

WRITTEN QUESTION P-4082/08
by Manfred Weber (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Lack of cooperation by Turkey in the return of illegal immigrants

During the discussions on the Returns Directive, a number of EU Member States criticised the lack of cooperation by third countries and countries of origin. Alongside the challenges presented by African countries, this focused in particular on the 'Balkan Route' via Turkey, Greece and the Balkans to central Europe.

Neighbouring countries such as Ukraine are cooperating very well with the European Union, in this case with the EU's eastern Member States, but one issue that came up time and again during the debate on efficient repatriation was the lack of cooperation by Turkey. This is all the more surprising in that negotiations on full membership are currently being held with Turkey and one would expect full cooperation from a country that was seeking to become a member of the EU.

What is the Commission's view of Turkey's behaviour? How important is the policy on returns for the accession negotiations? What specific objectives has the EU Commission set for the coming months?