COI QUERY

Country of Origin	**IRAN**
Title	**Treatment of individuals affiliated with or perceived to be affiliated with the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq (MEK) by the government**
Reference period	January 2023 to 24 September 2025
Topic(s)	1. Information on the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq (MEK) 2. Treatment by the government
Date of completion	25 September 2025
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COI QUERY RESPONSE – Iran

Treatment of individuals affiliated with or perceived to be affiliated with the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq (MEK) by the government

1. Information on the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq (MEK)

The People's Mujahedin of Iran (PMOI,[1] also called: Mujahedeen-e Khalq or MEK/MKO) is a political dissident group[2] operating outside Iran.[3] The MEK is affiliated with the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), an organization considered the 'political wing' of the MEK,[4] which presents itself as an alternative Iranian 'parliament in exile'.[5] Both the NCRI and the MEK are led by Maryam Rajavi.[6] Further, the organizations call for regime change in Iran.[7] According to Reuters, in June 2025, Rajavi stated that the groups sought a 'democratic, non-nuclear republic, with the separation of religion and state, gender equality and also autonomy for Iran's nationalities'.[8]

The MEK began as a leftist revolutionary group opposing the Shah of Iran in the years leading up to the 1979 Islamic Revolution.[9] After falling out with the new regime, the group launched an armed rebellion against the Islamic Republic, conducting attacks on Iran during the Iran-Iraq War, before relocating to Albania in the mid-2010s due to pressure from Iraqi authorities.[10] Many MEK members are based in Albania,[11] whilst the NCRI is based in Paris, France.[12] According to sources, 3 000 Iranian exiled dissidents from the MEK[13] were based in Ashraf-3 camp, 30 kilometers west of Albania's capital, Tirana.[14]

[1] France24, Two Iranian dissidents at 'imminent risk' of execution: activists, 27 January 2025, url
[2] Al Jazeera, Why was this Iran dissident group raided in Europe?, 21 June 2023, url
[3] Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs: General Country of Origin Information Report on Iran, September 2023, url, p. 37
[4] France24, Two Iranian dissidents at 'imminent risk' of execution: activists, 27 January 2025, url; Al Monitor, Exiled MEK group condemns execution of two members in Iran, 27 July 2025, url
[5] Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs: General Country of Origin Information Report on Iran, September 2023, url, p. 37
[6] Reuters, Dissident leader abroad urges Iranians to bring down Khamenei, 24 June 2025, url; Reuters, Opposition groups rally in France demanding EU list Iran's Guards as terrorist group, 12 February 2023, url; Iran International, Ex-Vice President Pence Visits Controversial Iranian Group In Albania, 24 June 2022, url
[7] Reuters, Dissident leader abroad urges Iranians to bring down Khamenei, 24 June 2025, url; Iran Freedom Network, MEK Resistance Units Across Iran Declare: My Vote, Regime Change! The Genuine Response of the Iranian People to the Regime's Sham Elections, 21 February 2024, url
[8] Reuters, Dissident leader abroad urges Iranians to bring down Khamenei, 24 June 2025, url;
[9] Al Jazeera, Why was this Iran dissident group raided in Europe?, 21 June 2023, url; Reuters, Dissident leader abroad urges Iranians to bring down Khamenei, 24 June 2025, url
[10] Al Jazeera, Why was this Iran dissident group raided in Europe?, 21 June 2023, url; Iran International, Ex-Vice President Pence Visits Controversial Iranian Group In Albania, 24 June 2022, url
[11] Tirana Times, Iran Hacks Tirana Municipality in Retaliation Over MEK, 20 June 2025, url; Clingendael, Opposition politics of the Iranian diaspora: out of many, one – but not just yet, 27 October 2023, url; Al Jazeera, Why was this Iran dissident group raided in Europe?, 21 June 2023, url
[12] Reuters, Dissident leader abroad urges Iranians to bring down Khamenei, 24 June 2025, url
[13] Iran International, Ex-Vice President Pence Visits Controversial Iranian Group In Albania, 24 June 2022, url
[14] Iran International, Ex-Vice President Pence Visits Controversial Iranian Group In Albania, 24 June 2022, url; Al Jazeera, Why was this Iran dissident group raided in Europe?, 21 June 2023, url

Iranian authorities consider the MEK a terrorist organization[15] and it was listed as a terrorist organization by the European Union and the United States until 2012,[16] after it agreed to 'abandon violent operations'.[17] However, sources further described that the MEK does not have a significant influence in Iran and amongst Iranians.[18]

2. Treatment by the government

Iranian authorities claimed that the MEK were responsible for 17 000 deaths in Iran,[19] over the past four decades, 'a figure that is regularly repeated by Iran's state-controlled media'.[20] Moreover, the Iranian authorities accuse MEK members of various incidents in Iran,[21] including cooperating with Israel in the 12-day Iran-Israel conflict[22] in June 2025.[23] The 2023 Country Report on Iran by Netherland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, citing external sources, described that 'the authorities reported several arrests of individuals and the winding up of networks allegedly linked to the People's Mujahedin'.[24]

Some examples documented by sources of Iranians being targeted for involvement or perceived involvement with the MEK group are:

- In August 2025, Iranian authorities arrested three individuals 'linked' to the MEK, accusing them of forming 'sabotage cells' to disrupt public order. The arrests, made by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps near Tehran, came amid allegations that MEK were using 'underground propaganda' to recruit members and incite unrest.[25]

