

**Question for written answer E-006591/2020  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Clare Daly** (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Frontex legal case against transparency campaigners

Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, is pursuing a legal case against two private individuals, the transparency campaigners Arne Semsrott and Luisa Izuzquiza, to collect costs awarded against them in respect of a previous transparency court case, largely accrued as a result of the agency's decision to hire private lawyers for that case.

Freedom of information disclosures obtained in the course of Semsrott and Izuzquiza's work have served as the basis for important journalistic stories about Member State involvement in human rights abuses on the external border, and potential Frontex complicity.

On what basis did Frontex accrue these legal costs by hiring private lawyers?

What steps is it taking to minimise legal costs in the present action?

Has Frontex or the Commission considered whether the signal sent by bringing this case will inhibit civil society organisations and the press in performing their important watchdog role, and make it more difficult to ensure the transparency of the EU institutions?