

**Question for written answer E-011525/2013
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Slavi Binev (EFD)

Subject: Syrian refugee crisis

The Bulgarian Government has remained silent and taken no stance on the problems in Syria. Bulgaria and the EU should take a decisive stand against armed intervention in Syria and urge that a solution to the Syrian problem be sought solely through the United Nations Security Council.

Over two million Syrian refugees, most of whom are children, have already abandoned their homeland. According to Eurostat figures, 23 150 Syrian refugees applied for asylum in the EU in 2012, and 18 700 were granted asylum. This makes them the largest group of people to have been given refuge in the EU. Most of the refugees are living in the countries neighbouring Syria – Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey – and their numbers are swelling daily as the conflict continues. Since refugees are being freely allowed to enter Bulgaria through its southern border with Turkey, the number of refugees in Bulgaria is nearing the critical level and there is a major risk this will spark a crisis. The critical figure is 5 000 refugees. At present there are over 12 000 refugees and it is expected that this number will increase to around 15 000 by the end of the year.

Bulgaria does not have the means or resources to cope with a flood of refugees on this scale and it is logistically ill-prepared for this situation, which is unprecedented in the country's recent history.

Can the Commission therefore state:

1. Whether the EU approves of the Member States' attitude of waiting for a solution without adopting their own positions?
2. Whether the Commission intends to take steps to provide funding and logistical support so that this wave of Syrian refugees can be distributed evenly across the whole of the EU?