Question for written answer E-003758/2020 to the Commission
Rule 138
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Subject: Monitoring mechanism at the external borders in Croatia

On 15 June 2020, The Guardian published an article entitled ‘EU “covered up” Croatia’s failure to protect migrants from border brutality’. It suggests that the Commission has withheld information from Parliament on the Croatian Government’s underspending on the establishment of a fundamental rights monitoring mechanism at the external border, and intended to assist the country in drafting the implementation report justifying such underspending. As part of the emergency assistance support for migration and border management to Croatia, EUR 300 000 were provided to establish a monitoring mechanism. However, the article claims that only EUR 84 672 have actually been spent. The article also details two brutal attacks on immigrants at the Croatian border, allegedly carried out by Croatian forces.

1. Can the Commission clarify how the remaining EUR 215 328 intended for the monitoring mechanism have been spent? Will the Commission launch an audit on the expenditure allocated to border management in Croatia, including the monitoring mechanism?

2. Parliament supports Schengen accession when the technical and legal criteria have been fulfilled. What impact would the failure to establish a monitoring mechanism ensuring compliance with fundamental rights and EU asylum laws, coupled with the increasing number of reports of push-backs, have on Croatia’s accession to the Schengen area without internal border controls?