

**Question for written answer E-002763/2023/rev.1  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Elena Lizzi (ID)**

**Subject:** Possible EU action to tackle illegal immigration from the Western Balkan route

According to the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), in 2022 45% of irregular crossings of the EU's external borders were made via the Western Balkan route.

From January to August 2023, 70 548 irregular entries were reported.

Almost half of the migrants intercepted were of Syrian origin, with the next largest groups being Afghan, Turkish and Pakistani. A fifth were recorded as being of 'unknown origin'.

The Italian Minister of the Interior recently reported that some 13 700 migrants had arrived in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region in the first eight months of this year.

On 17 September 2023, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said, 'We will decide who comes to the European Union and under what circumstances'.

In view of the above, and given that, according to UNHCR, by mid-2023, around 3.4 million Syrian refugees were recorded in Türkiye, around 800 000 in Lebanon and 650 000 in Jordan, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What action has it taken to prevent departures from these countries?
2. Could asylum applications be checked directly in the refugee camps that the migrants are in, considering how much the EU has provided over the years to the countries in which these camps are located?
3. What will the Commission do to help the Italian Government and local authorities manage this situation?

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