

**Priority question for written answer P-002890/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Pushbacks on the Croatia-Bosnia border

According to an investigation by 'The Guardian', Member States have used illegal methods to push back at least 40 000 refugees and migrants since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic. These pushbacks are reported to have resulted in 2 000 deaths. Almost half of the deportations have reportedly taken place in Croatia. Some 20 000 migrants have been pushed back in the process since the start of the pandemic. Asylum seekers trying to enter the EU from Bosnia are being forcibly pushed right back across the border by Croatian police officers; this has been going on for years. In the process, the police use methods such as kicking or beating with wooden sticks or metal bars. Often, mobile phones are destroyed, too, or asylum seekers are stripped and their clothes burned. To date, Croatia has refused to acknowledge any such events and reports.

In the light of the above:

1. How will the Commission tackle pushbacks, in general, in both the short and long term?
2. Who will the Commission hold responsible for violating the principle of non-refoulement and the ban on torture and inhuman or degrading treatment at borders?
3. Does the Commission intend to put EU funds on hold if Member States do not change their policies? If not, why not?