

Reformist-Hardline Rivalries Dull Iran's Parliament Elections

by [Banafsheh Keynoush \(/experts/banafsheh-keynoush\)](#)

Feb 20, 2020

Also available in

[العربية \(/ar/policy-analysis/almzahmt-byn-alaslahyyn-walmtshddyn-tutfy-zkhm-alantkhabat-albrlmanyf-fy-ayran\)](#) /

[Farsi \(/fa/policy-analysis/rqabthay-aslahtlban-w-tndrwha-aml-rkwd-antkhabat-mjls-dr-ayran\)](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

[Banafsheh Keynoush \(/experts/banafsheh-keynoush\)](#)

Dr. Banafsheh Keynoush was a Visiting Fellow at the King Faisal Center for Islamic Studies and Research in Saudi Arabia, and has spent time in Iran as visiting researcher. She is a Visiting Scholar at Princeton University and Non-Resident Scholar at the International Institute for Iranian Studies. She is the author of "Saudi Arabia and Iran: Friends or Foes?" (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016; Arabic edition, Dar AlSaqi, 2017; Persian edition, Zarir Publishing 2017).



Brief Analysis

On February 21, Iran will hold elections for the 290 seats of its parliament, the Islamic Consultative Assembly. Facing a hardline-led state campaign to disqualify their candidates from seeking seats, most reformist candidates have retreated from trying to compete in the elections—despite the fact that the reformist coalition in the current parliament holds a plurality of seats in the current session. Confident of their own victory, Iran's hardliners are attempting to demonstrate unity and present themselves as a vibrant alternative to the reformist camp. Still, reformists are [battling \(https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%B4-%D8%B3%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-62/3627714-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%AF-%DA%A9%D9%88%D8%A7%DA%A9%D8%A8%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B7%D9%87%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%82%DB%8C\)](https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%B4-%D8%B3%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-62/3627714-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%AF-%DA%A9%D9%88%D8%A7%DA%A9%D8%A8%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B7%D9%87%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%82%DB%8C) to stay relevant in the elections, while hardliners do indeed face disunity within their ranks.

The final list of [candidates \(https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51168971\)](https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51168971) to run in the parliamentary elections was scheduled to be announced around the anniversary of the victory of Iran's Islamic [Revolution](#)

[\(https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4823857/%DB%B2%DB%B2-%D8%A8%D9%87%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%B7%D8%B9%DB%8C-%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B2%D8%AF%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85-%D9%85%DB%8C-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%AF\)](https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4823857/%DB%B2%DB%B2-%D8%A8%D9%87%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%B7%D8%B9%DB%8C-%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B2%D8%AF%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85-%D9%85%DB%8C-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%AF) to build some momentum for the elections. But [public](#)

[\(https://fararu.com/fa/news/429589/%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3-%D8%A2%DB%8C%D8%A7-%D8%AF%D9%88-%DA%AF%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%87-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%E2%80%8C%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D9%BE%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%AA%D9%87-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA\)](https://fararu.com/fa/news/429589/%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3-%D8%A2%DB%8C%D8%A7-%D8%AF%D9%88-%DA%AF%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%87-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%E2%80%8C%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D9%BE%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%AA%D9%87-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA) support for the elections on the eve of voting still seems to be lacking. Regardless of the rate of participation, the outcome of the parliamentary elections is likely to shape the key trends already visible within Iran's reformist and hardline camps.

Reformist Camp: To Run or Not to Run?

For this election, reformists are facing a particularly steep barrier: the mass disqualification of many of their candidates from seeking election. This step by the hardline Guardian Council—in charge of vetting the candidates—points to a campaign led by hardliners seeking to take over the Parliament. Compared to the last parliamentary [elections \(https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51168971\)](https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51168971) four years ago, nearly three times as many candidates have been disqualified from running for parliamentary seats.

The Guardian Council [disqualified \(https://www.timesofisrael.com/irans-rouhani-slams-disqualification-of-thousands-from-running-for-parliament/\)](https://www.timesofisrael.com/irans-rouhani-slams-disqualification-of-thousands-from-running-for-parliament/) a remarkable 90 current members of Parliament, nearly one-third of its ranks. Most of these parliamentarians were reformists, though the Guardian Council rejected charges that it had [disqualified candidates \(https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51168971\)](https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51168971) based on their political orientation. Instead, the Council claimed most of those disqualified had pending financial corruptions charges against them, which they were informed of in letters sent to them by the Council.

