



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on October 3, 2016

## Muslim Syrian Refugees Vastly Outnumber Christians — 12,587 to 68

Continuing a trend reported in July, recent figures from the State Department Refugee Processing Center indicate a continuation of the wide disparity between Syrian refugees who are Muslim and those who are Christians.

CNSNews reported on July 25, citing State Department data, that of the 12,587 Syrian refugees who have been admitted in Fiscal Year 2016, which just ended on September 30, 12,486 were identified as Muslims, while only 68 were Christians.



Breaking those figures down further, of the 12,587 total Syrian refugees, the vast majority — 12,363 (98.2 percent) — are Sunni Muslims while another 103 are identified simply as Muslims and a further 20 as Shi'a Muslims.

Of the 68 Syrian refugees (0.5 percent) identified as Christians, 16 were Catholics, eight Orthodox, five Protestants, four Jehovah's Witnesses, one Greek Orthodox, and 34 self-identifying simply as Christians.

As [we reported in July](#), also relying on a CNS News story, the same trend of Syrian refugees being overwhelmingly Muslim, with very few Christians among them, was evident at that time. As of July 25, of 6,726 Syrian refugees who had arrived in the United States since the beginning of fiscal year 2016, 6,625 (98.4 percent) were Sunni Muslims, and a mere 23 (0.3 percent) were Christians.

Similar figures were reported in a July 1 article posted by Breitbart News, which noted that of more than 2,300 refugees admitted by the United States in June, 99 percent were Sunni Muslim and just eight were identified as Christian. The report observed that the breakdown of refugees from Syria has drawn criticism because the percentage of Sunni Muslims among them has been far greater than that of the Syrian population as a whole, which is about 75 percent Sunni.

That report quoted from a July 1 article by Robert Spencer, director of Jihad Watch, who stated: "This is social engineering, not humanitarian relief. Syria was 10 percent Christian before the war. The Christians have been targeted and persecuted by several jihad groups. The refugees, then, should be at least 10 percent Christian and probably more than that."

We made a similar observation in our article last November, "[Plight of Christian Refugees Ignored During Refugee Crisis Discussions](#)," noting:

Some conservative political leaders in the United States have pointed out that only three percent of the refugees coming to the United States from Syria are Christian, although Syria is 10 percent Christian. This figure is suspiciously indicative of discriminatory policies on the part of the current administration because Christians in the Middle East have been the victims of widespread terrorism and violence and are especially deserving of refugee status.

In our November article, we observed how the plight of Christians in Syria mirrored what happened in neighboring Iraq. Christians had freedom of religion and freedom from persecution under Saddam



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Hussein. However, since the 2013 U.S.-led invasion that deposed the Iraqi strongman, that was no longer the case, and the country became inhospitable for Christians, with more than half of them fleeing to neighboring countries. The exodus has continued in recent years as thousands of Christian refugees fled from ISIS terrorists in northern Iraq in 2014 and went into exile in the autonomous Kurdistan region. As we noted in our article:

Since the fall of Saddam Hussein in Iraq and the rise of ISIS in both Iraq and Syria, Christians in those lands have been driven from their homes, threatened with death unless they convert to Islam, have had their homes, businesses, and churches burned down, and have even been killed, sometimes by being beheaded. Few of these terrorized Christians have been afforded the opportunity to seek refuge in the United States.

The matter of our country's acceptance of a disproportionately small number of Christian refugees from Syria and failure to recognize their plight was brought up by former Florida Governor Jeb Bush, who was a presidential candidate at the time, on a CNN program last November 15. At that time, Bush proposed that U.S. assistance to Middle Eastern refugees should focus primarily on Christians fleeing the violence: "We should focus our efforts as it relates to refugees on the Christians that are being slaughtered."

However, President Obama rejected the suggestion outright. Speaking at the G20 summit in Antalya, Turkey, the next day, Obama condemned those who wanted a "religious test" for admitting refugees from Syria.

Without mentioning Bush by name, Obama said:

When I hear political leaders suggesting that there would be a religious test for which a person who is fleeing from a war-torn country is admitted, when some of those folks themselves come from families who benefited from protection when they were fleeing political persecution, that's shameful, that's not American. That's not who we are. We don't have religious tests [for] our compassion.

However, Representative Dana Rohrabacher (R-Calif.) issued a perfect response to Obama's statement:

To my political colleagues and all who wag their tongues in the public discourse: The religious test has already been imposed. It was imposed by radical Islamists — not, to be sure, by the entire Islamic world — but impose it these extreme religious misfits unmistakably did.

Rohrabacher also introduced legislation that would require the State Department to designate Christians and Yazidis as targets for genocide, which he said would be a step creating priority refugee status for them.

But, as we noted last summer, the Obama administration has other priorities than the plight of displaced Christians.

The White House press office posted a statement on September 20 confirming that the number of refugees being admitted to this country is on track to increase by 40 percent over the next two years, to 100,000 in 2017.

However, there was no sign at all that the administration would do anything to ensure that the number of Christian refugees accepted would be increased in proportion to their share of the total number of refugees.



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