**Iranium**

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The influence of the economic sanctions imposed by the UN on Iranian people; What do the GDP, inflation, unemployment and child mortality rate tell us about the influence economic sanctions have on the Iranian population?

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# Executive summary

This thesis focuses on the effect economic sanctions have on the population of Iran. It will be measured by the rate of GDP, inflation, unemployment and child mortality. For the past few years, it seems economic sanctions have been affecting the Iranians in a negative way. The research will provide an answer to the question what the influence of economic sanctions is on the population of Iran, when analysing the GDP, inflation, unemployment and child mortality rate.

Economic sanctions may affect the political life of the country, but more importantly they will also affect the population. So, economic sanctions have pros and cons and consequently strong advocates and fierce opponents. This research will not discuss whether sanctions are justified after the balance of advantages and disadvantages has been made, but it will investigate what kind of tool economic sanctions are and which alternatives or variations thereof could be used in the future. The main purpose of the current analysis is looking at the broad effect the sanctions have on the Iranian population as a whole. This explains the motives of the policymakers and the consequences of the sanctions for the Iranian population.

The policy of sanctions is important during the process of imposing sanctions. Imposing sanctions is a forceful tool that should be used with responsibility and carefully. It is also important for the international community to agree upon sanctions in a coherent way. This is important because economic sanctions also cause disadvantages for the countries that impose them upon a state. That is a reason why some member states of the United Nations were not in favour of this measure.

In order to provide more insight and to expose the complexity of international sanctions, some questions and sub questions are added to structure this study. These contain information about the general background of sanctions, antecedents of the sanctions, the establishment of sanctions against Iran, a summary of the sanctions against Iran, the actual influence the sanctions have on Iran and how Iran tries to avoid sanctions.

Based on statistical data, together with data obtained in an interview with Mrs Kazemi, a columnist in de Volkskrant of Iranian origin, and literature research it can be concluded economic sanctions are probably influencing Iran’s economy and hence the Iranian population. The degree of this influence cannot be inferred from the current analysis. Therefor, additional research is warranted.

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# Abbreviations

AIV Adviesraad Internationale Vraagstukken (Advisory Council on International  
 Affairs)   
CFSP Common Foreign and Security Policy  
EEAS European External Action Service  
EU European Union  
GDP Gross Domestic Product  
IAEA International Atomic Energy Agency  
NGO Nongovernmental Organisation   
NPT Non Proliferation Treaty  
TEU Treaty of the European Union  
UN United Nations  
UNICEF The United Nations Children’s Fund  
US United States

# 1. Introduction

This thesis focuses on the influence that economic sanctions have on Iran’s population. More specifically, it analyses the influence on important economic issues like Gross Domestic Product (GDP), inflation, unemployment and child mortality will be analysed in order to have an indication of the impact of economic sanctions.

The study will not analyse the political influence of sanctions. This study will analyse what kind of tool economic sanctioning is, and what it brings about according to the population. The complexity of how sanctions work, the different parties involved and their different interests will be investigated.

It has been chosen to perform a broad and superficial analysis in order to obtain an overall picture of the effects of sanctions on the Iranian population at large. This will provide a better insight in what policymakers have implemented and the impact on the population.

This thesis also shows how important accurate information is, as this research depends on different journalists, newspapers and opinions. Statistics have been used and an interview with Mrs Kazemi has been carried out in order to evaluate and to confirm the reliability of this information.

## 1.1 Central question and sub questions

This thesis will focus on the main question: The influence of the economic sanctions imposed by the UN on Iranian people; What do the GDP, inflation, unemployment and child mortality rate tell us about the influence economic sanctions have on the Iranian population?

The central question will be underpinned by the following sub questions:

* What is the general background of sanctions?
* What went antecedent to imposing sanctions on Iran?
* How were sanctions against Iran established?
* What are the current sanctions against Iran?
* What is the actual influence of sanctions?
* What Iran does per sanction to get round these sanctions and is this successful?

The first sub question explains what economic sanctions are, how sanctions are used in international relations, what the purpose of imposing sanctions is, what kind of sanctions exist and what difficulties the international community faces in applying sanctions.

The second sub question gives information on the international community’s reason to impose sanctions. Reasons are given why Iran would have benefits of possessing nuclear weapons, and hence why the international community suspects Iran of having a nuclear weapon. This sub question will also explain arguments against Iran having a nuclear weapon.

The third sub question refers to the establishment of sanctions against Iran and will show what is involved when imposing sanctions. It will provide information about the Non-Proliferation Treaty, why the West is suspicious of Iran and why Iran wants to develop its nuclear programme all by itself. Factors that influence the reason of imposing sanctions will be explained. For example, the credibility of the NPT being at stake, if the international community would not act while they suspect Iran. Difficulty of consensus will be explained, as it was difficult to reach an agreement on Iran.

The fourth sub question will delineate a summary of the current sanctions against Iran. It will give information on how the sanctions were started and how the aspect of sanctions evolved over time. Two equivocal situations concerning the sanctions will be explained.

The fifth sub question will provide an answer to the central question and includes statistics of the variables of GDP, inflation, unemployment and child mortality. The economic effects and social effects of sanctions will be explained. Not only statistics will contribute to this analysis, but an interview and literature research as well.

The sixth and final sub question will cover how Iran tries to avoid sanctions in order to limit the influence of the sanctions as much as possible.

## 1.2 Methodology

In this section, the tools used for this research will be explained.

Statistics have been used from Trading Economics, which are based on figures provided by the Central Bank of Iran. These statistics have been used because they are the most reliable data. These statistics were also found in governmental and organizational reports, which contributed to the reliable aspect.

The interview of Mrs Kazemi can be found in appendix 1 and was helpful to analyse statistics and gather more background information about Iran. Mrs Kazemi was interviewed because of her knowledge of Iran. She is Iranian herself and writes a lot about the conflict for de Volksrant. Moreover, her family still lives in Teheran and therefore has knowledge of the state of wellbeing of a part of the population in Iran, which is important to answer the central question. An interview with the Iranian Embassy was never realised, but was intended.

Various authors have published information about sanctions, such as Giumelli, F. (2013), van der Meer, S. (2008), Kasting, N., Fite, B. (2012), Katzman, K. (2013), Medalia, J., Belkin, P., Kan, S.A., Kerr, P.K., Mix, D.E., Nikitin, M.B., et al. (2013) and Peterson, S.M. (2012).

The documentary Tegenlicht, of Dutch broadcasting association VPRO (2012) analyses the impact the conflict between Iran and the West has on the Iranian population. Thomas Erdbrink, an NRC and The Washington Post journalist, and Middle-East expert, living in Teheran, provides relevant information for those who do not live in Iran, nor speak Farsi.

Organisations, councils and NGO’s have contributed to this thesis for information such as the report of the Advisory Council on International Affairs of the Netherlands in 2012 and the information of United Nations Security Council (2012) on the resolutions.

Also newspapers like NRC, Trouw, the New York Times and the Guardian, and broadcasting services like BBC and Aljazeera, with correspondents in both the West and in Iran have been consulted. This is relevant for information about both sides in this conflict.

# 2. What is the general background of sanctions?

In order to be able to analyse the sanctions imposed by the United Nations (UN), background information is important in order to delimit the research and to clarify elements in international relations. The following information will explain what sanctions are, what the objectives are to impose sanctions and the reason why sanctions have been imposed on Iran.

## 2.1 Sanctions in international relations

In international relations, a sanction is a measure to control the behaviour of a group or country or to elicit a change in their behaviour. Sanctions are usually imposed when the behaviour of the specific nation is considered as dangerous. In recent years, the development of nuclear weapons has brought the risk of having sanctions imposed by the European Union and the United Nations (European External Action Service [EEAS], 2008, p. 3). The EEAS is a EU department that serves as a diplomatic department focussing on the Common Foreign and Security Policy. The EU and UN have the power to impose sanctions against a nation that is considered to be a possible threat and sanctions are binding for all members (EEAS, 2008, p. 3). Sanctions are usually economic and include trade embargoes or boycotts, freezing of assets, bans on cash transfers, bans on technology transfer and restrictions on travel (EEAS, 2008, p. 3). Examples of sanctions are the boycott of South Africa because of its former apartheid policy; the UN’s sanctions against North Korea because of nuclear weapons; on Iraq in 2003 because of nuclear and chemical weapons; Myanmar which have changed in 2013 and at the moment in Syria especially on arms because of the war (Business and Sanctions Consulting Group Nieuwediep, 2013).

Sanctions or restrictive measures imposed by the UN are explained and secured in Chapter VII of the Charter of the UN, in Article 39 until 51. In these articles, a framework is made of how to proceed in a situation of treat to the peace. Also determinations of a possible threat to the peace are provided and measures to prevent escalation of the conflict (UN, “Repertoire of the practice of the security council”).

The EU applies restrictive measures or sanctions in practice of the specific objectives of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as set out in Article 11 of the Treaty on European Union. According to the website of the European Union, this article states: “*To safeguard the common values, fundamental interests, independence and integrity of the Union in conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter; To strengthen the security of the Union in all ways; To preserve peace and strengthen international security, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Helsinki Final Act , and the objectives of the Paris Charter including those on external borders; To promote international cooperation; To develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms”* (EEAS, 2008; Giumelli, 2013).

## 2.2 Purpose of sanctions

The purpose of the sanctions is to influence the cost-benefit analysis of the country. When the sanctions are effective, the benefits of the challenged policy do not outweigh the disadvantages (Van der Meer, S., 2008, “Economische sancties tegen Iran: successen en tegenvallers”). This is a way to force the government of the country on which sanctions are imposed into a certain policy. In the case of the sanctions on Iran the sanctions have different purposes. First, the purpose of the sanctions is to let Iran freeze its uranium enrichment. This could stop Iran (secretly) building a nuclear weapon, of which the West suspects Iran. Iran still denies that it is working on a nuclear weapon (NRC, 2010,” Nieuwe VN-sancties tegen Iran op komst”). Second, it is likely that the threat of imposing sanctions, or actually moving on to sanctioning, should also work as a discouragement, showing the international community has run out of patience and understanding. Third, the threat of imposing sanctions, or actually moving on to sanctioning, is used as a second last tool to force Iran to stop the enrichment of uranium. Assuming that military intervention would be the last option the international community has to stop Iran from uranium enrichment. This was done during the Iraq war, for example. There is a difference with the first and the last purpose. Giumelli explains that the first purpose was used in the beginning (when sanctions were imposed) as a coercive dominant aspect. The intention changed over time as it transformed into a constraining dominant aspect. Giumelli states this was done in order to cripple the administration policy and potential to continue its nuclear ambitions (Giumelli, 2013, p. 28).

## 2.3 Types of sanctions

There are different sanctions that can be imposed. When the decision of imposing sanctions has been made, a suitable package of measures should be composed that will encourage the desired outcome. According to the EEAS these can contain: diplomatic sanctions such as withdrawal of diplomats, fracture of diplomatic relations and (temporarily) no more official visits; interruption of cooperation with a third country; boycott of sport or cultural events; sanctions on trade or embargoes on arms; financial sanctions, including freezing of funds or economic resources, boycott on financial transactions, limitations on export credits or investment; flight bans; and limitations on admission (2008, p.3).  Imposing sanctions is part of Community law. This means that when national law conflicts with the imposed limitations on a country, the sanctions take precedence over this conflicting legislation of the Member State; international law is superior to national law (EEAS, 2008, p. 3). Council and Commission Regulations are directly applicable and have direct effect for all Member States. It comes with rights and obligations for EU citizens and economic operators (EEAS, 2008, p. 3). Imposing sanctions requires a coherent group of actors. The bigger the group of countries imposing sanctions, the more impact sanctioning will probably have. The EU forms a block (of 27 countries), which forms an effective blockade and a powerful alliance in their policy to impose sanctions. Together with the member states of the UN, sanctions form an even more powerful tool.

