



Women's Human Rights International Association

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Introduction

This factsheet has been prepared to the **human rights council resolution 35/16** based on the UN High Commissioner for Human Right's request, in response to question number 1.

Below are statistics gathered from government sources on compulsory marriages of children.

Fact sheet

Country - Statistics & Facts

A social expert revealed that at present, 41,000 early marriages under the age of 15 take place in Iran every year. Amir Taghizadeh, deputy for cultural and youth affairs in the General Department of Sports and Youth in East Azerbaijan Province, said that girl children between 10 and 15 years of age are forced to get married. He said, "In 2015, some 4,000 girls between 10 and 15 years old got married but this year, this number increased to 4,164."

<http://www.magiran.com/npview.asp?ID=3622511>

Earlier in May, Parvaneh Salahshouri, head of the so-called women's faction in the mullahs' parliament, said, "The statistics show that there have been 37,000 marriages of girls under 15 in the country last year, and in the same time interval, 2,000 of them either got divorced or became widows." (The state-run IRNA news agency, May 8, 2018)

<http://www.irna.ir/zanjan/fa/News/82908548>

Child widows constitute a great catastrophe in Iran, said Hassan Moussavi Chelak, head of the Social Work Association. From March 2017 to March 2018 (Persian year 1396), the number of marriages registered in Tehran was 78,972, which included 1,481 marriages of girls under 15 years of age. This is just for Tehran. This statistic escalates in lower-income cities and town and destitute regions. Some 43,000 girls under 15 were married in this time span across Iran, according to the statistics and monitoring director of the Social and Cultural Council of Women and Family. (The state-run salamatnews.com - July 24, 2018)

<http://www.salamatnews.com/news/249254>

Zahra Mirzaii, a social researcher said this in an interview on the outcome of her research into early marriages of girl children in Iran. She added, "Many social harms related to women is due to early and forced marriages." (The state-run pana.ir website - July 4, 2018)

<http://www.pana.ir/news/831293>

As one of the first consequences of early marriages of girl children in Iran, Mirzaii said these girls do not have any knowledge of family planning, so they face consecutive pregnancies with short intervals and without proper medical care, all of which jeopardize their health.

As for other consequences of early marriages of girl children in Iran, Mirzaii explained, "Chances of death during delivery is twice as much for women between 15 and 19 years of age compared to women above 20. Chances of unwanted pregnancies is twice as much for women under 16. Chances of

pregnancy poisoning is six times greater in young mothers. Chances of contracting cervical cancer is 2.5 times greater. 84 percent of women contracting cancer of the cervix have gotten married under 18 years of age. And the number of underweight infants delivered by young mothers is three times greater. Also, 30% of women who prostitute say they got married when they were under 15 years of age.

<http://www.salamatnews.com/news/247464>

A member of parliament admitted that there are 24,000 young widows under 18 years of age in Iran. Citing remarks by Massoumeh Agha-Alishahi the state-run media wrote on Monday, May 28, 2018, "The harms caused by early marriage of girl children are so much that now Agha-Alishahi has announced that the existence of 24,000 child widows under 18 years of age. It is not clear what the fate of these many children is going to be, those who have lost their childhood and have no perspective for a bright future." (The state-run ICANA news agency - May 28, 2018)

<http://www.icana.ir/Fa/News/385680>

Some 37,000 girl children got married while under 15 years of age last year. This was announced by Parvaneh Salahshouri, head of the so-called women's faction, in the mullahs' parliament on May 8, 2018. She said another 2,000 women under 15 years of age also got divorced or were widowed during the same period. Marriage and divorce of girl children under 15 years of age causes numerous problems for them. The statistics indicate that two-thirds of marriages that take place in young age cause various diseases in adulthood. The girls who abruptly enter adult life are also deprived of education and necessary life skills. 175,000 divorces were registered last year in Iran which was an unprecedented high in its history. According to Salahshouri, there are between 2.5 and 5 million women heads of household in Iran. Lack of jobs and services they need causes many problems for them. (The state-run IRNA news agency - May 8, 2018)

<http://www.irna.ir/zanjan/fa/News/82908548>

A member of Tehran's City Council revealed that the number of young women under 15 years of age who have been widowed is 15,000. At the same time, a woman official announced that there were 36,422 marriages of girls under 15 years of age in just one year. Shahrbanou Imami, member of Tehran's City Council and former member of the mullahs' parliament, told an IWD gathering at Tehran's Melli University that there were 15,000 young widows under 15 years of age in Iran. She said, "Today, our laws have regressed."

