

TERRORISM IN THE U.S.

Program on Extremism

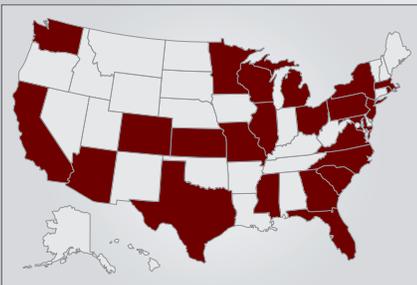
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

May 2016 Update

ISIS IN AMERICA

The average age of those charged is **26**

Their activities were located in **24** states



Approximately **38%** are converts to Islam

88 INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN CHARGED IN THE U.S. on offenses related to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) since March 2014, when the first arrests occurred. Of those:

88% are male

44%

were accused of attempting to travel or successfully traveled abroad

32%

were accused of being involved in plots to carry out attacks on U.S. soil.

56%

were charged in an operation involving an informant and/or an undercover agent.

✦ indicates law enforcement operation

37

HAVE PLEADED OR BEEN FOUND GUILTY

ISIS-Related Apprehensions/Charges in May

AZIJON RAKHMATOV

MAY 11

28



Azizjon Rakhmatov, a 28-year-old Uzbek citizen, was charged with conspiring and attempting to provide material support to ISIS, conspiracy to use a firearm, and travel document fraud. The indictment alleges that between August 2014 and February 2015, Rakhmatov conspired with Abdurasul Hasanovich Juraboev, Akhror Saidakhmetov, Abror Habibov, Dilkhayot Kasimov, and Akmal Zakirov to provide services and personnel to ISIS. Specifically, the indictment alleges that Rakhmatov partially funded aspiring ISIS fighters' travel to the conflict zone. Rakhmatov was arrested on May 11, 2016; his co-conspirators were all arrested in 2015. [Source: DOJ Press Release, Rakhmatov Indictment, Reuters](#)

ALEX HERNANDEZ

MAY 20

31



Alex Hernandez, a 31-year-old inmate at Old Colony Correctional Center in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, was charged with two counts of threatening to kill the President of the United States. According to the criminal complaint, in March 2015 Secret Service agents learned that Hernandez allegedly told an inmate working as a cooperating witness that he "wanted to become a mujahideen" and, upon his release, that he had the ability to obtain weapons and "wanted to kill the President in a lone-wolf style attack." Searches of Hernandez's jail cell revealed images of the 9/11 attacks, Osama bin Laden, and members of ISIS holding assault weapons and the ISIS flag. [Source: DOJ Press Release, Hernandez Criminal Complaint](#)

SAJMIR ALIMEHMETI

MAY 24

22



Sajmir Alimehmeti, a 22-year-old naturalized U.S. citizen from Albania, was charged with providing material support to ISIS and passport fraud. According to the complaint, Alimehmeti, who went by Abdul Qawii, attempted to travel to Syria via London in October 2014 and December 2014, but was denied entry and sent back to the U.S. on both occasions. The complaint alleges that images on Alimehmeti's cellphone and laptop found by U.K. officials in December 2014 established Alimehmeti's support for ISIS. After he was returned to the U.S., Alimehmeti allegedly purchased a number of military style weapons, attempted to obtain a passport under a different name for his own use, and, in the spring of 2016, attempted to assist an undercover FBI agent in his travel to Syria to join ISIS. Additionally, the complaint alleges that Alimehmeti told an undercover FBI agent that and his brother "had our own plan" to join ISIS via Albania, but that his brother had been arrested in Albania in August 2015. Source: [DOJ Press Release](#), [Alimehmeti Criminal Complaint](#), [CBS New York](#)

Apprehensions/Charges Related to Other Jihadist Groups

JAMES GONZALO MEDINA

APR. 29

40



The Department of Justice announced on May 2 that James Gonzalo Medina, a 40-year-old U.S. citizen, was arrested and charged with attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction in a synagogue in Aventura, Florida. The criminal complaint states that the FBI launched an investigation into Medina in late March 2016 "based on his suspected desire to attack a Jewish center/synagogue." On April 29, Medina took possession of an inert explosive device and was arrested while approaching the synagogue. The criminal complaint made reference to numerous foreign terrorist organizations. Source: [DOJ Press Release](#), [Medina Criminal Complaint](#)

Legal Proceedings (ISIS and Other Groups)

