STATEWATCH ANALYSES & BRIEFING

1. Italy renews Memorandum with Libya, as evidence of a secret Malta-Libya deal
2. Anti-migration cooperation between the EU, Italy and Libya: some truths surfaces
3. Briefing: Spain: Migrants' rights must be guaranteed and put at the core of measures taken by the government.

STATEWATCH NEWS

1. EU: MEPs, migration policy experts call for urgent action to uphold refugee rights
2. Refugee crisis: latest news from across Europe (17-23.3.20)
3. Two analyses, Briefing: EU-Italy-Libya cooperation; Spanish migration policies
4. EU-ERITREA: We will fight forced labour in Eritrea by funding projects that use it
5. Refugee crisis: latest news from across Europe (10-16.3.20)
6. EU: Little new on migration in Commission's plan for Africa
7. ITALY: Coronavirus: critical situation in prisons and detention centres
8. ITALY: Coronavirus: military personnel given police powers

NEWS

1. EP: Draft report: UK and launch of automated data exchange with UK
2. Hungary: Law to fight coronavirus creates 'uncertainty' for journalists
3. **Coronavirus**: Call for single EU tracking app with data protection
4. CoE: COVID-19 pandemic: urgent steps wanted to protect the rights of prisoners
5. Ministers of justice any extraordinary measures be in line with values of EU
6. 'Coronavirus doesn't respect barbed wire': concern mounts for Greek camps
7. Second Greek migrant camp under coronavirus lockdown
8. Greece/Turkey: Asylum-seekers and migrants killed and abused at borders
9. UK: Monitoring and surveillance at work - a practical guide for trade union reps
10. EU: The EU Integrated Political Crisis Response Arrangements: COVID-19
11. EU: Passenger Name Record: Commission eight infringement proceedings
12. EU: Love thy neighbour? Coronavirus politics and their impact on EU
13. Racial injustice in the Covid-19 response - Covid-19
14. EU: Joint statement on the principles of the rule of law in times of Covid-19
15. UK: Postmasters made legal history with biggest referral of miscarriage
16. UK: New Director General of MI5 appointed

17. SAMOS, GREECE: My open letter to the new manager of the Samos Hotspo**t**
18. From the « war against the virus » to the war against exiles security responses
19. Coronavirus: Urgent appeal for evacuation of Greek refugee **c**amps
20. Greece: Nearly 2,000 New Arrivals Detained in Overcrowded Camps
21. European Commission: first meeting of the EU-UK Joint Committee
22. CEPS In Brief: Will privacy be one of the victims of COVID-19?
23. Portugal to treat migrants as residents during coronavirus crisis
24. ' Are we in Greece?': Migrants seize their chance in Europe quest
25. Return to borderless Europe after COVID-19 will be difficult but not impossible
26. HUNGARY: Orbán to rule by decree with new powers to 'silence critics'
27. UK: Government-Funded AI Programme - 'Face Recognition
28. The Protocol on Ireland/ Northern Ireland: What it says is not what it does
29. EU/Greece/Turkey: Crisis not averted
30. Books for refugees in Greece: Help ECHO buy a new library van!
31. EU: Data protection in times of coronavirus: not a question of if, but of how
32. Hungary passes law allowing Viktor Orban to rule by decree
33. Migration: tales of brutality along Europe's borders
34. MALTA: Free the #ElHiblu3
35. Court orders Netherlands to pay colonial victims
36. UK: Act to guarantee the rights of EU nationals now: Right to Stay
37. It's official: North Macedonia becomes NATO's 30th member
38. From Windrush to Covid 19: another scandal in the making
39. UK police use drones and roadblocks to enforce lockdown
40. UK: Police given new powers
41. UK broke law over IS 'Beatles' by passing information to US
42. EDPS Annual Report 2019: Data protection rules must produce promised result
43. Threats to journalists: The 'new normal' in Germany
44. MEDITERRANEAN: Privatized Pushbacks: How Merchant Ships Guard Europ**e**
45. UK: Oval Four: Black man framed by corrupt police officer cleared 48 years later
46. UK: Rule of Law Monitoring of Legislation - Coronavirus Bill
47. UK: COVID-19: Protecting people in places of custody and detention
48. Coronavirus derogations from human rights send wrong signal, say MEPs
49. EU: In fight against coronavirus, governments embrace surveillance
50. HUNGARY: Pandemic as Constitutional Moment
51. EU asks Greece to move migrants most at risk from coronavirus out of crowded
52. UK: The Windrush Report: joint statement
53. ENAC: autorizzati i droni per il monitoraggio
54. European Commission: State of play of non-reciprocity in the area of visa policy
55. MEP calls for EU action to stop coronavirus spreading to Greek migrant camps
56. Hungary's state of emergency law is a 'blank cheque' to Orban, critics say
57. UK: Anthony Grainger shooting: Six officers under investigation
58. Respect Rights in COVID-19 Response
59. IRELAND: Coronavirus legal response: Dáil passes Covid-19 legislation)
60. UK: HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT RISKS PUBLIC HEALTH OUTBREAK
61. UK: "Two Years Is Too Long" for "Draconian" Coronavirus Bill
62. HUNGARY: Orbán introduces 'Enabling Act' in the name of fighting coronavirus
63. I SRAEL: Mossad bungles coronavirus test purchases
64. **#**Euroleaks: the full 2015 Eurogroup recordings now public!
65. UK Bill a License for Military Crimes? Law Would Stymie Prosecutions
66. Stuck under a cloud of suspicion: Profiling in the EU

STATEWATCH ANALYSES & BRIEFING

1. Statewatch Analysis: **Italy renews Memorandum with Libya, as evidence of a secret Malta-Libya deal surfaces** (pdf) by Yasha Maccanico:

The 2017 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Italy and Libya was tacitly renewed without amendments on 2 February 2020, amid widespread criticism over its legality and effects since October 2019. This article outlines the parliamentary debate that accompanied the interior minister's declared intention to renew the MoU in November 2019.

2. Statewatch Analysis: **Anti-migration cooperation between the EU, Italy and Libya: some truths** (pdf) by Yasha Maccanico:

Apart from a regression in human rights standards that immigration policy is producing within the EU's borders by promoting racism in politics and institutional discrimination in pursuit of its strategic objectives, the effects of EU migration policy's externalisation to third countries are also harmful.

3. Briefing: **Spain: Migrants' rights must be guaranteed and put at the core of measures taken by the government** (pdf):

The member organisations of the Euro-African network Migreurop based in Spain express deep concern regarding the proposed policy at the southern border announced by the interior ministry and the ECHR sentence backing 'hot returns'. We thus present to the new government our proposals in the field of migration and international protection aimed at guaranteeing migrants' rights.

STATEWATCH NEWS

1. EU: **MEPs, migration policy experts call for urgent action to uphold refugee rights**

Over 100 MEPs from four political groups in the European Parliament have called on the European Commission to take action so that "fundamental rights and the right to

asylum" are upheld in Greece. Their calls have been echoed by dozens of migration policy experts working on EU-funded projects.

2. **Refugee crisis: latest news from across Europe** (17-23.3.20) including:

- Anti-migration cooperation between the EU, Italy and Libya: some truths
- Erdogan in talks with European leaders over refugee cash for Turke
- COVID-19: No one is safe until All are protected!

3. Two new analyses and one new briefing: EU-Italy-Libya cooperation; Spanish migration policies

Statewatch is today publishing three new in-depth pieces, examining anti-migration cooperation between the EU, Italy and Libya; the renewal of Italy's Memorandum of Understanding with Libya and the accompanying parliamentary debate; and a briefing outlining demands for the new Spanish government to ensure that its migration policy respects human rights.

4. EU-ERITREA: **European Commission: We will fight forced labour in Eritrea by financing projects that use it**

"...The EU-funded project only finances the procurement and supply of material and equipment — the EU does not pay for labour..."

