



**Capital:** Tehran  
**Languages:** Farsi (Persian)  
**Religion:** Shia Muslim  
**Population:** 76,923,300  
**Refugees:** 72,774  
**Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):** 0

Iran is a Middle Eastern country bordering the nations of Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Turkmenistan and Turkey, as well as with the Persian Gulf and Caspian Sea. Its diverse terrain includes vast plains, rugged mountains and deserts.

Formerly called Persia, Iran has a rich, centuries-long history beginning with ancient empires and monarchies and currently maintains itself as a regional power concerning international security and economic resources. The last monarchy, ruled by the Shah of Iran Reza Pahlavi, was deposed in 1979 and a strict Islamic theocracy was established.

Many refugees crossed the border into Turkey as the Iranian population began to suffer human rights violations under the newly established regime. False imprisonment, loss of freedom of speech and other civil rights, religious persecution, torture and other forms of violence were experienced by those opposing the government or not complying with Islamic law. Iranians practicing the Bahai faith were targeted for persecution and are denied access to higher education and employment.

Iranian children entering the United States public school systems will have had the advantage of experiencing a formalized school setting and understanding modern amenities having come from an industrialized country. Since they have school experience, attention to ESL will be the main priority as well as other elements of acculturation.