

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000140/26
to the Commission
Afroditi Latinopoulou (Pfe)
(14 January 2026)**

Subject: Effective deterrence and expulsions as a prerequisite for the protection of the EU's external borders

The following should be noted in relation to the agreement on the 'Solidarity Pool' for 2026 and the new arrangements for speeding up expulsions and supporting Member States that are considered to be under pressure from illegal migration:

Said arrangements must be in line with the EU's obligation to rigorously protect the external borders and to effectively prevent and deter illegal crossings, in accordance with the relevant legislation in force. Available resources must therefore exclusively go towards strong border control measures, preventing flows and speeding up expulsions, so as not to place a disproportionate burden on frontline states such as Greece.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. Does it ensure that saving resources leads to increased operational deterrence and effective guarding of the external borders, limiting illegal arrivals?
2. How does it guarantee that 'alternative solidarity measures' (staff, logistical support) will be used exclusively for surveillance and deterrence, without creating new structures that encourage illegal arrivals?
3. What is the binding operational plan for the implementation of the new return rules and the centres outside of the EU to substantially increase expulsions and significantly reduce illegal flows?

Submitted: 14.1.2026

**Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the European Commission
(18 March 2026)**

The Pact on Migration and Asylum promotes a comprehensive approach to migration and is based on a balance between the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility, as set out in Articles 5 and 6 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 ⁽¹⁾.

The EU Strategy on Asylum and Migration Management ⁽²⁾ places the prevention of illegal migration as one of the key objectives for the EU in the coming years.

According to the European Annual Asylum and Migration Report ⁽³⁾, illegal border crossings at the Union's external borders decreased by 35% (223 812) in the period July 2024 — June 2025, compared to the period July 2023 — June 2024.

Pursuant to Article 56(2)(c) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351, alternative solidarity measures can be used in the fields of migration, reception, asylum, return and reintegration and border management, focusing on operational support, capacity building, services, staff support, facilities and technical equipment.

Article 65(1) of that regulation further specifies that such measures have to be based on a specific request of the benefitting Member State.

On 11 March 2025, the Commission adopted a legislative proposal in the form of a regulation establishing a common system for the return of third-country nationals staying illegally in the Union ⁽⁴⁾. Negotiations between the co-legislators are ongoing.

The proposal aims at setting the legal framework for Member States to return illegally staying third-country nationals to a 'return hub' in third country, based on an agreement or arrangement and in respect of international human rights standards and principles in accordance with international law, including the principle of non-refoulement.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on asylum and migration management, amending Regulations (EU) 2021/1147 and (EU) 2021/1060 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 604/2013, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L_202401351.

⁽²⁾ COM(2026) 45 final.

⁽³⁾ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: The European Annual Asylum and Migration Report (2025), COM(2025) 795 final, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:f449c5d6-bf11-11f0-a612-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_1&format=PDF.

⁽⁴⁾ 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, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:9565bdd7-ff1a-11ef-9503-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_1&format=PDF.