As a part of these disqualifications, reformists also face an uphill battle in maintaining voter [confidence \(https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51274747\)](https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51274747) given that the disqualifications are instead couched in the language of corruption and nepotism charges. For example, President Hassan Rouhani's son-in-law Kambiz Mehdizadeh has been disqualified on potential charges of [nepotism \(https://www.washingtonpost.com/\)](https://www.washingtonpost.com/) in his business dealings and for his [familial \(https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4826705/%D9%86%D9%85%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B3%D8%AA%DB%8C%D9%85-%D8%B9%D8%AF%D9%85-%D8%AA%D8%A3%DB%8C%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%B3%D8%AA%DA%AF%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A8%D9%87-%D9%85%D8%B9%D9%86%DB%8C-%D8%AD%D8%B0%D9%81-%D8%AC%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%AF%DB%8C%DA%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA\)](https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4826705/%D9%86%D9%85%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B3%D8%AA%DB%8C%D9%85-%D8%B9%D8%AF%D9%85-%D8%AA%D8%A3%DB%8C%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%B3%D8%AA%DA%AF%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A8%D9%87-%D9%85%D8%B9%D9%86%DB%8C-%D8%AD%D8%B0%D9%81-%D8%AC%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%AF%DB%8C%DA%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA) connection to Rouhani. Rouhani has indirectly contested this disqualification without naming Mehdizadeh in person, which has led the Guardian Council to criticize the president for contesting this disqualification and similar ones against other reformists. Meanwhile, Rouhani has mocked the Council's vetting process, and called the upcoming election just a [formality \(https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51274747\)](https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51274747). Rouhani has also tried to pass a [referendum \(https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51404973\)](https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51404973) bill to amend legislation that allows the Council to only selectively [vet \(https://www.rferl.org/a/iran--rohani-slams-disqualification-parliament-candidates-elections/30379110.html\)](https://www.rferl.org/a/iran--rohani-slams-disqualification-parliament-candidates-elections/30379110.html) candidates in early February, but with no success thus far.

Reformists seem dismissive of concerns that their voter support-base will buy into the corruption charges. Instead, they challenged the legal disqualification of their candidates at the [Interior Ministry \(https://plus.irna.ir/news/83586477/%D9%86%D9%87%D8%B6%D8%AA-%D8%AB%D8%A8%D8%AA-%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%A2%D8%AE%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%DB%8C-%DA%A9%D8%AC%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA\)](https://plus.irna.ir/news/83586477/%D9%86%D9%87%D8%B6%D8%AA-%D8%AB%D8%A8%D8%AA-%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%A2%D8%AE%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%DB%8C-%DA%A9%D8%AC%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA) of Iran. But this still does not solve the issue that they are lacking candidates to run; the deadline for the [reversal \(https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4856704/%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A8%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B4%D8%AA-%D9%86%DA%AF%D8%A7%D9%87-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%86%DA%AF%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B3%DB%8C\)](https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4856704/%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A8%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B4%D8%AA-%D9%86%DA%AF%D8%A7%D9%87-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%86%DA%AF%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B3%DB%8C) of the disqualifications passed, and the Guardian Council is saying that it will not issue [re-qualifications \(https://www.farsnews.ir/news/13981129000804/%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%86%DA%AF%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%AA%D8%A3%DB%8C%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AF%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D9%86%D9%85%D8%A7%DB%8C%D9%86%D8%AF%DA%AF%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B1%D8%AF%E2%80%8C%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA%E2%80%8C%D8%B4%D8%AF%D9%87-%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D8%AA%DA%A9%D8%B0%DB%8C%D8%A8\)](https://www.farsnews.ir/news/13981129000804/%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%86%DA%AF%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%AA%D8%A3%DB%8C%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AF%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D9%86%D9%85%D8%A7%DB%8C%D9%86%D8%AF%DA%AF%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B1%D8%AF%E2%80%8C%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA%E2%80%8C%D8%B4%D8%AF%D9%87-%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D8%AA%DA%A9%D8%B0%DB%8C%D8%A8) for candidates that were vetted out.

