**Commissioner Avramopoulos visits Frontex, meets with agency’s staff**

2019-10-01

Today, EU Commissioner for Migration Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos visited Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, and met with its staff.

“I am honoured to welcome the Commissioner at our premises today.  I can safely say that he is one of the main architects of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency,” said Frontex Executive Director Fabrice Leggeri in his opening remarks during the meeting.

Under the mandate of Dimitris Avramopoulos, the European Commission tabled in December 2015 a new regulation to give Frontex a broader mandate in order to tackle the increasing challenges at the EU’s external borders.

“I am proud to say that Frontex has fulfilled the expectations brought about by the 2016 regulation and we are now ready to take up the new responsibilities,” added Leggeri.

“Frontex is the most important tool at our hands to manage migration. It is critical to improve security and safety of the Schengen area. The reinforced agency will be a game changer in our ability to address future challenges and deliver more Europe where more Europe is needed,” said EU Commissioner Avramopoulos.

”Having a common European Border and Coast Guard is a milestone and I want to express my gratitude to Fabrice Leggeri and all the agency’s staff for their excellent work and commitment,” he concluded.

Commissioner Avramopoulos met with the Agency’s staff and visited the Frontex Situation Centre, which provides an up-to-date picture of what is happening at Europe’s external borders.

This year Frontex will see the new mandate come into effect later this autumn. The European Border and Coast Guard Agency will be reinforced with a standing corps of 10,000 border guards by 2027 and will become a core partner of the Member States, able to predict and prevent future crises.

The Agency will also have a stronger mandate on returns and will cooperate more closely with non-EU countries, including those beyond the EU's immediate neighbourhood.