5. **Refugee crisis: latest news from across Europe** (10-16.3.20) including:

- Little new on migration in Commission's plan for a "comprehensive strategy with Africa"
- More calls for EU and Greece to uphold international law and refugee rights
- Turkey steps back from confrontation at Greek border
- Border externalisation: agreements on Frontex ops in Serbia and Montenegro head for approval

6. EU: **Little new on migration in Commission's plan for a "comprehensive strategy with Africa"**

Last week the European Commission published a communication setting out a plan for a "comprehensive strategy with Africa", which includes "migration and mobility" amongst its five key themes. The document is intended to frame talks between the EU and the AU as they move towards a summit in October this year.

7. ITALY: **Coronavirus: critical situation in prisons and detention centres**

A note issued on 12 March by the ombudsman for people denied their freedom in jails and places of detention on describes the situation as "relatively" calm, despite problems resulting from disturbances and violence in numerous prisons in the past days.

8. TALY: **Coronavirus: military personnel given police powers to enforce restrictions on mobility and presence in the streets**

On 12 March 2020, Italian press agency ANSA reported the contents of an interior ministry circular issued concerning restrictions on mobility first decreed on 23 February and repeatedly expanded upon in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, from Lombardy and 14 provinces (the initial "red zone") to the entire national territory. Presence on the streets must be duly motivated in a justification form, for essential activities, going to work and essential shopping.

NEWS

1. European Parliament: **Draft report: on the draft Council implementing decision on the launch of automated data exchange with regard to dactyloscopic data in the United Kingdom** (link): Rapporteur: Juan Fernando López Aguilar:

"1.Rejects the Council draft;
2.Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council, the Commission and the national parliaments."

2. **Hungary: Law to fight coronavirus creates 'uncertainty' for journalists** (DW, link):

"These are turbulent times in Hungary, with a single political decision receiving massive international attention. It's not the first time Hungary has been in the headlines for government decrees that have raised eyebrows nationally and internationally. Prime Minister Viktor Orban has freely described his understanding of democracy as "illiberal," and refers to his decisions as "unorthodox.""

3. **Coronavirus: Call for single EU tracking app with data protection** (BBC News, link):

"Europe's data protection watchdog has called for a single coronavirus app to be used across the EU, instead of every country making its own.

Several countries are developing tracking apps, but privacy advocates warn of the dangers they might pose.

The European Data Protection Supervisor says a single EU app with strong data protection built in is the best solution to the coronavirus pandemic.

"We will not be able to solve it with national tools only," he warned."

4. CoE:: **COVID-19 pandemic: urgent steps are needed to protect the rights of prisoners in Europe** (link):

"Convicted prisoners and persons on remand are among those most vulnerable to viral contagion as they are held in a high-risk environment: in general, detention facilities are not adapted to face large-scale epidemics, and the basic protective

measures such as social distancing and hygiene rules cannot be observed as easily as outside, exposing prisoners to greater health risks.

Furthermore, in many European countries the pandemic strikes in a context of overcrowded prisons and poor detention conditions in cramped, collective cells, with unsatisfactory health services, as well as higher rates of infectious and chronic diseases among detainees, such as tuberculosis, diabetes and HIV.

Across Europe, a number of contaminations and some COVID 19-related deaths in prison have already been reported; tension in prisons has increased since the beginning of the pandemic crisis, leading to acts of protest (sometimes violent) in reaction to restrictions on visits or other activities."

5. **Ministers of justice stressed that any extraordinary measures should be in line with the fundamental values of the EU** (/eu2020.hr, link):

"At the initiative of the Minister of Justice, Mr Dražen Bošnjakovic, a video conference of the Ministers of Justice of the EU Member States was held. The European Commissioner for Justice, Mr Didier Reynders, also participated.

Representatives of the European Commission and Member States discussed the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the judiciary. They also exchanged information on measures taken by Member State's governments to prevent its spread. "

6. **'Coronavirus doesn't respect barbed wire': concern mounts for Greek camps - Calls grow for EU countries to accept refugees as outbreaks fuel fears that virus could rampage through overcrowded facilities** (Guardian, ,link):

"In Aegean islands on the frontline of the crisis, health carers speak of days gained, not won.

But an outbreak of the disease in two facilities near Athens has intensified concerns over the estimated 36,000 men, women and children stranded on remote isles opposite the Turkish coast.

Installations on Lesbos, Samos, Chios, Leros and Kos – at six times over capacity, sprawling, wretched and congested – where social distancing, and other precautionary measures are an impossible privilege, offer fertile ground for Covid-19"

7. **Second Greek migrant camp under coronavirus lockdown - Camp in Malakasa under 'full sanitary isolation' for 14 days after a 53-year-old asylum seeker tests positive** (Al Jazeera, link):

"*Officials in Greece have placed a second migrant camp near Athens under lockdown after an Afghan resident tested positive for the coronavirus, the migration ministry said.*

Officials said the camp in Malakasa, some 38 kilometres (24 miles) northeast of Athens, was placed under "full sanitary isolation" for 14 days, with no one allowed to enter or leave."

And see: **Greece quarantines camp after migrants test coronavirus positive** (Reuters, link)

8. **Greece/Turkey: Asylum-seekers and migrants killed and abused at borders** (Amnesty, link):

"*In the midst of violence at the Greek-Turkish border, at least two men were killed and a woman remains missing after Greek border forces reportedly fired live ammunition and tear gas against asylum-seekers and migrants. This occurred after Turkish authorities recklessly encouraged them to travel to Greece under false pretences,* **new research by Amnesty International has revealed.**

From 27 February onwards, thousands of people headed to the Greek border after Turkish authorities encouraged and facilitated their movement there. Some asylum seekers and their families living in Turkey even gave up their accommodation and spent all their money to make the journey. However, Greek authorities repressed the movement of people attempting to cross by bolstering border control, sending in police and army forces who used tear gas, water cannons, plastic bullets and live ammunition."

9. UK: **Monitoring and surveillance at work - a practical guide for trade union reps** (Labour Research Department, link):

From the **introduction**: "*There have never been so many different ways for management to watch over and monitor the workforce. Moving on from the days of bag checks and timesheets, monitoring is now far more likely to involve looking at internet usage, logging phone calls and taking CCTV footage. New technologies have created even more opportunities with surveillance software making it possible to assess performance on the production line, manage workers remotely, track deliveries, time toilet breaks and even determine if someone is in the right frame of mind for work.*

The use of algorithms to assess workers' output has led to cases of them being reprimanded for not keeping to strict schedules without any human interaction taking place. Recently Barclays bank found itself in a media storm after it used a software pilot that tracked when employees were away from their desk, how much time they spent on various tasks and that even sent warning messages if they were deemed not to be working hard enough.?

The need for robust safeguards to protect workers from intrusive monitoring has never been more urgent."

10. EU: **The EU Integrated Political Crisis Response Arrangements: Operational Conclusions - IPCR Roundtable 25 March 2020 - COVID-19** (pdf):

"*1. Speed up delivery of medical equipment*

2. Increase repatriation of stranded citizens

*3. Art 222 TFEU [the '**solidarity clause**']"*

11. EU: **Passenger Name Record (PNR): Commission closes eight infringement proceedings for failure to tranpose passenger surveillance rules** (EC, link):

"*The European Commission closes today [2 April 2020] infringement procedures against eight Member States as they transposed EU rules on Passenger Name Record data into national law.*

The European Commission decided today to close the infringement procedures against Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Greece, Luxembourg, Portugal and Romania as they have now fully transposed EU rules on Passenger Name Record data (Directive (EU) 2016/681) into national law... The Directive is an essential building block towards an effective and genuine Security Union and in order for its benefits to fully materialise, it is crucial that all EU Member States have their Passenger Name Record systems in place. The Commission is now assessing whether the transposition measures adopted by the eight Member States are in conformity with the provisions of the Directive. Today's decision does not prejudge the result of that assessment."

