

**Priority question for written answer P-004552/2025
to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: Discrepancy between statements on migration policy by Commissioner Brunner, responsible for migration, and implementation of the Return Regulation

In an interview with the Kölnische Rundschau dated 13 October 2025, Magnus Brunner, the Commissioner for Home Affairs and Migration, stated that the EU needed to make greater use of its political weight to put pressure on third countries which refuse to readmit their nationals who have entered the EU illegally or which prove uncooperative on migration issues. Mr Brunner explicitly referred to the three policy areas of trade, visa policy and development aid as levers that he would like to see coupled with EU migration policy¹.

As welcome as Magnus Brunner's analysis is, the EU's failure to do this is cause for concern. Behind closed doors, the Commissioner is engaging in the opposite of what he has public committed to do. His draft return regulation limits sanctions against uncooperative states to visa-related measures. There is no mention of suspending development aid or trade policy consequences, even though these instruments would be the most effective. It is this clear that Mr Brunner's words are devoid of consequence and lay bare his migration policy as mere empty rhetoric.

1. How does the Commission explain the discrepancy between Mr Brunner's demands to couple migration policy with trade, visa policy and development aid and the fact that the draft return regulation limits sanctions exclusively to the field of visas?
2. Why does the current draft return regulation not contain any provisions concerning the suspension of development aid or trade sanctions against uncooperative states?
3. What specifically does the Commission plan to do to ensure that trade, visa policy and development aid are used as effective tools to enforce returns?

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¹ <https://www.rundschau-online.de/debatte-kr/eu-kommissar-magnus-brunner-wollen-sie-mit-den-taliban-verhandeln-1127454>