



## Submission Rule of Law Report Greece

February 2022

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### LINK TO FULL RULE OF LAW REPORT:

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/upholding-rule-law/rule-law/rule-law-mechanism/2022-rule-law-report\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/upholding-rule-law/rule-law/rule-law-mechanism/2022-rule-law-report_en)

### Introduction

*Please insert an URL towards your organisation's main online presence or describe your organisation briefly:*

<https://www.borderviolence.eu/>

Border Violence Monitoring Network (BVMN) is a coalition of organisations working to document illegal pushbacks, collective expulsions and police violence at the EU's borders since 2016. Our data collection is done by a consortium of independent voluntary field experts who are part of or cooperate with humanitarian support groups united through BVMN.

We thank the Greek Council for Refugees for providing us with information on their legal work in Greece.

### I. Justice System

#### *Accessibility of courts (e.g. court/legal fees, legal aid, language)*

Pushbacks remove people-on-the-move from the jurisdiction. Although, in theory possible, practically it is very challenging for them to access courts.

As pushbacks, by design, are attempts to remove people-on-the-move from the territory of Greece, many survivors are outside of the territory. Instigating legal proceedings from abroad is challenging, hindered by lack of legal aid and the difficulties of obtaining admissible letters of attorney and testimonies. Although in theory someone removed from the territory can make a legal complaint against other constituent crimes than the pushback itself, such as threat to life, removal from the territory makes it practically very challenging. Moreover, when victims return to Greece, they often cannot present themselves to the authorities for testimonies due to the risk of being arrested for illegal entry and being pushed back again (HumanRights360, <https://bit.ly/3FHgMvJ>).