

**Question for written answer E-002311/2021
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Assita Kanko (ECR)

Subject: EU approach to people trafficking

On Thursday 22 April 2021, a rubber boat with an estimated 130 refugees on board ran into problems in Mediterranean waters north-east of the Libyan capital Tripoli, encountering very rough seas with waves reportedly up to six metres high. According to Frontex, while every effort was made to assist them, rescue arrived too late. This tragic loss of life leaves many questions unanswered.

According to the International Organisation for Migration, 500 people have already perished along the central Mediterranean route this year, over three times more than in 2020 over the same period.

1. What action is the Commission taking to combat people trafficking more effectively?
2. What further proposals can we expect from the Commission to counter people trafficking and step up cooperation with third countries in order to prevent lives being lost?
3. According to Commissioner Johansson, only 30% of those not entitled to residence in the EU are voluntarily returning to their country of origin. Will the Commission accordingly seek to make mandatory return procedures more effective and ensure that third countries are more willing to accept returnees?