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[Press release](#) | 15.07.2021

Parliament report on Frontex finds agency needs drastic reorganisation to uphold human rights standards

Today, MEPs from the Frontex Scrutiny Working Group presented their report on the EU's border agency's role in the illegal 'pushbacks' of refugees, during a meeting of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs. The investigation finds that Frontex failed to deliver on its responsibilities to safeguard human rights at the EU's borders. The report also finds that the agency was aware of human rights violations taking place in EU-countries with whom it cooperates, but failed to respond or act to these allegations. The management of Frontex ignored reports from journalists and NGO's, internal warnings from staff and even video footage in which human rights breaches were visible. The Greens/EFA Group have long called for an investigation into the allegations surrounding Frontex.

Tineke Strik, Greens/EFA MEP rapporteur of the Frontex Scrutiny Working Group report, comments:

“Frontex has failed in its duty to uphold the highest standards of human rights at the EU's borders and needs drastic reorganisation. This investigation was essential to uncover clear shortcomings and wrong-doings at Frontex that urgently need to be fixed. This is a vital first step in accountability for the border agency.

“We have found that not only was Frontex aware of human rights violations, but the agency did not react appropriately. There was clear inactivity, or even an unwillingness to act, despite multiple warning signs from internal and external actors. We have specific concerns about the human rights standards of operations taking place in Greece and Hungary. We are calling on the Executive Director to immediately suspend operations in Hungary and evaluate operations in Greece.

“There are also clear signs of mismanagement: Internal observations of human rights violations were ignored, the appointment of human rights observers was delayed and the many reliable and consistent reports from external actors on human rights violations at the border were disregarded. Therefore, we do not have faith in the ability of the current Executive Director Fabrice Leggeri, to address the issues we have exposed. Mr. Leggeri repeatedly misled the European Parliament and has fostered a culture of impunity, while still denying the existence of pushbacks.

“We urge the Management Board of Frontex and the Commission to reconsider the position of Mr. Leggeri. The Management Board, has knowingly failed in its role to supervise the organisation and safeguard good governance. Member States need to recognise their shared responsibility to uphold European values in border management. We expect the Management Board to implement our recommendations and the Commission to use its powers to enforce compliance with the fundamental rights obligations by Frontex and the Member States.”

More:

[Read the report](#)

The Executive Director of Frontex, Fabrice Leggeri, [has previously denied any knowledge of human rights violations](#), in a hearing before the LIBE Committee of the European Parliament.

Greens/EFA MEPs Tineke Strik and Erik Marquardt are members of the Frontex Scrutiny Working Group.

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Recommendations of the report:

- Frontex can only perform joint operations with countries that are acting in full compliance with human rights. To fulfill this obligation, Frontex should monitor the whole operational area and investigate all incidents or other indications of non-compliance.
- If a pushback is reported to Frontex, the Agency should not only investigate this by relying on the responses by government authorities, it should also verify the information provided.
- The European Commission should make EU funding for border management conditional upon fundamental rights compliance of the Member State concerned.

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Responsible MEPs



Tineke Strik

Member

Contact person



Alex Johnson

Press & Media Advisor EN (English language press)

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