Human Rights Activists (in Iran)

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Annual Statistical Report of Human Rights Conditions in Iran
Department of Statistics and Publications

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONITORING</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETHNIC MINORITIES</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELIGIOUS MINORITIES</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRADE UNIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACADEMIA/ RIGHT TO EDUCATION</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIGHT TO LIFE (DEATH PENALTY)</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CULTURAL RIGHTS</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKERS’ RIGHTS</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHILDREN’S RIGHTS</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOMEN’S RIGHTS</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRISONERS’ RIGHTS</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECURITY FORCES’ VIOLENCE AND CITIZENS’ SAFETY</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEATH OF CIVILIANS</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VICTIMS OF LANDMINES AND EXPLOSIONS</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLOGGINGS</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERVENTION IN PERSONAL AFFAIRS OF CIVILIANS</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENTENCES</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARRESTS</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEXUAL AND GENDER MINORITIES</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This leaflet contains the Annual Analytical and Statistical Report on Human Rights in Iran for the year 2021. The report, prepared by the Department of Statistics and Publications of Human Rights Activists in Iran (HRA), is the result of daily effort on the part of the organization and its members, and as part of a daily statistic and census project that started in 2009 by this organization.

This annual report on human rights violations in Iran collects, analyzes, and documents 5683 reports concerning human rights, gathered from various news sources during 2021 [January 1st to December 20th]. 38% of reports analyzed came from sources gathered and reported by Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA), while 38% came from official Iranian government sources or sources close to the government. 24% of reports came from other human rights news agencies.

The following 53-pages include statistical overviews and related charts regarding women’s rights, children’s rights, prisoners’ rights, etc. Despite the 1.5% increase in reports of human rights violations in provinces other than Tehran from last year's Annual Report, data from this year indicates that smaller cities lack adequate reporting and monitoring of human rights.

This report is the result the work of courageous human rights activists in Iran who pay a very high cost for as they strive to enact their humanitarian beliefs. However, for obvious reasons (i.e. existing governmental limitations, bans on the free exchange of information and government interference with the existence of human rights organizations in the country), this report by no means is free of errors and cannot solely reflect the actual status of human rights in Iran. Having said that, it should be emphasized that this report is considered one of the most accurate, comprehensive, and authentic reports on human rights conditions in Iran. It serves as a very informative resource for human rights activists and organizations working on Iran who seek to better understand the challenges and opportunities that they may face.

Human Rights Activists (in Iran)
Department of Statistics and Publications
December 2021
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The following map illustrates the number of reports per province made by human rights organizations and news agencies. This is a direct reflection of each province’s current capacity for civil rights (2021).
Number of reports by month

The highest number of reports were published in December, while the lowest number of reports published occurred in April.

38% of reports analyzed came from sources gathered and reported by Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA), while 38% came from official Iranian government sources or sources close to the government. 24% of reports came from other human rights news agencies.
In 2021, at least 2,300 protest rallies were held across 42 provinces. Of these, 1,261 were union rallies, 618 were workers' rallies, 301 were rallies related to economic hardship, 77 were rallies against suppression of freedom of expression, and 43 were student rallies. In addition to the rallies, there were also 339 labor strikes and 192 union strikes.
As indicated in the distribution map, there exists a major discrepancy between the capital Tehran, and other parts of the country in terms of the number of published reports. This is while the census of 2016 reported a population of 13,267,637 in Tehran, compared to a population of 66,658,633 in the rest of the country.

Figure 2. A comparison between the population of Tehran and other regions in Iran.

Figure 3. A comparison between reporting capacities in Tehran compared with the rest of the country (2021).
Table 1. The following table represents the provinces included in the 2021 Annual Report of Human Rights in Iran and the respective number of reports filed from the province. The absence of a province on the list does not indicate the absence of human rights violations in the corresponding province overall. Rather, it reflects the reality that some reports do not concern a specific province but apply to the whole country.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Provinces Name</th>
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<th>changes from the previous year</th>
<th>Provinces Name</th>
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<td>Overall*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The following pie chart illustrates the percentages of submitted reports based on the province. Figure 4. Pie chart of volume of submitted reports based on the province (2021)
To study categories of human rights violations in Iran, it is important to initially compare the categories based on the number of reports made in each category in the past year.

