

**Question for written answer E-004594/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Violent pushbacks and beatings at Croatia's external borders

On 6 October 2021, research was published by several media outlets, including Der Spiegel, ARD and RTL Croatia, describing the illegal and severely violent pushbacks at Croatia's external borders attributed to the country's own police officers commanded by the Ministry of the Interior. Systematic violence against refugees has been documented for years in Croatia, and the Commission's reaction has not yet been proportionate to the crimes committed. Moreover, there is evidence of misuse of EU funds granted by the Commission to the Croatian Ministry of the Interior as part of the emergency assistance grant agreement to help with the situation at the country's border.

1. How will the Commission investigate the pushbacks ordered by the state, and how will the findings play a role in Croatia's path towards Schengen membership, which was recently backed by the Commission?
2. What specific actions have already been taken within the independent monitoring mechanism set up by Croatia at its border using EU funds, and how does the Commission plan to make the monitoring more transparent and effective, and include credible actors, as enshrined in the Paris Principles?
3. What is the Commission's anticipated timeline for initiating an infringement procedure against Croatia for its practices at the external border, which violate among others the EU asylum acquis?