12. EU: **Love thy neighbour? Coronavirus politics and their impact on EU freedoms and rule of law in the Schengen Area** (CEPS, link to pdf):

"*Restrictions on international and intra-EU traffic of persons have been at the heart of the political responses to the coronavirus pandemic. Border controls and suspensions of entry and exist have been presented as key policy priorities to prevent the spread of the virus in the EU. These measures pose however fundamental questions as to the raison d'être of the Union, and the foundations of the Single Market, the Schengen system and European citizenship. They are also profoundly intrusive regarding the fundamental rights of individuals and in many cases derogate domestic and EU rule of law checks and balances over executive decisions*

This Paper examines the legality of cross-border mobility restrictions introduced in the name of COVID-19. It provides an in-depth typology and comprehensive assessment of measures including the reintroduction of internal border controls, restrictions of specific international traffic modes and intra-EU and international 'travel bans'. Many of these have been adopted in combination with declarations of a 'state of emergency'."

13. **Racial injustice in the Covid-19 response - Covid-19 is disproportionately impacting BAME communities and we need urgent action** (Charity So White, link):

"*This live position paper provides an overview of the risks and impact of COVID-19 on racial inequalities within the UK. It outlines an urgent call to action, including specific recommendations for civil society and its funders, to put BAME communities*

*at the heart of their response to ensure it addresses root issues and maximises impact. If you are working across any of the principles or issues we have highlighted, please let us know. You can contact us through **charitysowhite@gmail.com** and a member of our team will get back to you.*

*#CharitySoWhite are all volunteers and have published this paper for free to make it accessible to all. It has taken time and effort for our committee to bring this together. Make a **donation** when you have read this to recognise the value of our work and to be an ally to #CharitySoWhite.*

*You can read the executive summary below, and read the whole paper by following clicking the button below. Offline and accessible versions of the whole paper are available for download **here**."*

14. EU: **Joint statement on the principles of the rule of law in times of Covid-19** (German Foreign Office, link):

"Statement by Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden

In this unprecedented situation, it is legitimate that Member States adopt extraordinary measures to protect their citizens and overcome the crisis. We are however deeply concerned about the risk of violations of the principles of rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights arising from the adoption of certain emergency measures. Emergency measures should be limited to what is strictly necessary, should be proportionate and temporary in nature, subject to regular scrutiny, and respect the aforementioned principles and international law obligations. They should not restrict the freedom of expression or the freedom of the press. We need to jointly overcome this crisis and to jointly uphold our European principles and values on this path. We therefore support the European Commission initiative to monitor the emergency measures and their application to ensure the fundamental values of the Union are upheld, and invite the General Affairs Council to take up the matter when appropriate."

15. UK: **How subpostmasters made legal history with biggest referral of potential miscarriages of justice** (ComputerWeekly.com, link):

"*The referral to the court of appeal of 39 cases of potential wrongful prosecution of subpostmasters, for theft, fraud and false accounting, is the biggest group of probable miscarriages of justice in UK history, according to the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC).*

This group will get even bigger, with 22 more cases under review and only delayed because they were more recently taken up by the CCRC, and more potential applicants have contacted the CCRC in the days since the historic announcement was made.

"This is completely unprecedented," Helen Pitcher, chairman at the CCRC, told Computer Weekly. She said the previous biggest group referral comprised 10 cases."

See: **Postmasters 'rejoice' as convictions appeal granted** (BBC News, link) and: **CCRC to refer 39 Post Office cases on abuse of process argument** (CCRC, link)

16. UK: **New Director General of MI5 appointed** (MI5, link):

"*The Home Secretary has today (Monday 30 March) announced that Ken McCallum has been appointed as Director General of MI5. He will become MI5's eighteenth Director General and succeeds Sir Andrew Parker, who has been Director General since 2013 and retires in April.*

Ken McCallum is an MI5 officer with almost 25 years of experience across the full spectrum of the organisation's national security and intelligence work.

His first ten years was focussed on Northern Ireland-related terrorism, with his work contributing to the peace process remaining a career highlight. Senior operational roles in countering Islamist extremist terrorism followed, and a period leading on cyber security, where he expanded MI5 engagement with the private sector."

17. SAMOS, GREECE: **My open letter to the new manager of the Samos Hotspot** (Samos Voice, link): by Professor Chris Jones.

18. **From the « war against the virus » to the war against exiles : security responses to Covid-19 exacerbate violence at borders** (migreurop, link)

"*The Greek hotspots in which exiles are crammed without any protection of their rights or from the pandemic are an example of the precarization of their trajectories by the security policies of States. Migreurop denounces the violence inflicted onto exiles in the name of the "war against the virus", their unequal treatment with regard to the pandemic, and demands the immediate closure of all spaces of migrant detention in order to ensure their right to be protected.*"

 19. **Coronavirus: Urgent appeal for evacuation of Greek refugee camps** (DW, link):

"*Europe's biggest asylum seeker camp of Moria, on the Greek island of Lesbos, was designed for 3,000 refugees but houses 20,000. Given the coronavirus, evacuating it is paramount, says migration expert Gerald Knaus.*"

20. **Greece: Nearly 2,000 New Arrivals Detained in Overcrowded, Mainland Camps - Citing COVID-19, Authorities Arbitrarily Detain New Arrivals** (HRW, link):

"*Greek authorities are arbitrarily detaining nearly 2,000 migrants and asylum seekers in unacceptable conditions, and denying them the right to lodge asylum claims, in two recently established detention sites on mainland Greece, Human Rights Watch said today. Authorities claim they are holding the new arrivals, including children,*

persons with disabilities, older people, and pregnant women, in quarantine due to COVID-19, but the absence of even basic health precautions is likely to help the virus spread."

21.   **Statement by the European Commission following the first meeting of the EU-UK Joint Committee** (pdf):

"Today, the European Union and the United Kingdom held their first Joint Committee meeting on the implementation and application of the Withdrawal Agreement, by means of teleconference. The Joint Committee is co-chaired by European Commission Vice-President Maroš Šefcovic and the UK Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Michael Gove. The discussion took place in a constructive and productive atmosphere."

22.   **CEPS In Brief: Will privacy be one of the victims of COVID-19?** (link):

"As the COVID-19 outbreak rages across the world, governments have started observing the effectiveness of different approaches to 'flatten the curve' or contain the spread of the virus. So far, the most effective governments seem to be those that have invested in solid and even redundant healthcare infrastructure, engaged in mass testing, and identified and isolated infected people (and quarantined their contacts) to reduce the spread to healthy individuals.

European countries appear to suffer from a lack of medical and testing equipment, and to be reluctant to impose restrictions on individual rights, such as privacy and the free movement of people. Against this background, a dangerous debate has emerged on whether key tenets of European democracies, including the protection of the fundamental right to privacy, should be set aside during the pandemic to enable a more effective response."I

23.   **Portugal to treat migrants as residents during coronavirus crisis** (Reuters, link):

"All foreigners in Portugal with pending applications will be treated as permanent residents from Monday until at least July 1, authorities said on Saturday, to ensure migrants have access to public services during the coronavirus outbreak.

Applicants including asylum seekers need only provide evidence of an ongoing request to qualify - granting them access to the national health service, welfare benefits, bank accounts, and work and rental contracts."

24.   **'Are we in Greece?': Migrants seize their chance in Europe quest** (EUractiv, link):

"Some attempt to cut through a barbed wire fence while others hunt for wood and rocks to throw at police. The thousands of migrants at the Kastanies border town between Turkey and Greece are desperate to reach Europe and furious with Greeks who "won't open the gates".

Hundreds of Greek soldiers and armed police have fired tear gas in an attempt to hold back what they fear could become a flood of people trying to cross the border."

25. **Return to borderless Europe after COVID-19 will be difficult but not impossible**. (EUractiv, link):

"If we do not start creating conditions for the return to a border-free Schengen zone now, the temporary measures introduced to control the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic risk becoming permanent, writes Alena Kudzko."

26. HUNGARY: **Orbán to rule by decree with new powers to 'silence critics'** (EUactiv, link):

"The Hungarian Parliament approved new emergency powers on Monday (30 March) that will allow the ruling Fidesz party the right to rule by decree, without a set time limit, in a move that prompted an outcry from human rights groups.

The new plans would also see up to five years of imprisonment for those accused of spreading misinformation, as well as up to eight years for those found to be breaching the quarantine measures introduced as a means to stem the coronavirus outbreak in Hungary."

