

Algeria

Introduction

This page provides a country-specific quantitative overview of the foreign terrorist fighter (FTF) phenomenon. This includes, where available, a breakdown of how many individuals departed from or have returned to the country as well as certain demographics within those groups. The data is laid out below in infographics, you can hover over a data point to see its exact figures. Where not enough data is available the table is grayed out. If you can assist in completing this data, please click fill out the questionnaire on our [contact page](#).

Below this information, the page also sets out in detail a qualitative review of the policy measures utilized by or available to the country in response to the FTF phenomenon and provides a list of additional reading material relevant to the FTF situation in the country.

Last updated: 14 April 2025.

Algeria		
Totals	Total (Departed)	170-525 ¹
	Total (Non-Returned)	0-500 ²
	Total (Returned)	87-150 ³

¹ Foreign Terrorist Fighters, Manual for Judicial Training Institutes Middle East and North Africa, UNODC, 2021, https://www.unodc.org/pdf/terrorism/FTFs_manual_final_version_09.04.2021_ENG.pdf; Steinberg, G. & Weber A., 'Jihadism in Africa: Local Causes, Regional Expansion, International Alliances', SWP Research Paper, June 2015, https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/research_papers/2015_RP05_sbg_web.pdf; Greco, M., 'Algeria's Strategy to Overcome Regional Terrorism', The National Interest, 27 February 2019, <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/algerias-strategy-overcome-regional-terrorism-45742>; Cragin, R.K., 'Preventing the Next Wave of Foreign Terrorist Fighters: Lessons Learned from the Experiences of Algeria and Tunisia', Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 2021.

² 'Algeria was a Close Ally of Assad – and now its fighters are in Syrian Jails' World Crunch, 24 February 2025, <https://worldcrunch.com/world-affairs/syria-algeria-islamists>; 'Sharia law rejects Algeria's request to hand over Algerian fighters fighting alongside Assad and will prosecute them, how many are they?' MC Douliya, 11 February 2025, <https://www.mc-doualiya.com/الشرعيرفضالطلبالجزائريبتسليمالمقاتلينالجزائريينفيسفوفالأسدوسيحاكمهم...فكميبلغعدهم؟>

³ Foreign Terrorist Fighters, Manual for Judicial Training Institutes Middle East and North Africa, UNODC, 2021, https://www.unodc.org/pdf/terrorism/FTFs_manual_final_version_09.04.2021_ENG.pdf; El-Maki, F., 'Defusing the terrorist mindset: a Maghrebi tale?', ECDPM, 8 November 2018, <https://ecdpm.org/great-insights/north-africa-hope-in-troubled-times/defusing-terrorist-mindset-maghrebi/>; Cragin, R.K., 2021.

Nationality (At Departure)	Algerian National	78 ⁴ -500 ⁵
	Dual Citizen	200 ⁶
	Resident	-
Gender	Males (Departed)	-
	Females (Departed)	-
	Males (Returned)	-
	Females (Returned)	4 ⁷
Parent Status	Female Parent (Non-Returned)	-
	Female Non-Parent (Non-Returned)	-
	Female Parent (Returned)	-
	Female Non-Parent (Returned)	-
Current Location (Non-Returned)	Died	275 ⁸
	In Camps	-
	In Prison	0-500 ⁹
	Operational (in region)	-
	Operational (other regions)	-
	Prosecuted (awaiting trial or convicted and in prison)	-

⁴ 'How the Islamic State Rose, Fell and Could Rise Again in the Maghreb', International Crisis Group, 24 July 2017, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/north-africa/178-how-islamic-state-rose-fell-and-could-rise-again-maghreb>.

⁵ 'Algeria was a Close Ally of Assad – and now its fighters are in Syrian Jails' World Crunch, 24 February 2025, <https://worldcrunch.com/world-affairs/syria-algeria-islamists> ; 'Sharia law rejects Algeria's request to hand over Algerian fighters fighting alongside Assad and will prosecute them, how many are they?' MC Douliya, 11 February 2025, <https://www.mc-doualiya.com/الشرعيرفضالطلب...فكميبلغعددهم؟.الجزائريبتسليمالمقاتلينالجزائريينفيصفوفالأسدوسيحاكهم>.

⁶ 'How the Islamic State Rose, Fell and Could Rise Again in the Maghreb', International Crisis Group, 24 July 2017, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/north-africa/178-how-islamic-state-rose-fell-and-could-rise-again-maghreb>

⁷ Cook, J. and Vale, G., 'From Daesh to 'Diaspora' II: The Challenges Posed by Women and Minors After the Fall of the Caliphate', CTC Sentinel, 12:6, July 2019, p. 30-45, <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/CTC-SENTINEL-062019.pdf>.

