

## **How the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) deals with complaints about alleged fundamental rights breaches through its 'Complaints Mechanism'**

**Case** OI/5/2020/MHZ - **Opened on** 10/11/2020 - **Decision on** 15/06/2021 - **Institutions concerned** European Border and Coast Guard Agency ( No maladministration found ) | European Border and Coast Guard Agency ( No further inquiries justified ) |

The Ombudsman opened an inquiry on her own initiative to look into how the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) deals with alleged breaches of fundamental rights through its 'complainants mechanism', and to address the role and independence of Frontex's Fundamental Rights Officer in this regard.

The inquiry uncovered delays by Frontex in implementing its new obligations concerning the complaints mechanism and the Fundamental Rights Officer. In the context of the inquiry, the Ombudsman's inquiry team also reviewed complaints dealt with by the complaints mechanism and identified various potential shortcomings that may make it more difficult for individuals to report alleged fundamental rights violations and seek redress.

Based on the inquiry, the Ombudsman set out a series of suggestions for improvement to Frontex, with a view to improving the accessibility of the complaints mechanism for potential victims of fundamental rights violations and strengthening the accountability of Frontex operations and all those involved therein. [Frontex replied positively \[Link\]](#) to most of the Ombudsman's suggestions and took steps to give effect to those that it did not directly implement