



In 2019, Frontex inaugurated its first fully-fledged operation outside the EU, deploying 50 officers to support Albania in border control and in tackling cross-border crime.

Border Guard officers sent by Poland to participate in a Frontex mission patrol the border during the operation in Albania

FRONTEX AT A GLANCE



Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, assists the EU member states (Austria, Belgium, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden) and the Schengen associated states (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland) in managing the EU's external borders and combating cross-border crime (such as human trafficking, drugs and arms smuggling and detection of stolen cars) and terrorism.

The Agency's tasks include analyzing the situation and trends in irregular migration and sharing intelligence and expertise with the EU member states, as well as neighboring non-EU countries affected by migratory pressure and cross-border crime. Frontex plays a growing role in returning those unable to legitimize their stay in the EU back to their countries of origin. It helps member states coordinate and finance return operations, and it may also initiate such operations itself.

Among its many tasks, the agency coordinates the deployment of border and coast guards, along with boats, airplanes, patrol cars and other equipment, to EU countries facing exceptional pressure at their external borders.

In 2019, a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council paved the way for Frontex to establish a European Border and Coast Guard standing corps – the EU's first uniformed service. And so, Frontex will soon be able to rely on an operational staff of 10,000 to support national authorities in border control and migration management. ■

Further reading:

www.frontex.europa.eu

ACADEMIA INSIGHT

Photos 1, 2, 3
Frontex during the
COASTEX 2019 exercise
organized by Italy in Catania



1

Experts from EU member states, Frontex, the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA), and the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) tested different scenarios of potential situations they might encounter while protecting the EU's sea borders.



2



3



Photo 4
 Joint Operation Triton 2015
 – a rescue operation
 in the Mediterranean Sea

In 2015, the EU's southern borders were one of the main areas affected by irregular migration from North Africa and Turkey. For migrants heading to other member states, Italy is both a transit country and a destination. They are often smuggled across the Mediterranean Sea in dinghies, with little chance of survival. One of the Agency's priorities is to participate in search and rescue operations and to save lives.



Photo 5, 6
 Document inspection
 (Joint Operation
 Poseidon 2017, Greece;
 Operation Minerva
 2018, Spain)

For years, Frontex has been sending document experts to work alongside the EU's external borders. Their expertise, which is crucial for Europe's security, is gaining prominence because criminal groups that resort to document fraud use increasingly sophisticated methods. Passports and other identity documents are becoming increasingly difficult to forge, but at the same time counterfeiters also continue to improve their techniques and skills.



Photo 7
 German officers on patrol
 (Joint Operation Poseidon
 2019, Chios, Greece)

Photo 8
 Joint Operation Themis 2018

In the frame of JO Poseidon, Frontex supports Greece with border protection. In addition to Greece's sea borders with Turkey, the Agency's operational area covers the Greek islands.

Within JO Themis, Frontex supports Italy with the control of the EU's external border in the Mediterranean Sea. The Agency's task is to control irregular migration and combat cross-border crime.

ACADEMIA INSIGHT

Photo 9
Registration of migrants during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Canary Islands



In 2020, Frontex expanded its support to Spain by sending officers to the Canary Islands to assist local authorities with identifying and registering irregular migrants during their increased influx from Africa.

Photo 10
Frontex officers after completing their training at the Guardia di Finanza academy in Bari



Standing corps cadets were trained in Ávila, Spain, and another European training centers. At the end of this year, the number of statutory staff within the standing corps will increase to 1000.

Photos by **Frontex**