

Outsourcing borders

Monitoring EU externalisation policy

Bulletin 9
9 September 2025

“We cannot trample upon the humanity of others without devaluing our own.”

Chinua Achebe

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Thematic and regional developments

Official EU documents summarised here, and those published with previous editions of the bulletin, are contained in our [document archive](#).

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Border management

Member states hash out anti-smuggling punishments for transport companies

EU legislators are working on new rules designed to punish transport companies deemed to be involved in the smuggling or trafficking of people into the EU. In June, *Statewatch* [published](#) a redraft of the proposal by the Polish then-presidency of the Council. The redraft was informed by [comments compiled two days beforehand](#) (pdf).

The comments show that member states want clarity on how enforcement against air transport operators could impact bilateral air traffic agreements with third countries. Some also want clarity on how the Regulation is compatible with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and a [working paper on irregular migration](#) being discussed at the International Civil Aviation Organization (see below). Many want more explicit protection of national sovereignty over ports and transport infrastructure (air traffic rights in particular being a sticking point).

There are various practical implementation issues presented. If a heavy goods vehicle is used for smuggling, for instance, and that vehicle boards a vessel, Ireland asked for clarity on whether or to what degree both operators would be sanctioned. The Netherlands wants clearer operational guidelines for transport operators and “clear legal grounds” for them to deny passengers they suspect of being involved in smuggling.

Several member states including Ireland, Portugal and Slovakia criticised the Commission’s failure to carry out a proper impact assessment of the proposal.

EU wants commercial airlines to police migrant smuggling

An agenda item presented by Denmark (on behalf of the EU) for the [upcoming assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization \(ICAO\)](#) proposes state and commercial aviation industry actors take part in counter-smuggling enforcement.

The executive summary argues:

*Air transport operators, airport authorities and other aviation industry stakeholders can play an important role in supporting... law enforcement and border management agencies in addressing the use of air transport for irregular migration. **Their ability to identify and report potential cases of irregular migration and smuggling of migrants is particularly valuable in these efforts.** [emphasis added]*

The working paper ([hosted on the ICAO website](#)) suggests various measures to increase carriers’ capacity to “identify and report potential cases of irregular migration and smuggling”

and update ICAO guidance with stronger counter-smuggling measures. This could include guidance on deploying immigration liaison officers at “high-risk airports,” ground staff training and **enhanced engagement between aviation personnel and law enforcement**.

The working paper will be discussed at the 42nd ICAO assembly in Montreal beginning on 23 September.



Frontex reports activities for second half of 2024

Frontex presented [an update on its work in the second half of 2024](#) (pdf) to the Working Party on Frontiers on 5 June. The update has been heavily-redacted at the request of Frontex, as it relates to operational matters and the “modus operandi of criminal networks involved in smuggling”.

The report says [deportations of third country nationals](#) have grown compared to the previous two years, up 38% from 2023. 36% of the 29,469 people deported were reported to have been removed by force. Frontex also reports that more people have gone through its [EU Reintegration Programme](#), the majority being Turkish, Georgian or Iraqi nationals.



Frontex fundamental rights officer reports multiple cases of violent collective expulsions in 2024

Frontex’s fundamental rights office – a nominally [independent monitoring body](#) – has [released its report for 2024](#).

“2024 presented a mixed picture” writes Frontex Fundamental Rights Chief Jonas Grimheden in the foreword. Despite continuing work on monitoring and compliance **“many fundamental rights concerns in border management could also be observed.”**

The report observes multiple **“allegations of [collective expulsions](#) and ill treatment of migrants”**, particularly on the frontiers of Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia, at the hands of border guards and “frequently with the involvement of masked actors of unknown affiliation, use of masks by the border police or unorthodox maritime procedures”.

The report opines that incomplete operational reporting, the reticence of national authorities to include Frontex officers in “sensitive” border areas, border guards’ workplace culture and poor national follow-up investigations contribute to the risk of collective expulsions.

The report also notes monitoring officers were at various times denied access to observe border operations in member states Slovakia and Italy, as well as candidate Serbia.



EU travel authorisation system: “low overall progress” on data protection

The Visa Working Party meeting of 15 May 2025 received an update on the development of the [European Travel Information and Authorisation System \(ETIAS\)](#) – which will be used to

check and store applications for “travel authorisations” by citizens of countries who do not need a visa to enter the EU.

