



The role of Frontex in
**European
Coast Guard
Functions**

Border Control

Border control is a key aspect of European Integrated Border Management. Frontex, together with national authorities of the Member States, is responsible for implementing it.

Border control aims to prevent and combat cross-border crime, including people smuggling, trafficking in human beings and terrorism.

Every year, around 700 million people cross Europe's external borders.

One of the biggest challenges is detecting illegal activity without creating delays for other travellers.

Border control facilitates legitimate border crossings and provides adequate measures for people in need of international protection.

Frontex is a cornerstone when it comes supporting Member States in ensuring the highest standards of external border control with available experts and technical equipment.





Search and Rescue

Participation in search and rescue operations has always been a priority for Frontex and is enshrined in the EU regulation that created the European Border and Coast Guard Agency. Frontex is obliged to provide assistance at sea in support of rescue operations that may arise during border surveillance activities.

In 2017, Frontex contributed to the rescue of more than 38 000 people at sea with the vessels and aircraft taking part in the agency's maritime operations. In addition, the Multipurpose Aerial Surveillance, as a new Eurosur Fusion Service, contributed to the rescue of nearly 2 000 people.



Maritime Safety

Frontex is cooperating with Member States in the field of maritime safety, especially during joint operations and related activities.

The agency has been using airplanes for surveillance since 2015, completing more than 4000 flight hours during more than 1000 operational days, and contributing to enhanced maritime safety.

Frontex will soon start working together with the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) to acquire aerial surveillance services for operational activities and for the support of EU Member States.



Maritime Security

One of the priorities for Frontex is the cooperation with EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations. The agency works with CDSP missions in such areas as training, risk analysis, information exchange and coordination of operational activities.

Frontex experts are regularly deployed to the EU Border Assistance Mission in Libya (EUBAM) to support it with border management expertise. Close operational coordination has been established between the Frontex Joint Operation Themis and the EUNAVFOR Med operation Sophia, to effectively fight migrant smuggling networks and save lives at sea.

The agency also works closely with NATO sea operations in the Aegean with the aim of exchanging information on the migratory situation in the area. To this end, Frontex deploys a liaison officer on a NATO vessel. Frontex also supports Member States with the identification of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF).

Fisheries Control

In recent years, Frontex has increased its cooperation with the the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) in the detection and fight against illegal fishing. As part of this cooperation, Frontex regularly hosts fisheries inspectors from EFCA on board of its vessels. The two agencies also work together when it comes to information exchange.

All vessels and aircraft participating in Frontex sea operations send information related to fisheries control to EFCA for further action. On top of that, officers participating in operations coordinated by Frontex receive tailored briefings on fisheries control, to be able to quickly spot and react to any signs of illegal fishing.



Customs Control

Frontex is increasingly active in cooperating with authorities involved in customs control.

The agency participates in Operation Columbus, a joint pilot project implemented by the Customs Cooperation Working Party (CCWP), Frontex, Europol, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, and several other EU Member States. The project, which continues as Operation Columbus II in 2018, aims to improve the profiling of vessels potentially involved in cross-border crime, especially firearms trafficking.

Frontex also organised a special awareness session on the appliance of Eurosur Fusion Services for customs and other authorities counteracting excise fraud to increase their capacity to fight against the smuggling of tobacco, fuel and alcohol by sea.

The agency will soon develop and implement a cooperation strategy with the World Customs Organization.



Law Enforcement

Frontex has strengthened the European response at the external borders in order to better manage migration and improve the security situation at the borders and, by consequence, within the EU. Frontex contributes to the fight against terrorism by assisting Member States in tightening controls at the external borders and detecting potential foreign terrorist fighters on the move.

In 2017, 137 tonnes of drugs were seized during Frontex Joint Operations and 770 suspected facilitators and 276 smugglers were apprehended based on evidence collected by officers deployed by the agency.

Frontex cooperates closely with other European and international law enforcement organisations such as Europol, Eurojust, Interpol, Maritime Analysis and Operation Centre – Narcotics (MAOC-N).





Environmental Protection

Environmental crime has become an increasingly alarming threat. This is why Frontex has been involved in the EU EMPACT ENVICRIME priority to cooperate with Member States and other international organisations in finding and implementing the best ways to protect the maritime environment from criminal activities.

Frontex also cooperates with the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and European Fishery Control Agency (EFCA) to support its mandate in safeguarding the European maritime environment.

Benefits for Member States and the EU

Enhanced information sharing

Comprehensive risk analysis and information exchange on threats related to the maritime domain

Real time border surveillance

Integration with EU efforts to combat illicit activities at sea

Synchronisation of national measures in coast guard functions under the EU umbrella

Avoidance of duplication leading to cost-effectiveness

State-of-the-art surveillance and communication services available

European integrated response to maritime threats

Response based on Agencies' capacity – sharing initiatives and available services

**Multipurpose
maritime activities**

Fostering teamwork and networking

How it works in practice



Interagency cooperation timeline



2009–2014

Cooperation based on service level agreements and cooperation in the operational field

2015

The EU Pilot Project “Creation of EU CG Function” Launched

2016

Frontex, EMSA and EFCA Regulations amended with a common article on CG functions

2017

Full implementation in practice

2018

Frontex Interagency Chairmanship

2019

Strategic Action Plan in place