



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on August 23, 2016

## EU President Juncker Calls Borders “Worst Invention Ever Made”

Jean-Claude Juncker (shown), president of the European Commission (the executive branch of the European Union), said during a talk at the Alpbach Media Academy in Austria on August 22: “Borders are the worst invention ever made by politicians.”



Juncker’s take on borders came in the context of a statement in which he said: “We have to fight against nationalism. We have the duty not to follow populists but to block the avenue of populists.”

Juncker then added: “Borders are the worst invention ever made by politicians.... In the concentration of globalization and European problems, we must not lose our way.”

Among Europe’s biggest problems, currently, are the massive refugee crisis, with the BBC reporting last March:

More than a million migrants and refugees crossed into Europe in 2015, compared with just 280,000 the year before. The scale of the crisis continues, with more than 135,000 people arriving in the first two months of 2016.

Another major problem directly related to the refugee crisis is the wave of terrorist attacks that have taken place across Europe. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who has been perhaps the strongest critic of the open borders that have allowed uncontrolled migration into Europe, [told reporters in Warsaw on July 21](#) that there is a clear link between illegal migration to Europe and the terrorist attacks in European nations. “It is clear as two and two makes four, it is plain as day. There is an obvious connection [between the large-scale migration and the terrorist attacks],” Orban said through an interpreter. “If somebody denies this connection then, in fact, this person harms the safety of European citizens.”

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Among the terrorist attacks in Europe were those in Paris on November 13 that killed 129 people and wounded more than 350 others; bombings in Brussels on March 22 that killed 32; and a radicalized truck driver who killed another 84 people in Nice, France, on July 14.

All these attacks involved migrants from the Middle East or Muslim counties in North Africa, where the terrorist organization ISIS has a presence.

[As The New American observed in an article last September](#), Orban has criticized efforts by European Union leaders to impose immigration quotas on member nations before the continent’s borders are made secure. He told Hungarian diplomats in Budapest on September 7:

As long as we can’t defend Europe’s outer borders, it is not worth talking about how many people we can take in....



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The quota system wants to treat the effects before it treats the causes of immigration. The main reason for this is because [the EU] cannot control its outer borders.

[We reported last September](#) that Juncker, speaking to the members of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, on September 9, had asked EU members to each accept 160,000 migrants.

While Juncker's pitch to the European Parliament members began with the obvious statement, "As long as there is war in Syria and terror in Libya, the refugee crisis will not simply go away," his words also made plain how much national sovereignty member states have surrendered to the EU.

Recognizing that under the present system, EU members states have the right and responsibility to process requests for asylum on their own. Juncker proposed a more centralized approach to processing asylum requests:

We need more Europe in our asylum policy. We need more Union in our refugee policy.

A true European refugee and asylum policy requires solidarity to be permanently anchored in our policy approach and our rules. This is why, today, the Commission is also proposing a permanent relocation mechanism, which will allow us to deal with crisis situations more swiftly in the future.

By "solidarity," Juncker obviously meant a uniform, centrally controlled system throughout the EU for processing all asylum requests, thereby denying member states the right to accept or reject migrants who want to cross their borders.

Juncker's comments to the Parliament were, of course, made before the U.K.'s historic Brexit referendum in June, in which 52 percent of British voters voted in favor of leaving the European Union. An article in *Fortune* last June entitled "5 Reasons Why the Brits Have Turned in Favor of Brexit" listed "immigration" as reason number one and noted: "This could actually be arguments 1 through 10, but its many nuances are being boiled down to the essence of 'there's just too much of it, and most of that is because all E.U. citizens have the right to come and work here.'"

The second factor listed by *Fortune* as contributing to the British people's desire to leave the EU was "sovereignty" and it observed: "The E.U. has tried to codify answers through an increasingly constitutional process since 1970. That grates with Britain's constitutional flexibility (i.e., a strong executive tied down only by an ancient mesh of common law)."

In such a political climate, Juncker's statement asserting that Europeans "have to fight against nationalism" was bound to draw a negative response from the U.K.

A report in Britain's *Telegraph* for August 22 quoted a response to Juncker's statement from the office of Prime Minister Theresa May (who just assumed office on July 13):

This is not something that the Prime Minister would agree with and, indeed, you have heard the Prime Minister talk about the views that the British people expressed in the referendum.

The British people think that borders are important, having more control over our borders is important, and that is an issue we need to address.

The *Telegraph* noted that May and French President François Hollande reached a "very clear" agreement last month to keep Britain's border controls in Calais in a move to assuage fears that they could move to Dover after Brexit is completed. (Calais is near the French side of the English Channel tunnel and Dover is on the British side.) Calais is the site of a large refugee camp where thousands of migrants from North Africa and the Middle East reside in makeshift camps.



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Britain's *Daily Mail* observed that the unpopularity of Juncker's comments criticizing European nationalism "will further undermine Mr. Juncker's precarious position as European Commission President."

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