Figure 5. Percentile of the number of reports made in 2021, based on the Legal Category.
In the field of violations of rights for national and ethnic minorities, a total of 390 reports registered by the Department of Statistics and Publication of Human Rights Activists in Iran (HRA) in 2021. According to these reports, at least 445 people were arrested. It should be noted that the charges against 409 of these detainees remain unknown.

A total of 61 people were sentenced to 1348 months in prison, which breaks down to 1171 months of imprisonment and 177 months of suspended imprisonment. A total of 103 individuals were summoned by the security and judicial institutions.

Compared to the previous year there has been a 55% increase in the arrest of ethnic minorities and a 21% decrease in prison sentences.

As the following bar graph illustrates, the highest number of violations occurred in the month of January while the lowest occurred in the month of December.

Figure 6. The number of reports on the violation of the rights of ethnic minorities by month (2021).
The following graph illustrates the number of violations of human rights in the category of national-ethnic minorities in 2021 compared to 2020.

Figure 7. The number of violations of ethnic minorities’ rights by month in 2021 compared to 2020.
In this category, 144 reports have been registered by the Department of Statistics in 2021. These reports include 57 arrests, 11 cases where religious minorities were prevented from economic activities, 39 summons by judicial and security institutions, 24 cases of deprivation from education, and 60 cases of police home raids. Judicial authorities have registered 2 cases of desecration, 4 cases of imprisonment, 5 issuances of travel bans (which violate freedom of movement,) and 6 cases of individuals brought to trial on the basis of religious belief. 81 members religious minorities were sentenced by judicial institutions to a total of 4174 months of imprisonment. In addition, 4 people were fined one hundred and eighty million tomans (42840 USD), 1 person was sentenced to 74 lashes, and 10 people were deprived of social rights. The number of citizens arrested in the category of religious minorities has decreased by 25% in 2021 compared to 2020, and the prison sentences issued by the judiciary have decreased by 17%.

Figure 8. Violation of religious minorities’ rights based on the number of arrestees reported by month (2021).
Figure 9. Violation of religious minorities’ rights base on the number of convicted individuals by month (2021).

The highest number of violations have been reported in April, while the lowest occurred in December.

Figure 10. The number of reports on cases of violation of religious minorities’ rights by month (2021).
The following graph illustrates the number of violations of human rights in the category of religious minorities in 2021 compared to 2020.

Figure 11. The number of violations of religious minorities’ rights per month in 2021 compared to 2020.
71.77% of human rights reports regarding violations against religious minorities related to violations against Baha’is, 14.29% to Christians, 7.48% to Sunnis 2.04% to Yarsans 1.02% to Dervishes, 0.34% to Jews, and 3.06% to “Others”. Note that reports labeled as “Other” are those that did not belong to a specific group of religious minorities.

Figure 12. Pie chart based on the number of reports per religious minorities (2021).
FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

674 reports of violations against freedom of thought and expression have been registered by the Department of Statistics this year. These violations included 1043 individual arrests, 256 summons to judiciary and security authorities, 2 reports of publications banned, and 21 convictions for publications.

111 cases were tried by judicial authorities. 17 cases involved the issuance of travel bans, 64 involved execution of prison sentences, 34 involved house searches, 17 involved internet disruption, 2 involved telecommunication disruptions, 39 involved beatings, 44 involved harassment in the form of threats and intimidation, 77 involved assembly, and 26 involved preventing assembly.

In 2021, 215 arrestees were sentenced to a total of 10140 months of imprisonment. This breaks down to 9541 months in prison and 599 months of suspended prison terms.

Additionally, 24 people were fined a total of 603,575,000 tomans (143,650.85 USD), 16 people were sentenced to a total 998 lashes, and there were 22 cases of deprivation from civil rights.

Compared to 2020, reports regarding violations of freedom of expression have increased by 12%, sentences issued by the judiciary have decreased by 48% based on the number of people tried, and prison sentences decreased by 54%.

Below are charts highlighting violations of the right to freedom of expression.

Figure 13. The number of arrests in the category of violation of the right to freedom of expression by month (2021).
Figure 14. The number of convictions that violate the right to freedom of expression by month (2021).

Figure 15 illustrates that the highest number of violations in this category occurred in July and the lowest in December.