The [presentation from Frontex](#) (pdf), which will manage the ETIAS Central Unit, says “**many data protection issues remain unclear**.” The Commission is expected to provide legal advice, but it is unknown when it will be drafted. “Most data protection activities” are reported to be on hold while awaiting the Commission’s guidance.

Other major risks to the project are noted in the report:

- lack of “Traveller Support Tools,” which had, by May 2025, not yet been delivered by the EU’s IT agency eu-LISA;
- difficulties in forecasting demand for the ETIAS system once it begins in late 2026.

Frontex also reports it is still developing internal working processes, as well as outreach programmes to inform travellers about the app and a chatbot designed to support applicants.

The development of ETIAS is [part of a wider digitalisation of the EU’s border immigration control systems](#). This also includes the digitalisation of the Schengen visa application system. Other recent documents related to these efforts are:

- Commission presentations on the programme’s [legislative proposal](#) (pdf), [Implementing and Delegated Acts](#) (pdf), and [the EU Digital Travel Application Architecture](#) (pdf)
- Presentation from the EU’s IT agency eu-LISA on [preparatory work for the EU Visa Application Platform](#) (pdf)
- Frontex presentation on [takeover of False and Authentic Documents Online \(FADO\) system](#) (pdf)



More than 225 European officials deployed in “key route” countries

As noted [in the last bulletin](#), the EMWP meeting on 18 June discussed the operations of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions along key routes to the EU. Mandates for these missions have in recent years been amended to cover migration and border matters.

[A presentation](#) (pdf) from the EU’s Civilian Operations Headquarters (CivOps) to the 18 June meeting outlines the work of missions in Ukraine, Mali, Libya and Iraq. They include:

- study visits and coordination meetings with Iraqi officials;
- equipment provision and training to Libyan border guards; and
- training to Mali’s police on document fraud, irregular migration and human trafficking, as well as equipment provision to Mali’s border police.

The presentation reports there are 42 CSDP staff members in Iraq, 26 in Libya, 27 in Mali and 132 in Ukraine. It summarises the “opportunities” of CSDP missions as, among others:

- a permanent presence “on the ground” with knowledge build-up;
- practical contribution to the EU’s “internal/external security nexus”;
- networking with other CSDP missions; and
- closer cooperation between the EMWP and the EU’s civilian crisis management committee (CivCom).

Budgets and funding

EU budget proposals: more external migration control, less democratic scrutiny

An analysis of the European Commission's proposal for the next long-term EU budget finds an **increased focus on border externalisation with diminished democratic oversight**.

The [analysis for Statewatch](#) by Trine Odin of Aalborg University in Denmark examines the huge increase in funding for border management and external action - €11.9 billion for Frontex, €12 billion for the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (with a reduced mandate for integration support) and just over €200 billion for the new [Global Europe external instrument](#).

Odin notes this increase is accompanied by a change in funding structure that allows member states **more discretion in how they spend the funds and reduces democratic oversight over the process**. A proposed change to external action rules would allow EU development assistance to be withheld from countries who are found to be 'non-cooperative' on returns:

*The change **makes development** assistance **a direct tool of leverage** – conditioning aid on cooperation with EU migration control.*

In conclusion, writes Odin, the budget “consolidates **a shift away from a values-based external policy towards one increasingly at the service of border enforcement**.”

Read the full article [here](#).

EU-funded Libyan Coast Guard fires “hundreds of rounds” on humanitarian NGO ship

On 24 August, the Ocean Viking humanitarian rescue ship operated by SOS Méditerranée and the IFRC [came under fire from a Libyan Coast Guard](#) (LCG) patrol vessel while in international waters north of Libya. A crewman aboard described what happened over text:

*“**Hundreds of rounds were fired directly at us**; hitting the bridge, RHIBs (rescue speedboats) and hull. Even **two days later, we were still finding bullets** lodged throughout the ship.”*

*“Crew members were pinned to the floor during the assault, with bullets flying over our heads. **We were lucky to escape alive and uninjured**.”*

SOS Méditerranée identified the LCG vessel as one of the two Corrubia-class vessels [donated by the EU in 2023](#) as part of the €59 million project “[Support for Integrated Border and Migration Management in Libya](#) (SIBMMIL)”.

