



How the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) complies with its fundamental rights obligations and ensures accountability in relation to its enhanced responsibilities

Case OI/4/2021/MHZ - **Opened on** 04/03/2021 - **Decision on** 17/01/2022 - **Institution concerned** European Border and Coast Guard Agency (No further inquiries justified) |

The Ombudsman carried out an own-initiative inquiry to look into how the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) complies with its fundamental rights obligations and ensures accountability in relation to its new enhanced responsibilities. The inquiry sought to clarify matters relating to the accountability of Frontex 'joint operations', notably with regard to activities related to 'returns' of migrants and the 'screening' of migrants at the EU's external borders. The inquiry identified issues with the transparency of the operational plans, which define the terms and conditions of its operations, and the monitoring of fundamental rights compliance, as well with how Frontex takes decisions on suspending, terminating or not launching activities due to fundamental rights concerns. The inquiry identified areas where Frontex could make improvements, including by providing greater transparency, with a view to ensuring greater accountability for its operations. The Ombudsman set out a series of suggestions to this end.