



Article Type: Research paper

Explaining the Role of the Geopolitical Position of the Crossing on National Security with an Emphasis on the Air Transport of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Javad Amini¹, *Seyed Yahya Safavi Hamami², Ebrahim Romina³, Ribaz Ghorbannejad⁴

1. Department of Geography, SR.C., Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran
2. Political Geography Professor, Imam Hossein University, Tehran, Iran
3. Associate Professor of Political Geography, Tarbiat Modares, Tehran, Iran
4. Department of Geography, SR.C., Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Article Info.

Received: 11/1/2025

Accepted: 5/9/2025

Available Online: 11/9/2025

Extended Abstract

The concept of corridor-based geopolitical positioning plays a pivotal role in shaping national power and, by extension, national security. In geopolitical theory, such positioning refers to the strategic spatial configuration where power competition among geopolitical actors unfolds in relation to geographic space. When a state successfully leverages its corridor-based advantages in this competitive landscape, it gains geopolitical superiority over its rivals, thereby enhancing its national security. This study investigates the role of Iran's corridor-type geopolitical position in the domain of air transportation, emphasizing its potential to serve as a global aerial corridor. Despite possessing a geographically advantageous location that could facilitate international air transit, Iran has yet to capitalize on this latent asset, while

Seyed Yahya Safavi Hamami, Ph.D.

Address: Political Geography Professor, Imam Hossein University, Tehran, Iran.

E-mail: safavi.sr@iauo.com

How to Site:

Amini, J., Safavi Homami, Y. and Roumina, E. Ghorbannejad, R (2025). Explaining the role of the geopolitical position of the crossing on national security with an emphasis on the air transport of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Fundamental and Applied Studies of the Islamic World, 7(2), 1-4.



Authors retain the copyright and full publishing rights.

Published by Iranian Association of Geopolitics. This article is an open access article licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0)

regional competitors have effectively harnessed similar advantages to their benefit.

Iran's geographical location situates it at the crossroads of major continental axes—north-south and east-west—offering a unique opportunity to function as a strategic air transit hub. However, this potential remains underutilized due to a combination of infrastructural, political, and economic constraints. The research employs a descriptive-analytical methodology, relying on library-based documentary sources to assess Iran's current air transport infrastructure and its active air corridors. The findings reveal that Iran's geopolitical position has not yet translated into tangible power generation or enhanced national security. Nevertheless, if this position is strategically developed in alignment with Iran's geographic capacities, it could significantly contribute to both power projection and national security.

Corridor-based positioning inherently generates power by linking demographic, economic, political, military, and cultural spheres of influence. When such positioning holds regional significance, it is classified as geopolitical; when it extends to global relevance, it becomes geostrategic. The aviation industry, by its very nature, is deeply embedded in geopolitical dynamics. Air corridors and transit routes not only facilitate economic exchange but also serve as instruments of strategic influence. The development of air hubs and the expansion of aerial connectivity can directly impact national security by fostering economic resilience, diplomatic engagement, and regional integration.

Iran's geopolitical location offers multiple opportunities to enhance its national power. The aviation sector, in particular, presents a compelling case for strategic investment. In 2019, global aviation statistics underscored the magnitude of this industry: 4.3 billion passengers were transported, accounting for 8.3 trillion revenue passenger kilometers (RPKs). Additionally, 58 million tons of air cargo were moved, equivalent to 231 billion freight ton kilometers (FTKs). On a daily basis, over 100,000 flights carried approximately 12 million passengers and \$18 billion worth of goods. In total, 38 million commercial flights operated across 48,500 air routes, covering 54 million kilometers and accumulating 85 million flight hours. The aviation industry supported 65 million jobs and contributed 3.6% to global GDP, with an economic turnover of

\$2.7 trillion (Aviation Benefit, 2019:6).

These figures illustrate the strategic importance of air transit and its direct correlation with corridor-based geopolitical positioning. The volume and quality of transit flights are closely tied to a country's ability to leverage its geographic location. Iran's potential to serve as a transit hub—connecting northern, southern, eastern, and western air routes—remains largely untapped. By enhancing its air transport capabilities and offering competitive services to transit flights, Iran could generate substantial wealth and global prestige, both of which are critical to national security. According to projections, air travel is expected to double by 2034. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) reports that passenger growth between the Middle East and Africa will continue to rise through 2022, presenting Iran with a strategic opportunity to capitalize on this trend for both economic and security gains.

Transit flights are not only indicators of security but also contributors to its formation. The fluid nature of national security—shaped by political, economic, and strategic variables—means that the quantity and quality of transit flights are influenced by broader geopolitical conditions. Air corridors and overflight routes can generate wealth, mitigate geopolitical isolation, and serve as strategic assets during periods of international sanctions. Activating Iran's corridor-based position, a fixed geopolitical factor, through targeted policy measures and infrastructural development, can have a direct impact on national power and security.

The research findings underscore a critical gap between Iran's potential and its current utilization of corridor-based geopolitical advantages. Despite possessing high transit appeal and significant geographic capacity, Iran has not effectively harnessed these assets to bolster its national security or economic development. Key indicators such as transit flight revenue, number of overflights, airport capacity, geopolitical crises, comparative overflight tariffs, exclusion from regional corridors, and the strategic behavior of rival states all point to a strong correlation between air transit and national security. Iran's potential to increase its transit flight revenue far exceeds its current performance. This untapped wealth could serve as a continuous source of national resilience, directly influencing security, welfare, and national survival.

Several variables influence Iran's ability to generate revenue from its air corridors. These include its corridor-based positioning, territorial expanse, airport capacities, overflight tariffs (which are currently high), route security, availability of parallel routes through neighboring countries, the prevalence of restricted airspaces, political factors such as sanctions and conflicts, and inadequate infrastructure, particularly in air navigation systems. Addressing these challenges through strategic planning and investment could unlock Iran's latent potential as a regional and global air transit hub, thereby reinforcing its geopolitical standing and enhancing its national security.

In conclusion, the study highlights the strategic imperative of transforming Iran's corridor-based geopolitical position into a source of national power. By aligning infrastructural development with geopolitical strategy, Iran can reposition itself within the global aviation network, mitigate regional isolation, and secure long-term economic and security benefits. The findings call for a comprehensive policy framework that integrates geopolitical foresight with aviation sector development, ensuring that Iran's geographic advantages are no longer squandered but strategically leveraged for national gain.

Key words: Iran, transit position, air transportation, national security, national power.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in conducting this research study.