And while some 80 reformists did file complaints with the Council to contest their disqualifications, key reformist figureheads like Mohammad Reza Aref, who heads the Hope faction in parliament, opted [not to run \(https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF\)](https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF) in the elections. The Supreme Council of Reformist Policymakers, [\(https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-](https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF)

<https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51491406>

which includes at least ten factions, is said to have lost interest in the elections altogether, and did not immediately put forward a list of candidates to compete in the race. This has pushed some reform [factions](https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51491406) (<https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-51491406>) to forward their own list of candidates for the elections.

A number of prominent reformists are insisting on participating in the [elections](https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF)

(<https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF>), including the Executives of Construction leader and former Tehran Mayor Golamhossein Karbaschi, the National Confidence faction leader Elias Hazrati, and the Islamic Society of Teachers' leader Davood Mohammadi. In particular, recently formed populist reform factions that emerged in the fray of these elections are also trying to run, including the Sacrificers' Association led by Javad Imam, [women's](https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF)

(<https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF>) groups, and professional groups such as the Medical Science Association and the University Professors' Association.

Yet the reformist candidates most likely to win seats in the next elections are seen as intermediaries, aiming to build future [coalitions](https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF) (<https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF>) with hardliners. These include the Popular Rule's leader Mostafa Kavakebian, the Labor House leader Alireza Mahjoub, and the Voice of Iranians leader Sadegh Kharrazi. Many of these reformists will rally around party figures like Majid Ansari, a deputy for parliamentary [affairs](https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF)

(<https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF>)

who served Rouhani, but as a member of Iran's state-run Expediency Council has [experience](http://farhikhtegandaily.com/news/35151/%D8%AC%D8%B2%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%87-%D9%85%D8%AC%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%86%DA%AF%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86/) (<http://farhikhtegandaily.com/news/35151/%D8%AC%D8%B2%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%87-%D9%85%D8%AC%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%86%DA%AF%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86/>) working with the hardliners.

Other reformists still reject the idea of building coalitions with hardliner factions. One such group, the [Coalition for Iran](https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4856688/%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3-%D9%86%D8%A7%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A2%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%AF-%DA%A9%D9%85-%D8%AA%D8%AC%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%87-%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%87%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%AF) (<https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4856688/%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3-%D9%86%D8%A7%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A2%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%AF-%DA%A9%D9%85-%D8%AA%D8%AC%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%87-%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%87%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%AF>), favors building inner-party alliances. Moving forward, many staunch reformists argue they must revive their camp with help from a younger and defiant

(<http://farhikhtegandaily.com/news/35151/%D8%AC%D8%B2%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%87-%D9%85%D8%AC%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%86%DA%AF%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86/>)

Other reformists still reject the idea of building coalitions with hardliner factions. One such group, the [Coalition for Iran](https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4856688/%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3-%D9%86%D8%A7%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A2%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%AF-%DA%A9%D9%85-%D8%AA%D8%AC%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%87-%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%87%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%AF)

(<https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4856688/%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3-%D9%86%D8%A7%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A2%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%AF-%DA%A9%D9%85-%D8%AA%D8%AC%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%87-%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%87%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%AF>), favors building inner-party alliances. Moving forward, many staunch reformists argue they must revive their camp with help from a younger and defiant

(<https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4856688/%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3-%D9%86%D8%A7%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A2%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%AF-%DA%A9%D9%85-%D8%AA%D8%AC%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%87-%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%87%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%AF>)

generation, and by including figures such as [Emad Bahavar \(https://ir.usembassy.gov/emad-bahavar/\)](https://ir.usembassy.gov/emad-bahavar/), who registered for the elections but previously received and served a 5-year prison sentence from the hardliners. Bahavar was sent to prison after taking part in the post-election protests in 2009 and on charges of joining the [Freedom Movement \(https://www.en-hrana.org/emad-bahavars-sentence-reduced-at-supreme-court\)](https://www.en-hrana.org/emad-bahavars-sentence-reduced-at-supreme-court) and heading its youth wing. He and other reformists have threatened to [withdraw \(https://www.radiofarda.com/a/postponing-voting-for-reformists-decision-not-to-nominate-candidates/30414704.html\)](https://www.radiofarda.com/a/postponing-voting-for-reformists-decision-not-to-nominate-candidates/30414704.html) the list of their party candidates, even if they were qualified, from the elections—demonstrating the complicated politics for reformists of even participating in the elections this round