## 2.4 Difficulties involving the sanctions in the case of Iran

The joint action of the U.N. does not mean there are no difficulties among member states. China and Russia have different interests and were not keen on sanctioning Iran (Volkskrant, 2012 “China hekelt nieuwe EU sancties tegen Iran”). Their interests will be explained in the chapter about the establishment of sanctions against Iran.

Another point of friction is that China, India and Russia are taking over business of withdrawn UN memberstates. The EU imposes stricter sanctions, which causes empty spaces in business. Companies of countries that implement sanctions less strict, fill these empty spaces. This makes sanctions less effective and causes an imbalance. Another flaw is that some companies sanctioned for their involvement in Iran’s nuclear program, are successfully challenging the sanctions in European courts because European governments have refused to disclose evidence linking companies to the nuclear program (2013, “Next Steps With Iran”). Next to that, the sanctioning of Iran also leads to two equivocal situations. These will be further explained in the chapter: Summary of sanctions against Iran. This chapter will discuss that the penalties imposed are not having constraints, and control of goods to Iran are lacking of enforceability.

# 3. What went antecedent to imposing sanctions on Iran?

## 3.1 Reasons for Iran to have nuclear weapons

According to the international community, Iran has ambitions for a nuclear weapon. Chubin, a Geneva-based specialist on Iranian politics, states Iran has several reasons why it wants to have a secret program. Firstly, because of what happened during the war with Iraq (1980-1988), when Iran was in chaos after the Revolution and was suddenly attacked by Saddam Hussein’s army using chemical weapons (Chubin, 2010, “The Politics of Iran's Nuclear Program”). Chubin explains a nuclear weapon could be used as protection by Iran from any blindsiding in the future (2010, The Politics of Iran's Nuclear Program). Secondly, because five of the world’s nine nuclear powers are nearby or on Iran’s borders; Russia, China, Israel, Pakistan and India. The other nuclear powers are North Korea, the USA, France and the United Kingdom (Medalia, et al., 2013, p. 1). Also Ferdows Kazemi, an Iranian born columnist for the Dutch newspaper De Volkskrant, says it is likely Iran wants a nuclear weapon to be able to protect itself, but “*in the first instance, I think Iran wants a nuclear weapon for other purposes”*. She also explains Iran’s possible struggle for the nuclear weapon. Surrounded by Pakistan and Israel who both have a nuclear weapon and are in cahoots with the United States (U.S.), a nuclear weapon could be used as protection (F. Kazemi, personal interview, September 19, 2013). Chubin states Iran has a strategy of nuclear fencing. According to him, Iran would want to maintain the option to build on a nuclear weapon and at the same time tries to remain within the nuclear treaty (2010, “The Politics of Iran's Nuclear Program”). Thirdly, a military argument according to Martin van Creveld, an Israeli military historian and theorist, is to bring the regional power back in balance. At this moment, Iran is surrounded by U.S. military bases, which could form a possible threat to Iran. Having a nuclear weapon would be a form of defence for Iran. The difficulty according to van Creveld is how to bridge the time until the nuclear weapon is done. He explains that is the reason why Iran keeps *“zigzagging”*; agreeing on a nuclear meeting with the appearance it wants to cooperate and later not agreeing with certain for the West righteous concessions. This is done in order to win time until the nuclear weapon is finished (Tegenlicht, 2012).

US military bases in the Middle East, Aljazeera 2012

The above reasons for Iran wanting a nuclear weapon are believed by the West. Their suspicion is justified as Iran does not open up about their nuclear activities and the sanctions on possible secret developments have now turned Iran’s nuclear programme into a political issue. “*In the already tense environment after disputed 2009 presidential elections, Iran’s nuclear program became a political issue that pitted the hardline regime against both conservatives and the Green Movement opposition”* (Chubin, 2010, The Politics of Iran's Nuclear Program). Iran sees international pressure to suspend its uranium enrichment as a political motivation to keep the country scientifically backward and to deprive their rights under the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) (Chubin, 2010, “The Politics of Iran's Nuclear Program”). The rhetoric of Iranian politicians is to keep support for the regime conserved and the revolutionary sentiment circulate, Chubin explains that the nuclear dispute has become inevitably bound to the political character of the regime itself (2010, “The Politics of Iran's Nuclear Program”).

3.2 Reasons for Iran not to have nuclear weapons  
On the other hand, there are two arguments why Iran should not have a nuclear weapon. First, the highest religious leader of Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei, has issued a fatwa (religious ruling) against nuclear weapons, prohibiting them under Islam. Thomas Erdbrink thinks this fatwa is sincere. He states that the arguments of this fatwa being taqiyya (a religious dissimulation) are annulled because other ayatollahs have assured that the way in which Ayatollah Khamenei has spoken his fatwa, is binding in Islam and therefore not taqiyya. Revoking his statement would be a sin, costing Ayatollah Khamenei his reputation and support (Tegenlicht, 2012). Also Kazemi assures the fatwa is binding: *“His fatwa is technically binding for the Shiite Muslim society and credible as he does not speak of a fatwa that often”* (Kazemi, 2013, “De fatwa van ayatollah Khamenei is bindend: weg dus met kernwapens”). It should be taken into account that Ayatollah Khamenei is the highest authority of Iran. If a nuclear weapon is to be found, this would likely result into the shattering of his position and of the Islamic republic (Tegenlicht, 2012).

Second, there is no evidence found by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to assume Iran is making a nuclear weapon. After inspections of the IAEA and International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), no nuclear weapon is found (Adviesraad Internationale Vraagstukken [AIV], 2012, p. 17). However, Julian Borger makes a striking statement in his blog in the Guardian. According to him, the rest of the world assumes that *“Iran's nuclear activities extend well beyond what is necessary to meet their civil nuclear needs”* (2012, “Would a nuclear Iran really trigger a new arms race in the Middle East?”). This would explain the West’s concern about Iran’s intentions. On the one hand Iran has good reasons for a nuclear weapon, does not give openness about their nuclear programme and assumptions are made their nuclear activities are much more than needed for civil nuclear purposes. Opposite to that, the IAEA has found no evidence of a nuclear weapon. Israeli politicians, backed by the US, do not abide this information of the IAEA. Israeli politicians keep emphasizing that Iran has a nuclear weapon. According to the Advisory Council on International Affairs, (AIV, 2012) the Israeli intelligence services and security experts are less concerned about Iran’s nuclear weapon. (AIV, 2012, p.15).

Iran’s behaviour consistent with nuclear inspections is defined in most Western literature as vague and indecisive. In 2009, the general director of the IAEA stated that Iran should have notified earlier that it was working on an installation in Qom. Iran announced this when all work was almost finished and replied saying the announcement was on time as no nuclear material in the buildings was yet installed. The IAEA has no concrete evidence that Iran wants to make a nuclear weapon. But the US has feared for many years that Iran eventually wants to accomplish a nuclear weapon, despite their allegation that their nuclear purpose is merely peaceful. According to ElBaradei, former head of the IAEA, the nuclear watchdog remains concerned about the possibility Iran is working on weapons. The IAEA keeps demanding Iran to give more openness about their nuclear plans (NRC, 2009, “Atoomwaakhond mag op inspectie in Iran”).

But the evidence of Iran having a nuclear weapon is still lacking. There is no proof of Iran building nuclear weapons, only assumptions (AIV, 2012, p.17). Many specialists have their theories about why Iran would like to have nuclear weapons. One school of thought is that when Iran has a nuclear weapon, it cannot be dominated by the US or European countries over oil anymore, or over anything else. Another school of thought is that Iran having nuclear weapons would also bring the military balance back in the region, which is now dominated by US military bases (Tegenlicht, 2012). Another assumption is that Iran could also be taken much more seriously with a nuclear weapon, and could become the regional superpower it wishes to be. These assumptions are all very likely, but cannot be proven.

# 4. How were sanctions against Iran established?

The Non-Proliferation Treaty, a treaty that limits the possession of nuclear weapons, is also signed by Iran, and prohibits the production of nuclear weapons, but allows a civil nuclear program. It stipulates full transparency about the nuclear activities of states in order to keep control of nuclear developments and the compliance of limitations (abnegation of a nuclear weapon). This is supervisioned by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) by means of (mandatory) inspections (Colijn, K. (2010) “Round up Iran: Ko Colijn”). Iran does not give openness about its nuclear development. This development has been kept secret for the eyes of the IAEA-inspectors for more than twenty years. Additionally, Iran wants to have the right to have nuclear energy in case the country runs out of oil. The difference with other countries is that it wants to do it all by itself, from the first step until the last one. They want to be in control of their own nuclear process. That is why the West thinks Iran is doing something in secret that the rest of the world may not see. Iran in return says that the West are unreliable partners to work with. If one day, the West would not agree with Iran’s policy, no technology would be provided which would leave them without energy. Therefore Iran does not wish to be dependent of a second party or country (2012, Tegenlicht.) This is the crux of the matter, together with Iran’s close-tongued nuclear activity. Until now, no nuclear weapon has been found. Iran denies any development of a nuclear weapon. Authorities state the country’s nuclear activity is undertaken for the supply of electricity in case the country runs out of oil (Colijn, K. (2010) “Round up Iran: Ko Colijn”).

The IAEA of the UN has frequently warned the Iranian government that it should provide more openness about its nuclear programme and that it's uranium enrichment (the most worrying activity) should be suspended. The international community finds that Iran does not give enough openness to disprove their suspicion. As Iran did not respond to these calls, the UN imposed economic sanctions (Van der Meer, S., 2008, “Economische sancties tegen Iran: successen en tegenvallers”). Unfortunately, the sanctions imposed on Iran suffer from several factors, which undermine their effectiveness. Firstly Iran’s economic resilience. Secondly, the difficulty of conflicts in interests of different key players, such as the U.S., the EU, China and Russia. Thirdly, the incompatibility of these countries and how to sanction Iran (Giumelli, 2013, p. 28).

## 4.1 International Relations and interests

The task to solve the non-proliferation issue has become more complex, as the West needs to keep two situations in mind: The first situation is Israel who fears a nuclear-capable Iran. Rumours of a possible attack by Israel against Iran could cause an unpredictable war and instability in the whole region. The second situation is inactions of the West could lead to disrupting the plausibility the NPT, and it could also trigger other countries to flout at the NPT and develop nuclear arms themselves. Giumelli states that, even if Iran is responding in an innovative way to the sanctions, the action of the West will invigorate the NPT's credibility. Thereby, the international community does not have the belief that Teheran would cooperate when sanctions are abolished. If Iran does not want to cooperate when pressured, it will not do so either when sanctions are lifted. This makes the degree of sanctioning is crucial in this conflict, as it could escalate in both ways (Giumelli, 2013, pag. 28).

## 4.2 Difficulties of consensus

The most effective way of sanctioning is done by the United Nations, as the UN sanctions have pre-eminently a broad international support. In practice, however, consensus of opinion is very difficult to reach. It is the UN Security Council’s attempt since 2006 to obtain a strict sanctions policy toward Iran. But proposals for strict measures are mostly blocked by Russia and China. Both countries have strategic and economic interests, which leads to a milder idea of sanctioning. China imports Iranian oil and both countries export arms to Iran and are interested in investing in Iran’s petroleum sector (Kasting, Fite, 2012). The result is that decision-making in the Security Council on sanctions against Iran is difficult to mobilize. (Van der Meer, S., 2008, “Economische sancties tegen Iran: successen en tegenvallers”).