Figure 15. Number of reports in the category of violation of the right to freedom of expression by month (2021).
The following graph illustrates the number of violations of human rights in the category of freedom of expression in 2021 compared to 2020.

Figure 16. Monthly comparison of violations of freedom of expression in 2021 and 2020.
1173 reports were registered by the Department of Statistics and Publications related to the rights of trade unions and other associations. 26 members of trade unions were arrested, and 2 individuals were sentenced to a total of 67 months in prison. There were 8 summons to judicial and security institutions, and 23 cases where facilities were closed.

Also reported were instances were 3 people were fined a total 23,500,000 tomans (5593 USD), 3 people received a total of 74 lashes, as well as 2 cases of suicide, 4 cases of houses searched and 5 cases of harassment in the form of beatings. 4 cases were tried by judicial authorities, 405 cases were dismissed, with 147 months of deferral.

In 2021, at least 1261 protests and 192 union strikes were held. There were 4 reported instances of suppression of assembly. Most of these protests were related to salary/wage demands from corporations, bad economic conditions, and lack of proper management of corporations.

It should be noted that due to the compulsory military service for men in Iran and its classification as a job in the annual budget of the country, this group was also examined. In the past year, at least 4 soldiers committed suicide. Various reasons for this are cited, including conscription itself, the high pressure military environment, forced labor, and denial of human dignity.

In reports related to trade unions and associations there has been a 44% decrease in the number of arrests and an 87% decrease in sentences issued compared to the previous year.

The following graph illustrates that the highest number of violations occurred in the month of December while the lowest is in March.
Figure 16. The number of reports in the category of violation of the rights of trade unions and associations by month (2021).

Figure 17. A comparison of the number of violations of trade unions and associations rights per month for 2021 compared with the previous year (2020).
The Department of Statistics and Publication of Human Rights Activists in Iran registered 56 reports related to violations of academic rights in 2021. 3 students were arrested, and as, as mentioned in the religious rights section of this report, 24 students were prevented from continuing their education because of their religion.

In the category of academia and the right to education, there has been a 50% decrease in the number of arrests. Per our reports, 7 students were sentenced to 160 months in prison and 74 lashes.

Monthly comparisons of the violation of academic rights based on the number of reports, as the following graph illustrates, reveals the highest number of violations occurred in the month of September while the lowest instance is observed in the month of March.

Figure 18. A comparative analysis of the violation of academic rights based on the number of cases per Month (2021).
The following graph illustrates the number of violations of human rights in the category of academic rights in 2021 compared to 2020.

Figure 19. A comparison of the number of violations of academic rights per month in 2021 compared with the previous year (2020).
288 reports related to the death penalty were have been registered by the Department of Statistics and Publication of Human Rights Activists Association in Iran in 2021. This included 85 death sentences and 299 executions. Based on the announced identifications of some of the individuals executed, 259 were male and 15 were female.

In addition, 4 juvenile offenders were executed in 2021, meaning they were under the age of 18 at the time they committed the crime.

According to these reports, 51% of the executions were based on murder charges, while 40% were related to drug-related charges. 4% of individuals executed were charged with “waging war against God” and 3% were charged with rape. For 2% of executions the charges were unknown.

Figure 20. A comparative analysis of death sentences based on the number of individuals per month (2021).

This chart is a monthly comparison of the violation of the right to life based on the number of reports we received. According to the chart, the highest number of violations occurred in July while the lowest number occurred in June.
Figure 21. Monthly comparison of the number of violations of the right to life based on the number of death sentence cases (2021).

The following graph illustrates violations of human rights through the death penalty in 2021 compared to 2020.

Figure 22. Death sentences per month in 2021 compared to its corresponding months in 2020.
The following pie chart illustrates the number of death sentences issued and carried out across the country in 2021. The majority of death sentences came from murder charges (51%), followed by drug charges (40%).

Figure 23. Capital punishment sentences issued in 2021 based on the type of charges.
The following pie chart illustrates the death sentences in Iranian provinces with the province of Razavi Khorasan province with 13.71% of all the cases, followed by Alborz ranking with 11.71% of all the death sentences issued, that is due to its two populated and important prisons.

Figure 24. The ratio of death sentences issued per province (2021).
Figure 25 illustrates the number of death sentences in different prisons in Iran. Rajai Shahr prison and Zahedan Prison held the highest number of death sentences.