Other disgruntled reformists fear being marginalized by the hardliners in Parliament—a faction estimated to represent only 15 percent of Iran’s society. And while hardliners have accused the reformist bloc for Iran’s recent protests, the prominent reformist strategist Ali Shakouri-Rad insists that the frequent nationwide protests in Iran against the government are led by economically marginalized groups that form the hardliner’s voter-base, not the middle and upper middle class Iranians who mainly support the reformists. Even so, some reformist strategists say their future will depend on how quickly they can leave party ranks and join forces with the [people \(https://news.gooya.com/2020/01/post-34269.php\)](https://news.gooya.com/2020/01/post-34269.php) of Iran to create a movement for change across the country—outside the confines of parliamentary elections altogether.

The Rising Unity of the Hardline Camp

In contrast to reformers’ frustrations with this year’s elections, Iran’s hardliner politicians are united in believing that Iran’s frequent anti-government protests result from Rouhani’s failure to expand economic opportunities for the masses, opening a window for hardliners to take control of the parliament. Hardliners are also facing fewer barriers to participation in the elections; only four of 64 principlists—generally conservative hardliners—were disqualified on charges that cannot be legally revealed under Iran’s election laws. Two of those disqualified included moderate [principlists](https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/960350/%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%87-%D8%B9%D9%84%DB%8C%E2%80%8C-%D9%85%D8%B7%D9%87%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C%E2%80%8C-%D9%86%DA%AF%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86-%DA%86%D9%87-%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%AF)

[\(https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/960350/%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%87-%D8%B9%D9%84%DB%8C%E2%80%8C-%D9%85%D8%B7%D9%87%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C%E2%80%8C-%D9%86%DA%AF%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86-%DA%86%D9%87-%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%AF\)](https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/960350/%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%87-%D8%B9%D9%84%DB%8C%E2%80%8C-%D9%85%D8%B7%D9%87%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C%E2%80%8C-%D9%86%DA%AF%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86-%DA%86%D9%87-%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%AF) Ali Motahhari and Mahmoud Sadeghi, who were willing to work with Rouhani supporters including the [Moderation and Development \(https://www.saat24.news/news/483125/%D8%AD%D8%B6%D9%88%D8%B1-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%AA%D8%B5%D9%85%DB%8C%D9%85-%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%B9%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86\)](https://www.saat24.news/news/483125/%D8%AD%D8%B6%D9%88%D8%B1-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%AA%D8%B5%D9%85%DB%8C%D9%85-%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%B9%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86) faction in parliament. It is speculated that this disqualification occurred due to their vocal opposition to unfair state practices.

Thus, tomorrow’s voters have many options when it comes to hardliner candidates. The [velayee \(https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4831580/%D8%AA%D8%AE%D9%84%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B1%D8%AF-%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%B4%D8%AF%D9%87-%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%B4%D8%A7-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%AF-%DA%A9%D8%B3%DB%8C-%D8%B2%DB%8C%D8%B1-%D8%AC%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%B2%D9%87-%D8%B4%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D9%86%D9%85%DB%8C-%DA%AF%DB%8C%D8%B1%D8%AF\)](https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4831580/%D8%AA%D8%AE%D9%84%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B1%D8%AF-%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%B4%D8%AF%D9%87-%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%B4%D8%A7-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%AF-%DA%A9%D8%B3%DB%8C-%D8%B2%DB%8C%D8%B1-%D8%AC%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%B2%D9%87-%D8%B4%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D9%86%D9%85%DB%8C-%DA%AF%DB%8C%D8%B1%D8%AF) principlist faction, which dominates the hardline camp, promotes full allegiance to the Supreme Leader of Iran Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The *paydari* front, with nearly two dozen registered candidates, follows the ultra-conservative cleric Ayatollah Mohammad Taqi Mesbah Yazdi as its [spiritual](https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF)

[\(https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF\)](https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF) guide, though this faction is politically disliked by other hardliners for demanding a stronger political platform and due to their insistence on nominating a disproportionately large 60 candidates for Parliament.

