

REFUGEE CRISIS: IS EUROPE FULL UP? **YOU DECIDE**

EUROPEAN UNION

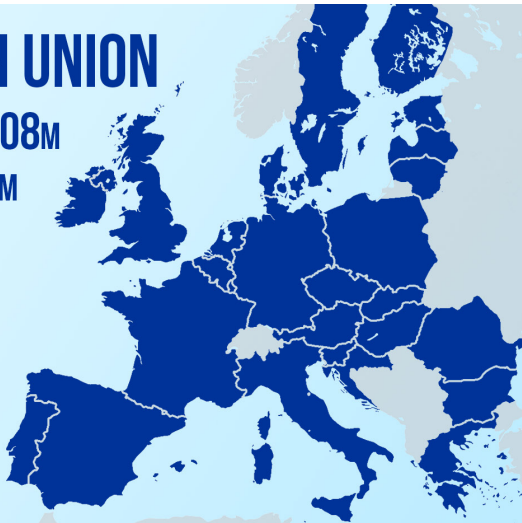
POPULATION: 508M

REFUGEES: 0.6M

LEBANON

POPULATION: 5.8M

REFUGEES: 1M



SOURCE: UNHCR DATA ON SYRIAN REFUGEES

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FOR A EUROPE THAT **WELCOMES REFUGEES**

Europe is failing the test of the refugee crisis. Whether fleeing the Assad regime, the brutality of ISIS or the Taliban, we have an obligation to help those seeking sanctuary build new lives for themselves and their families.

By treating it as a security problem and not a humanitarian one, the European Union has forced refugees into the hands of people smugglers, making their journey all the more life-threatening.

There is an alternative. Europe is not 'full' – far from it. Lebanon, a country geographically half the size of Wales, has taken in over 1 million Syrian refugees, equivalent to 20 per cent of its population.

But Britain's response has been even worse than many other European governments with only around 25,000 Syrians arriving. David Cameron has even attacked other countries

for taking in refugees, saying it created a 'pull factor' and wilfully ignoring the terrible 'push' factors pushing people to Europe.

If the vast sums being wasted on a military response to this humanitarian crisis were put into schools, hospitals, and investing in vital services, we'd all see a benefit.

That's why the debate on Europe and immigration is about the kind of continent we want to live in. Migrants and refugees aren't the cause of any of the big problems we face. But it's easy to blame them instead of our failing economic model.

The Europe we want to see would champion equality, jobs and climate justice. We won't get any closer to it by walking away from the EU this June, but only by working together across borders for a Europe of social justice and human rights.



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