

**Question for written answer E-004816/2020  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Systematic and coordinated pushbacks by Greek authorities

On 17/08/2020, The New York Times published the article 'Taking Hard Line, Greece Turns Back Migrants by Abandoning Them at Sea'. It documents how migrants landing on Greek soil have been forced onto precarious life rafts by Greek authorities on multiple occasions and dropped at the Turkish-Greek maritime border, leaving them to drift until rescued by the Turkish authorities. Others have been towed back to the Turkish maritime border and abandoned after disabling their engines, some have been left in an uninhabited island, others expelled without legal recourse across the Evros River.

Is the Commission aware of these events and can confirm that they are taking place?

Given the reliability of the newspaper, we consider that the Greek authorities are engaging in unprecedented, extremely aggressive, and systematic pushbacks, and thus contravening European Union law, reflected in Article 78 (1) TFEU, Article 3 and 4 of the EU Schengen Borders Code, Article 9 of the Asylum Procedures Directive, Article 5 of the Return Directive, Article 18, 19 (2) and 24 of the EU CFR, and the 1951 Refugee Convention. Asylum and Migration are a shared European responsibility. Thus, is the Commission considering opening an infringement procedure against the Greek Government?