

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001852/25
to the Commission
Petra Steger (PfE), Mary Khan (ESN)
(7 May 2025)

Subject: Frontloading elements of the EU asylum and migration package on the basis of a completely inadequate EU list of safe countries of origin

On 16 April 2025, the Commission announced the frontloading of elements of the asylum and migration package adopted in 2024, which was originally not due to come into force until June 2026. The announcement does not represent systemic change, however; rather, it is merely a pusillanimous attempt to appease the EU's increasingly incensed population. For one thing, the planned accelerated procedures at external borders are utterly toothless, as they are restricted to countries of origin for which the cross-EU recognition rate is below 20%; and, for another, the published EU list of safe countries of origin is alarmingly incomplete and ignores changed geopolitical realities. Large countries that export asylum seekers and crime, such as Syria or Afghanistan, will therefore remain completely unaffected by the measures. In addition, the involvement of questionable non-governmental organisations in the assessment procedure for classifying safe countries of origin does not suggest that there will be an end any time soon to illegal mass migration to Europe.

1. What tangible effects does the Commission expect from the frontloading of elements of the EU asylum and migration package if those elements do not affect the largest migrant groups at all?
2. How does the Commission intend to prevent illegal migrants from countries that are not affected by accelerated procedures or the list of safe countries of origin from continuing to profit from protracted procedures and from ultimately remaining in the EU permanently?
3. Which non-governmental organisations are specifically involved in the assessment procedure for classifying safe countries of origin?

Submitted: 7.5.2025

Answer given by Commissioner Brunner on behalf of the European Commission
(25 June 2025)

On 16 April 2025, the Commission proposed ⁽¹⁾ to frontload two key elements of the Asylum Procedure Regulation 2024/1348 ⁽²⁾: (i) the 20% or lower recognition rate threshold as an acceleration ground and (ii) the possibility to designate safe third countries and safe countries of origin with exceptions.

The aim of anticipating the application of these measures is to provide Member States with the possibility to use some of the key provisions of the Pact on Migration and Asylum ⁽³⁾ sooner than their originally expected date of application, providing them with more tools to manage the asylum caseload in an effective manner.

The same proposal also puts forward a first EU list of safe countries of origin to support a uniform application of the concept, while helping Member States to process asylum applications faster and more efficiently.

The countries proposed for designation were selected using a range of criteria, including the fact that they create a significant asylum caseload in the EU.

The assessment of whether a third country is a safe country of origin in accordance with the Asylum Procedure Regulation is based on a range of sources, including information from Member States, the EU Asylum Agency, the European External Action Service, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and other relevant international organisations.

Third-country nationals without a right to stay are subject to Directive 2008/115/EC (the Return Directive) ⁽⁴⁾. On 11 March 2025 the Commission tabled a proposal for a regulation ⁽⁵⁾ establishing a common system for returns, which aims at establishing swifter, simpler and more effective return procedures across the EU.

⁽¹⁾ Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) 2024/1348 as regards the establishment of a list of safe countries of origin at Union level, COM(2025) 186 final.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/1348 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 establishing a common procedure for international protection in the Union and repealing Directive 2013/32/EU; OJ L, 2024/1348, 22.5.2024.

⁽³⁾ https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/pact-migration-and-asylum_en.

⁽⁴⁾ Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals, OJ L 348, 24.12.2008, p. 98-107.

⁽⁵⁾ Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of The Council establishing a common system for the return of third-country nationals staying illegally in the Union, and repealing Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and the Council, Council Directive 2001/40/EC and Council Decision 2004/191/EC, COM(2025) 101 final.