



## 14/04: Around 50 travellers pushed violently back to Turkey by Greek authorities North of Lesbos

In Distress Push-Back

VERIFIED

15.04.2021 / 17:06 / Aegean Sea

### Watch The Med Alarm Phone Investigations – 14th of April 2021

Case name: 2021\_04\_14-AEG783

*Situation:* 50 travellers pushed back by Greek authorities north of Lesbos. One traveller beaten and thrown in the water.

*Status of WTM Investigation:* Concluded

*Place of Incident:* Aegean Sea

#### Summary of the Case:

On Wednesday the 14th of April 2021 at 09.14h CEST, the Alarm Phone shift team was contacted directly by a group of around 50 travellers, including 16 children, in distress in the Aegean sea north of Lesbos. They forwarded us their GPS position, showing that they were in Turkish waters, explaining that they had entered Greek waters but had been pushed back by the Greek authorities. In a call to the travellers at 09.50h CEST they told us that the Turkish authorities were blocking their way back to the Turkish coast, telling them to enter back into Greek waters. The travellers were therefore again moving in the direction of Lesbos. At 10.00h CEST we sent an email to both Greek and Turkish coastguards, as well as UNHCR, alerting them to the distress of the travellers. Five minutes later we forwarded the information to MRCC Piraeus via phone as well. At 10.07h CEST we called the Turkish coastguard, and they told us that they had two vessels on site and were waiting for more information about the situation. At 10.38h CEST we received an email from the Turkish coastguard, informing us that they had rescued the travellers and were bringing them to Çanakkale, which they confirmed to us on the phone, stating that all travellers were safe and in a good health condition.

Later, we spoke to the travellers again, and they recounted the events of the pushback. They told us that the Greek authorities had pushed them back. In doing so, they had dragged one of the travellers onboard their boat, beaten him severely and then thrown him back in the water. The rest of the travellers had then rescued him from the water.

From staying in touch with the travellers, we witnessed how this violent incident seriously affected their mental health. We are still investigation the details of this situation and might update this report accordingly.

Last update: 01:07 Aug 25, 2021

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[29/04: Greek coastguard pushes 48 protection seekers back to Turkey](#)

16:04 Jul 28, 2015 / Aegean Sea, near Lesbos Kms  
[Two groups in distress in the Aegean Sea near Lesbos, rescued by Turkey, one boat punctured by Greek coastguard!](#)

15:26 Jun 06, 2020 / Aegean Sea Kms  
[05/06: one boat with 10 people heading to North-Lesvos, rescued by Turkish coast guard after being attacked](#)

09:53 Feb 05, 2017 / Aegean Sea Kms  
[04/02: 44 travellers rescued by the Turkish coast guard - one woman dead.](#)

16:57 Jun 09, 2020 / Aegean Sea Kms  
[08/06: 50 people, 20 women, 8 children, 2 toddlers, left from Asos, attacked presumably by Greek coast guard near Lesbos, rescued to Turkey](#)

