

2nd JHAAN meeting, 21 June 2021

TOUR DE TABLE - Frontex

COVID-19 adjustments

Last year, Frontex had introduced sustainable crisis management and business continuity measures with the Crisis Cell and the high-level Strategic Crisis Response Team operating 24/7, including stand-by duty during the weekends. The Agency continued to support operations and activities in the field and ensure the safety of its staff. As of mid-March 2021, following the Polish government's decision to implement the so-called "amber phase", the Agency reduced staff presence to 15% and divided it into two shifts. As the epidemiological situation in Poland improved, the Agency increased staff presence per shift to 30% in June, and to 50% as of the 1st of July, with the activation of the so-called "yellow phase" - meaning that all staff will be going to the office on a rotating basis.

New organisational structure

As of 1 June, Frontex has in place a new organisational structure. The Agency is now equipped with 9 divisions, as the Deployment Management Division, the ECRET Division, the ETIAS Central Unit Division have been established, while the Corporate Governance Division was split into the Financial, Digital and Security Division on one hand, and the Governance Support Centre on the other. The remaining divisions - Situational Awareness Monitoring Division, Operational Response Division, Capacity Building Division and the International and European Cooperation Division remain as they were. The structural transformation which the Agency is implementing will further support the implementation of the strategic changes brought about by the setting up of the Standing Corps or the European Traveller Information Authorization system developments. It is worth mentioning that Frontex is in the process of recruiting three Deputy Executive Directors, respectively for matters related to Returns and Operations, Standing Corps Management and EBCG Information Management and Processes.

Standing Corps

The Agency is expected to have in place 10 000 SC officers by 2027. At this stage the Agency has around 750 cat 1 officers - 250 are deployed to the operational areas, half of the rest is still completing the specialised training, and the rest that has just joined has started their training last week in Spain (ES). Important to underline that fundamental rights are part of their basic curriculum.

When it comes to cat2, Frontex is currently reviewing their rules based on the first operational experience of their deployments.

Fundamental Rights

- NEW FRO

In March, Frontex MB appointed [REDACTED] (previously worked at FRA), who has undertaken his duties as of 1 June. His appointment prompted the recruitment of Deputy FRO that is currently taking place.

- FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS MONITORS RECRUITMENT

Frontex is expected to recruit at least 40 FRM. Following the selection procedure launched in November 2020, Frontex has recruited 20 Fundamental Rights Monitors that will start their duties by July 2021. The recruitment of further 20 monitors will be processed with the arrival of the new FRO in June 2021. Upon recruitment, monitors will undergo specialized training followed by deployments, planned according to needs and profiles which will also be assessed by the new FRO.

- **FR STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

Frontex has submitted its draft Fundamental Rights Action Plan (FRAP) to external stakeholders for input and comments. We shared the documents with FRA, EASO, EIGE, the Frontex Consultative Forum but also with the Commission and some Member States. Frontex has now received extensive feedback from these entities and is adjusting the FRAP accordingly. The FRAP is now planned to be adopted during Frontex MB in September.

- **NEW SERIOUS INCIDENT REPORT**

Following the recommendations from the Extraordinary MB meeting of 5 March 2021, on April 19 Frontex adopted a new Serious Incident Reporting Standard Operating Procedure (SIR SOP). The SOP incorporates recommendations of both the Consultative Forum and the MB WG on Fundamental Rights and Legal Operational Aspects of Operations in the Aegean Sea and ensures that cases involving potential violation of fundamental rights are directly reported to the Fundamental Rights Officer.

- **COMPLAINTS MECHANISM**

Frontex is revising its complaint mechanism to align it with the EBCG Regulation.

Transparency register

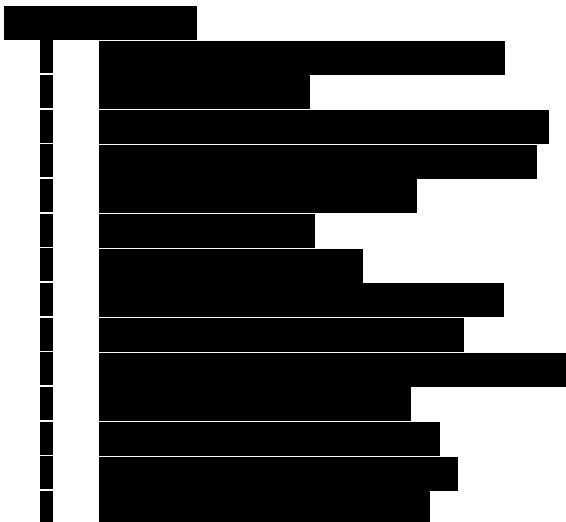
In May, Frontex established the transparency register in accordance with Article 118 of the EBCG Regulation. This register will contain information of all meetings and contacts of the executive and senior management with third parties' representatives, namely economic operator as defined in the EU Financial Regulation. The information is published on a bi-weekly basis. The register is managed manually by requiring third parties to submit a specific form to transparency.register@frontex.europa.eu.

The state of play of the cooperation with TCs, EU and international organisations

As regards the cooperation with EU stakeholders and TCs, last week Frontex MB authorized the Agency to negotiate WAs with:

EU partners

- European Agency for Safety and Health at Work - EU-OSHA (new)
- EASO (renewal)
- European Union Advisory Mission Ukraine - EUAM Ukraine (new)
- eu-LISA (renewal)
- EUBAM Libya (new)
- EUCAP Sahel Niger (new)
- Joint Research Center - JRC (new)



[REDACTED]

We are currently in the process of developing the cooperation plans with eu-LISA and Cepol.

Joint Operation in Serbia

On 16 June, Frontex launched its first Joint Operation in Serbia, following the entry into force of the EU-Serbia Status Agreement on the 1 May. This Status Agreement offers the Agency the possibility to deploy officers with executive powers on the Serbian territory and thus opens an opportunity for an increased operational engagement in the Western Balkans region. Frontex will also be active in operational activities without executive powers, such as Joint Operation Coordination Points or any risk analysis activities.

Deployment of Member State Liaison Officers to Frontex

On 28 June, Frontex will start a one-year pilot phase for the deployment of MS LO to the Agency. The purpose of this project is to adequately fine-tune the role of the Liaison Officers, the conditions of their deployment, communication flows, and the support provided by the Agency, with the aim to more efficiently implement their deployments after the completion of the pilot phase. The participating MSs: France (1 Liaison Officer), Germany (1 Liaison Officer), Italy (2 Liaison Officers), Spain (2 Liaison Officers) and Switzerland (1 Liaison Officer).

Security rules of the Agency on protecting EU classified information and sensitive non-classified information - state of play

Frontex is currently drafting the security rules on protection of EU classified information and sensitive non-classified information. For this purpose, the Agency has established a Security Advisory Group. Its first meeting took place on 2 June. The Group discussed the Rules of Procedure and the draft rules. The group is expected to reach some progress by September MB meeting.