

Updated Frontex Handbook on Contingency Planning for Border Management and Return



News

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At the end of September 2025, Frontex [released](#) an update of its [Handbook on Contingency Planning for Border Management and Return](#). The handbook offers practical guidance to EU Member States and Schengen-associated countries on how to prepare for and respond to crises at their external borders. It aims to support national authorities and Frontex Liaison Officers by explaining how to assess risks, design contingency plans, and put them into action, in this way helping authorities strengthen coordination and ensure effective border management in emergency situations.

A new feature of the second edition is its expanded scope, with the edition now covering returns as well as border management. Each of the four-phase cycles (Plan & Prepare; Respond & Lead; Test; and Review & Adjust) includes success factors, checklists, considerations, and review questions. The new edition describes a concise pathway from signal to decision: the RACER activation model (Report, Assess, Convene, Execute, Resolve), including triggers, thresholds, and de-escalation. In addition, it provides models and steps for setting a chain of command, assigning resources, and making time-bound decisions. It also provides practical templates such as stakeholder lists, RACI matrices, early-warning indicators, resource tables, communication plans, exercise scripts, and test reports.

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