Figure 25. The ratio of death sentences carried out per prison (2021).
Of those executed in 2021, 5% were female, and 87% were male, while the gender of the other 8% is unknown.

Figure 26. Percentage of executed individuals based on gender (2021).

The following diagram is directly related to the secret executions of prisoners. These executions are reported by independent sources and human rights associations, indicating that 88% of executions are carried out in secret or without any public notice.

Figure 27. Secret executions compared to announced executions (2021).

Executions carried out in 2021 compared to 2020 increased by 26%. The number of death sentences issued decreased by 10%.
23 reports were registered by the Department of Statistics and Publication of Human Rights Activists Association in Iran related to violations of cultural rights in 2021. This included reports of 6 arrests, as well as the report that 2 individuals were sentenced to 84 months of imprisonment.

7 individuals were summoned to judicial and security organizations. 1 license was revoked and 1 person was banned from working.

There were also 4 trials by judicial authorities, 1 house search, 4 cases of obstruction and interference with publications, and 1 case of the destruction of a historical site.

In this category, arrests have decreased by 77% compared to the previous year.

In a monthly comparison, the highest number of violations were reported in May, while the lowest were reported in April, October, and December.

Figure 28. Violation of cultural rights based on the number of cases per month (2021).
The following graph illustrates the number of violations of cultural rights in 2021 compared to 2020.

Figure 29. Violations of cultural rights per month in 2021 compared with the previous year.
The Department of Statistics of Human Rights Activists Association in Iran registered 1474 reports of violations of workers’ rights in 2021. This included 64 arrests. 9 workers activists or workers were sentenced to 276 months in prison, 124 lashes and 23,000,000 tomans (5474 USD) in fines. 42 people were summoned to judicial and security organizations.

The Department also registered 7 cases of trials by judicial authorities, 10 cases of suicide, 7 cases of self-immolation, 9 cases of beatings, 3 cases of house searches, 2 cases of curfew imposition, and 2 cases of imprisonment.

During 2021, a total of 1247 months of overdue payment of salaries to workers was reported. 2073 workers were laid off or fired, 3332 people reported unemployment, 6404884 lacked work insurance, 5434 workers were waiting for work-related decisions. There were also a reported 68 factory closures.

In addition, 616 people have lost their lives in work-related accidents, and 5584 workers have been injured while at work. On a global scale amongst other counties, Iran ranks 102nd in work safety.

In a monthly comparison of workers’ rights violations in 2021, the highest number of violations happened May, with the lowest in December.
Figure 30. A monthly comparative analysis of the violation of workers’ rights based on the number of cases per month (2021).

The following graph illustrates the number of violations of human rights in the category of workers’ rights in 2021 in comparison with 2020.

Figure 31. Violations of workers’ rights on a monthly bases in 2021 compared with the previous year.
Figure 32. Classification of work-related accidents

- Factories: 26%
- Construction: 24%
- Fires: 19%
- Farming: 8%
- Falling in wells: 8%
- Electrocution: 5%
- Mines: 5%
- Accidents: 5%

Total: 100%
In 2021, there were at least 618 worker protests, with 9 reported instances of suppression in this regard, and 339 workers strike took place. The majority of these protests were regarding wages. Based on these reports the arrest of workers has increased by 53% compared to 2020.
A total of 186 reports of violations of children’s rights in 2021 were registered by the Department of Statistics. However, it should be mentioned because of secrecy regarding these incidents, leading to underreporting, there is no accurate statistic in this field. Reports included at least 2117 cases of child abuse, 15 cases of rape and sexual abuse of children, 11 murders of children, 1 self-immolation, 54 cases of child suicide, 1 case of honor killing, 2 cases of acid attacks, 29 cases of sale and trafficking of children and 1448 cases of child abuse in economic activity. In addition, there were more than 9000 instances of child marriage.

3 million students are deprived of the right to education.

Many students in Iran have been denied access to education due to lack of access to e-learning facilities, as well as child marriages, poverty, cultural issues.

As mentioned in the section on the death penalty, at least 4 minors were executed for various offenses during 2021.

During the nation-wide protests, 25 children were arrested.

In monthly comparison in this category, the highest number of violations were reported in January and the lowest number in August.

