 (2008)

### **Energy :: Iran**

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#### **Electricity - production:**

220.3 billion kWh (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 20

#### **Electricity - consumption:**

182.7 billion kWh (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 20

#### **Electricity - exports:**

6.707 billion kWh (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 25

#### **Electricity - imports:**

3.015 billion kWh (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 46

#### **Electricity - installed generating capacity:**

62.09 million kW (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 15

#### **Electricity - from fossil fuels:**

86.2% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 86

#### **Electricity - from nuclear fuels:**

0% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 108

#### **Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:**

13.7% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 104

#### **Electricity - from other renewable sources:**

0.2% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 93

#### **Crude oil - production:**

3.589 million bbl/day (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 6

#### **Crude oil - exports:**

2.377 million bbl/day (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 4

**Crude oil - imports:**

15,600 bbl/day (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 72

**Crude oil - proved reserves:**

154.6 billion bbl (1 January 2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 4

**Refined petroleum products - production:**

1.712 million bbl/day (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 13

**Refined petroleum products - consumption:**

1.694 million bbl/day (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 14

**Refined petroleum products - exports:**

330,800 bbl/day (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 22

**Refined petroleum products - imports:**

180,400 bbl/day (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 29

**Natural gas - production:**

151.8 billion cu m (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 4

**Natural gas - consumption:**

144.6 billion cu m (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 5

**Natural gas - exports:**

9.05 billion cu m (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 28

**Natural gas - imports:**

10.59 billion cu m (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 30

**Natural gas - proved reserves:**

33.61 trillion cu m (1 January 2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 2

**Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:**

624.9 million Mt (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 8

## Communications :: Iran

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**Telephones - main lines in use:**

28.76 million (2012)

**country comparison to the world:** 12

**Telephones - mobile cellular:**

58.16 million (2012)

**country comparison to the world:** 24

**Telephone system:**

**general assessment:** currently being modernized and expanded with the goal of not only improving the efficiency and increasing the volume of the urban service but also bringing telephone service to several thousand villages, not presently connected

**domestic:** the addition of new fiber cables and modern switching and exchange systems installed by Iran's state-owned telecom company have improved and expanded the fixed-line network greatly; fixed-line availability has more than doubled to more than 27 million lines since 2000; additionally, mobile-cellular service has increased dramatically serving roughly 56 million subscribers in 2011; combined fixed and mobile-cellular subscribership now exceeds 100 per 100 persons

**international:** country code - 98; submarine fiber-optic cable to UAE with access to Fiber-Optic Link Around the Globe (FLAG); Trans-Asia-Europe (TAE) fiber-optic line runs from Azerbaijan through the northern portion of Iran to Turkmenistan with expansion to Georgia and Azerbaijan; HF radio and

microwave radio relay to Turkey, Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Syria, Kuwait, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan; satellite earth stations - 13 (9 Intelsat and 4 Inmarsat) (2011)

#### **Broadcast media:**

state-run broadcast media with no private, independent broadcasters; Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), the state-run TV broadcaster, operates 5 nationwide channels, a news channel, about 30 provincial channels, and several international channels; about 20 foreign Persian-language TV stations broadcasting on satellite TV are capable of being seen in Iran; satellite dishes are illegal and, while their use had been tolerated, authorities began confiscating satellite dishes following the unrest stemming from the 2009 presidential election; IRIB operates 8 nationwide radio networks, a number of provincial stations, and an external service; most major international broadcasters transmit to Iran (2009)

#### **Internet country code:**

.ir

#### **Internet hosts:**

197,804 (2012)

**country comparison to the world:** 72

#### **Internet users:**

8.214 million (2009)

**country comparison to the world:** 35

### **Transportation :: Iran**

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#### **Airports:**

319 (2013)

**country comparison to the world:** 22

#### **Airports - with paved runways:**

**total:** 140

**over 3,047 m:** 42

**2,438 to 3,047 m:** 29

**1,524 to 2,437 m:** 26

**914 to 1,523 m:** 36

**under 914 m:** 7 (2013)

#### **Airports - with unpaved runways:**

**total:** 179

**over 3,047 m:** 1

**2,438 to 3,047 m:** 2

**1,524 to 2,437 m:** 9

**914 to 1,523 m:** 135

**under 914 m:**

32 (2013)

#### **Heliports:**

26 (2013)

#### **Pipelines:**

condensate 7 km; condensate/gas 973 km; gas 20,794 km; liquid petroleum gas 570 km; oil 8,625 km; refined products 7,937 km (2013)