See also: **Hungary's emergency law 'incompatible with being in EU', say MEPs group - Measures voted on Monday will allow Viktor Orbán to rule by decree without time limits** (Guardian, link)

27. UK: **This UK Government-Funded AI Programme Wants to Make 'Face Recognition Ubiquitous'. (But Sure, We're Probably Being Paranoid About Face Surveillance)** (Privacy International, link):

"*The UK's Metropolitan Police have began formally deploying Live Facial Recognition technology across London, claiming that it will only be used to identify serious criminals on "bespoke 'watch lists'" and on "small, targeted" areas.*

Yet, at the same time, the UK's largest police force is also listed as a collaborator in a UK government-funded research programme explicitly intended to "develop unconstrained face recognition technology", aimed "at making face recognition ubiquitous by 2020".

The £6.1m programme, which also includes the Home Office, various biometrics companies, and a University in China – home to some of the most pervasive face surveillance in the world – shows how governments are investing in facial recognition technology designed for mass surveillance."

28. **The Protocol on Ireland/ Northern Ireland: What it says is not what it does** (EU Law Analysis, link):

" On Wednesday 11 March 2020, at a meeting of the Future Relationship with the European Union Committee of the House of Commons, the following exchange took place:

Hilary Benn: "On goods moving from GB to Northern Ireland under the Northern Irish Protocol, we know there are some regulatory checks at the moment … there will be additional checks once the Northern Ireland Protocol is implemented won't there?".

Michael Gove: "That'll be a matter for the Joint Committee".

No it won't. No it isn't. There will be additional checks. Mr Gove is wrong."

29. EU/Greece/Turkey: **[Crisis not averted: security policies cannot solve a humanitarian problem, now or in the long-term](#)** (pdf)

"At the end of February, the Turkish government announced it would allow refugees to travel onwards to Greece and Bulgaria, in the hope of extracting from the EU further financial support as well as backing for its military operations in Syria. It has now taken up its role as Europe's border guard again, but the manufactured crisis induced by the Turkish decision and the EU response highlight the long-term failings of the EU's asylum and migration model."

30. **Books for refugees in Greece: [Help ECHO buy a new library van!](#)** (Chuffed, link):

"*There are currently 115,000 refugees in Greece. Many are trapped in an asylum system that puts lives into a state of paralyzing insecurity and deep boredom. Isolated by a government that describes them as 'dirt', 'dust', and 'parasites', most are forced to live in peripheral camps far from the towns and city centres.*

In five of the locations our library visits, it is the only source of education for adults. Meanwhile, less than 50% of school age children in these locations are in school. In these deplorable and ostracising conditions, both hope and relief can be hard to come by.

The ECHO mobile library travels 250km to 11 locations in and around Athens each week. We have; books in 13 languages, learning resources, lessons, whiteboards, rugs, tea and structured children's activities.

Our faithful old library van is on the edge of collapse. It is twenty years old and has seen more than 200,000km on the road. Breakdowns have cost us three days of library sessions in two months - and we've been told that the next will probably be its last... With your help we can get our library back on the road. All donations, no matter how small, help us get closer. "

See: **[Good deeds: the mobile library reaching refugees' hearts and minds](#)** (The Guardian, link)

31. EU: **[Data protection in times of coronavirus: not a question of if, but of how](#)** (NOYB, link):

"*In recent days, the discussions around the use of data to combat the corona pandemic have increased.*

*Therefore, we have written an **ad hoc paper** (PDF, English) on compliance with the GDPR and would like to take this opportunity to provide an initial overview of these projects.*

*...In an **article on GDPRhub.eu**, noyb has compiled a first overview of concrete apps and projects in Europe and beyond, in order to shed some light on this issue as well.*

The vast majority of these approaches are far away from problematic forms of mass surveillance or "Chinese approaches".

GDPR allows data to be used in the event of epidemics - the question is not if, but how."

See: **Projects using personal data to combat SARS-CoV-2** (GDPRhub, link) and: UK: **Statement in response to the use of mobile phone tracking data to help during the coronavirus crisis** (ICO, link)

32. **Hungary passes law allowing Viktor Orban to rule by decree** (DW, link):

"*Hungary's parliament on Monday passed a bill that greatly increases the power of the country's far-right prime minister Victor Orban.*

The premier had said the move is necessary to fight the spread of coronavirus. Orban has asked to extend a national state of emergency that would give his government the right to pass special decrees in response to the coronavirus outbreak.

Lawmakers passed the bill with 137 votes against 52 in Hungary's lower chamber. Orban's Fidesz party holds a two-thirds majority there."

33. **Migration: tales of brutality along Europe's borders** (Financial Times, link):

"*Violence, increasingly routine at the doorstep of the EU, is hardening into what asylum-seekers and rights groups see as brutal, if unofficial, policy.*

Interviews with 25 migrants and several aid organisations suggest beatings and "pushbacks" — the forcing of asylum seekers out of a country before their applications can be reviewed — are now systemic, despite violating EU law. The normalisation of violence grows as migrants seek new routes. Initial criticism focused on Hungary, before allegations rose in Bulgaria and Greece. In recent months, as more migrants try Balkan routes passing through Croatia and Romania, accusations of violence along these borders have soared."

34. MALTA: **Free the #ElHiblu3** (Alarm Phone, link):

"*One year ago, a rubber boat with over 100 people on board left the coast of Libya to reach safety in Europe. Although they were found and rescued by the merchant vessel El Hiblu 1, its crew was ordered by European authorities to return the rescued to Libya. Through a collective protest on board, the 108 rescued people averted a*

push-back and prompted the crew to steer toward Malta. During the protest, nobody was injured and nothing was damaged. In public, they were described as 'pirates' and 'terrorists' but when the Maltese military stormed the vessel, they only met humans who were looking for protection.

...Our international solidarity campaign – Free the El Hiblu Three! – launches today. Passengers of the El Hiblu 1, sea-rescue organisations, international lawyers, researchers, activists, human rights organisations in Malta and beyond have come together to call for the immediate dismissal of the trial. Instead of being prosecuted, the El Hiblu Three should be celebrated for preventing an illegal push-back to Libya."

See: **Free El Hiblu 3** (link) and: **The Rescue: A flimsy raft, more than 100 souls, and three teenage heroes—or are they pirates?** (The Atavist, link)

35. **Court orders Netherlands to pay colonial victims** (EUobserver, link):

"*A court in The Hague ordered the Dutch state to pay compensation to victims of colonial massacres in the 1940s, the Guardian reports. The court found that 11 men had been killed as a result of actions by Dutch soldiers, mostly by summary executions. Eight widows and three children of the executed man will receive a compensation of between €123.48 and €3,634 for loss of income.*"

36. UK: **Act to guarantee the rights of EU nationals now: Right to Stay** (link)

"*The Covid-19 pandemic is dominating government policy, public health and public consciousness – and rightly so. We must remember that this crisis puts the lives and rights of migrants into even more uncertainty and danger. Unless we act to prevent it, we could be facing an additional catastrophe in terms of the rights of millions of people living in the UK.*

In June 2021, EU citizens without Settled Status will become illegal in the UK. Many will have just played a vital role in keeping the country running and staffing the NHS. Others will have cared for the elderly, or delivered our groceries and take aways. Because of the Covid crisis and potential delays in the Brexit process, people who require face-to-face support and advice with their Settled Status application will not have been able to access it. The most vulnerable communities will not have been assisted or even reached.

There is a very simple solution to this situation. We urge the UK Government to give all EU citizens currently residing in the UK a Right to Stay, guaranteed in primary legislation. This can be done quickly and easily, and must not become embroiled in future delays in EU trade negotiations."

See: **EU citizens in UK at risk of becoming illegal as coronavirus response prioritised** (The Guardian, link)

37. **It's official: North Macedonia becomes NATO's 30th member** (Defense News, link):

"*North Macedonia on Friday officially became the 30th member of the NATO military alliance.*

"North Macedonia is now part of the NATO family, a family of 30 nations and almost 1 billion people. A family based on the certainty that, no matter what challenges we face, we are all stronger and safer together," NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said in a statement.

