

**Question for written answer E-001008/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
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Subject: Cooperation with the countries of the Western Balkans to combat arms trafficking in the EU

The multiple terrorist threats and attacks that the EU has already had to face in 2015 are proof of the worrying ease with which weapons can be obtained illegally in the EU.

More than 100 million AK-47 rifles are estimated to be in circulation on the worldwide black market. Weapons of this kind can now easily be obtained over the internet. More than 4000 illegal firearms are believed to be in circulation in France, and 95 % of those seized are thought to have originated in the Balkan countries.

Shutting down supply chains is an essential step in the fight against arms trafficking in the EU. The EU must work with the Balkan countries if it is to achieve this aim.

Discussions have already taken place in the Council on a draft action plan on arms trafficking for the EU and South West Europe for 2015-2019.

Given the scale of the problem, however, measures also need to be taken now. What legislative measures does the Commission intend to take to strengthen cooperation and information exchange between the networks of firearms experts in the EU and the Western Balkans with a view to clamping down on arms trafficking in the EU?