

The Refugee Crisis - Far from over

It has been many months since we've faced images like these:



Yet, the crisis continues. The refugee crisis is still one of the most important issues facing the global community today. The war in Syria has not stopped and arguably is escalating, with Russian intervention and Assad's ruthlessness. The journey to Europe has been made more and more difficult for refugees, with EU countries tightening border control. Croatia, Macedonia and Slovenia have closed their borders to refugees and migrants; while Hungary, Austria, Bulgaria and many more have built fences along their borders.



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The situation in Syria is desperate. The Syrian Centre for Policy Research has suggested that 470,000 Syrians have died due to the civil war. Over 7.6 million are internally displaced within Syria and 4.6 million have left the country as refugees. The rise of ISIS is another major push factor for Syrians and other people in the Middle East, this terrifying group is taking areas of Iraq and Syria, and despite recent setbacks (capture of ISIS-controlled Iraqi towns by Iraqi Army), seems to be staying in the area for many years to come.

How has Europe responded to the growing refugee crisis? On the whole, quite poorly. John Green, the historian and author of *The Fault in Our Stars* described Europe's response to the refugee crisis as "inconsistent, inhumane and disorganised".



Are we willing to go the extra mile to save the lives of refugees?

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees said a few months ago that "Europe is facing a moment of truth and that this is the time to reaffirm the values upon which it was built." I don't believe we have done so, we've given the minimal amount of help required, forcing refugees and children to walk for miles across fields of snow in the middle of winter. While, Europe's intentions seem to mainly be good, we aren't going out of our way to help the refugees arriving.

This isn't a question of resources, we have plenty, but a question of morals and political motivation. Are we willing to at least try to end the war and genocide in Syria? Are we willing to go the extra mile to save the lives of refugees?

Cyffin