While this is not the first time EU-funded vessels have been used to menace NGO vessels, the sustained direct firing is a significant escalation. A European Commission spokesperson, when asked about the incident, [told Euronews on 26 August it was a “worrying development”](#) and said the Commission would “assess the situation and consider any possible action”.



Joint Valletta Action Plan follow-up launches dashboard and data browser

The "Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP) follow-up" is an ongoing project established to implement the action plans emerging from the 2015 Valletta Summit between the EU and the African Union.

The JVAP is one of the main pillars of EU-Africa externalisation, funded by the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and the Pan-African Programme and supported by externalisation specialists the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).

The project, which is currently in a data collection phase, [has launched a database and dashboard](#) to monitor projects and initiatives.

Deportation and readmission

Outgoing Polish presidency urges “every effort” to speed up deportations

A [paper sent from the Polish presidency of the Council of the EU on 10 June](#) (pdf) urges **swift negotiations on the proposed deportation Regulation** and increased readmission cooperation with third countries.

“Achieving an effective return policy continues to be high on our political agenda”, reads the paper. It argues that despite “positive” developments in the last five years, “the number of effective returns remains unsatisfactory”.

The Presidency urges that “every effort” is made to rapidly implement the incoming [deportation Regulation](#), and says the then-incoming [Danish presidency](#) shares its ambition to start negotiations with the Parliament by the end of 2025. Cooperation with third countries is highlighted as “particularly important” for speeding up returns.

The paper discusses how [visa agreements](#) can be used to exert leverage, and recommends ways to improve the mechanism and expand its use. It notes trade policy as another potential leverage mechanism.

Member states comment on proposed deportation law

[Member states’ comments and drafting proposals](#) (pdf) for the new [deportation Regulation](#) were circulated within the Council following a meeting of the Working Party on Integration, Migration and Expulsion (IMEX) on 13-14 May.

Most member states welcomed the proposal and described it as a “good basis” though many amendments were suggested. Notable comments include:

- Greece welcomes the “permissive approach taken by the Commission with regards to return hubs”;
- Denmark complains some mechanisms in the proposal will increase administrative burdens on member states;
- Belgium argues for more efficiency by making it possible to **blur the lines between voluntary return and removal, and delaying non-refoulement assessments in the removal process**;
- Cyprus says it is “imperative” that member states be given flexibility to continue with national deportation practices [“that have been proven successful”](#).

The document will continue to be worked on at the [4 September IMEX working party meeting](#) (pdf). This will be accompanied by the Commission presenting its assessment of third countries’ level of cooperation on readmissions in 2024.

EU doubling down on “reintegration” programmes

A Danish presidency paper offers a lengthy explanation of why [so-called voluntary return and reintegration programmes](#) are a key part of Europe’s future deportation ambitions, particularly in preventing “re-migration,” and notes an uptick in such returns in recent years.

[The paper](#) (pdf) also praises:

*...the effectiveness of the EU’s initial investment in a **route-based approach to migration management**, which prioritize(s) return and reintegration support in key transit and host countries, **thus potentially reducing the number of returns from Europe by addressing return and reintegration needs earlier along the migration route.***

This route-based approach – having people deported before they can even reach Europe – is identified as a priority for the EU’s external migration policy.

Concluding that stronger capacity for readmission and reintegration in origin, transit and host countries is needed, the paper notes a “resource gap” in EU funding. It invites delegations to consider how and to what extent EU resources should be used to enhance “capacity and ownership” of readmission and reintegration programmes around Africa.

The paper includes a summary of EU-funded programmes to manage reintegration in Sub-Saharan Africa.

