Question for written answer E-001667/2021/rev.1

to the Commission

Rule 138

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Subject: Widespread pushbacks by Greece in the Aegean Sea

In the last few months, we have seen a continuation of violent pushbacks by the Greek Government. A number of credible reports account for these illegal practices and a recent example even allegedly resulted in the death of migrants who were thrown handcuffed into the sea[[1]](#footnote-0).

In a Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs meeting in July 2020, Commissioner Johansson said she expects national authorities to follow up on pushback allegations.

Is the Commission satisfied with the Greek response, and if not, how is it planning to fulfil its role as Guardian of the Treaties in this regard? Is the Commission considering launching infringement procedures?

A 2020 investigation concluded that Frontex was complicit in and aware of several illegal pushbacks in the Aegean Sea[[2]](#footnote-1). A subsequent three‑month internal investigation by the Frontex Management Board was not able to fully exclude involvement in pushbacks.

Does the Commission consider the case to be closed due to the inquiry, and what actions will it take to address these allegations, which concern an EU agency?

In addition to Member State authorities and Frontex, what other sources does the Commission consult when analysing pushback allegations?

1. https://www.lavanguardia.com/internacional/20210319/6602473/turquia-rescata-migrantes-acusa-grecia-arrojarlos-esposados-mar.html [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. https://www.bellingcat.com/news/2020/10/23/frontex-at-fault-european-border-force-complicit-in-illegal-pushbacks/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)