North Macedonia's flag will be raised alongside those of the other 29 member countries at NATO headquarters in Brussels and two other commands simultaneously on Monday."

38. **From Windrush to Covid 19: another scandal in the making** (IRR News, link) by Frances Webber:

"A review of differential policies towards different populations draws attention to the ways in which civil society is mobilising to demand protection and an end to the stigmatisation of those with no escape from infection.

The growing coronavirus crisis has exposed many faultlines in the UK and in Europe, and in particular, governments' treatment of refugees, asylum seekers and other vulnerable and marginalised populations including prisoners and homeless people, carries disquieting echoes."

39. **UK police use drones and roadblocks to enforce lockdown** (Guardian, link):

"A police force has defended using a drone camera to shame people into not driving into a national park during the lockdown, while another force said it was introducing roadblocks to stop drivers heading to tourist hotspots.

A new law came into effect on Thursday allowing police to use force to make people return home.

Derbyshire police tweeted drone footage taken near Curbar Edge, in the Peak District, and said they had checked the numberplates of vehicles in the car park and found that some cars were registered to addresses in Sheffield, a 30-minute drive away."

40. UK: **Police given new powers** (gov.uk, link)

"The government has today (26 March 2020) made new public health regulations strengthening police enforcement powers in England, to reduce the spread of coronavirus, protect the NHS and save lives. (...)

Participating in gatherings of more than two people in public spaces is also not permitted except in very limited circumstances,"

41. **UK broke law over IS 'Beatles' by passing information to US** (BBC News, link):

"*The UK acted unlawfully by passing evidence to the US that could lead to the execution of two British members of an Islamic State murder squad.*

The Supreme Court said former Home Secretary Sajid Javid should not have passed information on Shafee Elsheikh and Alexander Kotey to the US.

Lord Kerr said the seven justices concluded the decision in 2018 breached the UK's strict data protection laws.

The Londoners, linked to 27 murders, are in US custody in Iraq."

Judgment: **Elgizouli (AP) (Appellant) v Secretary of State for the Home Department (Respondent)** (pdf) and: Supreme Court's **press summary** (pdf)

42. **EDPS Annual Report 2019: new EU data protection rules must produce promised result** (EDPS, link):

"*With new legislation on data protection in the EU now in place, our greatest challenge moving into 2020 and beyond is to ensure that this legislation produces the promised results, the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) said today, as he published his 2019 Annual Report.*"

43. **Threats to journalists: The 'new normal' in Germany** (ECPMF, link):

"*The European Centre for Press and Media Freedom publishes results of its five-year study of attacks on media workers in Germany*

ECPMF has been systematically monitoring attacks on journalists since 2015. A clear picture emerges after five years: attacks on the press are now the new normal.

The 2019 results, on the other hand, confirm the findings from previous years – despite the lower number of cases. ECPMF has recorded 14 physical attacks on journalists last year. For comparison: in the previous year 2018, 26 violent attacks were verified.

In 2019, with the exception of three attacks, they all came from right-wing groups. This confirms the findings of the past four years: media professionals, journalists and reporters were still most at risk from right-wingers who despise the press. ECPMF is not aware of any attacks from the left in 2019."

44. MEDITERRANEAN: **Privatized Pushbacks: How Merchant Ships Guard Europe** (New York Times, link):

"*The Panther, a German-owned merchant ship, is not in the business of sea rescues. But one day a few months ago the Libyan Coast Guard ordered it to divert course, rescue 68 migrants in distress in the Mediterranean and return them to Libya, which is embroiled in civil war.*

The request, which the Panther was required to honor, was at least the third time that day, Jan. 11, that the Libyans had called on a merchant ship to assist migrants."

The Libyans could easily have alerted a nearby rescue ship run by a Spanish charity. The reason they did not goes to the core of how the European authorities have found a new way to thwart desperate African migrants trying to reach their shores from across the Mediterranean.

And some maritime lawyers think the new tactic is unlawful.

..."We call them privatized pushbacks," said Charles Heller, the director of Forensic Oceanography, a research group that investigates migrant rights abuses in the Mediterranean. "They occur when merchant ships are used to rescue and bring back migrants to a country in which their lives are at risk — such as Libya.""

See: **PRIVATISED PUSH-BACK OF THE NIVIN** (Forensic Architecture, link)

45. UK: **Oval Four: Black man framed by corrupt police officer at London Tube station cleared 48 years later** (The Independent, link):

"*A black man who was jailed for a crime he did not commit has had his conviction quashed almost 50 years after being arrested by a corrupt police officer.*

Omar Boucher is the last member of the Oval Four to be formally cleared of trying to steal handbags, amid calls for a review of other cases led by the same officer.

They were arrested at Oval underground station in London in 1972 by an undercover police unit who accused them of stealing handbags.

The unit was run by Detective Sergeant Derek Ridgewell, who had previously served in the South Rhodesian (now Zimbabwean) police force, and was involved in a number of high-profile and controversial cases in the early 1970s."

46. UK: **Rule of Law Monitoring of Legislation - Coronavirus Bill** (Bingham Centre, link):

"*The Coronavirus Bill is a response to a genuine public health emergency and contains the most sweeping powers ever taken by the UK Government outside of wartime. There is absolutely no doubt that the Government needs to take swift and bold measures to protect citizens, and that some of these measures will unavoidably impinge upon personal liberties in a drastic way.*

The role of Parliament in scrutinising these measures is even more important during an emergency. Neither law nor Parliament should fall silent in the war on Covid-19. Parliament will need to be satisfied of the necessity of these measures.

This Report focuses on two fundamental areas of concern.

(1) the two year duration of the Bill

(2) mechanisms for reporting to Parliament"

47. UK: **COVID-19: Protecting people in places of custody and detention** (INQUEST, link):

"*INQUEST has today published a new briefing on COVID-19: Protecting people in places of custody and detention. The briefing sets out our immediate concerns around the pandemic, focusing on our areas of expertise. We highlight the government's human rights obligations and the need to protect people in places of custody and detention.*

We recognise that this is a challenging time for everyone living and working in institutional settings. The impact of more restrictive regimes and practices, suspension of family visits and the anxiety around the virus will impact on people's mental and physical health - many of whom are already extremely vulnerable.

We also offer a stark warning - without immediate action to implement safety measures alongside efforts to reduce the number of people in some detention settings, the impact could be catastrophic, with many preventable deaths."

48. **Coronavirus derogations from human rights send wrong signal, say MEPs** (Euractiv, link):

"*At least six European countries have announced plans to derogate from the European Convention on Human Rights, (ECHR), invoking the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Critics, however, fear that this sends the wrong political signal.*

Armenia, Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Moldova and Romania have notified the Council of Europe (CoE) of their intention to derogate from the human rights treaty under Article 15, which allows signatories to derogate from the convention in times of a "public emergency threatening the life of the nation."

In the meantime, the press in Sofia announced that Bulgaria has also asked for a similar derogation."

And see: **(Rule of) Law in the Time of Covid-19: Warnings from Slovenia** (Verfassungsblog, link): " *In spite of the gravity of the situation, however, any measures adopted to combat it must be adopted by competent bodies, following the procedure and under the conditions envisaged by law. In other words, rule of law concerns have to be fully respected. It is my concern that Slovenia has been failing this "rule of law in times of emergency" test.*"

49. EU: **In fight against coronavirus, governments embrace surveillance** (Politico, link):

"*Chinese-style surveillance is coming to a neighborhood near you.*

From drones barking orders at park-goers to tracing people's movements through cellphones, Western governments are rushing to embrace sophisticated surveillance tools that would have been unthinkable just a few weeks ago.

In the European Union, home to the world's strictest privacy regimen, leaders have taken the unprecedented step of asking telecoms companies to hand over mobile phone data so they can track population movements and try to stop the spread.