It is important to note that the discussion on imposing sanctions was not completely unified. The international community should also be careful not causing intern disagreement in order to keep sanctioning Iran. As China for example dislikes the current sanctions. China finds that sanctioning Iran makes the conflict more complex and does not create a fundamental solution (Volkskrant, 2012 “China hekelt nieuwe EU sancties tegen Iran). As explained before, the international community has many ways of putting pressure on a country.

## 4.3 Reason of moving on to sanctions

The reason why the international community started imposing sanctions is not clearly answered in literature. It is likely that after many years of trying to inspect Iran’s nuclear installations, the international community ran out of patience by Iran not fully cooperating. Other aspects that may play a role of sanctioning Iran, is that countries can have their personal reasons to sanction Iran. For the US for example, the occupation of the embassy in 1979 in Teheran forms a sore point. Israel on the other hand, has some benefit in a weak and divided Middle East. It would create fewer possibilities that Arab neighbours will attack Israel. The Gulf States on the other hand, could fear the Iranian influence of Shiites. These are all elements that are important to keep in mind as they have influence in the conflict.

# 5. What are the current sanctions against Iran?

## 5.1 Beginning of imposing sanctions

In August 2002, Iran’s secret nuclear programme was revealed. This programme included the enrichment of uranium and the production of heavy water. In September 2002, work began on Iran’s first nuclear reactor at Bushehr. In December 2002 nuclear sites at Arak and Natanz are seen on satellite photographs and Iran agrees to an IAEA inspection (BBC, 2006, Iran rejects Russia nuclear plan). In February 2003 Iran admitted that the revealed information was correct (NRC, 2005, “Rusland en Iran bezegelen kernakkoord”). Since that time, the IAEA was charting the size of Iran’s nuclear programme. In September 2003, Iran was given the opportunity (by the IAEA) to prove their position; not developing a nuclear weapon. In November 2003 Iran allows strict inspections and suspends its uranium enrichment. The IAEA concludes there is no proof of a weapon programme.

But in June 2004 the IAEA reprimands Iran for not completely co-operating with nuclear inspections. In November 2004 a deal between Iran and the EU makes Iran suspending its uranium enrichment. In August 2005 Iran rejects EU proposals and resumes work at Isfahan nuclear plant (BBC, 2006, “Iran rejects Russia nuclear plan”). In between these developments, Russia also played a part. In 2006 the Dutch newspaper NRC reported of Russia providing Iran the possibility to move the enrichment programme to Russia.

Finally, one of these last attempts did not work out (NRC, 2006, “Spoedzitting Atoomagentschap over Iran”). Literature research did not provide a clear answer on why the UN finally went over to sanctioning. It is likely that the international community’s patience of Iran not cooperating had run out. Sanctions are also likely to be imposed in order to scare Iran and to force them to cooperate with the IAEA and the UN.

5.2 Current sanctions:  
Up to now, the sanctions imposed by the Security Council against Iran are:

* Resolution 1696 in July 2006. In this resolution, the international concern about Iran’s nuclear programme was expressed and Iran was asked to come up with evidence that it was not working on a nuclear programme and to give more openness about its nuclear ambitions (United Nations Security Council [UNSC], 2006, “Resolution 1696”).
* Resolution 1737 in December 2006: as Iran did not answer to the UN’s calls in resolution 1696, sanctions were imposed in the form of the freeze of assets, a travel ban and boycott of commodities that may be used for nuclear development. The Council of the European Union decided to extend the sanctions by freezing assets and the travel ban of 23 new targets (UNSC, 2006; Van der Meer, S., 2008; Giumelli, F., 2013).
* Resolution 1747 in March 2007: Amplification of travel ban targets in resolution 1737 and prohibition of goods, items, equipment, materials and technology as specified by the resolution or resolution 1737. Member states were asked to do everything in their power to prevent the entry into or transit through their territories of individuals designated in the resolution (UNSC, 2007; Van der Meer, 2008).
* Resolution 1803 in March 2008: Amplification of travel ban targets in resolution 1747 and prohibition of goods, items, equipment, materials and technology as specified by the resolution or resolution 1747. These are goods that indirectly can also be used for nuclear purposes. This resolution also called for vigilance when trading with Iran, especially international transactions with Iranian banks (UNSC, 2008; Van der Meer, 2008).
* Resolution 1929 in June 2010: Amplification of travel ban targets in resolution 1803 and prohibition of goods, items, equipment, materials and technology as specified by the resolution or resolution 1803. Member states must do everything in their power to prevent the entry into or transit through their territories of individuals designated in the resolution. Member states were also called to inspect cargo from Iran and were authorized to confiscate goods. Financial services to Iran became prohibited, causing Iranian financial activities could no longer be carried out abroad. Doing business with Iranian companies or persons had to be done very carefully. A panel of experts was established to monitor the compliance of sanctions by member states. Full cooperation with this panel was demanded (UNSC, 2010, “Resolution 1929”).
* Resolution 1984 in June 2011: This resolution extended the mandate of the panel of experts for one more year, until June 2012 (UNSC, 2011, “Resolution 1984”).
* Resolution 2049 in June 2012: This resolution extended the mandate of the panel of experts for one more year, until June 2013 (UNSC, 2012, “Resolution 2049”).
* Resolution 2105 in June 2013: This resolution extended the mandate of the panel of experts for one more year, until June 2014 (UNSC, 2013, “Resolution 2105”).

5.3 Character of sanctions over time  
According to Giumelli The Council of the European Union “followed suit” and went regularly beyond the UN mandate by extending the list of targets, by compiling a long and detailed list of technologies that were not supposed to be sold to Iran due to the risk of them being used to support either the nuclear or the missile programme, and by imposing a number of financial restrictions on Iranian Financial institutions and an embargo on oil and gas in 2012 (2013, p. 28). Both Giumelli and Kazemi state these last resolutions of the EU and UN on sanctions were especially harmful to the Iranian economy (Giumelli, 2013; Kazemi, personal interview, September 19, 2013).

The US forms an important centre of international economic relations and thus has indirect financial power. Many multinational companies are listed on one of the US stock exchanges, but even more because the dollar is the international standard currency (since WWII) in trade. Therefore the US Department of Treasury has an important role in the sanction policies against Iran. The US Department of Treasury also makes use of a black list of people and institutions with which no business should be done. Companies doing business in the United States, particularly international financial institutions, have to respect the black list to stay away from punitive measures of the Ministry. The black list consists of various suspicious persons and institutions, including major Iranian banks. This boycott has caused Iran’s international payment transactions a heavy blow. Any financial institution that does business internationally, tries to fight shy of cooperating with these 'contaminated' stated institutions, so as to avoid U.S. sanctions. Several (mainly Western) major banks have rolled back their activities in Iran. This causes difficulties for Iranian companies to perform international payment transactions, which forms an obstacle in order to succeed in foreign trade. This also discourages foreign investors in two ways. Firstly, in a psychological way by the UN resolutions on Iran. Secondly, in a practical way by the paralyzed procedure of payments. (Van der Meer, S., 2008, “Economische sancties tegen Iran: successen en tegenvallers”).

## 5.4 Equivocal situations

Two equivocal situations can be found in the measures though. Firstly, the penalties imposed are not having constraints, as it is not clear what the punitive measure is when sanctions are not applied. Secondly, the third resolution calls up for better control of goods-traffic to Iran, but it is up to the UN member states to implement this in their own way (Van der Meer, S., 2008, “Economische sancties tegen Iran: successen en tegenvallers”). This lack of enforceability arises from international law. Sovereign states make their own rules, but in most cases, there is no organisation that can control or enforce these rules, and sanctions make a country keeping itself to the international obligations. That is why sanctions are used and what the essence of sanctions is (Van der Meer, S., 2008, “Economische sancties tegen Iran: successen en tegenvallers”).

# 6. What is the actual influence of sanctions?

The influence of the economic sanctions imposed by the UN will be measured by GDP, inflation and unemployment rates. An overview of these variables is important to have an image of the current standard of living in Iran. Economic growth, inflation control and employment are three important purposes of macroeconomics and therefore analysed in this research (Armesh, 2010 “Causes of Inflation in the Iranian Economy”). It measures whether the life of the Iranians is influenced by the sanctions and to what extent, including work, buying products in supermarkets and the value of money are basic needs every person should have access to. The purpose of this study is also to research whether sanctions influence these basic needs in a negative way. In order to make an estimation about the influence, the preamble to the sanctions has also been taken into account in the statistics. Therefore, the optimal timespan to investigate these three elements is from 2002 until 2012. This is done to research not only the effect of the sanctions, but also the preamble to it. The mortality rate of children under the age of five is also an important indicator to research the effect of economic sanctions on the Iranian population. This is not like the former statistics, an economic element of society, but an important element in order to see the development of one of the most vulnerable groups of society.

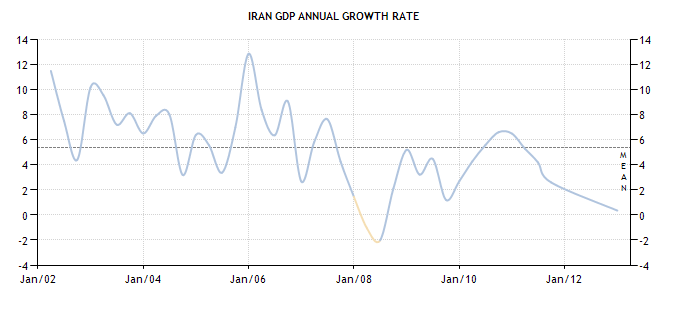
6.1 Economic effects measured by GDP and inflation rate:GDP stands for Gross Domestic Product. It quantifies the total market value of all final goods and services that have been produced in a country for over one year and is equal to total consumer, investment and government spending plus the value of exports, minus the value of imports. This variable is often used to indicate the standard of living in a country, and thus interesting for this research to be analysed. Sectors of Iran’s economy can be found in figure 1.1.  
 **Figure 1.1** (Trading Economics, 2013 “Iran GDP”)

Most important observations in Figure 1.2 are decrease 1 which is the decrease from January 2002 from 11,51 per cent until July 2005 at 3,2 per cent.; peak 1, which is in January 2006 at 12.88 per cent; decrease 2 from 8,4 per cent to 5.59 per cent; peak 2 in October 2010 which was 6,62 and decrease 3 from 6,51 per cent in January 2011 until 0,36 per cent in January 2013. When looking at figure 1.2, Iran’s GDP from January 2006 started decreasing every year. The first big nadir after 2005, took place in 2008. In this period, Iran’s GDP hits the bottom and even goes beyond zero. In the months afterwards, the GDP increases until it hits the mean of almost 6 per cent. From that moment on, Iran’s GDP increases until mid-2010 to 6.62 per cent, with few exceptions in the end of 2009. From January 2011, the GDP seems to fall back more and more until today. Before 2006, Iran’s GDP annual growth rate was not stable, but remained close to the mean and even showed growth until January 2006. From that moment on, growth reduced every year, especially from 2007 to July 2008 where a record low of -2.01 was reached. It can be concluded from this figure, that from January 2006 Iran’s GDP remains unstable and keeps oscillating, showing high peaks and deep valleys. Peak 1 and 2 cannot be explained in the statistics nor by literature. These peaks are remarkable and no direct explanation can be given. Extended research could state what these peaks mean.

