



**STATUS**  
Archived

**ASPECTS**  
migration

**TEAM**  
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**ABSTRACT**

The violent illegal pushbacks along the EU's external border between Greece and Turkey are structurally embedded and routine, but take place far from the public eye. State and Quasi-State actors (civilian yet acting as border guard entities) apply pushback protocols against international law for more than a decade, with numbers varying vastly. Between 2013 and 2017, UNHCR recorded 350 pushbacks at sea and on land involving 11,500 persons, 7,500 of which were expelled from the Evros land border.

NGOs such as Mare Liberum, Human Rights Watch and ECCHR collect and structure data, reports, witness statements and testimonies to form public awareness and political momentum around this

illegal state operation.

For asylum seekers, the violent and brutal practice of pushback forms an unpredictable and life-threatening obstacle before reaching infrastructures to proceed with applying for and receiving asylum. Human rights lawyer and researcher Niamh Keady-Tabbal writes: "Often, it seems like the two countries are playing a violent game of ping-pong across the Aegean with migrant bodies."

This quote was the starting point to make the mechanisms of pushbacks tangible in an unfair and frustrating board game.

## FILES









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