



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on June 13, 2016

## Obama Administration's Syrian Refugee Processing Numbers Skyrocket

Acting on its commitment to accept 10,000 Syrian refugees by the end of fiscal year 2016 (September 30), the Obama administration has cranked up the number being processed to the rate of 100 refugees a day.

As an indication of how rapid the increase has been, the AP reported in April that only 1,000 Syrian refugees had moved to the United States during the first six months of the fiscal year, which began last October. That report noted that the Obama administration had opened a resettlement center in Amman, Jordan, in February that began interviewing 600 refugees a day to help it meet its goal of processing 10,000 Syrian refugees by the end of fiscal year.

A recent report at Conservative Review stated that only 100-250 refugees per month were admitted for the first six months of fiscal year 2016, but "that number has increased exponentially since April."

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Citing figures from the Refugee Processing Center, the CR report noted that 1,000 refugees were admitted in May and 950 more were admitted during the first eight days of June. The CR report also said:

As we noted in April, the Administration has set up a "resettlement surge center" in Amman, Jordan to process the refugee applications expeditiously. While the American people were promised a vetting process of 18-24 months per refugee, this new "surge" agenda has condensed the process to just three months. Now that this center has been operating for several months, Obama has a ready-made refugee mill that can churn out thousands of applications per month.

The lack of adequate vetting has been a major objection mentioned by U.S. governors opposed to the resettlement of Syrian refugees in their states. Among them is New Hampshire Governor Maggie Hassan, the only Democrat among those governors. Hassan, who is running for the Senate in 2016, said the federal government should "halt acceptance of refugees from Syria until intelligence and defense officials can assure that the process for vetting all refugees ... is as strong as possible."

In an open letter to President Obama last year, Texas Governor Greg Abbott also mentioned security concerns, stating, in part:

I — and millions of Americans — implore you to halt your plans to accept more Syrian refugees in the United States. A Syrian "refugee" appears to have been part of the Paris terror attack. American humanitarian compassion could be exploited to expose Americans to similar deadly





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danger. The reasons for such concerns are plentiful.

The FBI director testified to Congress that the federal government does not have the background information that is necessary to effectively conduct proper security checks on Syrian nationals, Director Comey explained: “We can query our database until the cows come home, but there will be nothing show up because we have no record of them.”

The Center for Immigration Studies (CIS), a non-profit research organization that advocates for greater restrictions on immigration, published a report for June observing that the Obama administration has implemented a special “surge operation” in order to meet its target goal of resettling 10,000 Syrian refugees before the end of this fiscal year. That report quoted Simon Henshaw, principal deputy assistant secretary of the State Department’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, who said during a meeting on the “Refugee Crisis in the Middle East” organized by the Center for Immigration Studies in May:

The Departments of State and Homeland Security worked together to send additional staff to Jordan, and between February and April and the U.S. [Citizenship] and Immigration Service (USCIS) interviewed almost 12,000 applicants who had been referred by UNHCR for refugee resettlement in the United States.

The report’s writer, CIS senior research Nayla Rush, commented that the fact that our government set a new record by admitting 225 Syrian refugees into the United States in a single day “is beside the point.” Rush continued:

What is of importance here is that 12,000 were interviewed in such a short time driven by the urgency to meet the September deadline. Of those, 4,700 have been approved, according to U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Johnson, and an additional 7,900 are awaiting final approval. How many come in a day or a week is more likely related to logistics (plane tickets, welcoming committees, available housing, etc.) and final screening.

The Obama administration is obviously cutting corners and rushing refugees through the resettlement center in unprecedented numbers in order to meet what is basically a political objective of meeting its announced target. Proper vetting and national security are taking a back seat to that objective.

During a House Homeland Security Committee Hearing last October, Representative Lamar Smith (R-Texas) questioned FBI Director James B. Comey, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Jeh Johnson, and Nicholas J. Rasmussen, Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, about the security risk that Syrian refugees pose to Americans and also asked about the vetting process.

When Johnson tried to minimize the threat and suggested that the vetting process was adequate because the refugees tended to “settle into communities that ... embrace them, that are very supportive,” and that these communities tend to be “pretty tight-knit” and “supportive,” Smith replied:

As I say, both the profile and the motive of terrorist organizations, and your admission that there is some risk involved, to me would persuade the administration to go slow, rather than fast, when it comes to admitting individuals who might do us harm.”

As we have seen, since that hearing was held last October, the administration has done just the opposite of what Smith recommended. While only 1,000 refugees came to the United States during the first six months, 1,000 more were admitted during the month of May alone. And the rate as well as the



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numbers are likely to increase even further.

An AP report in April quoted a statement from Gina Kassem, the regional refugee coordinator at the U.S. Embassy in Amman, who told reporters that while the target of 10,000 refugees applies to Syrian refugees living around the world, most will be resettled from Jordan.

“The 10,000 [figure] is a floor and not a ceiling, and it is possible to increase the number,” Kassem said.

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