

**Question for written answer E-004387/2021**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Traian Băsescu (PPE)**

**Subject:** Enhancing Member States' capacities to manage returns of illegal immigrants

According to European Court of Auditors Special Report No 17/2021, the 'effective return rate' for illegal immigrants is below 20% for returns to countries outside Europe. The returns process depends largely on the resources of national authorities and on cooperation with third countries. The Court emphasises that EU actions to enhance readmission cooperation have yielded limited results.

The Commission and the EEAS have achieved limited progress in concluding readmission agreements. The two institutions have negotiated six legally non-binding arrangements for returns and readmissions. At the same time, the report highlights that the EU and its Member States are 'the world's biggest donors of development assistance' and 'major global trading partners and foreign investors.' Creating incentives to stimulate third country cooperation on readmission and developing synergies between the Commission and Member States on the implementation of return agreements are key considerations. In view of this:

1. What steps can the Commission take to enhance the capacities of Member States to conclude bilateral return agreements?
2. What steps can the Commission take, including through the granting of operational funding, to enhance Member States' capacities to increase the rate of returns of illegal immigrants?