⁸ Cragin, R.K., 2021

⁹ 'Algeria was a Close Ally of Assad – and now its fighters are in Syrian Jails' World Crunch, 24 February 2025, <https://worldcrunch.com/world-affairs/syria-algeria-islamists> ; 'Sharia law rejects Algeria's request to hand over Algerian fighters fighting alongside Assad and will prosecute them, how many are they?' MC Douliya, 11 February 2025, <https://www.mc-doualiya.com/الشرعيرفضالطلب...فكميبلغعددهم؟.الجزائريبتسليمالمقاتلينالجزائريينفيصفوفالأسدوسيحاكهم>.

	Other (Unknown location)	-
Current Legal Status (Non-Returned)	Prosecuted	-
	Held Without Charges	-
	Citizenship Revoked	-
	Trials in Absentia	-
Current Status (Returned)	Citizenship Revoked	-
	Extradited to Third Country	-
	Prosecuted	88 ¹⁰
	Post-release	-
	In Rehabilitation/Reintegration Program	-
	Not prosecuted	-
Method of Return	Own Initiative	-
	Expelled	-
	Repatriated	0 ¹¹
Returnee Attacks	n/a	2 ¹²

Preventive measures

Algeria does not have a published strategy for preventing violent extremism, though it is known that the Algerian government focuses on regulating the mosques to ensure that these religious institutions are “de-politicized” and “de-ideologized”. To that end, the Algerian government monitors mosques for possible security-related offenses and [prohibits](#) the use of mosques as public meeting places outside of regular prayer hours.

Administrative measures

The Algerian Public Prosecutor may impose **house arrest** upon an individual on grounds of protecting the national security. Legislation suggests that this measure

¹⁰ As of January 2018, 88 Algerian returnees were in prison, Cragin, R.K., 2021

¹¹ ‘Returning Jihadists are mobilizing in Morocco and Algeria’ [Translation], Middle East Online, 13 February 2019, <https://middle-east-online.com/>.

¹² Gustafsson, L. and Ranstorp, M., ‘Swedish Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq: An Analysis of Open-Source Intelligence and Statistical Data’, Center for Asymmetric Threat Studies, 2017, p.14 and 30, <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1110355/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.

may be challenged before the respective court. It is contained in the [Algerian Penal Code](#).

The Public Prosecutor may also impose **short-term detention for questioning outside of a criminal context** for national security purposes. It is suggested that the measure may be challenged in front of the respective court. The regulation is contained in the [Penal Code](#).

Additionally, the Algerian Public Prosecutor may **confine an individual to a designated area** and can **prevent imminent travel**. These measures can be made on grounds of national security. Both regulations are contained in the [Algerian Penal Code](#).

The Algerian authorities have the power to **revoke an individual's nationality**, specifically of those who have gained citizenship through naturalization. This may be based on national security, although, may only be imposed within the first 10 years of the individual gaining Algerian nationality. Legislation suggests this may be challenged in front of the respective court. Important to note is that Algeria has not yet applied this measure in relation to terrorism charges. This regulation is found within [Algeria's Nationality Law](#).

The Public Prosecutor may **prohibit an individual from entering into contact with specific individuals**. This is based on grounds of national security and, as with other measures, the legislation suggests it may be challenged before the respective court.

The Algerian Public Prosecutor may impose several restrictions on the freedom of movement, namely: **restricting an individual's freedom to choose their residence, obligating an individual to report to a police station, imposing exclusion zones, and restricting an individual's freedom to leave the country or temporarily seizing/retaining/cancelling/revoking the individual's passport**. Grounds for these measures are based on protecting national security and may potentially be challenged in front of the respective court. These regulations are contained in the [Penal Code](#).

The National Committee for the Classification of Terrorist Entities has the power to add entities to a **watchlist**. They may add entities for reasons of national security. Legislation allows for this to be challenged in front of the respective Committee. This regulation is contained in [Law 21-384](#).

The National Committee for the Classification of Terrorist Entities may also add entities to a **sanctions list** for national security reasons. This may be challenged in front of the respective Committee. The regulation is contained in [Law 21-384](#).

Criminal and surveillance measures

In Algeria, **incitement** to terrorism is addressed by [Article 87 bis. 4 of the Criminal Code](#), under which providing an apology for, encouraging or financing crimes that qualify as acts of terrorism are punishable.

Recruitment for terrorism is covered by [Article 87\(6\) of the Criminal Code](#) and it punishes an individual who “activates or who enlists abroad in a terrorist or subversive association, group or organization” with a prison sentence of ten to twenty years and a fine. When the acts defined above are intended to harm the interests of Algeria, the penalty is life imprisonment.

