

**Question for written answer E-007365/2017
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)

Subject: Western Balkan route

Despite the claim that the Balkan route has been closed, ever-growing numbers of migrants are entering the EU that way. The agreement concluded with Turkey on 18 March 2016 was intended, on the one hand, to control the number of refugees coming from Turkey and, on the other, to distribute (relocate) and integrate the refugees already inside the EU. While the influx of refugees into the Union has diminished since that date, a parallel effect has been that thousands of people are now attempting, with the help of traffickers, to reach the EU via the Balkan route.

1. According to the Commission's figures, how many refugees migrated into the EU via the Balkan route and applied for asylum in a Member State in each of the months of January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September and October 2017?
2. What steps does the Commission intend to take to combat human trafficking and penalise traffickers?