

On International Migrants Day (18 December), activists in 17 cities call to abolish the EU's deadly border regime

16 December 2021 - On International Migrants Day this Saturday, people in 17 cities across nine countries will target the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, Frontex. Actions will involve demonstrations in Basel, Berlin, Brussels, Naples, Oujda, Thessaloniki and Vienna, among others (see the full list below). The Abolish Frontex network, consisting of 120 groups and organisations, highlights the deadly toll of the European border regime that frames migration as a problem and migrants as threats, and calls for the abolition of Frontex.

International Migrants Day sees no reason to celebrate: more than 44.764 people have died trying to reach Fortress Europe. In Tripoli, Libya, almost 3000 refugees are protesting outside the UNHCR headquarters following the mass detention of 5000 people and the killing of six people in early October. Many of them have tried to cross the Mediterranean Sea in an attempt to reach Europe, but were pulled back by the so-called Libyan coast guard. Frontex collaborates with this 'coastguard' to force people back to Libya where they face torture and other severe human rights abuses in detention camps.

Frontex's new armed border guard corps has already been deployed to several countries, adding to the militarisation of European borders. And the agency has also become active in stopping refugees crossing from France and Belgium to the UK. The UK's increasingly hostile migration policies have recently resulted in the death of 27 people on the move, when their dinghy capsized on the Channel.

Meanwhile, thousands of people are facing violence at the Polish-Belarus border and are being pushed back into Belarus. Instead of providing help and allowing them safe passage into the EU, Margaritis Schinas, vice president of the European Commission, has proposed a plan to officially restrict asylum rights at the Belarussian border.

The Abolish Frontex network highlights the involvement of the EU into forced displacement. A spokesperson said: "By fuelling conflicts, injustice and climate change and encouraging arms trade, the EU is one of the reasons why people are forced to leave their homes. At the same time, the EU and its member states are militarising their borders and conducting illegal pushbacks. Frontex plays a key role in this and needs to be abolished immediately."

For media inquiries, please email press@abolishfrontex.org. Spokespeople for:

Netherlands - Amsterdam: Vincent de Jong (All Included) - +31659087174 / info@allincluded.nl
Belgium - Brussels : Stephanie Demblon (Agir pour la Paix) +32495698273 / stephanie@agirpouurlapaix.be

Updates on the actions will be available on social media (Twitter/Instagram: [@abolishfrontex](https://twitter.com/abolishfrontex)/ Facebook: Abolish Frontex)

The full list of the network's demands can be found here: <https://abolishfrontex.org/how/>

List of actions (see <https://abolishfrontex.org/blog/2021/12/13/join-the-abolish-frontex-actions-on-18-december-international-migrants-day/> for a version with links to announcements):

Austria

Vienna: Platz Der Menschenrechte, 13-17h – Manifestation, with film screening, speeches and a ‘wall of shame’ about pushbacks.

Belgium

Brussels: Rond-Point Robert Schuman (starting point), 13-17h – Demonstration with actions, passing by Frontex, EU institutions, arms companies and embassies to the church “Béguinage” where there was an occupation by undocumented people who were on hunger strike in spring.

France

Dunkirk: Gare de Dunkerque, 14h – Demonstration in support of exiled people, demanding emergency reception centers, housing and accommodation.

Germany

Berlin: Bernauer Straße/Ackerstraße, 12h – Demonstration ‘Abolish Frontex’, in front of the parliament and the office of the Chancellor.

Greece

Chania (Crete): Agora Square, 12h – Demonstration in solidarity with refugees.

Chios (North Aegean): Chios Town, 11h – #StopPushbacks protest.

Thessaloniki: Kamara, 13h – Protest ‘Locals and Migrants to Live Together’.

Italy

Catania: Piazza Maravigna, 16h – Manifestation ‘No a Frontex: Fermiamo i naufragi ed i respingimenti’ in front of the Frontex office.

Milan: Piazza Mercanti – Distribution of flyers, informing people, connection with activist that went to the Polish borders.

Naples: Piazza del Plebiscito, 16h – Manifestation ‘Abolish Frontex’.

Palermo: Piazza Vigliena-Quattro Canti, 16h – Manifestation against the situation of refugees in Libya and the EU migration policies. With live connection with the action in Cantania.

Pescara: Piazza Salotto, 17h – ‘Abolish Frontex’ meeting with images from European borders, voices from the refugee camps.

Rome: Spazio Anarchico “Vettor Fausto”, 19h – Meeting with screening of screening of the film “When you are born you can no longer hide” by M.T. Giordana and debate.

Ventimiglia: Mission to the Val Roya for a meeting with activist Cédric Herrou and to provide material aid for the cold emergency.

Morocco

Oujda: The Association d'Aide de Migrants en Situation Vulnérable – AMSV – is organizing several activities at its headquarters in Rue de Figuig résidence Gharnata, including speeches, a meeting with representatives of associations of immigrants and a symbolic stand in solidarity in the square of August 16.

Netherlands

Amsterdam: Dam Square, 14h – Flyer action in solidarity with Refugees in Libya.

Switzerland

Ongoing actions and other activities as part of the campaign to hold a referendum on Switzerland's support for Frontex.

Basel: Theaterplatz, 16h – Demonstration 'Nieder mit der EU-Aussengrenze! Gegen die Gleichgültigkeit!'

