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2.1. The Iranian authorities

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: January 2025

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI reports: Country Focus 2024, 1; COI Human Rights, 1.1, 3.2. Country Guidance should not be referred to as source of COI.

Iran is an Islamic Republic in which Shia Muslim clerics, Shia Muslim belief and a Persian-dominated central government maintain control over every aspect of public life. Any threat against the State or its highest authority, the Supreme leader, is considered as an 'enmity against God' and punishable by death.

The Iranian armed forces consist of:

- the army (*artesh*) tasked to secure territorial integrity

- the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) mandated to preserve the Islamic Republic, guarding the Islamic Revolution and its achievements and backed by the *Basij* to maintain order;

- the Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (*farmandehi-ye entezami-ye jomhuri-ye eslami-ye iran* - FARAJA) which includes the police forces, the anti-riot police, the Counter-Terror Special Forces (*niroo-ye vizhe pasdar-e Velayat* – NOPO), and the morality police whose tasks include enforcing and monitoring compliance with the *hijab* rules in public.

Intelligence agencies are also part of the Iranian and armed forces. They conduct domestic surveillance, including by the *herasat* offices in universities and public insitutions, and foreign surveillance, the latter with agents based in Iranian ebassies across Europe. They closely monitor social media platforms, collect information online, and remove critical content against the Islamic Republic for example by shutting down Instagram accounts. Authorities have the ability to track activities such as registering for a phone SIM card, vehicle registration, purchasing a phone, or booking a flight. They conduct interrogations and engage in wiretapping. They monitor and target internal political rivals, and carry-out activities abroad also by hiring criminal groups, arresting exiled dissidents, bringing them back to Iran and executing them.

The Iranian authorities have committed a wide range of human rights violations against different categories of individuals. For example, they have engaged in harassment, arbitrary arrest,

detention, ill-treatment, and torture. Affected groups include Members and sympathisers of opposition parties and movements (perceived as) critical of the Iranian authorities, as well as Journalists and other media workers (perceived as) critical of the Iranian authorities, Protesters, Human rights defenders, activists, and lawyers, with Women and girls often facing harsher treatment. Furthermore, individuals from Ethnic minorities and Religious minorities have faced arrests, prosecution, and harassment, including confiscation of personal belongings and properties.

The EU sanctioned several individuals and entities as perpetrators of serious human rights violations including the involvement in Mahsa Amini's death and the violent suppression of protests in Iran, the broadcasting of forced confessions, and arbitrary arrests over online criticism.

For further information on human rights violations committed by the Iranian authorities and related actors, and their relevance as potential exclusion grounds, see Exclusion.

See other topics concerning actors of persecution or serious harm:

- *2.1. The Iranian authorities*
- 2.2. Other actors

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