What does this chart say about the relation between the sanctions imposed from 2006 and the GDP rate? As explained above, from about 2006 Iran’s GDP growth rate went dropping. This is the same year sanctions were imposed. On first sight, one could consider sanctions influenced the dropping GDP rate. But there are many more elements that influence economic growth and the line shows no constant decrease, so probably more elements are of influence on the decrease. A possible influence and explanation for the great differences in peaks and valleys in Iran’s GDP could be that because of sanctions, a certain sector (oil for example) loses customers by sanctions. This creates the fast decrease like is shown after January in 2008. Afterwards, the trade (in oil) shifts to other clients. China, India and Russia for example, take over business where Western companies are withdrawing from the Iranian market. This could influence the Iranian economy to improve quickly. The same could happen to other businesses besides oil, showing the high peaks and deep valleys in statistics.

The same applies to Iranians payments and trade. This has also been moved to countries where one is less strict on sanctions of the UN or the US. Especially Pakistani banks have gained a large market share in Iran. These financial institutions have little or no (customer) ties in the US or other Western countries and have nothing to lose when violating rules of international sanctions. Iranian financial transactions are only connected with transactions of the rest of the world through an opaque chain of small and larger financial institutions. Critics of economic sanctions therefore point out that this causes even more shady financial practices and illegal transactions are likely to increase.

It should also be noted that in august 2005, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was elected as the president of Iran. Comparable to his predecessor Mohammad Khatami who left Iran’s economy in decent shape with economic growth, Ahmedinejad left with high inflation, no economic growth and a high unemployment rate( Trouw, 2013, “Rohani erft dramatische economie”). His influence on policy making and the economy has probably highly influenced Iran’s economy. Also Kazemi explains this, according to her, Iran’s failing economy is partly influenced by the sanctions imposed by the international community and partly by mismanagement in the Iranian government. Where Khatami kept economic growth going, *“Ahmadinejad really made a mess. He has no knowledge of economics and he is not the most clever person. Ahmadinejad is conservative right according to religion, and conservative left in economics. When these two elements come together, the system is ruined”.* That does not mean he did nothing right. *“Many people on the countryside have a house nowadays by Ahmadinejad’s politics. But he only focussed his politics on the lowest class of society and has forgotten the middleclass. That is why the middleclass became smaller and smaller. Most people from the middleclass have been degraded to the lowest class and the gap between rich and poor has grown. When a government only focusses on the highest or lowest class, the middleclass will disappear”.* She add*s: “There is a very small group that became very rich of Ahmadinejad’s mismanagement, very rich.”* Mismanagement and corruption has always been part of doing business in Iran according to Kazemi, even before the revolution. If these numbers are correct according to what Kazemi can estimate, because of having contact with people in Iran, she states the given numbers on Iran’s economy can be correct or *“it even could be worse”* (F. Kazemi, personal interview, September 19, 2013).

**Figure 1.2  
** (Trading Economics, 2013, “Iran GDP”)

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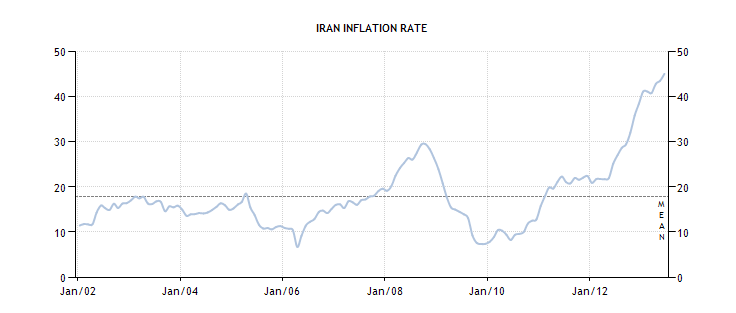
Inflation is the increase of the general level of prices which causes the (internal) value of money to drop and the purchasing power of the people; for the same amount less products can be bought.   
Figure 2.2 shows that the most recent inflation rate in Iran in June of 2013 was determined at 45.10. The figures based on information of Trading Economics of figure 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 are based on figures by the Central Bank of Iran. According to Trading Economics, the most important categories on which money is spent can be found in figure 2.1.

**Figure 2.1**  
(Trading Economics, 2013, “Iran GDP”)When looking at figure 2.2, from 2002 on, the inflation rate in Iran shows a more or less steady rate until 2006. From the lasts months of 2005 until the first months of 2006, Iran’s inflation rate drops down below 10 per cent. From that moment on, the inflation rate keeps increasing, until it hits below 10 per cent again before January 2010. This means that in a timeframe of approximately 1 year (the end of 2008 until the beginning of 2010) inflation has dropped from 30 per cent to below 10 per cent. From the beginning of 2010 on, inflation keeps increasing until it stays stable for a couple of months and close to the mean at the end of 2011 and the beginning of 2012. The inflation rate keeps on increasing, until it hits (according to last measurements in June 2013) 45.10 per cent.

Figure 2.3 shows a comparison of the inflation rate in; Iran, Iraq and the US. The use of this graphic is not to start analysing this chart into detail, but to create reference and a quick idea of the comparison to other countries. The US is a Western country with a reasonable stable inflation rate. It is also important to compare Iran with a country from its own region, Iraq in this case, a neighbouring country of Iran. The inflation rate of Iraq is in some periods even higher than in Iran, as in 2007. This shows that there are other countries with high or unstable inflation rates like Iran, but which do not have sanctions. Therefor it cannot be said that sanctions are the one and the only cause of Iran’s inflation.

First it is important to know how inflation is caused. There are different schools of thought. The Keynesian theory shows that **demand-pull inflation** is caused when the demand for a good or service rises, but the supply remains (initially) the same: *demand goes ↑ and supply remains →.*   
**Cost-push inflation** occurs when the demand for a good or service remains the same, but the supply drops: *demand remains → and supply ↓.* **Adaptive expectations** take place when adverse factors are passed on to other factors, for example the wage/price spiral. This is when the wages go up, prices will go up as well in order to maintain an acceptable margin of profit. If this spiral continues, inflation can arise: *wages go ↑ causing prices to go ↑.* Another school of thought is the monetary theory. Central banks and monetary authorities play a major role in this situation, as they determine the interest rate (Blinder, 2008, “Keynesian Economics”).

What does chart 2.2 say about the relation between the sanctions imposed from 2006 and the increasing inflation rate? When looking at the imposed sanction in 2006, resolution 1737 shows that organisations and persons were put on a ‘black list’ for international financial transactions, and export of goods possible for nuclear use became prohibited (van der Meer, 2008, “Economische sancties tegen Iran: successen en tegenvallers”). During the years, this list has been enlarged with many more boycotts of products, persons and institutions. It is likely that this boycott has hindered Iran’s economy and is influencing Iran’s currency. Products and currency have become scarce. This influences the question and demand of the product, and causes prices to go up. This, in combination with less income of the Iranian government (2012, “Sancties kosten Iran 109 miljoen dollar per dag”), which is likely after boycotts of other countries, makes that sanctions are likely to influence Iran’s economy. Also lack of confidence in the economy can influence investors to stay away and people to search for another currency. This could influence prices to increase which keeps inflation going and might be causing a downwards spiral for Iran’s economy. Fewer investors will remain or become interested, which causes Iran’s economy to worsen, media will report this development, which causes less trust of investors again, and so on. These are all small elements that influence a country’s economy, but when they all come together including economic sanctions, the influence can increase. The same happens with shortage of goods when the demand stays the same or even increases considerably. Additionally, the boycott on export of certain goods can start a difference between demand and supply, which can also trigger inflation. From about January 2009, inflation seems to decrease. An explanation for this decrease has not been found in literature. A likely explanation would be the raise of interest by the Central Bank of Iran, but this is not the case. Trading Economics shows the rate of interest remained 12 per cent from January 2008 until January 2010. A possible influence could have been the elections in Iran of 2009. Unfortunately, this research is too limited to give a possible explanation for this. From January 2010, inflation in Iran rose from under 10 per cent up to 45.10 per cent at the most recent counting in June 2013. When reflecting the so called hyperinflation on economic sanctions, it is likely the sanctions contribute to the economic woes. Especially as Kazemi states that sanctions of 2011 and 2012 really hurt Iran (F. Kazemi, personal interview, September 19, 2013).

**Figure 2.2**(Trading Economics, 2013, “Inflation”)

**Figure 2.3**  
Inflation rate of Iran, U.S. and Iraq from 2005 until 2013 according to data of the Trading Economics.

(Trading Economics, 2013, “Inflation”)

The vast majority of the media report that Iran is economically in crisis. They confirm the statistics in articles about high inflation and little economic growth. Especially on inflation and high food prices many articles can be found. Sabrina Peterson, managing editor at International Affairs, states in her article inflation is one of the most pressing problems in Iran: *“Inflation is not a new problem in Iran, due in part to sanctions in recent years that have resulted in disrupted supply chains and higher operating costs. But spiralling inflation is being felt by ordinary Iranians like never before”* (2012, “Iran’s Deteriorating Economy: An Analysis of the Economic Impact of Western Sanctions” ). The Rial, Iran’s currency, has become less reliable because of its depreciation. The U.S. dollar is becoming a stable investment for the Iranians and a way to fence against future Rial depreciation. This causes more Iranians to demand dollars. The Central Bank of Iran now limits the amount of dollars for individuals going abroad or for well-connected importing companies. A black market for foreign cash arose where, because of the large amount, currency is traded with unofficial exchange rates. According to Peterson in late July, the official rate was 12.260 Rials to the dollar. On the black market the rate was about 19,600 Rials to the dollar (2012, “Iran’s Deteriorating Economy: An Analysis of the Economic Impact of Western Sanctions”). Katzman even announces in his report “Iran Sanctions” of July 2013, the Rial has fallen on unofficial markets in October 2012 to almost 40.000 to one U.S. dollar. He also states in July 2013, the Rials value stands at about 30,000 to the dollar because of confidence in new president Rouhani (2013).

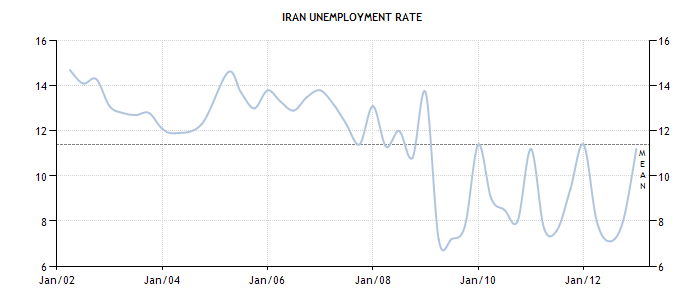
The Dutch newspaper “de Volkskrant” reports that sale of oil (Iran’s most important export product) has also declined. According to a report of the IAEA in 2012, Iran’s export of oil went in October 2012 to 1,3 million. In 2011 the amount of oil drums were a million higher. This loss costs Iran 109 million dollars a day (On the list of biggest oil producers in the world, Iran fell from the second to the fourth place. According to Stevens, professor of think tank Chatham House, even if sanctions immediately would be repealed, it would take years before the Iranian economy would regain its previous level (2012, “Sancties kosten Iran 109 miljoen dollar per dag”). Besides, oil fields have become old and decayed. The problems of the Iranian government will keep increasing when international sanctions remain, stated the Institute for International Finance (IFF) (Volkskrant, 2012,”Sancties zorgen voor recessie in Iran”). The oil export has not only reduced, also the production. Neither is there interest in investing in these oil fields (Volkskrant, 2012, “Sancties kosten Iran 109 miljoen dollar per dag”). The decline means the government earnings are becoming less which causes the Rial to fall. Since the end of 2011, the Rial has lost two thirds of its value against the dollar. Inflation has become more than 31,5 per cent per year and will keep increasing by new measures. These reports show us several developments. First, Iran is losing countries that buy Iranian oil, and thus sanctions are lived up to by member states of the UN. Second, when countries do not buy Iranian oil, the government misses out income. Especially as oil is, according to Trading Economics together with gas, accounting for 82 per cent of Iran’s export revenues one of Iran’s most important export products (Trading Economics, 2013, “Iran Exports”). Third, the fall of the Rial seems a logic and thus likely consequence when earnings of the government are declining. The Volkskrant also reported the prohibition of approximately 2000 so-called luxury products such as make-up, clothes, jewellery, cars, computers and mobile telephones. In this way, the government wants to curb the shortage of foreign currency. According to the minister of trade, Iran can economize 4 billion dollar per year (2012, “Iran verbiedt import make-up, juwelen, computers en gsms”). This could elucidate the Iranian government tries to fill the hole that is arosen when losing income of export in oil. All these developments show sanctions are influencing Iran’s economy. The degree of the influence cannot be measured out of these reports. Therefore, additional research should be done, as this research is limited.

