



European  
Commission

# SECURING EUROPE'S EXTERNAL BORDERS

## A EUROPEAN BORDER AND COAST GUARD



«A united refugee and asylum policy requires stronger joint efforts to secure our external borders. Fortunately, we have given up border controls between the Member States of the Schengen area, to guarantee free movement of people, a unique symbol of European integration. But the other side of the coin to free movement is that we must work together more closely to manage our external borders. This is what our citizens expect. The Commission said it back in May, and I said it during my election campaign: We need to strengthen Frontex significantly and develop it into a fully operational European border and coast guard system.»

European Commission **President Jean-Claude Juncker**, [State of the Union Address](#), 9 September 2015

The Schengen area without internal borders is only sustainable if the external borders are effectively secured and protected. The European Commission is proposing to establish a European Border and Coast Guard – designed to meet the new challenges and political realities faced by the EU, both as regards migration and internal security. The European Border and Coast Guard will be composed of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and the national authorities and coastguards responsible for border management.



Between January and November 2015 an estimated 1.5 million persons have crossed the EU external borders illegally – an all-time peak.



From July to September 2015, 413 800 persons applied for international protection in the Member States, twice as many as in the second quarter of 2015.



## A NEW MANDATE

The limitations of the current EU border agency, Frontex, have hindered its ability to effectively address and remedy the situation created by the refugee crisis: it is not able to purchase its own resources, it does not have its own operational staff and relies on Member State contributions, it is unable to carry out its own return or border management operations without the prior request of a Member State and it does not have an explicit mandate to conduct search and rescue operations. The new Agency will be strengthened and reinforced to address all these issues.



## UNION STANDARDS FOR BORDER MANAGEMENT

The new Agency will ensure Union standards for border management are implemented at all external borders. The external borders will be constantly monitored with periodic risk analyses and mandatory **vulnerability assessments** to identify and address weak spots. **Liaison officers** will be seconded to Member States where the borders are at risk. They will be fully integrated into the national information systems and able to relay the information back to the Agency.



## A RESERVE OF EUROPEAN BORDER GUARDS AND TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT

The Agency's permanent staff will be more than doubled and for the first time, the Agency will be able to purchase its own equipment and deploy them in border operations at a moment's notice. A **rapid reserve pool of border guards** and a **technical equipment pool** will be put at the disposal of the Agency – meaning there will no longer be shortages of staff or equipment for Agency operations.



## THE RIGHT TO INTERVENE



When deficiencies are identified, the Agency will be empowered to require Member States take **timely corrective action**. In urgent situations that put the functioning of the Schengen area at risk and when deficiencies have not been remedied, the Agency will be able to step in to **ensure that action is taken on the ground** even where there is no request for assistance from the Member State concerned or where that Member State considers that there is no need for additional intervention.

## WORKING WITH AND IN THIRD COUNTRIES

The Agency will have a new mandate to send liaison officers and launch **joint operations** with neighbouring third countries, including operating on their territory.



## A STRONGER ROLE IN RETURNS

A European Return Office within the Agency will allow the deployment of **European Return Intervention Teams** composed of escorts, monitors and return specialists who will work to effectively return illegally staying third country nationals. A uniform **European travel document for return** will ensure a wider acceptance by third countries.



## GUARANTEEING INTERNAL SECURITY

The Agency will include cross-border crime and terrorism in its risk analysis, process personal data of persons suspected to be involved in acts of terrorism and cooperate with other Union agencies and international organisations on the **prevention of terrorism**.