<http://www.asriran.com/fa/news/597734>

In an interview with the state television, Zahra Ayatollahi, head of the Social-Cultural Council of Women and Family at the Supreme Cultural Revolutionary Council, said, "Based on the statistics of the National Statistics Center, last year (March 2016-March 2017) there were 36,422 marriages of girls under 15 years of age." (The state-run ISNA news agency - March 10, 2018)

<https://www.isna.ir/news/96121709566>

A bill proposing raising age of marriage for Iran's girl children from 13 to 16 met opposition of men in the mullahs' parliament, Majlis. Tayyebeh Siavoshi, a Majlis deputy, tweeted on Saturday, February 3, 2018, that the age of marriage for girls which was supposed to be increased to 16 has been stopped for the time being, due to the opposition of men. In yet another tweet, Siavoshi wrote, "In some courts, judges who want to endorse marriage of girls under 13 years of age, show them a gold ring and ask them if it is a gold ring in order to determine whether the girl has reached rational maturity." She also said another existing problem is the fact that the marriages of child spouses are not registered.

<https://twitter.com/TayebehSiavash/status/967424769162440707>

<https://twitter.com/TayebehSiavash/status/958731559942672384>

<https://twitter.com/TayebehSiavash/status/958731566385127424>

Provinces - Statistics & Facts

In the first four months of this (Iranian) year, 970 girls under 18 married in Kurdistan Province of Iran, the Director General of the Civil Status Registration of Kurdistan announced.

In an interview with the state-run ISNA news agency in Kurdistan on August 18, 2018, Hassan Sumi said, "Out of the 4,520 registered marriage cases in the Kurdistan Province in the past four months of this year, 970 cases for females were under the age of 18. Underage females made up 21 percent of the total number of marriages in the province." In connection with the 970 girls under 18 married in Kurdistan, Sumi added, "According to the report up to the date of registration until August 6, 2018, out of 970 marriages, 659 were urban and 311 were rural."

<https://www.isna.ir/news/97052714115>

According to official government statistics, 180,000 early marriages occur annually in Iran, accounting for 24 percent of all marriages. In the past years, according to recorded data, the largest figure of registered marriages of 10 to 14-year-old girls was in 2014 which amounted to 40,229. The number of girl children under 10 who have gotten married was 220 in 2011; 187 in 2012; 201 in 2013; 176 in 2014; and 179 in 2015. These figures are probably higher because of unregistered marriages. Mostafa Amani, general director of the Registrar of Lorestan Province, said that there were 1,126 marriages of girls under 15 in Lorestan over the past year in that province.

In 2015, 3,944 girls between the age of 10 to 14 were married, which, according to research, most of these marriages were in the country's counties and villages. In 2016, the early marriage of 10 to 14-year-old girls rose up to 4,165.

<http://www.irna.ir/lorestan/fa/News/82990422>

Early marriages threaten health and safety of girl children in Iran. Official figures indicate that 180,000 early marriages take place in Iran every year and comprise 24 per cent of the total number of marriages. "The largest number of registered marriages of 10-14 girl children was in 2014 which amounted to 40,229. The number of girl children under 10 who have gotten married was 220 in 2011; 187 in 2012; 201 in 2013; 176 in 2014; and 179 in 2015. These figures are probably higher because of unregistered marriages," said Batool Salimi Manesh, a social researcher.

Salimi Manesh added, "As for the dispersal of child marriages in various cities, Razavi Khorasan Province (northeastern Iran) tops the list, followed by East Azerbaijan Province (northwestern Iran), and Sistan and Baluchestan (southeastern Iran). Of course, Lorestan Province (western Iran) also faces the problem of child marriages but their numbers are lower than other provinces and there is a long way before this phenomenon is uprooted." Mostafa Amani, general director of the Registrar of Lorestan Province, said there were 1,126 marriages of girl children under 15 in Lorestan province over the past year in that province. Early marriages of girl children are one of the most vivid examples of child abuse. (The official IRNA news agency - August 5, 2018)

<http://www.irna.ir/fa/News/82991296>

Girls under 10 got married in the southwestern Iranian province of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad over the past Iranian year. Ali Mohammad Taghavi, general director of the National Statistics Registration Office in this province, announced that nine girls under 10 years of age had gotten married in the Iranian year 1396 (March 2017- March 2018) in the Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province. Taghavi added, "Another 12 girls got married under 11 years of age; 25 were married under 12; 63 were married under 13; 124 girl children were married under 14; 225 girls got married under 15; 258 were married under 16; 312 girls were married under 17 years of age, and 384 girls got married under 18 years of age." (The state-run ISNA news agency, July 29, 2018, and salamatnews.com, July 31, 2018)

<https://www.isna.ir/news/97050703440>

<http://www.salamatnews.com/news/249747>

Earlier, in an interview published by the state-run PANA news agency, a social researcher explained that since these young girls have not received family planning education, they face multiple pregnancies and deliveries with short intervals, and without observing minimum standards of hygiene and therefore, their health is seriously jeopardized. She said that the consequences of marriages of girl children under 15 include rising chances of death during delivery, unwanted pregnancies, poisoning during pregnancy, and cervical cancer occurring.