Figure 33. A monthly comparative analysis of the violation of children’s rights based on the number of cases per month.
The following graph illustrates the number of violations of human rights in the category of children’s rights in 2021 in comparison with 2020.

Figure 34. Violations of children’s rights per month compared with the previous year (2021, 2020).
The Department of Statistics Registered 90 reports of violations of women’s rights in 2021. At least 43 women reported physical and sexual abuse. There were also 24 cases of honor-killing, 8 self-immolations, 3 cases of acid attacks, and 4 cases where women’s rights activists were summoned to judicial and security organizations. In addition, there were 20,187 cases of domestic abuse against women and 13 murders.

Based on this report, 7 women have been detained for reasons related to women’s rights. At least 4 women’s rights activists were sentenced to 282 months in prison.

As the following bar graph illustrates, based on the number of reports per month, the highest number of reports were in November and the lowest in April and May.

Figure 35. A comparative analysis of the violation of women’s rights based on the number of cases per month.
The following graph illustrates the number of violations of human rights in the category of women’s rights in 2021 compared to 2020.

Figure 36. Violations of women’s rights per month in 2021 compared to the previous year.
575 reports of violations of prisoner’s rights were registered in 2021. 26 of these reports were of physical assault of prisoners, 232 of deprivation of medical care, 136 of illegal transfer to solitary confinement, 131 of attempted hunger strikes, 77 of forced transportation or exile, 246 of threats against prisoners, 26 of banning prisoners from having visitors, 23 of torture, 20 of deaths by diseases. 5 arrestees were killed by prison authorities and 5 prisoners committed suicide. There were also 68 cases where prisoners lacked lawyers, 495 reports of prisoners being held in unsuitable circumstances, and 1 case of self-immolation.

In this category, there have also been 272 cases of prisoners kept in an unsure state regarding their sentence and 172 cases of keeping prisoner in conditions of indecision.

As the following bar graph illustrates, the highest number of reports of violations of prisoner’s rights occurred in June and September and lowest in November.

Figure 37. A monthly comparative analysis of the violation of prisoners’ rights based on the number of cases per month.
The following graph illustrates the number of violations of prisoners’ rights in 2021 in comparison with 2020.

Figure 38- violations of prisoners’ rights per month in 2021 compared with the previous year.
SECURITY FORCES' VIOLENCE AND CITIZENS' SAFETY

Death of civilians

This section is dedicated to the killing or injury of civilians by police or military institutions. In 2021, a total of 242 people were shot by military forces. 94 of the victims lost their life. This includes 23 kolbar, 31 fuel carriers and 40 civilians. 148 people were injured by military fire, including 81 kolbar, 51 civilians, and 16 fuel carriers.

Additionally, 28 kolbars were affected by climate and geographic factors such as freezing and falling from heights. 16 of these kolbars were injured and 12 were killed.

Victims of landmines and explosions

The landmines left from the war threaten the lives of civilians living in border cities each year. The Iranian government continues to manufacture and plant anti-personnel mines against international agreements, arguing that the use of these type of landmines is the only effective way to keep its vast borders safe.

Based on reports, at least 15 civilians in the past year have lost their lives to landmines in border areas, while 30 other civilians have been injured.

Floggings

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) has explicitly banned the use of inhuman or degrading punishments such as flogging. However, based on the reports gathered in
2021, flogging sentences were carried out for at least 3 accused. These accused were sentenced to a total of 214 floggings.

It should be noted that the judiciary issued a total of 6982 flogging sentences in the past year.

**Intervention in personal affairs of civilians**

In 2021, at least 68 civilians were arrested for attending or hosting personal gatherings and parties. This number is based on 5 official reports in the country.

In 2021, at least 301 groups of civilians –mostly consisting of those who have lost money due to poor economic conditions, or those whose rights have been violated– have organized protests. These protests took place in 24 provinces. The provinces with the most protests were Tehran, Eastern Azerbaijan, Khuzestan, and Khorasan Razavi.

As the following bar graph illustrates, the highest number of reports related to violence from security forces and citizens' safety occurred in January and the lowest in August.

Figure 39. A monthly comparative analysis of the of Security forces' violence and citizens' safety rights based on the number of cases per month
The following graph illustrates the number of Military violence in 2021 in comparison with 2020.