[15] Al Jazeera, Iran blacklists US officials for supporting 'terrorist' group MEK, 16 July 2022, url; Tehran Times, No Country for Traitors, 2 July 2023, url; Al Jazeera, Why was this Iran dissident group raided in Europe?, 21 June 2023, url
[16] Reuters, Iran executes two members of opposition group for attacking infrastructure, 27 July 2025, url; Reuters, Opposition groups rally in France demanding EU list Iran's Guards as terrorist group, 12 February 2023, url
[17] Al Jazeera, Iran blacklists US officials for supporting 'terrorist' group MEK, 16 July 2022, url
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[20] RFI, Exiled Iranian dissidents welcome UN's call for investigation into 1980s purge, 28 July 2024, url
[21] Nejat Society, Iranian court uncovers MEK role in coordinated attacks with Israel during recent war, 16 August 2025, url; Tehran Times, Three convicted of terrorist attack in Isfahan executed, 12 December 2023, url; VOA News, Iran: More Than 100 Arrested Over School Poisonings, 12 March 2023, url; Iran International, Iran Government Website Hacked By Opposition Group, 14 March 2022, url; Al Jazeera, Why was this Iran dissident group raided in Europe?, 21 June 2023, url
[22] Nejat Society, Iranian court uncovers MEK role in coordinated attacks with Israel during recent war, 16 August 2025, url; Tehran Times, Israel confirms funding MEK, marking second time group sides with foreign aggressor, 16 August 2025, url; Wana Iran, Mossad-Backed MEK's Footprint Exist in Tehran Explosions, 17 June 2025, url
[23] Wana Iran, Mossad-Backed MEK's Footprint Exist in Tehran Explosions, 17 June 2025, url
[24] Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs: General Country of Origin Information Report on Iran, September 2023, url, p. 38
[25] Kurdistan 24, Iran Arrests Three Suspected MEK Members Accused of Sabotage Plot, 5 August 2025, url; Times of Israel, Iran says it detained 'sabotage cell' linked to exiled opposition group, 5 August 2025, url

- In July 2025, Iranian authorities executed two members of the MEK group, Mehdi Hassani and Behrouz Ehsani-Eslamloo, for allegedly attacking civilian infrastructure with homemade projectiles.[26] They were sentenced to death in September 2024, and indicted with 'Moharebeh - an Islamic term meaning waging war against God, destroying public property and membership in a terrorist organisation with the aim of disrupting national security'.[27] According to Amnesty International, the two men 'repeatedly denied these accusations, saying they were based on forced "confessions" extracted through torture and other ill-treatment'.[28]
- In January 2025, Amnesty International reported that six men convicted of membership in the MEK were sentenced to death by the Revolutionary Court of Tehran, 'following a grossly unfair trial' in October 2024, which was 'marred by allegations of torture' used to 'extract forced "confessions"'.[29]
- In December 2024, Iranian authorities arrested four MEK operatives, accusing them of engaging in 'acts of sabotage and espionage'. The individuals were transferred to the judiciary to face charges related to their alleged criminal activities.[30]
- In December 2023, Marzieh Farsi and Forough Taghipour were each sentenced to 15 years in prison for allegedly collaborating with the MEK, having both been previously arrested on similar charges. The court proceeded in their absence after they refused to attend or recognize the legitimacy of the proceedings.[31]
- In April 2023, an Iranian criminal court sentenced Majid Khademi to ten years in prison on charges of 'assembly and collusion against national security,' 'propaganda against the regime', and 'membership in anti-regime groups', reportedly the MEK.[32]
- Sources from 2024 and 2025 report that Iran's criminal courts have prosecuted 104 MEK members residing in Albania, formally bringing charges against them.[33]
- An April 2023 article by Iran Wire quoted political activist and daughter of a former Iranian president, Faezeh Hashemi, saying that MEK members 'are in prison because members of their families were Mojahed, meaning that they themselves have done nothing but have been given heavy sentences'.[34]
- A January 2023 article reported that Maryam Akbari Monfared has been imprisoned in Iran since 2009 for allegedly supporting the MEK and has endured torture during her detention.[35]

[26] Iran International, Iran hangs two political prisoners over alleged attacks on civilian sites, 27 July 2025, url; Reuters, Iran executes two members of opposition group for attacking infrastructure, 27 July 2025, url
[27] Reuters, Iran executes two members of opposition group for attacking infrastructure, 27 July 2025, url
[28] Amnesty International, Iran: Horrifying secret executions amid mounting political repression, 28 July 2025, url
[29] Amnesty International, Iran: Six Men at Risk of Execution After Grossly Unfair Trial, 23 January 2025, url
[30] Tehran Times, Intelligence forces capture four MEK operatives in Tehran suburbs, 3 December 2024, url
[31] Iran HRM, Thirty years of imprisonment for political prisoners Marzieh Farsi, and Forough Taghipour, 19 February 2024, url
[32] HRANA, Majid Khademi Sentenced to over Ten Years and Additional Punishments, 10 April 2023, url
[33] Nejat Society, Options for Albania: either to expel or extradite the leaders of the MEK, 29 January 2024, url; ADVT, The 33rd court session to hear the charges of the MEK: Sure innocence and the principle of surprise, the most fundamental distinction of victims of terrorism from others, 3 June 2025, url
[34] Iran Wire, IranWire Exclusive: Faezeh Hashemi on her Incarceration, Protests and the Opposition, 7 April 2023, url
[35] Arab News, Mother jailed in Iran for 13 years describes 'hell' of prison life, 3 January 2023, url

Further information on the MEK group abroad and treatment by the government can be found in the EUAA query, Iran: Human rights situation (section 2.2. – Treatment upon return for political activities abroad), published in October 2024.

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