The Commission welcomes the steps by Croatia to put in place an independent monitoring mechanism. Croatia is the first Member State to do so. The Commission will monitor closely the implementation of the mechanism, as its implementation will determine its effectiveness. As the mechanism was established only recently, it is too soon to assess its effectiveness.

Concerning Greece, the Commission notes that Greece has now officially requested the National Transparency Authority to perform the functions of such a mechanism and to investigate the media reports mentioned in the Honourable Member’s question. The active cooperation with international partners, like the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration, and EU agencies, including the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and its Fundamental Rights Officer, will be integral to its success. The progress made will be evaluated within the coming six months. The Commission continues its close dialogue with the Greek authorities.

The establishment of an independent monitoring mechanism to help prevent and address fundamental rights violations at Member States’ borders will be a significant step towards one of the key objectives of the Pact on Migration and Asylum. An independent monitoring mechanism that can ensure respect for fundamental rights will become an essential pillar of the European management of external borders. Even if the Screening Regulation is still under negotiation, the Commission encourages all Member States to establish already now independent monitoring mechanisms at national level.