



**Rethink Rebuild Society**

*The voice of the Syrian Community of Manchester*

# Statement

10/06/2016

## RR Troubled by the Leave Campaign's Views on Immigration

As Syrians living in the UK we are watching the debate surrounding the upcoming referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union with great interest. We are disappointed that the Leave campaign is playing on fears of immigration to gather support for their position.

Syrian immigrants to the UK have contributed greatly to British life. Independent [research](#) by the IMF has shown that countries in the European Union that have taken in significant numbers of refugees from Syria and other areas of conflict have seen an economic benefit which will have long-term positive effects. They estimate that by 2020, the GDP of the European Union could be 0.25% higher, and up to 1% higher in the countries that have taken in the most refugees. Far from presenting Britain with a crisis, as the Leave campaign claim, there is a strong economic argument for the UK to take in more refugees, regardless of the obvious moral responsibility to provide refuge to displaced people.

The newly resettled Syrian community within the UK has already demonstrated its eagerness to integrate and to contribute to the British community. When communities in Rochdale were hit by flooding at the end of last year, for example, Syrian refugees from Rethink Rebuild Society rallied around to help those who had been affected. As Yasser al-Jassem told [Manchester Evening News](#), "As Syrian refugees, we are honoured to take part in community service initiatives such as this to give back to the communities that have so warmly taken us in."

We hope to further our contribution to the UK as our community grows, and so find it dismaying to hear immigrants spoken of so disparagingly by the Leave campaign. We hope that voters will look to the Syrian community as a shining example of the benefits of immigration to the UK as they make their decisions on the referendum. And we hope too that those people of Syrian origin who are British citizens will cast their vote with consideration to the benefits of European Union membership both to the UK and to the Syrian community.

### ENDS

For further information and press enquiries, please contact 07769704656, or email: [advocacy@rrsoc.org](mailto:advocacy@rrsoc.org)

**Rethink Rebuild Society** has established itself as a non-profit organisation that acts as an umbrella for the Syrian community in Manchester, and endeavours to clarify the Syrian cause to its audience in the UK and the wider public.