

# Anatomy of Iran's political structure

While Iran's President has a high public profile, his powers are limited by the constitution, which subordinates his role to the Supreme Leader



**Supreme Leader**  
**Ayatollah**  
**Ali Khamenei**  
(Since 1989)

Highest political and religious authority, appointed for life. Can dismiss senior government officials

Directly elected  
Appointed or approved

Vetting procedure

**Armed forces**  
Revolutionary Guard and army commanders

**National Security Council**  
Guides foreign and nuclear policy

**Expediency Council**  
Advisory body to Supreme Leader

**Head of judiciary**  
Top authority on Islamic law

**Guardian Council**  
12 jurists – six chosen by Supreme Leader, and six nominated by judiciary and approved by Parliament. Can block parliament's laws and bar candidates from standing in elections

**Assembly of Experts**  
Conservative body of 88 clerics elected for eight years. Selects and can dismiss Supreme Leader, but has never been known to challenge any of his decisions

**Cabinet**  
21 ministers

**Parliament**  
290 members elected for four years

**Electorate**  
55 million people eligible to vote

**President**  
**Hassan Rouhani**  
(since 2013)  
Elected for four years, may serve only two consecutive terms