

Tehran, Iran



Tehran – a strategic city in an ancient dynasty. The Persian Empire that played such an important role in biblical history has as its modern-day successor the Islamic Republic of Iran, situated in the heart of the Muslim world. And just as the Persian Empire left a lasting mark on the ancient world, so too Iran is exercising a growing influence in our day. The capital Tehran is at the centre of that global influence.

With a population of more than 9 million within the city limits alone – and nearly double that number when urban sprawl is taken into account – Tehran is the second largest metropolitan area in the Middle East. Its population has doubled since the 1979 Islamic

Revolution that removed the shah (king) and installed Ayatollah Khomeini as the supreme leader. Much of that population growth has come as poorer and less educated peasants have moved to Tehran from rural areas of the country in search of work. As a result, the city is increasingly ethnically and socio-economically diverse.

Among the issues that plague Tehran is poor air quality as vehicle and factory pollution is on the rise. Visitors who are sensitive to air pollution should be aware of this reality and take steps to reduce its impact on health.



Quick Facts

Population:
9 million

Language:
Farsi

Economy:
Petro-chemicals,
manufacturing

Gospel Resources:
Farsi Bible available





Engage

It is important to understand that opportunities for ministry inside Iran are shaped partly by one's passport. The governments of some countries have stronger ties with the regime in Tehran, thereby providing better access to visas and less suspicion of expatriates.

Education – Tehran is home to more than 50 major colleges and universities. Some of these are quite open to receiving international

students at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels. A student visa provides a worker a 2-4 year window of time to learn Farsi and develop friendships while living in student housing.

Business – Currently, the business climate in Iran is unstable and involves a significant amount of risk. Foreign direct investment requires an enormous sum of start-up capital, with regulations and sanctions hampering opportunities for growth. Employment at a multinational company might be an option, though not without its own challenges.

Tehran's sheer size means that workers can likely move about and engage in ministry with a bit less scrutiny and government surveillance than in other parts of the country. Despite the growth of the Iranian church over the past few decades, there are still large parts of the capital with little gospel witness. Over time – as one gains an understanding of life in Iran, learns Farsi, and establishes a viable identity – ministry to the Iranian church may even be possible. There is a particular need for life-on-life discipleship and leadership training among the many house churches of the country.



Pray

- **Followers of Jesus in Tehran are weary from constant surveillance. Ask God to strengthen them.**
- **Pray for new doors to open so that Kingdom workers from outside Iran are given access to live and serve in Tehran.**
- **Remember before God the urban poor of Tehran, many of whom have come seeking work.**

Is God calling you to take the gospel to Tehran, the capital of Iran?
Contact us. We would love to help you get there!