Other principlists have tried to revive electoral excitement in their camp through a more progressive conservative political [agenda. \(https://plus.irna.ir/news/83586477/%D9%86%D9%87%D8%B6%D8%AA-%D8%AB%D8%A8%D8%AA-%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%A2%D8%AE%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%DB%8C-](https://plus.irna.ir/news/83586477/%D9%86%D9%87%D8%B6%D8%AA-%D8%AB%D8%A8%D8%AA-%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%A2%D8%AE%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%DB%8C)

<https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/713905/%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%AC%D8%A8%D9%87%D9%87-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%BE%DB%8C%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%AA-%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%87-%D9%88-%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86> faction, which claims to offer an innovative vision for change by supporting young

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1398/11/06/2189502/%D8%AC%D8%A8%D9%87%D9%87-%D9%BE%DB%8C%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%AA-%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%87-%D9%88-%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%DA%A9%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AF%DB%8C%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%AC%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%82%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%A8%DB%8C-%D9%88-%D9%BE%D8%A7%DA%A9-%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D9%85%DB%8C-%DA%A9%D9%86%D8%AF> and pure revolutionary candidates to build momentum for growth and development. Other factions following this strategy include the Islamic Revolution Youth, the Society of Young Progressives, and the *iranzameen* Islamic Party.

Conversely, hardliners have also seen the return of old political figureheads who are attempting to lead the principlist camp, including former Mayor of Tehran Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf and former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Both men aspire to run in Iran's next presidential race in 2021, but some [hardliners](#)

<https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF> say that Iran's society, under immense hardships, will not be interested in bringing back to power familiar political figures.

Still, Qalibaf has registered for the parliamentary elections, hoping to become the [legislative](#) <https://plus.irna.ir/news/83586477/%D9%86%D9%87%D8%B6%D8%AA-%D8%AB%D8%A8%D8%AA-%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%A2%D8%AE%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%DB%8C-%DA%A9%D8%AC%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA> body's next speaker by forwarding a list of 30 candidates for his Proud Iran faction. He also boasts a strong professional track record, having served as Tehran's former mayor and as the current Economic Commission Deputy at the Expediency Council. But he too faces [corruption](#) (<https://donya-e-egtesad.com/%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%B4-%D8%B3%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-62/3627714-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%AF-%DA%A9%D9%88%D8%A7%DA%A9%D8%A8%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B7%D9%87%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%82%DB%8C>) charges—this time fielded by the reformists. Qalibaf has dismissed these accusations, stating that they are the result of the many people who want to compete with him and [envy](#) (<https://donya-e-egtesad.com/%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%B4-%D8%B3%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-62/3627824-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%A7%DA%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D9%87-%D9%86%D9%81%D8%B1-%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D9%88%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%AA-%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%84%D9%86%D8%AF-%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%86%D8%AF%D9%87%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%A7-%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%AF%DB%8C%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B1%D8%A3%DB%8C-%D9%85%DB%8C-%D8%A2%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF-%D8%B1%D9%82%DB%8C%D8%A8-%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%B2%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%85>) him. He supports the progressive conservatives, otherwise known as the [neo-principlists](#)

<https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF>

[https://donya-e-
eqtesad.com/%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%B4-%D8%B3%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-
62/3627824-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%A7%DA%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D9%87-
%D9%86%D9%81%D8%B1-%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D9%88%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%AA-
%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%84%D9%86%D8%AF-
%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%86%D8%AF%D9%87%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%A7-
%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%AF%DB%8C%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B1%D8%A3%DB%8C-
%D9%85%DB%8C-%D8%A2%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF-%D8%B1%D9%82%DB%8C%D8%A8-
%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%B2%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%85](https://donya-e-
eqtesad.com/%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%B4-%D8%B3%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-
62/3627824-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%A7%DA%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D9%87-
%D9%86%D9%81%D8%B1-%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D9%88%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%AA-
%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%84%D9%86%D8%AF-
%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%86%D8%AF%D9%87%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%A7-
%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%AF%DB%8C%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B1%D8%A3%DB%8C-
%D9%85%DB%8C-%D8%A2%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF-%D8%B1%D9%82%DB%8C%D8%A8-
%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%B2%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%85)) of 30 has 18 candidates under the age of 45.