A recent study, commissioned by the Iranian government, showed that at least 55 per cent of the population in cities live below the poverty line. And the Volkskrant speaks of the worst financial crisis in Iran since the war with Iraq (2012, “Waarde Iraanse munt zakt met 40 procent in een week”). Foreign currency is no longer subsidized by the Iranian government, which was done for the import of most products. This means prices of food and other basic products will keep increasing. The prices of some food items have increased by as much as 100 per cent in recent months. Extensive research in newspapers show that Iran is in crisis, especially for food and medicine (Gladstone, 2013; Worth, 2012; Omidi, 2013; , BBC, 2013; Aljazeera, 2013: Peterson, 2012). Or as Sander Terphuis, a Dutch civilian originally from Iran, puts it; “The Iranian people are craving for medicine and cheap food” (Terphuis, 2013, “Oorlogstaal en sancties gaan Iraanse bevolking niet helpen”). These reports show the sanctions are hurting the Iranian economy, which are now affecting the life of the Iranian people in shortages of food and medicine.

As already mentioned above, another result of the sanctions is the deficit of medicine. This is confirmed in news articles and by Kazemi. Some medicines cannot enter the country because they are not exported to Iran any longer. (F. Kazemi, personal interview, September 19, 2013; Borger, Deheghan, 2013; Dehghan, 2012). The result of this development is that patients with (life threatening) diseases cannot be treated and causes that the medicines left are given to patients standing in line for many hours (Erdbrink, 2012, “Iran Sanctions Take Unexpected Toll on Medical Imports”). Because of the medicines crisis, Western governments tried to import medicine into Iran by building waivers. Unfortunately, this is not helping because of the covering restrictions on banking. Therefor Iranian pharmacies cannot pay for medicine as it is impossible to transfer money for any kind of trade. Kazemi states: “*They say sanctions are not affecting medicines, but medicines cannot be imported when banks are boycotted. What pharmaceutical company will send medicine to Iran for free? Besides that, the rules and restrictions of the sanctions are not very clear. Pharmaceutical companies are afraid to send medicine to Iran, they fear to breach sanctions and become fined by the US*”. An anaesthetist told Kazemi patients sometimes wake up during their operations because of the shortage of medicine and cancer patients cannot be treated. According to Kazemi, especially the shortage of medicine and shortage of food puts millions of lives at risk (F. Kazemi, personal interview, September 19, 2013; Borger, 2013,; Dehghan, 2012). This effect could be interpreted as a side effect of financial restrictions, causing an untenable and inhumane situation for ill people that cannot be treated.

A conclusion about the economic effects according to the media, the statistics and the information given by Kazemi is difficult. The reality will probably lay somewhere in the middle. Unfortunately this study is too limited to give a right and clear answer. Besides that, it is difficult to trust statistics or journalists. According to Kazemi, statistics given by Iran itself should not be trusted completely. And journalists cannot always be right. They report about (many) snapshots which do not mirror the daily life of all Iranians in the country. Additionally, Kazemi explains that many journalists live in the north of Teheran, the better part of the city. The south is much poorer and less known because most Western journalists do not live there. These are all elements that can deform the reality. It is likely that sanctions are hurting Iran, especially after the sanctions implemented in 2011 and 2012. This is what Kazemi claims, is shown as the inflation rate keeps rising and the GDP is close to zero, and journalists report of people living in poverty (F. Kazemi, personal interview, September 19, 2013). Additional research could be done to investigate to what extend sanctions are hurting Iran.

6.2 Social effects measured by unemployment and child mortality rate

Unemployment is represented in figure 3.1. Where unemployment until 2010 remained mostly above the mean, the first quarter of the same year shows a deep fall in unemployment. Every year, unemployment seems to go up and falls down later. It is clear that Iran is unable to create enough jobs for its people. From 2009 on, the unemployment rate seems unstable, showing a recurring pattern of high peaks and deep valleys every year. Economic sanctions are likely to have influenced this crisis.   
  
**Figure 3.1**  **(**Trading Economics, 2013, “Unemployment”)

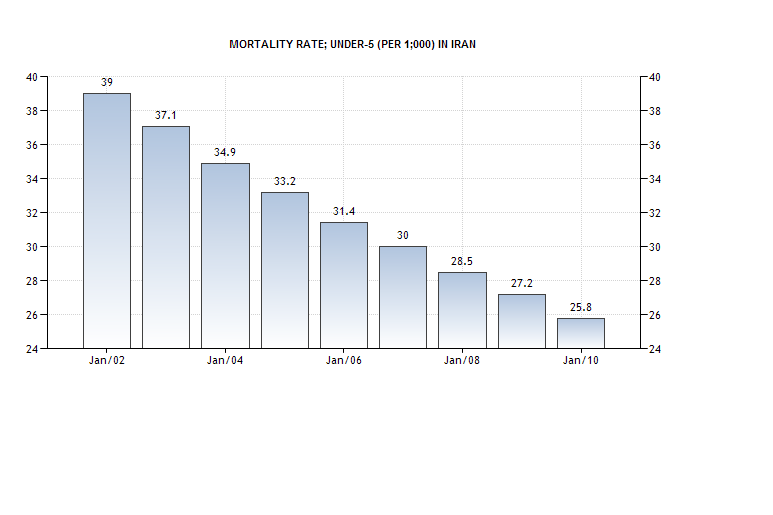
What does this chart say about the relation between the sanctions imposed from 2006 and the unemployment rate? Before sanctions were imposed, Iran’s unemployment rate was already high as is shown from 2002 until 2006. From 2006 on, the unemployment seems to become very unstable, showing peaks and valleys in short periods of time. Especially from 2009 on where unemployment falls from 14 per cent down to 7,2 per cent. Unemployment then seems to rise every year and fall down again, thereafter rises and falls again and so on. This is a very peculiar figure reflecting an inexplicable situation. Kazemi’s finds the figure incomprehensible: *“During the elections of this year, I understood people under Ahmadinejad have changed the way of measuring unemployment. I do not know what parameters they used, but this was also point of discussion during the elections. They have said to Ahmadinejad that the numbers given are not correct and the way of measuring has changed. When the way of measuring changes, it cannot be compared*”. Kazemi concludes that these numbers are not trustworthy.

High unemployment is also reported in many news articles. This could indicate Iran’s economy is getting worse. In July 2012, the Telegraph reports unemployment in Iran is *“soared to an unofficially estimated 35% because factories unable to import vital goods and equipment due to sanctions are forced in turn to sack their workers*” (Osanloo, 2013). Journalists also report about the possibility the unemployment rate is much higher than officially stated. Unemployment is in particular persistent among the youth. According to Iran’s president Rowhani, statistics show that in four years 4.5 million university graduates will be unemployed (Edrbrink, 2013, “Next Steps With Iran”). Erdbrink, reported in 2012 of unemployment rising in Iran and the official rate of unemployment is much lower: “*Iran is grappling with corruption and inflation, and youth unemployment is over 20 per cent, according to official figures, but experts say it is probably much higher*” (2012). More newschannels report of high youth unemployment and probable higher rates than officially reported: “*The country's official unemployment rate is around 12 per cent, but some analysts think the actual figure may be double that”* (Aljazeera, 2013; Reuters, 2012) . The high unemployment rate forms a hopeless future for young Iranians (Erdbrink, Gladstone, 2013; Bozorgmehr, 2012). According to Al Jazeera, a result of the high unemployment rate, especially under the young populations is high educated people are leaving the country. Youth unemployment could be as high as 40 per cent and Iran has one of the world's highest "brain drain" rates (2013). According to literature and Kazemi, it is likely to assume that the unemployment rate is much higher than shown in figure 3.1 (F. Kazemi, personal interview, September 19, 2013). This is also reported by several newspapers ((Trouw, 2013; BBC, 2012; Erdbrink, 2013; Posthumus, 2013). This would denote sanctions are influencing the rise of unemployment.

However, there are examples of other social unfortunate developments together with the high unemployment rate. Kazemi states criminality has risen and forced prostitution as well. She states people feel very unsafe when leaving their house, many fear to be attacked and some people have installed bars in front of their windows so nobody can break into their house. Kazemi gives a personal example and explains: “*These are all terrible developments. My family is lucky to be able to take of themselves and have personnel working for them. Sometimes they say it is not that bad, but for their personnel it is incredibly tough. The lady that helps my sister has four children and had to take surgery after which she had to rest for 6 weeks. She then send her daughter of 16 years old to help, but she should actually be at school*”. For this social economic class in Teheran, which is a very large group, Kazemi states sanctions are a real burden. Another example according to Kazemi is forced prostitution, which is “*very bad*” at the moment. Because this is not registered anywhere, it is difficult to find more information about this. Next to that, as a prostitute in Iran, you will face heavy punishment under Islamic law. She explains the Iranian authorities have a double standard though. “*They are turning a blind eye as well with these things*.” She explains the Islamic regulation of sigheh, a temporarily marriage. It is possible to then marry someone for just one hour, in order to sleep with that person, as long as the end of the marriage is agreed upon before the marriage. Women undergoing a temporarily marriage have no rights and are not seen as the official wife. They cannot inherit, their children are out of wedlock and cannot be registered either. Kazemi stresses many of these marriages are taking place in Iran at this moment and many children of these temporarily marriages end up in orphanages (F. Kazemi, personal interview, September 19, 2013).

There are other examples of disastrous developments. Erdbrink reports: “*divorce, drug abuse and inequality have risen steadily in the last decade*” (Erdbrink, 2012, “Iran Resorts to Hangings in Public to Cut Crime”). The Financial Times reports robberies are rising in Iran because US and EU sanctions are taking their toll on the economy. Power to purchase products has fallen, causing people to become desperate (Bozorgmehr, 2012, “Rial’s woes lead to rise in Iranian crime”.) The New York times says “*officials report a rise in violent crimes, mostly perpetrated by young men attacking their victims with knives to get money and other valuables*”. In January 2013, two young men were publicly hanged because of robbing a man and stabbing him. Also Trouw reports that thefts, burglaries and robberies in Iran are increasing (2012, “More theft, burglary and robbery in Iran”). According to The Economist, “*American and European economic sanctions, have helped to turn ever more Iranians to hard drugs*” (2013, “Drug addiction in Iran:The other religion”). Also RTL Nieuws reports this development in relation with high unemployment (2013, “Iraanse jongeren massaal aan de harddrugs”). According to this information, these developments of criminality and prostitution show people are trying to do everything to make money. Robberies and prostitution are likely to be one of the last possibilities a person with shortage of money would lunge for. Divorce, drug abuse and inequality could be outcomes of a society under high pressure.

