

GW EXTREMISM TRACKER

TERRORISM IN THE UNITED STATES

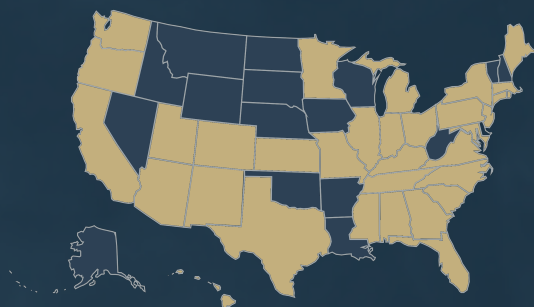
Program on Extremism

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



247 INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN CHARGED IN THE U.S. ON OFFENSES RELATED to the Islamic State (also known as IS, ISIS, and ISIL) since March 2014, when the first arrests occurred. Of those:

Their activities were located in **34** states and the District of Columbia



90% are male

28 the average age of those charged.

213 have pleaded or were found guilty

13.4* the average length of sentence in years.

*Uses 470 months for life sentences per the practice of the U.S. Sentencing Commission

38%

were accused of attempting to travel or successfully traveled abroad.

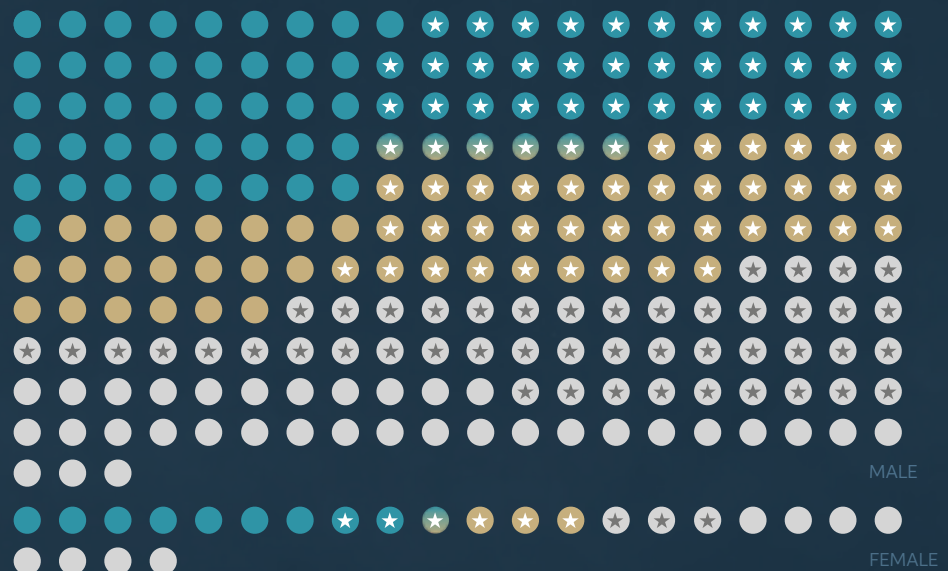
28%

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



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Disclaimer

The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as necessarily representing the official policies, either expressed or implied, of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Arrests (Islamic State)

RIDON KOLA

MAR 14 32  NY

Ridon Kola, a 32-year-old resident of Yonkers, New York, was arrested and charged in the Southern District of New York with making threatening interstate communications. According to the complaint, sent multiple messages over the internet in which he threatened to kill officers of the Yonkers Police Department (YPD) and the Mayor of Yonkers. Between November 2021 and March 2023, Kola allegedly used his social media account to post public threats and send private messages targeting YPD officers, including a message which stated that “Starting tomorrow I will start killing your officers just so u know who is doing it, Ridon Kola Albanian blood and I’m going to kill your fat rat mayor.” On his social media account, Kola allegedly also posted a statement praising Sayfullo Saipov, who committed a terrorist attack in New York City on behalf of IS, as well as numerous statements expressing support for violent jihad and the establishment of a caliphate.

Sources: DOJ Press Release, Criminal Complaint, CBS News

MATEO VENTURA,

JUN 8 18  MA

Mateo Ventura, a 18-year-old resident of Wakefield, Massachusetts, was arrested and charged in the District of Massachusetts with knowingly concealing the source of material support or resources that he intended to go to IS. According to court documents, Ventura provided multiple gift cards to an individual he believed to be an IS supporter with the intention that they be sold on the dark web and that the profits be used to support IS. Between January and May 2023, Ventura

allegedly provided \$705 in gift cards to the purported IS supporter “for war on the kuffar.” Ventura also sent an audio file containing his pledge of allegiance to the leader of IS.

