

News Releases

Frontex deploys Rapid Border Intervention Teams to Greece

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Warsaw, 25 October 2010 - Yesterday at 22:49 Frontex received a request from the Greek Minister of Citizen Protection Christos Papoutsis to deploy Rapid Border Intervention Teams (RABITs) as well as operational means to increase the control and surveillance levels at Greece's external border with Turkey. This is the first time since the creation of the Agency in 2005 that Frontex has deployed the RABIT teams – a group of specialised border guards made available by 27 EU countries to deal with emergency situations at the EU's external borders.

Due to the exceptionally high numbers of migrants crossing the Greek-Turkish land border illegally, Greece now accounts for 90% of all detections of illegal border crossings to the EU. In the first half of 2010 a total of 45,000 illegal border crossings were reported by the Greek authorities for all their border sectors. Greece currently estimates that up to 350 migrants attempt to cross the 12,5-km area near the Greek city of Orestiada every day.

“The situation in Greece is very serious. Acting on the basis of the Regulation 863/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council, I have decided that Frontex will provide assistance to the Greek border authorities by deploying adequate number and composition of Rapid Border Intervention Teams. Once deployed they will be operating under the command and control of the Greek authorities” stated Frontex Executive Director Ilkka Laitinen.

“A team of Frontex staff is on its way to the Greek/Turkish land border to assess the situation in view of Minister Papoutsis' request. We will decide how many officers and what kind of technical means will be needed to effectively assist the Greek authorities in strengthening this external EU border and act swiftly to provide the assistance that this Member State has requested. We will take immediate action of reorganising experts and assets being present in the area within the framework of Poseidon Joint Operation coordinated by Frontex” – he added.

Files available for download

- [backgrounder_rabits_english.pdf](#)
Backgrounder - Rapid Border Intervention Teams