- **Active programmes**

- [“Support, Mobility, Integration, and Awareness-Raising”](#) (AMIS), Guinea
 - Run by Belgian federal development agency Enabel and French state-owned Expertise France
 - €12.7m, December 2024 to December 2028
 - Offers “economic opportunities and psychosocial services” and supports local reintegration governance
- [“Sustainable Reintegration of returning migrants in Ivory Coast and fight against trafficking”](#) (MIGRET)
 - Run by Expertise France, Enabel and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM)
 - €4m, July 2024-June 2027
 - The project will be “complemented by an upcoming action” funded by the EU’s Flexible Mechanism
- [“A Ghanaian-European safe and prosperous people’s mobility project on migration governance”](#)
 - Run by the IOM
 - €2.9m, launched in March 2025
 - Aims to establish a “National Referral Mechanism” for people to access training and community-based projects, as well as strengthening

- “stakeholders' capacities, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and the decentralization of return and reintegration”
- Support to Migration Governance in Nigeria
 - Implemented by the IOM
 - Launched in June 2025 and to run around four years
 - Addresses reintegration [but also counter-migration measures in general](#), including training of judicial and police authorities
- Improving Cameroon's Migration Management Capacity and Cooperation
 - Implemented by IOM and German development agency GIZ
 - Previously mentioned in the MOCADDEM meeting of 27 July 2023
- **Pending programmes**
 - “Managing migration better in Western Africa”
 - An **individual measure** [with a budget of €100m via the EU's NDICI](#)
 - Targeting Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and The Gambia
 - The project has both reintegration and counter-migration aims and appears to still be in development.

Launch date for Entry/Exit System announced

The EU's Entry/Exit System (EES), a biometric border crossing database [long beset by technical delays](#), will [launch on 12 October 2025](#). Member states will have six months to introduce the system, which will collect non-EU citizens' fingerprints and photographs.

The system, which replaces passport stamps, will check whether someone crossing a border has a valid visa and has not exhausted the number of entries or length of stay permitted.

One of the main aims of the system is to **systematically detect visa overstayers** and “**prevent irregular migration** and help protect the security of European citizens.”

A Commission impact assessment previously estimated the system [will allow an increase of 33% in the number of deportation orders enforced](#) five years from the system's launch.

Migration partnerships

Document offers insights on extensive EU cooperation with African states

The European Commission has circulated its latest update on external migration cooperation (the [previous update](#) was 21 January 2025). It rounds up the EU's various bilateral dialogues and cooperation with countries of origin and transit.

Notable additions to [the update](#) (pdf) include:

- **North Africa**
 - Relations between **Morocco** and Frontex are reported to be “restarting” mid-2025 after slowing down earlier in the year, and member states report “**higher satisfaction**” with **Morocco’s 2024 cooperation on deportations**, though challenges remain.
 - The EU Subcommittee on Justice and Security for Egypt – [established under the EU-Egypt Association Agreement](#) - discussed **Egypt’s** priorities for the operationalisation of the **€200m for border and migration management foreseen under the Strategic and Comprehensive Partnership until 2027**, with a response from Egypt expected by the end of June.
 - In June this year, the Council extended for two years the EU Border Assistance Mission in **Libya** – which provides “technical advice, capacity-building activities,” including to the so-called Libyan Coast Guard, which recently fired [hundreds of bullets](#) at a civil search and rescue ship.
- **The Sahel**
 - After [cooperation with Niger ended in 2023 following the coup](#), the Commission reports a “significant change” in relations with the Nigerien junta, leading to deals being signed on various projects including migration.
 - The Commission reports “the [new EU supported projects](#) for **Mauritania**” have aided a decrease in departures towards the Canary Islands, but internal political issues with migration in the country are an “irritant” to the partnership, with the country demanding more EU resources.
 - The EU is still taking a “pragmatic” approach to defend its interests in **Mali**, including capacity-building for internal security forces through a CSDP project renewed for two years this January, which includes migration as a priority issue, though the Commission calls for a new strategy for Mali and wants more cooperation on “return and reintegration”.
- **West Africa**
 - The update notes that work on a readmission agreement with **Nigeria**, [which had stalled multiple times since 2016](#), resumed in late 2023, though some member states objected to some of its content at a meeting of the Working Party on Integration, Migration and Expulsion in May 2024.
 - After [being subjected to EU visa restrictions](#), **The Gambia** gave a “firm commitment” in May 2025 to continue migration cooperation, and several

member states are reportedly willing to lift restrictions following a “significant” decline noted in irregular departures from the country.