Sources: DOJ Press Release, Affidavit in Support of Arrest Warrant, CBS News

Legal Proceedings (IS & Other Jihadist Groups)

MOCTAR AHMADOU GOUROUDJA AHMADOU

MAR 14 24  TX

Moctar Ahmadou Gouroudja Ahmadou, a 25-year-old citizen of Niger and resident of Stafford, Texas, was convicted in the Southern District of Texas on four counts of possession of a firearm by an alien admitted under a nonimmigrant visa. According to court records, the Federal Bureau of Investigation opened a preliminary investigation into Ahmadou based on his contact information being contained in the telephones used by Adam Alsahli, who conducted an attack using a firearm on the Naval Air Station in Corpus Christi, Texas on May 21, 2020. Subsequent searches of Alsahli’s residence and phones revealed IS propaganda and confirmed that Alsahli was in communication with Ahmadou, who was engaged in ongoing efforts to acquire weapons and develop his skills as a marksman. In May 2021, Ahmadou and an FBI confidential human source traveled to a gun range in Texas, where Ahmadou possessed and fired several pistols and rifles over the course of several days, despite his nonimmigrant visa status not allowing him to possess or use firearms or ammunition. Court records show that Ahmadou’s electronic devices contained IS propaganda, including propaganda videos of beheadings and a sermon from an IS spokesperson.

Sources: DOJ Press Release, Verdict Form

XAVIER PELKEY

MAR 19  ME

Xavier Pelkey, a 19-year-old resident of Waterville, Maine, pleaded guilty in the District of Maine to conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists. Beginning in November 2021, Pelkey conspired with two minors, one in Chicago and one in Canada, to conduct a mass shooting at a Shia mosque in the Chicago area. During the execution of a search warrant of Pelkey's residence, investigators observed a hand-painted IS flag on the wall of Pelkey's bedroom and found a handwritten document that pledged allegiance to IS and which claimed the planned Chicago attack in the name of IS. Three handmade explosive devices were also found in Pelkey's bedroom which he intended to use in the attack.

Sources: [DOJ Press Release, Pelkey Agreement to Plead Guilty, Pelkey Prosecution Version, ABC7](#)

MOHAMED FATHY SULIMAN

APR 25  FL

Mohamed Fathy Suliman, a resident of Gainesville, Florida, pleaded guilty in the Northern District of Florida to one count of attempting to provide material support to IS. According to the plea agreement, Suliman booked a flight from Florida to Egypt in June 2014 with a connecting flight in Istanbul, Turkey, with the intent to enter Syria and join IS. Once he arrived in Istanbul, Suliman purchased a separate flight to Gaziantep, Turkey, using cash and disposing of his SIM card at the airport. From Gaziantep, Suliman boarded a microbus which was going to drive the group to the area of the Turkish-Syrian border that was closest to IS-controlled territory. Suliman and other passengers were intercepted and arrested by Turkish law enforcement, and upon release Suliman requested to be sent to Sudan in order to avoid arrest and prosecution in the United States. In a voluntary interview

at the United States Embassy in Khartoum, Sudan, in 2018, Suliman admitted that he intended to go to Gaziantep in order to join IS, and that he intended to supply translation services to IS's media apparatus.

Sources: [Plea Agreement, Statement of Facts, WCJB](#)

MOAD MOHAMED BENKABBOU

MAY 5  FL

Moad Mohamed Benkabbou, a 23-year-old resident of Kissimmee, Florida, pleaded guilty in the Middle District of Florida to two counts of making false statements to a federal agency. According to the plea agreement, Benkabbou was interviewed by federal agents conducting an international terrorism investigation on August 9, 2022. During this interview, he falsely claimed he had never spoken to a specific individual regarding IS, or about traveling overseas to join IS. According to court records, Benkabbou was engaged in online communications with an FBI undercover employee in which he shared IS propaganda and expressed interest in assassinating a high ranking Florida government official for his pro-Israel positions if he was unable to travel to join IS.

Sources: [DOJ Press Release, Plea Agreement](#)

MOYAD DANNON

JUN 9  IL

Moyad Dannon, a resident of Fishers, Indiana, pleaded guilty in the District of Illinois to attempting to provide material support to IS. According to court records, Moyad and his co-defendant Mahde Dannon sold both illegally-obtained and illegally-manufactured firearms to FBI undercover employees with the belief that they would be shipped to the Middle East and used by IS. Following a trip to the southwest border, Moyad and Mahde agreed to manufacture at least 55 additional fully-automatic "ghost guns" for IS.

Sources: [Petition to Enter Plea of Guilty and Plea Agreement](#)

HAWAZEN SAMEER MOTHAFAR

JUN 13

33



OR

Hawazen Sameer Mothafar, a 33-year-old resident of Troutdale, Oregon, pleaded guilty in the District of Oregon to conspiring to provide material support to IS. Mothafar, who immigrated to the U.S. from Iraq in 2014, was the co-founder of the Sunni Shield Foundation, a pro-IS media organization that created and published violent propaganda promoting IS. Mothafar and the Sunni Shield Foundation received permission from the central media apparatus of IS to begin publishing Al Anfal, an online newspaper which promoted the goals and ideology of IS. Mothafar was in direct communication with IS media officials in Iraq, and regularly received instructions on media production. Through his work with the Sunni Shield Foundation, Mothafar aided other pro-IS media organizations and other IS associates in providing support to IS, providing graphic designs and assisting in the production of IS news and pro-IS material.

Sources: DOJ Press Release, AP News