

**Question for written answer E-003222/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Dominique Bilde (ID)

Subject: Repatriation of Afghan migrants from the European Union

On 29 February 2020, the United States signed a peace agreement with the Taliban ¹. As a result, the number of US troops in Afghanistan is expected to drop from around 12 000 to 8 600 in 135 days ². The Taliban have reportedly committed to holding negotiations with government forces in Afghanistan whose situation remains extremely unstable.

In this context, many Afghan nationals are seeking to reach the European Union, in particular via Greece since the decision by the Turkish president no longer to respect the agreement on refugees which he had concluded with the Union. Afghanistan was among the leading countries of origin for asylum seekers in 2019 (nearly 60 000 applications, up by 30%) ³.

However, in 2016, the European Union had concluded an agreement with Afghanistan, the Joint Way Forward on migration issues ⁴, which was supposed to facilitate the management of migration flows and in particular repatriations. However, the number of repatriations remains low: eleven per year in France approximately ⁵.

How does the European Union intend to implement the Joint Way Forward on migration issues and, in particular, speed up the repatriation of Afghan nationals who are not covered by the right of asylum in the light of the current context in Afghanistan?

¹ <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-af/product/20200305DPU24662>

² <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-51689443>; «Within the first 135 days of the deal the US will reduce its forces in Afghanistan to 8,600, with allies also drawing down their forces proportionately.»

³ <https://www.ouest-france.fr/europe/ue/demandes-d-asile-en-hausse-dans-l-union-europeenne-une-premiere-depuis-2015-6753855>

⁴ https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_afghanistan_joint_way_forward_on_migration_issues.pdf

⁵ <https://www.infomigrants.net/fr/post/19605/accord-ue-afghanistan-la-france-veut-faciliter-les-retours-forces-de-migrants-afghans>; «in 2017, 2018 and 2019, 11 Afghans were expelled from French territory each year, according to figures released by the Ministry of the Interior.»