Ahmadinejad ([https://plus.irna.ir/news/83586477/%D9%86%D9%87%D8%B6%D8%AA-%D8%AB%D8%A8%D8%AA-
%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%A2%D8%AE%D8%B1-
%D8%B1%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%DB%8C-
%DA%A9%D8%AC%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA](https://plus.irna.ir/news/83586477/%D9%86%D9%87%D8%B6%D8%AA-%D8%AB%D8%A8%D8%AA-
%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%A2%D8%AE%D8%B1-
%D8%B1%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%DB%8C-
%DA%A9%D8%AC%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA)) will not run in the parliamentary elections, but nearly two dozen of his former Cabinet members and ministers, mid-level managers, and governors who support him have registered to run for Parliament, forming a new bloc ([https://fararu.com/fa/news/428994/%D8%AC%D9%86%DA%AF-
%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA%E2%80%8C%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%B1%D9%82%D9%87-
%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%AC%D8%A8%D9%87%D9%87-
%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86](https://fararu.com/fa/news/428994/%D8%AC%D9%86%DA%AF-
%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA%E2%80%8C%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%B1%D9%82%D9%87-
%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%AC%D8%A8%D9%87%D9%87-
%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86)) called the People's Coalition in order to win more seats.

Given the internal competition within the hardliner camp, some factions are nevertheless presenting a united front. The Coalition Council of the Islamic Revolution Forces

([https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-
%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-
%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-
%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-
%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-
%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF](https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1346993/%D8%AD%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA-
%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-
%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-
%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%B3-
%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AA-
%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF)), an umbrella group aiming to unite the hardliners, has forwarded the first list of 159 candidates, including a list of the top 30 to run for seats in the capital Tehran. In early February, the council gathered some 7,000 members virtually to compile a final list of 90 top candidates, and another top 10 candidates for key seats to ensure victory. But the council only has so much control over all of Iran's hardline factions (<https://news.gooya.com/2020/02/post-35235.php>). It has warned factions not to be complacent or divided ([https://fararu.com/fa/news/428994/%D8%AC%D9%86%DA%AF-
%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA%E2%80%8C%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%B1%D9%82%D9%87-
%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%AC%D8%A8%D9%87%D9%87-
%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86](https://fararu.com/fa/news/428994/%D8%AC%D9%86%DA%AF-
%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA%E2%80%8C%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%B1%D9%82%D9%87-
%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%AC%D8%A8%D9%87%D9%87-
%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%88%D9%84%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86)) during the elections, but tomorrow will show whether or not this warning is heeded.

The ferocity of reformist-hardline competition to shape the next parliament has dominated the political debates inside Iran and has obfuscated views of popular opinion about the elections. Historically, potential voters facing the immense hardships that now plague Iran can give them cold feet when it comes to placing their hopes in the electoral process. Still, voter turnout is expected to be around 50 percent, slightly lower than the 2016 elections. But more importantly, there is no indication yet that a parliament dominated by hardliners—the likely outcome of these elections—will have a strong platform that can introduce the needed changes in Iranian society. Hardliners may achieve a hollow victory unless they are both united and able to offer real, workable policies that quickly alleviate Iranians' social and economic hardships. ❖

RECOMMENDED



BRIEF ANALYSIS

[Iran Takes Next Steps on Rocket Technology](#)

Feb 11, 2022



Farzin Nadimi

(/policy-analysis/iran-takes-next-steps-rocket-technology)



BRIEF ANALYSIS

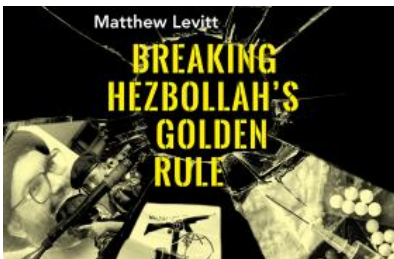
[Saudi Arabia Adjusts Its History, Diminishing the Role of Wahhabism](#)

Feb 11, 2022



Simon Henderson

(/policy-analysis/saudi-arabia-adjusts-its-history-diminishing-role-wahhabism)



ARTICLES & TESTIMONY

[Podcast: Breaking Hezbollah's Golden Rule](#)

Feb 9, 2022



Matthew Levitt

(/policy-analysis/podcast-breaking-hezbollahs-golden-rule)