



Obama Administration's Syrian Refugee Processing Numbers Accelerate

The number of Syrian refugees being processed for entry into the United States has accelerated in recent months, increasing the likelihood that the Obama administration will meet its goal of processing 10,000 such refugees by the end of the fiscal year in September.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported on July 13 that the United States pledged last year to resettle 85,000 refugees from all over the world during the fiscal year that began on October 1, including at least 10,000 Syrian refugees. Fiscal year 2016 ends September 30.

However, noted the report, by March 31, which was halfway through the fiscal year, only 1,285 Syrians had arrived.

Then the pace rapidly increased. By June 30, the number of Syrians had jumped to 5,211, and the total number of refugee admissions had reached 49,791.

The *Journal* report, which cited official government data, stated that of the Syrian refugees admitted this year, 20 percent have been adult men, another 20 percent were adult women and 60 percent were children. The vast majority of the men were part of a family unit, the report indicated, citing a State Department spokesman.

Owing to security checks, it takes about two years for a refugee to be admitted to the United States, noted the report. As a general practice, the vetting includes background checks, multiple interviews of family members (both together and apart), fingerprinting, and iris scans.

The increase in refugee arrivals "does not represent a curtailment, in any way, of our comprehensive and robust security screening," the *Journal* quoted the unnamed State Department spokesman as saying, adding that "Syrian refugees are subject to even more scrutiny" than other refugees.

However, Mark Krikorian, executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS), a non-profit research organization that advocates for greater restrictions on immigration, told the *Journal* that he wasn't confident in the vetting. "They aren't going to admit the next 5,000 Syrians in three months unless they are rushing through the supposedly rigid security screening," Krikorian said.

[Our article posted on June 13](#) presented similar information and observed that the Obama administration had cranked up the number of Syrian refugees being processed to the rate of 100 refugees per day.

In that article, we cited an AP report from April indicating that only 1,000 Syrian refugees had moved to the United States during the first six months of the fiscal year. That report also noted that the Obama administration had opened a resettlement center in Amman, Jordan, in February that began





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interviewing 600 refugees a day to help it meet its goal of processing 10,000 Syrian refugees by the end of fiscal year.

We also cited a report at *Conservative Review* stating that while only 100-250 refugees per month had been admitted for the first six months of fiscal year 2016, “that number has increased exponentially since April.”

The CR report (citing figures from the Refugee Processing Center) 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 as being paramount among his objections, 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 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 rapid increasing in the rate of refugee processing indicates that the Obama administration is cutting corners and rushing refugees through the resettlement center 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.

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