<http://www.pana.ir/news/831293>

Young girls in Zabol are forced into marriage at young age. This was asserted by Aziz Sarani, member of the City Council of Zabol and representative of Sistan and Baluchistan Province in the Supreme Council of Provinces. Revealing the city's extreme poverty and deprivation, he said that because of

shortage of resources as well as religious prejudices, young girls in Zabol "are given in to marriage when they are only 14 or 15 years old, and in some villages we see girls as young as 9 get married."

<https://www.khabaronline.ir/print/787488>

Last year, too, Amir Taghizadeh, deputy for cultural and youth affairs in the General Department of Sports and Youth in East Azerbaijan Province, announced that the number of forced marriages of young girls had increased in this province. Taghizadeh said, girl children between 10 and 15 years of age are forced to get married. He said, "In 2015, some 4,000 girls between 10 and 15 years old got married but this year, this number increased to 4,164." (The state-run Kayhan newspaper, September 3, 2017)

<http://www.magiran.com/npview.asp?ID=3622511>

East Azerbaijan Province leads the Iranian provinces in early marriages of girl children 10 to 15 years old, ranking second only to Khorassan Razavi Province, NE Iran. Amir Taghizadeh, cultural and youth affairs deputy in the General Department of Youths and Sports in East Azerbaijan (NW Iran), said, "Parental coercion is the reason for marriage of girl children between 10 and 15 years of age." 3,944 girls between 10 and 14 years old got married in 2015. Most of these marriages took place in villages and rural areas. One year later, in 2016, this number reached 4,165 marriages.

The marriage age for girls in Zainub village is under 10. Javidnia, the headman of Zeinub village, located 50 km from Tabriz (the capital of East Azerbaijan), says: "Here, girls' marriages are official. For example, the girl gets engaged at the age of 10. A religious contract (*Seigheh*) is written (to sanction contacts between the couple), then when the girl reaches legal age, the same contract is registered. Some girls stay engaged for three years and some go to their new home after they are engaged." (The state-run ISNA news agency- May 24, 2018)

<https://www.isna.ir/news/97030301491>

The average marriage age for girls in Zaweheh is 11. Zaweheh is a village located near a town by the same name in Razavi Khorassan Province in northeastern Iran. Ali Baghdar Delgosha, advisor in youths' affairs the Governor of Razavi Khorassan Province, made the announcement at a meeting entitled, "The Forgotten Childhood," held on Monday, May 14, 2018, at the School of Literature of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad. Delgosha pointed out, "According to last year's census, 63,000 girls under 15 have married in Tehran. A more regretful statistic belongs to some townships of Razavi Khorassan Province such as Zaweheh where the average marriage age for girls is 11 years old."

<http://khorasan.isna.ir/default.aspx?NSID=5&SSLID=46&NID=133350>

Under 10-year-olds marriage - Statistics & Facts

The presidential directorate on women and family affairs has also published a report on the number of marriages of girls under 10 in recent years, as the following:

- 220 children from March 2011 to March 2012;
- 187 children from March 2012 to March 2013;
- 201 children from March 2013 to March 2014;
- 176 children from March 2014 to March 2015;
- 179 children from March 2015 to March 2016.

This makes up a total of 963 marriages of girls under 10 in five years. (The state-run ISNA news agency - October 14, 2017)

<https://www.isna.ir/news/96072211693>

Official figures indicate that 180,000 early marriages take place in Iran every year and comprise 24 percent of the total number of marriages. "The largest number of registered marriages of 10-14 girl children was in 2014 which amounted to 40,229. The number of girl children under 10 who have gotten married was 220 in 2011; 187 in 2012; 201 in 2013; 176 in 2014; and 179 in 2015. These figures are probably higher because of unregistered marriages," said Batool Salimi Manesh, a social researcher. (The state-run IRNA news agency - August 5, 2018)

<http://www.irna.ir/fa/News/82991296>

There have been 35 cases of early marriages of 10 to 13-year-old girls in only one town in Markazi Province in central Iran. An expert in charge of the Health Center of Markazi Province announced that the town of Khondab has special conditions for early marriages of girl children compared to other

towns in the province, with 35 cases of early marriages of 10 to 13-year-old girls being reported. In a meeting on early marriages in Markazi Province, Akram Hamzeh-Loiyan noted: "In this province, 35 cases of early marriages of girl children between 10 and 13 have been recorded. If there is no quick intervention in this regard, we will witness consequences such as running away from home or child divorces under the age of 15." (The state-run ISNA news agency - August 15, 2018)

<https://www.isna.ir/news/97052412608>

Marriages of girl children under 15 reached 350 in Bushehr Province in the Iranian year 1396 (March 2017 - March 2018). According to the Census Department in Bushehr Province, there were also 7 marriages of girl children under 10 years of age during the same time period.

Based on the data registered by the Census Department of Bushehr Province, the number of marriages of girl children under 15 in the previous year 1395 (March 2016 - March 2017) was 234.

The provinces of Sistan and Baluchistan, West Azerbaijan, and Kermanshah are national record holders with around 4,000 marriages of girl children under 15 per year. (The state-run website of Young Journalists Club - July 5, 2018)

<https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/6585891>