Childmortality rate under the age of 5 is also measured as this is one of the most vulnerable groups in society. When a country’s economy is worsening, together with difficulties have obtaining cheap food and medicine, this group of young children could be affected first.

**Figure 4.1** (Trading Economics, 2013, “Mortality Rate”)

The latest report of the mortality rate under-5 (per 1;000) in Iran was in 2010 with a number of 25.80. From 2010 on, no more data have been reported. Therefor another source has been found. The UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (IGME) in cooperation with UNICEF. The estimates of figure 4.2 lay a little lower than figure 4.1, but in general both charts show the decrease of child mortality.

When reading articles about the current situation it could be likely child mortality would increase because of the shortage of medicine and (cheap) food in Iran. Two factors that are of vital importance for this vulnerable group in society. According to Ferdows Kazemi, the charts of Figure 4.1 given by the Central Bank of Iran are correct: “*Figures of life and death are not false. Those are properly registered in Iran*” (F. Kazemi, personal interview, September 19, 2013).

**Figure 4.2**

(Child Mortality, 2013, “Rates”)

Kazemi credits the decrease of child mortality to Ahmadinejad’s improvement of the living conditions on the countryside. Life is more difficult on the country in general. Alimony has been realised for people with low incomes which improved the lives of many people, including children. Ahmadinejad also realised child allowance. According to Kazemi this child allowance caused more births. “*People on the countryside are self-reliant, they do not need that much because they cultivate food themselves. For that matter I think the statistics are correct.*” She states improvement in social services led to the decrease of child mortality (F. Kazemi, personal interview, September 19, 2013).

# 7. What does Iran do per sanction to avoid these sanctions and is this successful?

Despite the relative success of UN sanctions and unilateral U.S. measures, Iran has found way to avoid the trade barriers, to a certain extent.

Firstly, Headquarters of Iranian companies have been moved to neighbouring countries such as the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Qatar. A lot of "middlemen" are used in these countries (often called letterbox companies). In this way, international partners can do business with formally a non-Iranian company, while revenues still end up in Iran. Trade between the United Arab Emirates and Iran has boomed in recent years (Van der Meer, S., 2008, “Economische sancties tegen Iran: successen en tegenvallers”).

Secondly, Iranian payments and trade has been moved to countries where one is less strict on sanctions of the UN or the US. Especially Pakistani banks have gained a large market share in Iran. These financial institutions have little or no (customer) ties in the US of other Western countries, so have nothing to lose when violating international sanctions. Iranian financial transactions are only in connections with the transactions of the rest of the world through an opaque chain of small and larger financial institutions. Critics of economic sanctions therefore point out that this causes only more shady financial practices and illegal transactions will increase (Van der Meer, S., 2008, “Economische sancties tegen Iran: successen en tegenvallers”).

Thirdly, trade in general is shifting. Where large Western companies are withdrawing from the Iranian market, non-Western competition takes their place. China in particular has established a firm foothold in Iran. China's export grew in 2007 up to 70 per cent compared to 2006. Also Russia and other Asian countries take places of Western markets that had to leave because of sanctions. When French oil company Total in 2008 withdrew from Iran, the Iranian minister of oil immediately announced it did not need the West, as plenty of other Asian partners were interested in Iranian oil (Van der Meer, S., 2008, “Economische sancties tegen Iran: successen en tegenvallers”).This means that, as long as there is no strong international consensus on sanctions, countries can continue to do business. Moreover, the increasing economic interests of China and Russia work as a paradox, as it leads to further difficulties regarding new or tougher economic sanctions. The interests they have gained thanks to the current trade with Iran would cross the benefits (Van der Meer, S., 2008, “Economische sancties tegen Iran: successen en tegenvallers”).

According to Kazemi the effect of other countries taking over European businesses is not the same. Iran still misses out a lot of money because of disappeared businesses according to her (F. Kazemi, personal interview, September 19, 2013).

# 8. Conclusion

This thesis focusses on the question what the influence is of the economic sanctions imposed by the UN on the people living in Iran, in the variables of what GDP, inflation, unemployment and child mortality rate tell us. In order to answer this question, different forms of research have been done.

The sub questions of this research provide information about:

* What is the general background of sanctions?
* What went antecedent to imposing sanctions on Iran?
* How were sanctions against Iran established?
* What are the current sanctions against Iran?
* What is the actual influence of sanctions?
* What Iran does per sanction to get round these sanctions and is this successful?

As explained before, the variables of GDP, inflation an unemployment rate show how a country is economically doing, and its people according to the principles of macroeconomics. Child mortality rate has been added as a fourth variable, as this shows how one of the most vulnerable groups of society is doing. This group is likely to be affected first by problems in quality of life and therefor relevant to include in the research. These statistics of Trading Economics are based on figures provided by the Central Bank of Iran. In view of objectivity, it should be taken into account that Iran itself provides these statistics.

The interview of Mrs Ferdows Kazemi was taken for comment and personal view on the research question and on the statistics, as these can be difficult to fathom for an outsider. Also an interview with the Iranian Embassy was intended, but because of email failure, never realised. In view of objectivity, it should be taken into account that a personal interview provides personal information and is thus influenced by personal opinion.

Information gathered from articles, news reports and other media are maintained as extensive as possible and not only limited to Western journalists but also Iranian or Middle East correspondents, journalists and news channels. In view of objectivity, it should be taken into account that these sources of information are influenced by personal opinion of journalists.

A conclusion about the economic effects on the economy according to the media, the statistics and the information given by Kazemi is that sanctions are likely to have influence on the economy of Iran. Especially as variables GDP, inflation and unemployment show certain patterns since the sanctions in 2006 and have even worsened since the last imposed sanctions. This round of sanctions is also labelled in literature as very hurtful for Iran by Giumelly and by Kazemi as well. Additional research on child mortality could explain whether a decline of child mortality is due because of better social services or other influences such as a higher birth rate which could control the mean as well. This has been explained earlier. It could denote influence of sanctions on the people of Iran. How big this influence is, is difficult to measure and cannot be stated out of this research. Neither can be stated this (negative) influence is completely caused by the sanctions imposed by the UN. As figure 2.3 shows, Iraq which is not on sanctions shows a less negative inflation rate, but is also a country in Iran’s region, which is an economically unstable region. A comparison of Iraq shows Iran is still doing worse. On the basis of the statistics, literature and information provided by an interview, no correlation can be measured as this is a literature research. Neither can be measured to what extend negative developments are completely caused by the sanctions.

In order to find a relationship, statistical research could be done with the same statistics. More figures could be added though, such as import and export rate, interest rate and also birth rate. This could give a more decisive answer to what the impact of sanctions are, what the correlation is and how big the influence is.

The goal for the West to impose sanctions on Iran was to stop Iran from enriching uranium. In recent years, this goal has not been achieved and has not improved in any way; Iran has still not opened its development for the IAEA’s inspection. Both parties have drifted more apart from each other. Luckily, recent developments show Iran is trying to approach the US, and luckily, the US has not rejected Rohani’s initiative. Rohani being elected by the people of Iran and seeking contact with the US could denote the country is economically in crisis. And trying to strengthen ties is their last option in order to lift the embargoes and bring economic prosperity to the county. According to Kazemi it is a clear sign that the people of Iran have chosen for Rohani. It shows the Iranians want more freedom and economic welfare.

The attempted rapprochement does not mean the goal of the sanctions has been achieved. There have been no reports of Iran suspending or reducing its uranium enrichment. It is yet to be seen whether Iran and the US, probably together with the international community are able to find a solution.

It can be concluded that, because of the negative influence economic sanctions are likely to have on the population, economic sanctions are a fierce tool in international relations that should be used responsible. As explained before, it should be used as a second last possibility of putting pressure, as military intervention is the last option.

There are some recommendations resulting from this research. First, there were difficulties in Iran communicating its nuclear development to the IAEA as explained in chapter 3.2, p.11. Iran was blamed not to inform the IAEA on time about an installation in Qom. Iran said it had informed the IAEA from the moment nuclear material in the buildings was installed. Regulations about when to inform about nuclear installations in buildings could be made, in order to prevent miscommunication in the future. Stricter rules will also prevent countries to avoid regulations. The clearer the rules are the better control the IAEA has.

Second, the United Nations should have tried to keep the dialogue open with Iran. According to Kazemi, the international community has not pulled out all the stops for preventing economic sanctions. The lack of information on why the UN finally moved on to sanctions could contributes to this idea.

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# Appendix 1: Interview Ferdows Kazemi

19-09-2013

**Vraag: Kun je me wat vertellen over de verschillen in cultuur tussen Iran het Westen? Ook met betrekking tot onderhandelingen en zaken doen?**

Antwoord: Iraniërs zijn veel trotser dan andere volkeren. Ze zijn vooral trots op hun verleden. Om dat ze een imperium geweest zijn en misschien zijn ze nu ook trotser dan voor de revolutie, dat weet ik niet precies. Als een soort van verdedigingsmechanisme, omdat ze het altijd te zeggen hadden in de wereld voor de revolutie. Overal waar we gingen, gingen de poorten voor ons open, als je Iraniër was hoefde je geen visum te hebben bijvoorbeeld. Na de revolutie waren ze nergens welkom en overal worden ze gezien als terroristen en fundamentalisten. Ik denk dat het psychisch werkt en je daardoor terug valt op je verleden en verlangt naar je verleden. Qua manier van zakendoen is het totaal anders dan in het Westen, je hebt daar weinig regels en moet je het hebben van je connecties. Vandaar ook de uitdrukking: “Zeg me wie je kent dan zeg ik wie je bent”. Als je de juiste kanalen hebt, kun je veel succes hebben. In het Westen geldt dat natuurlijk ook, maar je moet je ook altijd houden aan de regels en in Iran kun je die makkelijker omzeilen. Ik weet niet zo heel veel meer van voor de revolutie omdat ik toen zelf nog maar 12 was, maar nu weet ik dat er eigenlijk heel veel corruptie in Iran was. Men betaalde om iets gedaan te krijgen. Na de revolutie zijn dit soort mensen, die dus op een ongezonde manier zaken doen, heel erg rijk geworden, daarom is de kloof tussen arm en rijk zo groot.

**Vraag: Iran wordt omsingeld door basissen van de VS. Ondanks dat Iran een nucleair programma wil voor als de olie opraakt of voor medische ontwikkelingen, zou een nucleair wapen ook kunnen functioneren als bescherming. Wat vindt u van deze theorie?**

Antwoord: In eerste instantie is het denk ik voor vreedzame doeleinden, dat kan niemand ontkennen. Aan de andere kant kun je je ook voorstellen dat als je een vijand als Israël naast je hebt met een atoombom, je je af kunt vragen: “Waarom zou ik het niet doen?”. Al 35 jaar lang heeft de VS zich gefocust op Iran. Afgezien van wat voor regering Iran is, dat bestrijd ik niet, maar er zijn een aantal landen die onder een hoedje spelen met Amerika zoals Pakistan die ook een atoombom heeft, en Pakistan doet niks zonder toestemming van de VS, Israël heeft ook een atoombom. Iran denkt dan “Waarom zou ik het niet mogen hebben?”. Deze theorie is naar mijn mening correct, dat is ook mijn mening. Maar ze hadden ook niet gedacht dat het zo ver zou komen, dat de sancties zo ver zouden gaan dat het de fundamenten van het regime in gevaar zou brengen. Nu is het zo ver gekomen dat de bevolking eigenlijk maar een ding wil en dat is goede betrekkingen met Amerika, als wij maar gered zijn en onder uit die sancties kunnen.