#### **Railways:**

**total:** 8,442 km

**country comparison to the world:** 24

**broad gauge:** 94 km 1.676-m gauge

**standard gauge:** 8,348 km 1.435-m gauge (148 km electrified) (2008)

#### **Roadways:**

**total:** 198,866 km

**country comparison to the world:** 26

**paved:** 160,366 km (includes 1,948 km of expressways)

**unpaved:** 38,500 km (2010)

#### **Waterways:**

850 km (on Karun River; some navigation on Lake Urmia) (2012)

**country comparison to the world:** 70

#### **Merchant marine:**

**total:** 76

**country comparison to the world:** 60

**by type:** bulk carrier 8, cargo 51, chemical tanker 3, container 4, liquefied gas 1, passenger/cargo 3, petroleum tanker 2, refrigerated cargo 2, roll on/roll off 2

**foreign-owned:** 2 (UAE 2)

**registered in other countries:** 71 (Barbados 5, Cyprus 10, Hong Kong 3, Malta 48, Panama 5) (2010)

#### **Ports and terminals:**

Bandar-e Asaluyeh, Bandar Abbas, Bandar Emam Khomeyni

### **Military :: Iran**

#### **Military branches:**

Islamic Republic of Iran Regular Forces (Artesh): Ground Forces, Navy, Air Force (IRIAF), Khatemolaniah Air Defense Headquarters; Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (Sepah-e Pasdaran-e Enqelab-e Eslami, IRGC): Ground Resistance Forces, Navy, Aerospace Force, Quds Force (special operations); Law Enforcement Forces (2011)

#### **Military service age and obligation:**

18 years of age for compulsory military service; 16 years of age for volunteers; 17 years of age for Law Enforcement Forces; 15 years of age for Basij Forces (Popular Mobilization Army); conscript military service obligation is 18 months; women exempt from military service (2012)

#### **Manpower available for military service:**

**males age 16-49:** 23,619,215

**females age 16-49:** 22,628,341 (2010 est.)

#### **Manpower fit for military service:**

**males age 16-49:** 20,149,222

**females age 16-49:** 19,417,275 (2010 est.)

#### **Manpower reaching militarily significant age annually:**

**male:** 715,111

**female:** 677,372 (2010 est.)

#### **Military expenditures:**

2.5% of GDP (2006)

**country comparison to the world:** 56

### **Transnational Issues :: Iran**

#### **Disputes - international:**

Iran protests Afghanistan's limiting flow of dammed Helmand River tributaries during drought; Iraq's lack of a maritime boundary with Iran prompts jurisdiction disputes beyond the mouth of the Shatt al Arab in the Persian Gulf; Iran and UAE dispute Tunb Islands and Abu Musa Island, which are occupied by Iran; Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Russia ratified Caspian seabed delimitation treaties based on equidistance, while Iran continues to insist on a one-fifth slice of the sea; Afghan and Iranian commissioners have discussed boundary monument densification and resurvey

#### **Refugees and internally displaced persons:**

**refugees (country of origin):** 2.4 million (1 million registered, 1.4 million undocumented) (Afghanistan); 42,500 (Iraq) (2013)

#### **Trafficking in persons:**

**current situation:** Iran is a presumed source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to sex trafficking and forced labor; Iranian and Afghan boys and girls are forced into prostitution domestically; Iranian women are subjected to sex trafficking in Iran, Pakistan, the Persian Gulf, and Europe; Azerbaijani women and children are also sexually exploited in Iran; Afghan migrants and refugees and Pakistani men and women are subjected to conditions of forced labor in Iran; NGO reports indicate that criminal organizations play a significant role in human trafficking in Iran

**tier rating:** Tier 3 - Iran does not comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, and is not making significant efforts to do so; the government does not share information on its anti-trafficking efforts, making it difficult to assess the country's human trafficking problem or the government's attempts to curb it; NGOs report that laws against human trafficking, forced labor, and debt bondage remain unenforced because of a lack of political will and widespread political corruption; there is no evidence that the government has a process to identify trafficking victims, refers victims to protective services, or has made efforts to prevent human trafficking (2013)

#### **Illicit drugs:**

despite substantial interdiction efforts and considerable control measures along the border with Afghanistan, Iran remains one of the primary transshipment routes for Southwest Asian heroin to Europe; suffers one of the highest opiate addiction rates in the world, and has an increasing problem with synthetic drugs; lacks anti-money laundering laws; has reached out to neighboring countries to share counter-drug intelligence