The European Commission has gone further, asking all such data to be centralized to speed up prevention across the bloc, three people involved in the talks told POLITICO. But epidemiologists argue that such efforts are only a first step: To be fully effective, some say, the EU will have to follow the example of South Korea and China and make infected people download an app that would reveal exactly where they go and whom they meet."

50. HUNGARY: **Pandemic as Constitutional Moment: Hungarian Government Seeks Unlimited Powers** (Verfassungsblog, link):

"*Late in the evening on Friday, March 20, 2020 the Hungarian government tabled a short bill to install rule by executive decree for an indefinite period. The bill enables the government to take any measure to prevent and manage the COVID-19 outbreak and its consequences. The bill sets no date for expiry or parliamentary review mechanism for the plenary executive powers granted: the regime remains in place until Parliament revokes it.*

At the same time the bill envisions that Parliament may not be able to meet due to the pandemic, while it prepares the Constitutional Court for digital operation. Elections and referenda are suspended till the end of the crisis is declared. The bill also seeks to extend the application of emergency measures already in place, amends the definition of the crime of spreading false information and makes violating the terms of epidemiological confinement a crime."

And see: **EP stands up for democracy in Hungary during COVID-19** (EP, link): "*The Civil Liberties Committee highlights that any extraordinary measure adopted by the Hungarian government in response to the pandemic must respect the EU's founding values.*"

51. **EU asks Greece to move migrants most at risk from coronavirus out of crowded camps** (ekathimerini, link):

"*The European Union has asked Greece to move migrants most at risk of contracting the coronavirus from overcrowded camps on its islands, the EU's top migration official told Reuters on Tuesday.*

Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson said Athens had opposed moving the migrants to the Greek mainland, citing the absence of coronavirus cases in the camps while the disease is spreading elsewhere in Greece."

And see: **Greece: Move Asylum Seekers, Migrants to Safety: Immediate Hotspot Decongestion Needed to Address COVID-19** (Human Rights Watch, link) and: **COVID-19 PAVES WAY FOR MASS DETENTION OF MIGRANTS** (Lesvos Legal Centre, link)

52. UK: **The Windrush Report: joint statement** (Freedom From Torture, link):

"*Windrush Lessons Learned Review: 25 organisations representing the Windrush generation, other marginalised migrant groups and refugees, say this must mark a turning point for the government on immigration.*

The nation was shocked and appalled when the Windrush scandal hit the news in 2018. Rightly so, for what happened was the destruction of the lives of black Britons as a direct result of a Government policy.

The Windrush Lessons Learned Review puts beyond any doubt what we have said all along: that the scandal was not an isolated mistake, but the inevitable result of Home Office policies aimed at creating a Hostile Environment for people unable to easily prove their right to be in the country. To this day the elements of institutional racism and policies responsible for the scandal, including the Hostile Environment, continue to tear lives apart.

Justice for the Windrush Generation will not be fully served until the Hostile Environment is scrapped and the attitudes which drove its creation are rooted out.

The Review shows that the Home Office culture of disregard for people's human rights and humanity and disbelief of their testimony and that of experts is pervasive from ministerial level down."

See: **Windrush lessons learned review: independent review by Wendy Williams** (pdf)

53. **ENAC: autorizzati i droni per il monitoraggio** (link):

The Italian civil aviation authority (ENAC, Ente Nazionale Aviazione Civile) has authorised the use of drones on city streets to strengthen the capabilities of police forces and municipal councils. Previous limits for their use that centred on the risk of drones causing damage to people and things in ordinary circumstances may not apply, considering that sidewalks are empty and streets are clear, meaning that drones are useful to monitor gatherings. Derogations to these norms are motivated as follows:

"With a view to guaranteeing the containment of the epidemiological 'coronavirus' emergency, in order to allow operations to monitor the movement of citizens in the municipal territory envisaged in the decrees of the President of the Council of Ministers (PM) of 8 and 9 March 2020, it becomes necessary to derogate from some provisions of the measures in the ENAC Regulation on 'Remotely Piloted Aircraft', 3rd edition of November 2019."I

54. European Commission: **State of play as regards the situation of non-reciprocity in the area of visa policy** (COM 119, 2020, pdf);

"the Commission currently considers that the adoption of a delegated act temporarily suspending the exemption from the visa requirement for nationals of the United States would be counterproductive at this point in time and it would not serve to achieve the objective of visa-free travel for all EU citizens.

In this context, it is essential that the EU continues to speak with one voice on this important matter. The Commission will continue to work closely with the European Parliament and with the Council to achieve full visa reciprocity and will keep the European Parliament and the Council informed on the further developments. "

55. **Senior MEP calls for EU action to stop coronavirus spreading to Greek migrant camps** (Politico, link):

"There is no chance of isolation or social distancing,' in overcrowded camps, says head of civil liberties committee.

The EU must come up with an "immediate" response to the problem of coronavirus spreading in Greece's overcrowded migrant camps, where social distancing is almost impossible, according to the head of the European Parliament's civil liberties committee."

56. **Hungary's state of emergency law is a 'blank cheque' to Orban, critics say** (Euractiv, link):

"A draft Hungarian law allowing the government to rule by decree during the state of emergency caused by the coronavirus pandemic risks staying in place indefinitely, the opposition has warned.

The Hungarian parliament is due to consider a draft law that would keep the decrees issued under the state of emergency in force until further notice."

57. UK: **Anthony Grainger shooting: Six officers under investigation** (BBC News, link):

"Six officers are under investigation by the police watchdog in connection with the fatal shooting of an unarmed man.

Anthony Grainger, 36, was in a stolen car when he was shot in the chest by a firearms officer in Culcheth, Cheshire.

The retired and serving officers from Greater Manchester Police (GMP) are being investigated by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC).

A public inquiry into the 2012 shooting criticised senior officers for "failings and errors"."

See: **IOPC begins new investigations relating to the death of Anthony Grainger** (IOPC, link)

58. **Respect Rights in COVID-19 Response** (Human Rights Watch, link):

"*(New York) – Governments should respond to the COVID-19 pandemic by prioritizing the right to health for all and respect for human rights, Human Rights Watch said today in a new report.*

The report, "*[Human Rights Dimensions of the COVID-19 Response](#)*," analyzes government obligations and the human rights concerns posed by the coronavirus outbreak along with examples of responses so far. Human Rights Watch proposes recommendations for governments to address the outbreak while respecting fundamental human rights, including the rights to health, free expression, nondiscrimination, and freedom of movement.*

...Governments should avoid sweeping and overly broad restrictions on movement and personal liberty, rely upon voluntary social distancing, and move toward mandatory restrictions only when scientifically warranted and necessary and when systems to support those affected can be ensured. When quarantines or lockdowns are imposed, governments are obligated to ensure access to food, water, health care, and care-giving support. They should address the special concerns of people in prisons, jails, and migrant detention centers, older people, and people with disabilities in institutions."

59. IRELAND: **Coronavirus legal response: [Dáil passes emergency Covid-19 legislation](#)** (RTÉ, link):

"*The new laws will allow the State to shut down mass gatherings and to potentially order groups of people in certain areas to stay in their homes.*

There are regulations too that would allow for the detention of a person, on foot of a medical recommendation, if they refuse to self-isolate.

Minister for Health Simon Harris proposed that the new powers of detention contained in the Bill remain in place until 9 November.

He said the powers would only be used in the public interest to keep people well, adding that picking a date was an arbitrary process and it was prudent to pick November.

The Minister also said that the legislation would empower authorities to shut down house parties."

See: **COVID-19 emergency legislation: everything you need to know.**

60. UK: **[HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT RISKS PUBLIC HEALTH DURING CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK](#)** (Liberty, link):

"*The Government's hostile environment is stopping migrants from accessing healthcare – making them acutely vulnerable to the coronavirus, rights groups have warned.*

Liberty, Medact and JCWI are among more than 30 groups to warn this not only puts the most vulnerable at risk – it also undermines the Government's attempts to control the coronavirus and protect public health.

In a letter to the Home Secretary, the coalition is calling for an immediate suspension of all NHS charging and data-sharing between the NHS Trusts and immigration

enforcement. This is necessary so that migrants can access healthcare free from the fear that their details could be handed to the Home Office and put them at risk of detention or deportation."

