European Parliament investigation into possible Frontex human rights abuses

(3 March 2021) Tomorrow, 4th March, Frontex Executive Director, Fabrice Leggeri, will be grilled by MEPs on allegations of breaches of human rights, including irregular returns of asylum seekers.

Commissioner for migration Ylva Johansson will also participate in the hearing. You can follow the discussion live.

The MEPs’ investigation of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency was launched on 23rd February with the setting up of a Frontex Scrutiny Working Group.
Jan Willem Goudriaan, EPSU General Secretary said: “We welcome the EP investigation. EPSU has long raised concerns over the role and mandate of the EU agency and its impact on our members working in national asylum and migration services. The EU context is one of disproportionate resources over border security issues and outsourcing of asylum responsibility to third countries, while fewer resources are devoted for welcoming and supporting people seeking asylum in Europe.”

The EP probe comes on the heels of an enquiry launched by the European Ombudsman, Emily O'Reilly, on alleged breaches of fundamental rights, in particular the effectiveness and transparency of the EU agency’s complaints mechanism. This is the second enquiry launched by the Ombudsman. The first led to the establishment of the complaints mechanism.

Frontex’s handling of public money has also been under scrutiny by the EU court of auditors, while OLAF, the EU anti-fraud agency has recently launched an investigation and raided the agency’s head-quarters based in Warsaw.

The lack of resources in migration and asylum services led EPSU to establish a network of workers in those services, to give them a voice in a very hostile environment.

For more information on EPSU and asylum policy see here

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