Question for written answer E-006467/2020

to the Commission

Rule 138

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Subject: New evidence of push‑backs at the Croatian border – will the Commission now finally start to react?

On 18 November 2020, the German newspaper Der Spiegel published a report on illegal push‑backs at the Croatian border. The report documents how Croatian border officials forcibly pushed asylum seekers back across the border into Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, Frontex has been recording videos at Croatia’s external border, where push‑backs and serious human rights violations have taken place.

1. In view of the reliability of the source and the video evidence provided, will the Commission open an investigation into the allegations against Croatian border officials and Frontex without undue delay, while taking into account existing footage by Frontex?

2. Croatian border officials are evidently not acting in line with the Schengen Borders Code. What does that mean for a future accession of Croatia to the Schengen Area?

3. Croatian border officials have violated international and EU law. These violations include, among others Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, Article 13 of Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 and Article 21 of Directive 2011/95/EU. In view of these violations, what steps – besides potentially opening infringement proceedings against the Croatian Government – will the Commission take in response to these events?