

Question for written answer E-012603/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Adam Szejnfeld (PPE)

Subject: VP/HR - Refugees from Ukraine

Millions of people have been affected by Russia's annexation of Crimea and the activities of pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine. More than one and a half million people have been forced to abandon their homes, often leaving their life's possessions behind in an attempt to escape death, hunger, disease, persecution and poverty. There is good reason to believe that the situation in Donetsk and Lugansk provinces and in the Crimea will not improve in the coming years, but instead will deteriorate still further, given Russia's ambition to 'freeze' the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

Although the fighting is currently confined to the Donbass region, the possibility of it spreading to other parts of Ukraine in the near future cannot be ruled out. Regrettably, given all the other tragic events taking place in countries in close proximity to the EU, we tend to forget that an armed conflict is still in progress just beyond the Union's eastern borders. We must therefore prepare ourselves for all the possible repercussions of that conflict, including the need to take in refugees from Ukraine.

What action does the EU intend to take to prevent an escalation of the conflict in Ukraine and to avoid a repetition of what happened in Syria, where the international community's failure to respond robustly to a particularly fierce conflict has led to millions of Syrians fleeing the country?