- **Elsewhere**

- The Commission met in late 2024 with Paris-headquartered **Altai Consulting**, which has [multiple African migration-related contracts with the EU](#), on “identifying avenues for new EU financing in the area of migration”.
- **Cameroon** is making “important efforts” on migration, and is working with EU technical assistance to develop its national migration strategy.
- After the Commission [proposed visa measures against Somalia in 2024](#), the Somali government “reaffirmed its commitment” to migration cooperation in May 2025.
- A Frontex liaison officer, approved in 2024, was deployed to **Pakistan** in May 2025.
- Regular meetings with the **Iraqi ambassador in Brussels** continued in 2025 on readmission cooperation and arrangements.
- The 10th EU-**Armenia** Joint Readmission Committee will take place in Brussels on 9 October.
- In December 2024, a working group facilitated by the European Union Advisory Mission in **Ukraine** convened to support development of Ukraine’s Integrated State Border Management Strategy for 2026-2031, with key goals including cooperation with countries of origin and transit, countering irregular migration and deportations.

Externalisation working party discusses future migration from Central Asia

At a [meeting of the EMWP](#) on 14 May, members discussed the migratory situation in Central Asia and “key challenges and opportunities” for migration cooperation there.

The International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) – an organisation which works closely with the Commission on border externalisation – gave a presentation on regular migration from Central Asia to the EU.

While noting that Central Asian nationals hold a tiny share of overall residence permits in the EU, it also describes “rapid growth” in the past decade, mostly driven by employment opportunities.

[The presentation](#) (pdf) concludes there is possibly a “new corridor” for migration opening as the EU and Central Asian states work more closely together. **It questions whether irregular migration might increase** as well. An [accompanying briefing note](#) (pdf) mentions that irregular migration was up 47% 2022 to 2023, with 8,360 people from Central Asia detected living undocumented in the EU.

With the EU’s labour needs in mind, the ICMPD invited delegates to discuss:

- What are the key challenges and opportunities regarding cooperation with Central Asian countries on migration?

- What actions should be taken to balance the challenges (including potential security concerns), while facilitating migration to meet labour market needs?
- Should migration governance cooperation between the EU and Central Asia be better integrated into broader diplomatic and economic relations?

No doubt the ICMPD will be on hand to offer its assistance, should the EU and its member states wish to develop “migration governance cooperation” with Central Asian states.



Externalisation working party to discuss situation in Turkey, Syria and Afghanistan

[On 10 September](#) (pdf) the Council’s Working Party on External Aspects of Asylum and Migration (EMWP) will meet to discuss:

- o EU cooperation with Turkey in the area of migration (with Frontex attending);
- o displacement and recent developments in Syria;
- o the current migratory situation in Afghanistan; and
- o a “human rights-based approach to migration cooperation” with presentations from the UN’s Office for the High Commissioner on Human Rights and the Danish Institute for Human Rights.

The EMWP meeting of 14 May saw a [presentation from the IOM](#) (pdf) on the impact of the situation in Afghanistan on migration in neighbouring countries. The report notes widespread crackdowns on Afghans in Iran and Pakistan. It also says 40,000 undocumented Afghan migrants have been returned from Turkey since October 2023, the majority single men. Some of these people may have been detained and abused [with the help of EU funds](#).

The IOM also gave a presentation on the [migratory situation in the Western Balkans](#) (pdf).



The moment is “timely” to think about climate migration, says outgoing presidency

A paper sent by the Polish Presidency to the EMWP on 2 July explores the impact of climate change on migration and displacement on the African continent. Ahead of November’s [summit between the EU and African Union](#), the presidency said it would be timely to “reflect on the theme of climate migration and forced displacement within the African context with a view to **deepening and identifying the potential partnership opportunities** with affected African states”.

[The paper](#) (pdf) describes the EU’s current approach to climate mobility as centred on:

- addressing root causes;
- providing assistance and protection to displaced people and host communities; and
- global advocacy and action, research and data collection.

It also rounds up various EU-funded programmes in Africa as examples of Europe's approach, including the €100m [RE2CLID regional initiative](#), an €8m project with the IDMC on prevention, risk reduction and response, and the "[ResilientRemit](#)" project (launched in June 2025) to funnel remittances to climate resilience.