And see: **Coronavirus Bill Second Reading: Universal Access to Healthcare** (JCWI, link to pdf)

61. UK: **"Two Years Is Too Long" for "Draconian" Coronavirus Bill, Warn MPs & Rights Groups** (Big Brother Watch, link):

"*Parliamentarians and rights groups have today issued an urgent warning that the two year duration of the emergency Coronavirus Bill is too long, ahead of the Government's attempt to push the Bill through the House of Commons this afternoon.*

In a joint letter, led by civil liberties group Big Brother Watch and published in today's Telegraph, the group warns that the Bill contains "the most draconian powers ever proposed in peace-time Britain" and urges for a more proportionate time limit.

Signatories include former Minister David Davis MP, Shadow Home Secretary Diane Abbott MP, Joanna Cherry QC MP and Acting Liberal Democrat Leader Sir Ed Davey MP, who are all backing an amendment to shorten the duration of the Bill to six months."

62. HUNGARY: **Orbán introduces 'Enabling Act' in the name of fighting coronavirus** (Hungarian Spectrum, link):

"*Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán never lets a crisis go to waste. Friday, he put before the Hungarian Parliament a law that would give him dictatorial powers under cover of declaring a state of emergency to fight the coronavirus. Parliament could vote on this law as early as Monday.*

The law creates two new crimes. Anyone who publicizes false or distorted facts that interfere with the "successful protection" of the public – or that alarm or agitate that public – could be punished by up to five years in prison. And anyone who interferes with the operation of a quarantine or isolation order could also face a prison sentence of up to five years, a punishment that increases to eight years if anyone dies as a result.

...These two new crimes would not be, strictly speaking, emergency powers. They would be permanent changes to the criminal law. They would not go away when the emergency is over.

Alarming though those new crimes are, the provisions of this law that implicate separation of powers are even more disturbing and would end the appearance of constitutional and democratic government. (The reality of constitutional and democratic government ended some time ago, but appearances were maintained.) Under this pending emergency law, Orbán would govern alone."

See: **Legal scholars and opposition politicians condemn Orbán's "Enabling Act"**; **Translation of draft law "On Protecting Against the Coronavirus"** (Hungarian Spectrum, link) and: **EU Commission: no comment on Hungary's virus bill** (EUobserver, link)

63. I SRAEL: **Mossad bungles coronavirus test purchases: Israeli spies source up to 100,000 coronavirus tests in covert mission** (The Guardian, link):

"*Israel's secretive Mossad intelligence agency launched a covert international operation this week to fly in up to 100,000 coronavirus testing kits, although the effort may have been in vain as critical parts were reportedly missing.*

Domestic news outlets, citing government and health officials, reported that the secrecy of the operation was because the kits were acquired from at least two unnamed countries that do not have good diplomatic relations with Israel, meaning the government could not openly buy them.

...The Israeli news website Ynet had earlier quoted the health ministry deputy director general, Itamar Grotto, as saying the kits were missing swabs, which are used to take samples from the nose or the back of the throat.

"Unfortunately, what arrived is not exactly what we were lacking … Our problem is we're missing swabs," he said."

64. **#Euroleaks: the full 2015 Eurogroup recordings now public!** (DiEM 25, link):

"*Today, March 14, 2020, the Democracy in Europe Movement 2025 (DiEM25) is releasing the complete audio files of Yanis Varoufakis' Eurogroup meetings in 2015 on: euroleaks.diem25.org!*

During 2015 Yanis Varoufakis participated in thirteen Eurogroup meetings. After the first three Eurogroup meetings it became clear that no minutes were being taken!

This kind of intransparent action by an unelected group of politicians who influence all our lives is unacceptable. That is why DiEM25 is today releasing the recordings of the meetings of the Eurogroup from 2015."

65. **UK Bill a License for Military Crimes? Law Would Stymie Prosecution of Armed Forces for Abuses** (Human Rights Watch, link):

"*Given the distractions of the coronavirus pandemic, it's likely the proposed new law from Prime Minister Boris Johnson's government on overseas military operations will get far less attention than it deserves. If passed, the bill would greatly increase the risk that British soldiers who commit serious crimes will avoid justice.*

The proposed law, the Overseas Operations (Service Personnel and Veterans) Bill, would create a "presumption against prosecution" for members of the United Kingdom armed forces accused of crimes, including torture, committed overseas more than five years earlier. The government asserts this will protect UK forces from "vexatious" prosecutions – a dubious claim, given there have been hardly any such

criminal trials. Even though British civil courts and public inquiries having found extensive evidence of torture by UK forces in Iraq after 2003. In addition, the UK government has paid out millions of pounds to Iraqis who alleged abuse by UK forces."

See: **Overseas Operations (Service Personnel and Veterans) Bill** (pdf)

66. **Stuck under a cloud of suspicion: Profiling in the EU** (EDRi, link):

"*As facial recognition technologies are gradually rolled out in police departments across Europe, anti-racism groups blow the whistle on the discriminatory over-policing of racialised communities linked to the increasing use of new technologies by law enforcement agents. In a report by the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) and the Open Society Justice Initiative, daily police practices supported by specific technologies – such as crime analytics, the use of mobile fingerprinting scanners, social media monitoring and mobile phone extraction – are analysed, to uncover their disproportionate impact on racialised communities.*

Beside these local and national policing practices, the European Union (EU) has also played an important role in developing police cooperation tools that are based on data-driven profiling. Exploiting the narrative according to which criminals abuse the Schengen and free movement area, the EU justifies the mass monitoring of the population and profiling techniques as part of its Security Agenda. Unfortunately, no proper democratic debate is taking place before the technologies are deployed."

67. UK at last follows other EU states: **UK pubs and restaurants told to shut in virus fight** (BBC News, link):

"*Cafes, pubs and restaurants must close from Friday night, except for take-away food, to tackle coronavirus, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has said.*

All the UK's nightclubs, theatres, cinemas, gyms and leisure centres have also been told to close "as soon as they reasonably can".

Mr Johnson said the situation will be reviewed each month. (...)

The announcement about closures follows similar measures taken in other countries - including in Ireland, where pubs and bars were asked to close from last Sunday.

Speaking at a daily Downing Street press briefing, Mr Johnson said the measures would be **enforced "strictly"** *and that licensing arrangements will make doing so "relatively simple".*" (emphasis added)

68. UK: **Coronavirus Bill** (pdf) and **Explanatory Note** (pdf)

And see: **Police and health officials to get powers to detain under UK coronavirus bill - Bill allows police and officials to order anyone believed to be infected to undergo testing** (Guardian, link);

"Police, public health and immigration officers will be able to detain people suspected of having Covid-19 and exact £1,000 fines for refusing tests under emergency powers rolled out by the UK government. (...)

Immigration officers and police will also be handed powers to send people for screening and testing and hold them for a period of time before a public health officer can be consulted.(...)

In a letter to Johnson, Corbyn said people understood the need for temporary restrictions. He added: "But given how far-reaching these are proposed to be, people's elected representatives must be able to decide whether to renew the legislation at least every six months, up to its expiration after two years."

69. **UK privacy activists raise fears over social distancing tracking - Mobile phone operators' data could be used to monitor success of coronavirus policy** (Guardian, link):

"Privacy campaigners have warned that a UK government plan to use mobile phone data to track the success of the social distancing policy needs to be carried out with "radical transparency" because of the authoritarian possibilities.

The Guardian reported on Thursday that BT and O2 have talked to the government about providing the data, which would be delayed by 12 to 24 hours and stripped of individual identifiers, to help the government assess whether people are following advice to avoid pubs, bars and restaurants.

Big Brother Watch said it was concerning that the deals had been struck in secret. "We need further explanation and much more transparency," said Silkie Carlo, the privacy group's director."

