

**GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM AND ADVOCACY EFFORTS TO END PUSHBACKS
AND SUPPORT PEOPLE ON THE MOVE AT THE BOSNIAN-CROATIAN
BORDERLANDS**

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Since the closure of the Balkan migratory corridor in 2016, illegal pushbacks have become a key component of the EU's external border management. In Croatia, collective expulsions of migrants without access to asylum procedures are systematically accompanied by torture and severe human rights violations. Since 2018, humanitarian grassroots organizations at the Bosnian-Croatian border have collected testimonies and evidence from pushback survivors with the aim of public and legal advocacy. Over five years, the extensive testimonial archive strengthened journalistic investigations and litigation cases, and pressured national and EU policymakers, resulting in increased scrutiny on Croatian Border operations and a subsequent shift in deterrence strategies. Based on participatory observation in the Bosnian border town of Bihać and semi-structured interviews with seventeen activists from five different grassroots organizations, this thesis reflects on the achievements of the Border Justice movement and explores the perceived roles and impact of grassroots activists within broader advocacy efforts.