Figure 40. of Military violences’ per month in 2021 compared with the previous year.
The judiciary of the Iranian government, including both in initial trial and appeal, issued 16531 months of imprisonment in 2021. These reports included 1348 months of imprisonment for ethnic minorities, 4174 months of imprisonment for religious minorities, 10140 months of imprisonment related to freedom of expression, 67 months of imprisonment related to union activity, 276 months of imprisonment for workers, 84 months of imprisonment related to cultural rights, 282 months of imprisonment in women’ rights category, and 160 months of imprisonment for students.

These statistics only include the court sentences that indicated detailed information or characteristics of the verdicts.

As the following bar graph illustrates, the highest number of reports was in January and the lowest in September.

Figure 41. A monthly comparative analysis of the number of convicted citizens by month.
Courts sentenced defendants to a total of 787,875,000 tomanṣ (187,514.25 USD) in fines and 2,900 lashes in 2021.

In 2021, the number of convictions of citizens and activists decreased by 44%. Moreover, the convictions in the following categories decreased: Religious Minorities by 4%, Ethnic Minorities by 25%, Freedom of Expression by 54%, Unions by 87%, and Cultural Rights by 67%. The following categories saw an increase in convictions: Workers by 50%, Women’s Rights by 56%, and Students by 62%.

Figure 42. A monthly comparative analysis between 2021 and 2020 of the number of convicted citizens based on the number of cases.
ARRESTS

In 2021, security forces arrested 1676 individuals due to political or civil rights-related activities. The statistical analysis exhibited 26 case of arrest in the trade union category, 445 arrests in the category of ethnic minorities, 57 arrests in the category of religious minorities, 1043 arrests in the category of freedom of expression, 25 arrests related to children’s rights, 3 arrests of students related to the right to education, 6 arrests in the field of cultural rights, and 64 arrests in the category of workers’ rights.

6 women were prosecuted for their activities, including the promotion of their desired lifestyle. 5 of these women were arrested for modeling, and 1 for activism in this area.

As the following bar graph illustrates, based on the number of reports per month, the highest number of reports in this category fell in November and the lowest in December.

Figure 43. A monthly comparative analysis of the number of arrests by month.
In 2021, the number of arrests increased by 14% in total. Broken into categories, the number of arrests increased in the Ethnic Minority category by 55%, Culture decreased by 77%, Religious minorities decreased by 25%, Unions decreased by 44%. Students decreased by 50%, Workers’ Rights increased by 53%, and Freedom of Expression increased by 12%.

Figure 44. The number of arrests per month in 2021 and 2020.
The rights of sexual and gender minorities have previously been analyzed in the Annual Report of Human Rights Activists in Iran as a subset of other categories. The main reason for this was that the small handful of reports in the area did not allow analysis.

Creating an independent categorization, even with a small number of reports, is in fact an attempt to increase surveillance of this group.

The rights of sexual and gender minorities in the country are systematically violated in various ways. The criminalization of homosexuality and the non-recognition of transgender identity before gender reassignment procedures are two of many systematic violations that can seen codified into domestic law.

There are many obstacles in reporting on this topic, including open hatred against members of the community, cultural taboos, legal barriers, and the weakness of Iranian civil rights organizations in monitoring and reporting violations. The government's policy in dealing with sexual minority issues in Iran exacerbates the vulnerability of these groups.

Of the few reports published in this area, it should be noted that HRANA reported 15 prisoners with uncertain judicial status accused of having homosexual relationships in Wards 2 and 10 of Rajai Shahr Prison in Karaj.

The detention of these citizens was directly related to having a homosexual relationship.

In some cases, security and law enforcement agencies acknowledge the detention and harassment of members of this community. For example, in June of this year, Reza Molouki, head of the FATA police in the east of Tehran Province announced the identification and arrest of a citizen on charges of “corruption on earth”, calling his relationship with a homosexual illegitimate.

Trans citizens face legal problems in addition to cultural issues in the process of changing their identity documents or seeking exemption from conscription. In another report, a citizen living in Tehran, after obtaining a military exemption due to his gender identity, lost his employment and was unable to renew his license as an expert of the Food and Drug Administration.

In 2019, the World Health Organization updated its guidelines on disorders related to sexuality and gender identity in the ICD-11. In doing so, transgender identity was no longer recognized as a “disorder” by the WHO.