70. Samos Refugees: **We see a Darkness** (Samos, Chronicles, link):

"For the refugees, coronavirus is a fused bomb. When, rather than if it blows it will be devastating. The appalling conditions in which refugees are held which blatantly contradict all the government's instructions on hygiene and overcrowding make the camps and detention facilities exceptionally vulnerable to the virus. The police describe the island camps as "health bombs".

The police associations from Samos, Lesvos, Chios and the North and South Dodecanese are now demanding urgent action. The timing of their intervention is driven by the extremely cruel and unhealthy conditions for the 1,414 refugees who arrived on the islands after March 1st 2020. Following the Act passed on March 2 2020 all new arrivals are denied the right to apply for asylum. This is a major breach of international law, but more of that later. There is no registration or identification procedures for these new arrivals who are kept away from the pre March deadline refugees and detained, as the police noted in their letter to the government (14/3/2020);

Stacked like animals in temporary and inadequate infrastructure acting as ticking health bombs. On Samos there are 93 foreigners in a room of the Port Authority without a toilet or water supply."

71. **Erdogan in talks with European leaders over refugee cash for Turkey** (The Guardian, link):

"*Turkey has pressed European leaders to make fresh cash pledges to prevent tens of thousands of refugees from leaving the country and trying to reach Europe amid a Russian-Syrian offensive in north-west Syria.*

After intense bombardment in Idlib province last month, Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, encouraged thousands of refugees in the country to move on towards the Greek islands and the Baltics, in a repeat of the surge to Europe in 2015.

That push ended when the EU gave Turkey €6bn to house the refugees in Turkey. Nearly €4.7bn has been contractually awarded, but only about €3.2bn paid out.

In a phone call on Tuesday between the French president, Emmanuel Macron, the British prime minister, Boris Johnson, the German chancellor, Angela Merkel, and Erdogan, the leaders discussed the possibility of a new refugee deal, ways to combat the continued Russian threat in Idlib, and the fear that coronavirus could sweep through the refugee camps bordering Syria in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan."

72. BELGIUM: **Service providers in Belgium should not have to report irregular migrants, says Council of Europe's anti-racism watchdog** (Council of Europe, link):

"*Strasbourg, 18.03.2020 – Belgium should ensure that no service provider, either in the public or private sector, is required to report people suspected of being irregularly present in the country to the authorities responsible for immigration control and enforcement, in order to protect their fundamental rights.*

The Belgian authorities should also make sure that the committee responsible for evaluating federal anti-discrimination laws has enough resources to resume and expand the scope of its work, in consultation with civil society organisations.

These two recommendations are highlighted as requiring priority implementation in the latest report on Belgium from the Council of Europe's Commission on Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), published today (see Dutch and French versions of the report)."

See: **ECRI report on Belgium (sixth monitoring cycle)** (pdf)

73. UK: **Undercover policing inquiry: secretive Met unit shredded files** (The Guardian, link):

"A secretive Scotland Yard intelligence unit shredded a large number of documents after a public inquiry was set up into the undercover infiltration of political groups, a watchdog has found.

The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) announced on Wednesday that it had found that documents had been destroyed despite an instruction that they had to be preserved.

The watchdog found that an unnamed officer would have faced a disciplinary hearing on a charge of gross misconduct if he or she had not already retired from the Metropolitan police. Any officer found guilty of gross misconduct would be likely to be sacked.

The watchdog said a number of former managers had refused to cooperate with its inquiry. It said the investigation had uncovered serious failings within the intelligence unit."

See: **Materials that may have been relevant to undercover policing inquiry were shredded by Metropolitan Police personnel** (IOPC, link)

74. O**pen access book: Europe and the Refugee Response: A Crisis of Values?** (Routledge, link):

"This book explores how the rising numbers of refugees entering Europe from 2015 onwards played into fears of cultural, religious, and ethnic differences across the continent. The migrant, or refugee crisis, prompted fierce debate about European norms and values, with some commentators questioning whether mostly Muslim refugees would be able to adhere to these values, and be able to integrate into a predominantly Christian European society. In this volume, philosophers, legal scholars, anthropologists and sociologists, analyze some of these debates and discuss practical strategies to reconcile the values that underpin the European project with multiculturalism and religious pluralism, whilst at the same time safeguarding the rights of refugees to seek asylum.

Country case studies in the book are drawn from France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom; representing states with long histories of immigration, countries with a more recent refugee arrivals, and countries that want to keep refugees at bay and refuse to admit even the smallest number of asylum seekers. Contributors in the book explore the roles which national and local governments, civil society, and community leaders play in these debates and practices, and ask what strategies are being used to educate refugees about European values, and to facilitate their integration."

75. **Over 400 migrants returned to Libya over weekend** (InfoMigrants, link):

"Over 400 migrants have been picked up by the Libyan coast guard and returned to Libya over the weekend. That's according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which called the action "unacceptable."

The UN organization for migration decried the fact that this weekend, over 400 Europe-bound migrants were returned to Libya by the Libyan coast guard in several operations. The IOM counted 301 people who were intercepted and taken back to Tripoli on Saturday, March 14 and a further 105 on two different boats on Sunday, March 15.

The IOM communications officer Safa Msehli said: "It is unacceptable for this to continue despite repeated calls to put an end to the return of vulnerable people to detention and abuse."'

And see: **49 asylum seekers in Maltese waters taken back to Libya and beaten - NGO** (Times of Malta, link)

76. **Existence of secret body confirmed, no meaningful details provided: Hostile state activity assessment body announced** (Home Office, link):

"*The Home Secretary today publicly confirmed the existence of an organisation established to better understand the threat of hostile state activity and inform the government's response.*

The joint state threats assessment team (JSTAT) was created in 2017 in response to the increased and evolving threat the UK faces from hostile states.

...Like other independent assessment bodies, including the joint terrorism analysis centre, JSTAT reports to a governance board comprising senior officials from across the UK intelligence community and wider government departments. The Director General of MI5 has ultimate responsibility for the organisation."

See: **Joint State Threats Assessment Team** (MI5, link)

77. UK: **End deportation flights!: resisting the new authoritarianism** (Verso, link):

"*On February 11, a mass deportation flight to Jamaica departed from Doncaster Airport, UK, carrying seventeen people. At the same time the government announced an emergency law to imprison people convicted of "terror offences" for longer, and the Metropolitan police deployed facial recognition technology on the streets of London. In this article, Gracie Mae Bradley and Luke de Noronha analyse the authoritarian context of the new series of charter flights for so-called 'foreign criminals', and how to resist it."*

78. **COVID-19: No one is safe until All are protected!** (Transbalkan Solidarity Group, link):

"*Currently there are tens of thousands of refugees and other migrants in the Balkans. Some of them are accommodated in official collective centers, while a large number of people fall outside the system, surviving through the help of the local population and support provided to them by volunteers throughout the region. Yet with the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the already difficult situation in which they find*

themselves is becoming even more challenging and demands urgent action of those in charge – local and international actors – and solidarity from all of us.

The State of Emergency now in force in many countries of the region is a basis for the continuation and reinforcement of social inequalities and unfortunately is already serving as a rationale for the further stigmatization and repression of the most unprotected among us. But this exceptional situation must not become an excuse for continued policies of exclusion, restriction and expulsion, suffering and distress."

And see: **Us versus them? Covid-19 and its effects** (MPC, link): "*We now see that every one of us can suddenly can become vulnerable. As humans, we have much more in common, than what divides us: our fears, our anxieties, and how we react in difficult situations. Our humanity is also our strength, being able to put ourselves into the shoes of others, now more than ever.*"

79. UNHCR: **Key Legal Considerations on access to territory for persons in need of international protection in the context of the COVID-19 response** (pdf):

"*This paper sets out key legal considerations, based on international refugee and human rights law, on access to territory for persons seeking international protection in the context of measures taken by States to restrict the entry of non-nationals for the protection of public health in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It reconfirms that while States may put in place measures which may include a health screening or testing of persons seeking international protection upon entry and/or putting them in quarantine, such measures may not result in denying them an effective opportunity to seek asylum or result in refoulement.*"

And see: **EU border restrictions will hit transfers of child refugees - UN official** (Thomson Reuters Foundation, link)