**Vraag: Wat bedoelt u met de fundamenten van het regime?**

Antwoord: Dit dus, de Amerikanen hebben voor een deel hun doel bereikt, dat de bevolking tegen het systeem geworden is. Maar aan de andere kant kun je het ook zo zien dat ze zo druk bezig zijn met hun magen te vullen dat je verder geen tijd hebt om in opstand te komen. De regering heeft wel nog steeds de angst dat er een tijd komt dat het volk toch in opstand komt. Ik zie het niet snel gebeuren maar de Iraanse regering is bang voor alles natuurlijk en willen koste wat het kost blijven. Dat heeft nu wel geleid dat ze tegen Ahmedinejad zeiden: “Je moet weg, we willen je niet meer. We willen nu een regering die zich focust op de buitenlandse politiek en ons gaat redden uit de ellende”. Dus in die zin hebben de Amerikanen wel hun doel bereikt. Maar ik ben blij dat het eventueel toch opgelost gaat worden, dat er een andere regering gekomen is en dat ze Khameni meer aan zijn verstand hebben kunnen brengen en dat het niet verder moet gaan want dit kan zo niet meer. Ik denk dat Khameni ook wat flexibeler wordt. Hij gebruikt nu ook een andere taal dan hij tot nu toe deed, ook als ik zijn tweets lees.

Aan de ene kant heb je een aantal redenen waarom Iran een nucleair wapen zou willen, aan de andere kant heb je de fatwa die is uitgesproken. Waar ligt de waarheid?  
De waarheid is heel simpel, ze zullen zelf nooit een land aanvallen met nucleaire wapens. Daar ben ik echt van overtuigd. Het is puur ter verdediging. De ayatollahs zijn niet dom, ze weten als ze ook maar 1 bom gebruiken, dan zijn ze weg. Dus ze willen ook blijven. Wie wil blijven gaat toch niet een bom werpen. Ik weet zeker dat Iran, zelfs als ze een kernwapen hebben, het nooit zullen inzetten om aan te vallen, alleen maar voor verdediging. Net zoals Noord Korea gedaan heeft, wie durft Noord Korea nu binnen te vallen? Niemand. Als Noord Korea geen kernwapen zou hebben gehad, hadden ze het land al lang binnengevallen. Dus dat is hun angst. Natuurlijk is het ook verschrikkelijk voor de mensen daar die onder een dictator leven. Daarnaast is Iran een trots volk wat graag een atoombom wil hebben. De bevolking staat er niet bij stil dat de atoombom hun democratie en vrijheid in gevaar kan brengen, want dan is de regering, net zoals in Noord Korea, nergens bang voor. Maar zo ver denkt de bevolking niet, op dit moment speelt alleen de gedachte: “De machtige landen in de wereld hebben een kernwapen, waarom wij niet?”. Dus dat is uit trots. Dat is de bevolking. Maar het regime wil het echt ter verdediging.

Is dat de reden dat het atoomagentschap moeite had met het uitvoeren van inspecties?  
Er zijn twee dingen, Khamenei zei in zijn gemeenheid vorig jaar “Met het mes op de keel ga je niet onderhandelen”. Dus Amerika zet Iran het mes op de keel en zegt: “NU kom je met ons onderhandelen”. “Haal het mes weg, en vraag het netjes”. Elke bevolking verdient respect, maakt niet uit wat voor bewind het heeft. Ze leggen sancties op en dan zeggen ze, als je niet komt onderhandelen gaan wij verder met sancties opleggen. Eigenlijk zouden ze moeten stoppen met sancties en dan onderhandelen.

Hebben ze dat niet in het begin gedaan? Iran eerst de mogelijkheid gegeven om, voordat sancties begonnen, inspecteurs van het atoomagentschap toe te laten?  
Nee, Iran is al 35 jaar onder de Amerikaanse sancties. Soms wat mildere sancties en soms wat strengere sancties, maar Amerikaanse sancties zijn er al 35 jaar. Direct na de revolutie. Een heel groot geldbedrag wordt bevroren door de Amerikaanse banken. Dat hebben ze nooit teruggegeven. Dat was direct na de revolutie, terwijl men toen nog niet wist wat voor regime zou komen.

**Vraag: Ik vraag dit omdat ik de resoluties van de sancties helemaal heb doorgespit, en daarin staat iedere keer dat (op een hele officiële, droge manier) dat Iran wordt gevraagd de inspecties toe te laten. Dat is natuurlijk de VN waar Amerika invloed op uitoefent, voor zover ik het had begrepen wordt gesuggereerd dat de VN haar best heeft gedaan om Iran te vragen: “Doe de deuren open en laat ons zien dat je geen nucleair wapen maakt.” Dan gaan we niet verder met het opleggen van sancties. Dit was geloof ik in 2006 voordat de sancties daadwerkelijk werden opgelegd.**

Antwoord: De sancties zijn er altijd geweest. Behalve toen Obama kwam, die heeft toen geprobeerd een deur te openen maar toen was Khameni weer tegendraads. Het blijven trotse mannen, waar haantjes tegenover elkaar zitten dus toen was Khameni diegene die niet soepeler wilde worden. Ik hoop dat ze nu eventueel in New York gaan praten.

**Vraag: De sancties houden eigenlijk boycots in van bepaalde producten, personen en bedrijven in die te maken kunnen hebben met Irans nucleaire programma. Amerika heeft nog een manier van financiële sancties opgelegd. Wat is nu precies het effect van de sancties volgens u?**

Antwoord: Armoede natuurlijk en veel medicijnentekort. Ze zeggen dat de sancties niet op medicijnen zijn, maar medicijnen kunnen niet geïmporteerd worden omdat als je de banken boycot, hoe moet het betalingsverkeer dan plaatsvinden? De medicineren zijn inderdaad niet geboycot zoals wordt gezegd, maar de banken wel. Welk farmacie bedrijf gaat voor niks medicijnen sturen naar Iran. Bovendien zijn de grenzen van het betalingsverkeer niet duidelijk dus zijn farmaceutische bedrijven ook bang om medicijnen of voedsel te sturen en op hun kop te krijgen van de VS. Deze begrippen en grenzen zijn namelijk niet duidelijk gedefinieerd. Een anesthesist vertelde dat patiënten onder narcose wakker worden. Ze krijgen gewoon niet voldoende medicijnen. Kankerpatiënten kunnen nu niet behandeld worden.

**Vraag: Even kijken, dus armoede, medicijnen, stijgende werkeloosheid denk ik ook? Je schreef ook over gedwongen prostitutie en stijgende criminaliteit?**

Antwoord: Ja dat is bizar. Mensen voelen zich heel onveilig als ze naar buiten moeten. Want ze kunnen elk moment aangevallen worden en moeten heel voorzichtig zijn. Veel huizen hebben tralies achter de ramen, of voorzichtigheid met pinnen. Dat zijn allemaal verschrikkelijke ontwikkelingen van vandaag de dag. Met name mensen die het financieel minder hebben is het leven erg zwaar. Mijn familie kan zich gelukkig redden, en heeft mensen in huis die voor hun werken. Mijn familie zegt soms dat het wel mee valt, maar voor hun personeel is het ontzettend zwaar. De hulp van mijn zusje die vier kinderen heeft moest een zware operatie ondergaan waarbij ze 6 weken moest rusten. Zij heeft toen haar dochter van 16 jaar gestuurd om the komen helpen, terwijl zij natuurlijk eigenlijk naar school moest. Voor deze groep van de bevolking, en dat is een groot percentage, is het echt moeilijk om het hoofd boven water te houden. De prostitutie daarnaast, is echt heel erg.

**Vraag: Daar is heel weinig over te vinden.**

Antwoord: Dat klopt, dit staat nergens geregistreerd. Als prostituee krijg je natuurlijk te maken met de islamitische wetten en daar staat een hele zware straf op. Maar de Iraanse autoriteiten hebben ook een dubbele moraal. Ze knijpen ook een oogje dicht met zulke dingen. Er is ook een islamitisch regelgeving dat is Sigheh, dan kun je een tijdelijk huwelijk aangaan. Een tijdelijk huwelijk is dat je met iemand voor één uur naar bed gaan. Dan moet je wel vragen aan die persoon wil je met mij naar bed gaan, enfin dat zeg je niet maar je vraag wil je met mij trouwen. En als de ander dan ja zegt, dan zijn jullie getrouwd. Je moet dan altijd een tijd bepalen. Je kunt zeggen voor goed, of voor een uur. Mensen die een tijdelijk huwelijk aangaan, die hebben helemaal geen rechten. Ze worden niet als de vrouw van gezien. Ze kunnen niet erven, hun kinderen zijn buitenechtelijk en worden ook niet ingeschreven bij gemeenten en bestaan niet. Op dit moment zijn er heel veel van dit soort huwelijken. Veel kinderen uit dit soort tijdelijke huwelijken komen in weeshuizen terecht.

**Vraag: Er wordt beschreven dat waar Westerse bedrijven in Iran weg gaan, Chinese, Russische en Indiase bedrijven de markt overnemen. In hoeverre brengt dat weer wat goeds voor Iran. Brengt het meer voorspoed?**

Antwoord: Het valt eigenlijk wel mee met investeringen van Chinezen in Iran. Het zijn meer goederen van Chinese bedrijven die naar Iran gaan dan dat er investeringen worden gedaan. Westerse investeerders zijn uit Iran weggegaan, maar het is niet zo dat Aziatische investeerders in Iran gekomen zijn. Het is met name export van producten.