It then invites working party members to discuss the following questions:

- What are the lessons learned from the EU's and Member States' cooperation with African states on climate-related migration and forced displacement? Any outstanding gaps or needs?
- How can we further integrate climate-related migration and forced displacement into our migration and forced displacement programmes/projects, **including through a Team Europe approach?**
- In light of the current geopolitical changes, how do you assess the importance and relevance of climate related migration and forced displacement (in Africa) within the overall migration agenda?
- Do you see **specific future opportunities for the EU and Member States to engage with African partners** on the topic?

Mauritanian MP backing mass expulsions joins EP committee hearing

The European Parliament's development committee, DEVE, hosted a [public hearing](#) on the "Interlinkage between Migration and Development Cooperation" on 15 July.

On one of the panels was Mauritanian MP Zine El Abidine Ould El Mounir, head of the parliamentary team on refugees, who has been outspoken on Mauritania needing more resources. He's also described his [country's response to increased migration](#) - which includes mass expulsion - as "[humanistic and legally responsible](#), despite limited resources."

Jurisprudence updates



ECtHR clears Italy of responsibility in 2017 Libya pullbacks and deaths

Dr Kathryn Allinson, Senior Lecturer in Law, University of Bristol. Jurisprudence updates provided in association with the [Refugee Law Initiative Working Group on Externalisation](#).

On 12 June 2025, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) ruled in the case [S.S. and Others v Italy](#) (pdf) that claims by 17 applicants, who were violently intercepted at sea and suffered grave harm in a Libyan-led operation backed by the Italian state, were inadmissible.

In 2017 a maritime operation by the Libyan Coastguard, to whom the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) in Rome had given command (para. 6), left 20 individuals dead and 47 pulled back to Libya. The key aspect of the judgment is the Court's finding that it lacked jurisdiction under Article 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), as Italy did not exercise sufficient effective control over the relevant area or persons.

This is despite the extensive evidence presented that, under the terms of a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (pdf), Italy provided significant coordination, funding, and support to the Libyan Coastguard. This included an Italian vessel acting as the Libyan MRCC, and findings by the Tribunale di Catania that Libyan operations were occurring “[under the aegis of the Italian navy](#)” (pdf). Italy's policy, which allows ‘pullbacks by proxy’, is used to achieve indirectly what Italy was barred from doing directly after the [Hirsi judgment](#).

The ECtHR held that it lacked jurisdiction to rule on obligations under maritime conventions or the Law of the Sea (paras. 89-113). It then concluded that the criteria for extraterritorial jurisdiction were not satisfied. Referring to the [M.N.](#) decision (specifically paras. 101-6), it limits the grounds for extraterritorial jurisdiction to effective control over an area and over an individual (paras. 100-108). Consequently, it rejects the notion of a public powers or a “functional” interpretation of jurisdiction (para. 80). It also held that ‘effective control’ is confined to “physical control” (para. 78) and is a matter of fact that must be established “beyond reasonable doubt” (para. 96).

As a result, the Court applies this extremely high threshold, determining that there was neither effective control over the Libyan search and rescue operations by Italy, nor a situation of dependency in which Italy exerted decisive influence over the Libyan coastguard (para. 92-7). The Court also held that Italy did not have control over the crew of the Libyan ship, so there was no *ratione personae* (para. 102). However, the ECHR requires state control over the applicants themselves, not their agents (this being the test for attribution).

Ultimately, the decision adopts a very restrictive approach to establishing extraterritorial jurisdiction in maritime interdiction contexts. This diverges from [the approach of the UN Human Rights Committee](#), creating accountability gaps that enable states to violate migrants' rights by outsourcing activities to other actors. The Court recognises this in its final comments, acknowledging the ‘unsatisfactory’ nature of its judgement (para. 109-111).

Other



Moving borders with history: new ways of thinking about border externalisation

[An article](#) by border externalisation scholars Sebastian Cobarrubias and Martin Lemberg-Pedersen for a special issue of the human geography journal *Geoforum* re-examines understandings of the history of the European border externalisation regime.

A summary of the article [on the Statewatch website](#) explains:

*The authors critique common framings of border externalisation as being overly spatial and focused on contemporary dynamics, obscuring **the longer imperial histories underpinning these practices**. They advocate for re-historicisation and the de-centring of Eurocentric understandings, by situating current trends within the enduring legacies of colonial encounters.*

The [full article is available](#) in a special issue of *Geoforum* focussed on border externalisation.