ALAA SAADEH

MAY 10

24



Alaa Saadeh, a 24-year-old New Jersey man with dual American-Jordanian citizenship, was sentenced to 15 years in prison and a lifetime of supervised release for conspiring provide material support to ISIS. Saadeh,

with a group of four young men in the New York-New Jersey area, conspired to travel to Syria to join ISIS and facilitated his brother's travel to the conflict zone. Nader Saadeh (Alaa's brother) and Samuel Rahamin Topaz, both members of the cluster, have pleaded guilty and sentencing. The two additional members of the cluster—Munther Omar Saleh and Fareed Mumini—have pleaded not guilty. Saadeh, who was arrested in June 2015, pleaded guilty on October 29, 2015. Source: [DOJ Press Release](#)

JALIL IBN AMEER AZIZ

MAY 18

19

PA

Jalil Ibn Ameer Aziz, a 19-year-old U.S. citizen and resident of Pennsylvania, was charged in a superseding indictment with conspiracy and attempt to provide material support to ISIS; solicitation of a crime of violence; and transmitting a communication containing a threat to injure. According to the criminal complaint, from July 2014 to his arrest in December 2015, Aziz allegedly used at least 57 unique Twitter accounts to disseminate ISIS propaganda, espouse pro-ISIS views, and call for attacks against the U.S. and American citizens. The complaint also alleges that Aziz assisted a number of individuals seeking to travel to Syria. A November 2015 search of Aziz's home identified a backpack containing "five loaded M4-style high-capacity magazines, a modified kitchen knife, a thumb drive, medication and a ski mask." Source: [DOJ Press Release](#), [Aziz Superseding Indictment](#), [Criminal Complaint](#)

ALEXANDER BLAIR & JOHN T. BOOKER

MAY 23

30

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KS

Alexander Blair, a 30-year-old U.S. citizen, pleaded guilty to attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction and attempted destruction of government property. During his plea hearing, Blair admitted to conspiring with John T. Booker, a 21 year-old Kansas resident who pleaded guilty to plotting a terrorist attack targeting Fort Riley military base in Topeka, Kansas, on behalf of ISIS. Booker was arrested April 10, 2015. Source: [DOJ Press Release](#)

BILAL ABOOD

MAY 25

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Bilal Abood, a 38-year-old U.S. citizen and Texas resident, was sentenced to four years in prison and three

years of supervised release for one count of making a false statement to a federal agency. In April 2013, Abood traveled to Syria via Mexico, approximately one month after he was stopped at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport while attempting to make the trip. Upon his return to the U.S. in September 2013, Abood admitted to FBI agents that he had traveled to Syria, but denied supporting any terrorist groups. A review of Abood's computer in July 2014 revealed that approximately one month earlier Abood pledged allegiance to the self-proclaimed ISIS caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi via Twitter. Abood was arrested in May 2015, and pleaded guilty in October 2015. [Source: DOJ Press Release, CBS Dallas-Fort Worth](#)

MAHMOUD AMIN MOHAMED ELHASSAN

MAY 26

26



Mahmoud Amin Mohamed Elhassan, a 26-year-old Sudanese national and Virginia resident, was indicted by a grand jury on charges of conspiracy to provide material support to ISIS, aiding and abetting the provision of material support to ISIS, and making false statements to the FBI. According to the indictment, from approximately August 2015 to his arrest in January 2016, Elhassan allegedly conspired with fellow Virginia resident Hassan Farrokh to provide material support to ISIS. Elhassan was arrested after driving Farrokh to the airport, where

the latter attempted to board a plane to Jordan with the intention of joining ISIS. [Source: DOJ Press Release, Elhassan Indictment](#)

MINH QUANG PHAM

MAY 27

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May 27: Minh Quang Pham, a 40-year-old man, was sentenced to 40 years in prison for terrorism charges related to Pham's activities supporting al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). According to legal documents related to his case, Pham traveled to Yemen from his residence in London in December 2010 order to join AQAP. While in Yemen in 2010 and 2011, Pham allegedly "assisted with the preparation and dissemination" of the AQAP propaganda magazine Inspire, working closely with U.S. citizen Samir Khan, the now-deceased Inspire editor and publisher. Pham also allegedly received explosives training from the late American AQAP ideologue Anwar al Awlaki, who directed him to conduct a suicide bombing in the arrivals area of Heathrow International Airport in London. Pham returned to the United Kingdom in July 2011. He was arrested in June 2012, and extradited to the U.S. in February 2015. In January 2016, Pham pleaded guilty to providing material support to AQAP; conspiring to receive military training from AQAP; and possessing and using a machine gun in furtherance of crimes of violence. [Source: DOJ Press Release](#)