[Article 87 bis. 3 of the Criminal Code](#) criminalizes the **membership or participation** in a terrorist organization, as well as punishes anyone who creates, founds, organizes or directs any association, body, group or organization whose purpose or activities fall within the scope of terrorism (defined by Article 87).

Algerian authorities prioritize the monitoring of extremist groups’ websites, in order to identify those in charge of their management and target them. As part of this approach, the government has established a [compulsory requirement](#) for the private sector, among others, to cooperate and provide information relating to money laundering and assets tied to entities or individuals promoting what the Algerian government determines to be “extremist” ideology.

The Algerian government has also closely monitored passenger manifests of inbound and outbound flights for some time and utilizes domestic advance passenger information and passenger name record strategies. As of [2020](#), Algeria has a Passenger Information Unit, which is making active use of INTERPOL databases at ports of entry.

Regionally, Algeria has [cooperated](#) closely with Tunisia to enhance its border security. The two countries established a joint terrestrial and aerial force military operation against ISIS strongholds in the border area. Algeria has also taken a leadership role in AFRIPOL, the Algiers-based AU mechanism for police cooperation, whose mandate is to enhance African police cooperation and prevent transnational crime and terrorism.

Rehabilitation and reintegration measures

Algeria, due to its long civil war (1991-2002) and consequent reconciliation period, has a history in dealing with reintegrating former violent extremists and jihadi fighters. Algeria’s approach is unique in that it combines a soft and hard approach to tackle radicalization and address the reintegration of former fighters into its society. As a result of the reconciliation period following the end of its civil war in 2002, Algeria has implemented a range of conciliatory methods, including demobilization and rehabilitation programs, as well as investing in development in order to reintegrate former violent extremists into society and political life.

As early as from 1999, the Algerian government granted conditional amnesty to Islamist fighters engaged in the civil war against the government, on the condition that they surrender within a set limited timeframe and have not committed grave atrocities, such as rape, murder or planting bombs in public places. Those who did commit such crimes could benefit from reduced prison sentences if they surrendered. Due to the difficulties in collecting evidence against such a large number of fighters, the vast majority of those who voluntarily laid down their arms were pardoned.

Essential to the success of the disengagement policy were the efforts to legitimize the demobilization and reconciliation process among former jihadists. As part of the reconciliation process, former fighters were offered medical and psychological support to cope with their trauma, as well as weapons to protect themselves and their relatives against retaliation from families of victims or from still active jihadi groups. Financial compensation was also provided by the government to a broad category of people described as 'victims of the national tragedy'. This included families of the victims and the missing, families of perpetrators of crimes, as well as members of armed groups victimized by state violence.

Those who repented were also rehabilitated through entrepreneurial activities, supported by social enterprises, industries, and public companies. Former fighters who were unemployed prior to their engagement in jihadi groups were offered new professional opportunities, while others were reintegrated into their previous positions. Professional rehabilitation was crucial to the militants' reintegration into society as it provided them with a sense of belonging and purpose, pride and dignity, as well as a sense of citizenship. It also gave those who had laid down their weapons material and psychological incentives to do so. Financial compensation and job opportunities were intended to limit economic hardship and thus deter recidivism by providing an alternative to jihadism. This approach in the end helped reintegrate 15 000 former fighters. In addition, in 2005, Algeria also adopted the [Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation](#), which provided an exemption from prosecution for members of the security forces and pro-government militias.

This **large-scale national reconciliation effort** has been the 'backbone' of Algeria's (soft) counterterrorism strategy. In today's context, the same measures are being applied to foreign terrorist fighters involved with the Islamic State or local militias active in the Sahel. In exchange for surrendering, Algerian fighters are granted immunity from prosecution, in a coordinated effort with Mali and France that allows surrendering terrorists in the Sahel to move freely to rendezvous points in Algeria's southern provinces. Though much about this program is opaque, there are elements that have been taken from previous experiences or other countries' programs. An important aspect of the Algerian program is that it relies heavily on the community for delegitimizing extremism. This community-based approach to reintegration has been an important element of the reconciliation efforts both after the civil war and today. In addition, Algeria's rehabilitation program aimed at returning fighters from Syria and Iraq has been greatly influenced by [Saudi Arabia's program](#), with regards to the role religion plays in it. In an answer to returning foreign terrorist fighters, Algerian authorities couple traditional judicial mechanisms with religious re-training. The Algerian government encourages imams to regularly and explicitly denounce radical interpretations of Islam that lead to violence and instead focus on preserving an 'authentic Islam' that is based on the fundamental values of tolerance, dialogue, mutual acceptance, respect for differences and peaceful coexistence.

[Additional Resources](#)

Cragin, R.K., 'Preventing the Next Wave of Foreign Terrorist Fighters: Lessons Learned from the Experiences of Algeria and Tunisia', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2021

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