

# Report: More than half of people arrested for Islamic terrorist activities were American citizens

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Sixty percent of people arrested for Islamic terrorist activities between January 2009 and April 2011 were American citizens, according to a new report from Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy. The study of 104 people who were arrested included U.S. and non-U.S. citizens living in America or abroad.

The report, "Analyzing the Islamic Extremist Phenomenon in the United States: A Study of Recent Activity," was authored by Joan Neuhaus Schaan, fellow in [homeland security](#) at the Baker Institute. Jessica Phillips, an intern with the Baker Institute's homeland security and terrorism program, provided research support for the study.

Using data from international and U.S. news reports, general Internet media, public records and official court documents, the researchers set out in November 2010 to analyze information on the status of Islamic extremism in the United States. They also looked at some of the unanswered questions raised by U.S. Rep. Peter King's Committee on Homeland Security hearing, "The Extent of Radicalization in the American Muslim Community and That Community's Response." King, R-N.Y., and chair of the committee, held the hearing March 10, 2011.

"Providing policymakers this data can allow for a factual discussion and diminish rhetoric," Neuhaus Schaan said. "Consequently, policy can be crafted to address current and future needs in the face of change and

adaptation by those determined to bring harm to the United States."

Other key findings from the report include:

- Of the 104 [American citizens](#) arrested for Islamic extremist activities between January 2009 and April 2011, half were born in the U.S., 22 percent were naturalized citizens and 7 percent were dual citizens.
- Of the 104, 5 percent entered the U.S. on a visa.
- Sixty-three percent of converts had a known prior [criminal record](#).
- Of the 14 American converts with a prior criminal history, at least 55 percent had converted to Islam in prison.
- Ninety-two 92 percent were male.
- Sixty-four percent were 30 years old or younger.
- Sixty-six percent had traveled or were in the process of traveling to the Middle East, Somalia, South Asia or the Balkans.
- Of the 104, 70 percent had an association or were attempting an association with an internationally recognized terrorist organization; al-Qaida and its associated branches were cited most.
- Of the 29 persons with no known association to a group, 11 had been active on terrorist-related chat rooms and websites.
- Overall, 38 percent had been involved in this Internet activity.
- Only 10 of the 104 are what the authors would consider "lone wolves"; most in the cohort had ties to others in the group or to an organization.

Information on birthplaces and conversion to Islam was available for 77 of the 104 people arrested. The data revealed that 60 percent of the group was born outside the U.S. Of the 31 U.S.-born persons where religion of origin could be determined , 14 were born into Muslim

families and 17 converted to Islam.

"The Internet and prison conversion are the two biggest new trends that policymakers need to look at more closely," Neuhaus Schaan said.

"We've seen a major change in how people become associated with extremist groups in the past 20 years, and we need to adapt."

The report concludes that approximately two-thirds of those involved in extremist activity are men under the age of 34, and no single, all-encompassing profile can be made of the analysis group of 104. Neuhaus Schaan said that the Baker Institute will continue to compile data and issue an updated report annually.

**More information:** To view the complete report, visit [bakerinstitute.org/publication ... cExtremist110411.pdf](http://bakerinstitute.org/publication ... cExtremist110411.pdf).

A transcript of King's hearing is available at [homeland.house.gov/hearing/hearing-%E2%80%9C-extent-radicalization-american-muslim-community-and-communitys-response%E2%80%9D](http://homeland.house.gov/hearing/hearing-%E2%80%9C-extent-radicalization-american-muslim-community-and-communitys-response%E2%80%9D)

Provided by Rice University

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