**Vraag: Maar het is dus niet zo dat Iran daar financieel echt wat aan heeft?**

Antwoord: Wat ik positief vind is dat er ook veel techniek naar Iran komt, en techniek kan democratie een handje helpen. Men maakte bijvoorbeeld kennis met internet. Bijna ieder huishouden heeft tegenwoordig wel een laptop, zo kan men ook met het buitenland in contact komen. Dit helpt een bevolking dichter bij democratie te komen. Voor democratie in Iran hebben we een mentaliteitsverandering nodig. Er zijn partijen die een revolutie bepleiten en daar ben ik zeker tegen. Revolutie heeft Iran niet nodig. We hebben al een revolutie gehad, en heeft dat geholpen? Nee. Eerst moet een bevolking toe zijn aan democratie. Want op dit moment lijdt Iran onder een moreel faillissement. Hoe wil je dan democratie in dat land krijgen? Laat eerst de mensen bijkomen, deze Rohani wat reformaties in het land brengen en dan pas gaat het stap voor stap. Een vriendin van mij is deze zomer na 20 jaar naar Iran gegaan en vertelde hoeveel Iran na al die jaren veranderd is qua vrijheden. Heel positief. Het is nu niet te vergelijken hoe vrouwen erbij lopen en erbij liepen in Iran. Nauwelijks een hoofddoekje, en ze worden ook steeds creatiever natuurlijk. Nagellak, zonnebrillen, teenslippers met gelakte nagels etc. Er wordt van alles bedacht om hun vrouwelijkheid te uiten. We moeten dus niet te veel willen. Laat men zelf tot de conclusie komen wat ze willen. We hebben geen kant en klaar model voor democratie. Het moet van binnenuit de mensen zelf komen. Ik denk dat er nog een generatie nodig is, en dan zijn de theocraten weg. Welke theocratisch systeem kan de baas over het volk spelen, als het volk het echt niet wil. Laatst had ik het met een vriendin over de voor en nadelen van voor de revolutie en we kwamen tot de conclusie dat over het algemeen men het beter had voor de revolutie. Tot voor de revolutie was men wel religieus maar eigenlijk wist men niet wat religie inhield. Het was dat men moest bidden maar niet heel veel meer. Ik zeg altijd: een fata morgana van een islamitisch regime is een fata morgana. Islam is een fata morgana voor onderdrukte volkeren. Dus ze denken: “Deze religie gaat ons redden van de onderdrukking”. En dat was ook precies het geval met de Iraniërs. Want Khomeini zei als religieus leider: “Ik ga jullie redden uit de onderdrukking”. Islam heeft natuurlijk ook heel veel regels die onderdrukking verwerpt bijvoorbeeld gelijkheid, economische gelijkheid, is in Islam heel sterk. Dus dat is heel verleidelijk voor mensen die in armoede leven en denken de politieke leiders hebben niks voor ons gedaan dus we keren ons tot de ayatollahs. Dat was precies het geval met de Iraniërs. En je kunt niet het ene hebben, en het ander niet, in de zin dat je de voordelen van de Islam wel wilt, maar een hoofddoek dragen doe ik niet. Dus als je kiest voor een Islamitische regering, moet je voor een kant en klaar pakket kiezen. Dat hebben ze gedaan, en toen kwamen ze erachter dat het eigenlijk tegen valt. Want je kunt ook onder een ander systeem die gelijkheid waarborgen zonder die nadelen erbij. Ik ben blij dat die revolutie geweest is, want als de revolutie niet geweest was hadden de mensen nog steeds die grote wens gehad om het te willen. En nu weten ze van binnenuit wat het inhoudt. Natuurlijk heeft de Islam goede kanten, maar de Islam heeft ook slechte kanten. En het voordeel van andere religies is dat zij zich niet met de politiek bemoeien, dus mensen kunnen alleen maar de goede kanten in hun privéleven eruit pikken en handhaven, maar op het moment dat men zich met de religie gaat bemoeien dan kun je niet als individu zeggen ik pak dit element wel eruit en dat element niet. Dat kan niet. Dat is wat er gebeurd is in Iran. En nu zijn ze zelf tot het besef gekomen dus het hele pakket gaat aan de kant. Wij willen weer terug naar een seculiere systeem net als voor de revolutie; we zijn moslims en we willen ook binnen onze muren misschien bidden en daarbij blijft het. We zullen geen atheïsten worden en denken: “alles weg, God weg, etc.”. De jeugd in Iran zegt ook het is mijn zorg niet of God bestaat of niet, of Mohammed bestond of niet, mijn zorg is dat ik nu even wat meer vrijheid krijg.

**Vraag: Hoe kan Iran (onder zulke slechte omstandigheden) de sancties toch zo lang weerstaan?**

Antwoord: Iran is een rijk land door de olie. En het is niet zo dat niemand die olie afneemt. Pas vanaf juli neemt echt niemand het meer af behalve China en nog een aantal landen. Maar daarvoor namen ook nog Westerse landen olie van Iran af. Je hebt nu nog altijd Rusland en China.

**Vraag: Dus de olie is eigenlijk Irans redding?**

Antwoord: Ja. Iran is het tweede grootste land van de wereld met olie. Dus ze zitten eigenlijk op een enorme rijkdom. Het is natuurlijk niet voor niks dat Amerika zich al 35 jaar lang focust op Iran. Ze weten waar ze mee bezig zijn.

**Vraag: Hoe zou de internationale gemeenschap volgens u gehandeld moeten hebben in hun achterdocht naar Irans nucleaire programma?**

Antwoord: De vriendschapsbanden niet verbreken. Blijf praten met elkaar. Ze hebben niet alles uit de kast gehaald om Iran aan de onderhandelingstafel te krijgen. Ze hebben altijd gedreigd, al 35 jaar. En wat ik ook heel erg jammer vindt is dat ze zeggen mensenrechten worden geschonden maar dat is nu naar de achtergrond geschoven. Er hebben zoveel martelingen plaatsgevonden, er zijn zoveel gevangenen, etc. maar daar hoor je de internationale gemeenschap bijna niet over, het gaat altijd maar over kernwapens, kernwapens en kernwapens. Dus de autoriteiten gingen makkelijk hun gang en kregen ook autoriteit van de bevolking: “zie maar, dit is het Westen”. En dan afgeleid van de interne misstanden dus de schending van mensenrechten, zonder opgemerkt te worden door de bevolking omdat mensen zich richten op de sancties en het vullen van hun maag.

**Vraag: Wat voor instrument zijn economische sancties tegen Iran volgens u?**

Antwoord: Als ze op den duur helpen, tegen welke prijs? A helpen ze niet. Hoe lang is Noord-Korea al onder sancties? Hebben ze iets bereikt,? Nee. En in Iran hebben ze ook niks bereikt uiteindelijk. En zelfs als ze iets bereiken, is het dat dan waard? Met onmenselijke instrumenten ga je een onmenselijke regering te lijf, waar ben je mee bezig? Kwaad bestrijd je niet met kwaad.

**Vraag: Hoe had het Westen het moeten aanpakken in de tijd dat Iran na de revolutie erg streng en religieus was. Hadden Westerse bedrijven wel in Iran hun business kunnen beginnen, of waren ze dan tegengehouden door de ayatollahs?**

Antwoord: Ik denk dat ze wel waren tegengehouden door de ayatollahs. Maar er was ook een tijd toen Khatami aan de macht was, die deed toen de deuren weer open. Dus het had gekund. Het Westen had de poging niet moeten staken. Als je dat doet dan kan het niet anders dan dat een land van binnenuit zelf reformeert. Dus dat is wat ik altijd zeg: “haal die druk weg en zie maar wat er gebeurt”. En het gebeurde ook tijdens de regering van Khatami, hij heeft heel veel vrijheden gegeven, die ze niet meer terug konden nemen. Dus die vrijheden die vrouwen toen kregen, toen gebeurde het. En zelf 8 jaar later hebben ze dat nog steeds niet terug kunnen draaien.

**Vraag: Dus Khatami is een voorbeeld van hoe het ook had kunnen gaan?**

Antwoord: Ja precies.

**Vraag: Zouden andere land of de VN in zijn geheel baat hebben bij een Iran wat in crisis verkeerd? Denk je ook dat dat iets is wat achter de economische sancties schuilt?**

Antwoord: Ja natuurlijk. Ze zeggen eigenlijk dat de Iraanse revolutie, en dat is natuurlijk meer een complottheorie maar ik geloof daar wel in, mede dankzij de Amerikanen tot stand gekomen. Omdat Shah in een van zijn laatste speeches vertelde hij dat hij eigenlijk de ambitie heeft om de agent van de regio te worden. Met zo’n vingertje naar Amerika van: “Wij zijn straks sterker dan jij”.

**Vraag: Hoe zie je de toekomst van Iran?**

Antwoord: Ik ben optimistisch. Door de nieuwe president, maar dat niet alleen want dat zijn eigenlijk allemaal poppen. Ik ben optimistisch over de bevolking zelf. Democratie is een proces. En als ik naar dat proces in Iran kijk, en het begint met de bewustwording van de jongeren. Als ik nu zie hoe bewust de jongeren tegenwoordig zijn, dan denk ik: “Dat gaat de goede kant op”. Nog een generatie en dan is het afgelopen met de theocraten.

ANNUAL GDP RATE OF IRAN  
**Vraag: Zijn de daling van GDP alleen te wijten aan de sancties?**

Antwoord: Deels wel en deels ook aan mismanagement van de regering, het zijn niet alleen maar sancties natuurlijk. Ahmedinejad heeft er echt een puinhoop van gemaakt.

**Vraag: Waarom? Want zijn voorganger Khatami heeft het echt veel beter gedaan?**Antwoord: Jazeker, omdat Ahmedinejad daar helemaal geen verstand van heeft. Hij is niet een van de slimste. Ahmedinejad is conservatief rechts in religie, en conservatief links in economie. Dus als die twee bij elkaar komen dan maar je een systeem kapot. Hij heeft ook goede dingen gedaan. Zo hebben bijvoorbeeld heel veel arme mensen op het platteland een huis. Maar hij heeft zich zo gefocust op de onderlaag van de bevolking, dat hij de middenklasse helemaal vergeten is. Daarom is de kloof van de middenklasse steeds kleiner en kleiner geworden. Als de regering zich focust op de hoge klasse of de lage klasse, verdwijnt de midden klasse. Dat is altijd zo. Hij heeft zich gefocust op de lage klasse en de middenklasse is verdwenen, een deel gaat naar de hoge klasse en een deel naar de lage klasse. Maar de meesten zijn naar de lage klasse gegaan. En er is een klein deel dat super rijk is geworden van het mismanagement van Ahmedinejad, echt super rijk.

**Vraag: Denk je dat deze statistieken kloppen of denk je dat het veel erger is? Want dit zijn statistieken van de Central Bank of Iran, klopt dat dan precies?**

Antwoord: Dat is lastig, het kan ook nog erger zijn. Want dit lijken me geen reële cijfers van Iran. Ik durf niet helemaal te vertrouwen op de cijfers van Iran.

INFLATION RATE OF IRAN   
**Vraag: Dat geldt ook voor de inflatie van Iran die momenteel heel hoog is?**

Antwoord: In januari 2010 waren de sancties nog niet zo erg. Het werd heel erg in 2011 en 2012 qua sancties. Dat klopt ook.

**Vraag: Dus dit zou in overeenkomst met de sancties wel redelijk kunnen kloppen?**

Antwoord: Ja dat klopt.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF IRAN  
**Vraag: Hier kon ik zelf niet veel uit opmaken, de werkeloosheid gaat namelijk steeds op en neer. Hoe verklaart u dit? Geeft dit aan dat de cijfers onbetrouwbaar zijn of dat de manier van meten steeds anders is?**

Antwoord: Wat ik begreep van tijdens de presidentsverkiezingen van dit jaar is het dat de mensen onder Ahmedinejad het steeds anders zijn gaan meten. Ik weet niet welke parameters ze gebruikt hebben, maar dit was ook punt van discussie tijdens de verkiezingen. Er is toen tegen hem gezegd: “Het klopt niet de cijfers die je gegeven hebt. Jullie zijn het gewoon anders gaan meten.” En als je het anders gaat meten, kun je het ook niet met elkaar vergelijken. Dus dat klopt gewoon niet. Ik denk dat dat daarmee te maken heeft. Dus die cijfers zijn gewoon niet betrouwbaar.

MORTALITY RATE  
**Vraag: Hoe verklaar je de daling van kindersterfte? Over het algemeen is dat een teken dat het goed gaat met een bevolking?**

Antwoord: Cijfers van geboorte en sterfte liegen niet. Die zijn heel goed geregistreerd in Iran.

**Vraag: Hoe kan dat dan dat ze dalen?**

Antwoord: Wat Ahmedinejad gedaan heeft is op het platteland, waar de levensomstandigheden over het algemeen slechter zijn dan in de steden, de levens te verbeteren. Mensen met een laag inkomen hebben bijvoorbeeld een uitkering gekregen in het hele land wat voorheen niet bestond. Dus wat dat betreft is het verbeterd. Hij heeft ook een soort subsidie ingevoerd, een soort kinderbijslag. Hierdoor zijn op het platteland meer kinderen geboren om dat geld te krijgen. Met name omdat ze op het platteland zelfredzaam zijn. Dus ze hebben niet zoveel nodig want eten verbouwen ze zelf al. Dus wat dat betreft denk ik dat deze cijfers kloppen. Het komt niet door hoge werkgelegenheid dat de sterfte naar beneden gegaan is, maar door sociale voorzieningen.