Updates to the document archive

The [Outsourcing Borders document archive](#) hosts key documents from the Council of the EU and the European Commission.

External Aspects of Asylum and Migration Working Party (EMWP)

- [Agenda of the EMWP Meeting on 10 July 2025](#) (3223/25, 23 June 2025, pdf)
- [Agenda of the EMWP Meeting on 10 September 2025](#) (3696/25, 24 July 2025, pdf)
- ICMPD background note: [Migratory routes from Central Asian countries](#) (7995/25, LIMITE, 7 May 2025, pdf)
- ICMPD presentation: [Regular migration from Central Asia to the EU](#) (6341/2025, LIMITE, 14 May 2025, pdf)
- IOM presentation: [Impact of the current situation in Afghanistan on migratory flows in neighbouring countries](#) (6330/2025, LIMITE, 14 May 2025, pdf)
- IOM presentation: [Migration in the Western Balkans](#) (6344/2025, LIMITE, 14 May 2025)
- Presentation from the representative of the Civilian Operations Headquarters (CivOps) “[Optimising cooperation along migratory routes and strengthening the EU’s comprehensive approach to building security in partner countries: contribution from CSDP missions](#)” (8302/2025, LIMITE, 18 June 2025)
- Presidency paper: [Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration \(AVRR\) programmes in the African context](#) (10308/25, LIMITE, 3 July 2025, pdf)
- Presidency paper: [Climate related migration and forced displacement on the African continent](#) (10309/25, LIMITE, 2 July 2025, pdf)

Working Party on Frontiers

- [Agenda of the Working Party on Frontiers Meeting on 5 June 2025](#) (2840/25, 27 May 2025, pdf)
- [Frontex presentation on takeover of False and Authentic Documents Online \(FADO\) system](#) (7464/2025, LIMITE, 6 June 2025, pdf)
- [Frontex report on external border management activities in second semester 2024](#) (7463/2025, LIMITE, 6 June 2025, pdf)
- [Frontex 13th report on the state of preparation of ETIAS](#) (6504/2025, LIMITE, 16 May 2025, pdf)
- [Commission presentation: Digitalisation of travel documents and facilitation of travel: legislative proposal](#) (6500/2025, 16 May 2025, pdf)
- [Commission presentation: EU Digital Travel Application Architecture](#) (6501/2025, LIMITE, 16 May 2025, pdf)

Working Party on Integration, Migration and Expulsion (IMEX)

- [Agenda of the IMEX Meeting on 4th September 2025](#) (3665/25, 23 July 2025, pdf)
- Regulation on establishing a common system for the return of third-country nationals staying illegally in the EU: [Compilation of drafting proposals and comments on Articles 1 to 11](#) (7502/2025, LIMITE, 12 June 2025, pdf)



Visa Working Party

- [Commission presentation on Visa digitalisation: Implementing and Delegated Acts](#) (5709/2025, LIMITE, 7 May 2025, pdf)
- [eu-LISA presentation on preparatory work for the EU Visa Application Platform](#) (5706/2025, LIMITE, 7 May 2025, pdf)



Operational Coordination Mechanism on the External Dimension of Migration (MOCADDEM)

- [Agenda of the MOCADDEM Roundtable on 19 June 2025 \(WK 7359/2025 INIT, pdf\)](#)



Other documents

- Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on EU measures against transport operators involved in migrant smuggling: [Compilation of delegation comments](#) (7087/2025, LIMITE, 10 June 2025, pdf)
- [Presidency paper on enhancing returns through more effective readmission cooperation from third countries](#) (7406/2025, LIMITE, 4 June 2025, pdf)

About this bulletin

This project, carried out by *Statewatch* and *migration-control.info* and funded by *Brot für die Welt*, *Misereor*, *medico international* and *Pro Asyl*, aims to make the EU's externalisation policies, plans and practices public. In doing so it seeks to highlight their impact on the rights of people on the move, as well as democratic standards, transparency and accountability. It addresses a lack of public information by publishing relevant EU documents, in this phase primarily those produced or discussed by the Council of the EU. It also tackles the overflow of information that results from a variety of EU institutions, working groups and national governments involved in the externalisation agenda by summarising thematic and regional developments, and by analysing key issues in depth.