



News

8 June 2020 (08/20)

STATEWATCH ANALYSIS

EU: Reinforcement of Frontex runs into legal problems

STATEWATCH NEWS

1. A statement of solidarity: Black lives matter
2. EU-UK: Commission not happy with UK's 'action plan' to fix unlawful use of Schengen database
3. EU-TURKEY: 369 Syrians deported to Turkey through EU fund for refugees to Turkey.
4. UK: Policing virus: all 44 prosecutions under Coronavirus Act unlawful; "postcode lottery" for fines
5. EU: Border externalisation: EP gives green light to Frontex operations in Serbia and Montenegro

NEWS

1. Germany struggles to face its own police racism
2. Project Interoperability: EU to pay 300 million EUR for face and fingerprint recognition
3. Hostility towards migrants and those working to support them continues as state policy in Lesbos
4. Responses across the UK and Europe to the death of George Floyd
5. George Floyd death: Thousands join UK protests
6. Michel Barnier says EU is open to Brexit delay of up to two years
7. Illegal floating prisons | Carla Camilleri
8. Politically-motivated crimes in Germany at second-highest level since 2001
9. EU: Increase in cumulative charges for terrorism and war crimes
10. Racial discrimination in education and EU equality law
11. CYPRUS: Syrian refugees in Cyprus pushed back to Turkey
12. FRANCE: First victory against French police drones
13. UK Supreme Court quashes Adams' Long Kesh escape convictions
14. GREECE: Tents at Sea: How Greek Officials Use Rescue Equipment for Illegal Deportations
15. HUNGARY: No more transit zones, now asylum seekers will have to apply abroad
16. GERMANY: Surveillance powers of foreign telecommunications violate fundamental rights
17. EU data watchdog 'very worried' by Hungary's GDPR suspension
18. Hungarian Supreme Court: Romani children deserve financial compensation
19. UK: Artificial intelligence in the police force: a force for good?
20. UK: Prison sentences for any serious crime to be increased for 'terrorist connection'
21. Risk of Repression: New Rules on Civil Society Supporting Refugees and Migrants in Greece
22. Syrian refugees in Cyprus pushed back to Turkey
23. Fears mount over migrants dying 'out of sight' in Mediterranean
24. GREECE: 14-day quarantine for passengers arriving from abroad extended to end of May
25. Hungary: European Court declares broke EU law by detaining asylum-seekers in transit zone
26. 40 percent of LGBTI people suffer harassment, finds largest ever EU survey
27. EU: Ban biometric mass surveillance!
28. France: End Discriminatory Police Checks and Fines

29. 'A bloody method of control': the struggle to take down Europe's razor wire walls
30. EU court censures Hungary over migrant detentions
31. Swiss lawmakers should review draft legislation on police counterterrorism measures
32. Internal EU report: Far-right terrorist attacks rise
33. ITALY: Thousands of undocumented migrants to get Italian work permits
34. GREECE-TURKEY: During and After Crisis: Evros Border Monitoring Report
35. UK: It just got more difficult for Europeans to become British citizens
36. The EU is undermining its democracies while funding its autocracies

VIRUS NEWS

1. UK turns to counterterror chief to run Covid-19 risk hub
2. Lithuania's Response to COVID-19: Through the Prism of Human Rights and the Rule of Law
3. Coronavirus cases among refugees on Lesbos spark fresh calls for evacuation
4. EU: COVID-19 and the justice system: CCBE Statement on the reactivation of justice in Europe:
5. UN: Joint Guidance Note on the Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic on Human Rights of Migrants:
6. The dismal UK Home Office response to coronavirus: the wider picture
7. Europe's COVID crisis does little to disparage Mediterranean migrants
8. Covid-19 makes it clearer than ever: access to the internet should be a universal right
9. Responding to Covid-19: Surveillance, Trust and the Rule of Law
10. Coronavirus / Policing; Rights groups demand change to fix unfair policing of lockdown
11. The Commission encourages Member States not to consider as illegal stay in the EU th
12. New Right, old racism – the battlefield of Covid-19
13. UK: ow Britain's profiteering spymasters ignored the country's biggest threats like coronavirus
14. CORONAVIRUS: The Netherlands: Of Rollercoasters and Elephants

STATEWATCH ANALYSIS

EU: [New Analysis: reinforcement of Frontex runs into legal problems](#)

An internal Frontex report published today by *Statewatch* highlights a series of issues in implementing the agency's new legislation, including uncertain legal terminology and delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

STATEWATCH NEWS

1. [A statement of solidarity: Black lives matter](#)

As an organisation that has sought to report on, analyse and expose state and street racism for almost 30 years, we wish to add our voice to the chorus of anger and disgust at the murder of George Floyd by the police in Minneapolis, USA.

This is the latest in a long line of brutal police killings and nobody should be surprised that it has provoked such widespread anger. It is an atrocity in itself and representative of a social order that systematically excludes, demeans and denigrates people because of the colour of their skin.

We express our full support for all those protesting against the ongoing blight of institutional racism and structural discrimination in the USA, the UK and elsewhere.

2. EU-UK: [Commission not happy with UK's 'action plan' to fix unlawful use of Schengen database](#)

The European Commission has condemned a UK action plan to remedy its mismanagement and misuse of the Schengen Information System as "not adequate... mainly because the implementation timelines of at least 10 of the recommendations are very lengthy and cannot be considered acceptable."

3. EU-TURKEY: [369 Syrians deported to Turkey through EU fund for refugees](#)

At the end of April the European Commission slipped out the 'Fourth Annual Report on the Facility for Refugees in Turkey', which summarises how the €6 billion committed by the EU and the member states to projects in Turkey, as part of the March 2016 EU-Turkey deal, has been used. Amongst other things, the funds have paid for the deportation of 369 Syrians from the EU to Turkey.

4. UK: [Policing the virus: all 44 prosecutions under Coronavirus Act unlawful; "postcode lottery" for fines](#)

New powers given to UK police forces as part of the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic are being unlawfully and unevenly applied.

5. EU: [Border externalisation: European Parliament gives green light to Frontex operations in Serbia and Montenegro](#)

The European Parliament has voted to approve two agreements allowing Frontex operations outside the EU: one between the EU and Serbia, and the other between the EU and Montenegro.

NEWS

1. [Germany struggles to face its own police racism](#) (DW, link):

"The killing of George Floyd in the US has put extra scrutiny on structural racism in the police. Activists in Germany are now renewing their call to address cases of police brutality and structural racism in the force."

2. [Project Interoperability: EU to pay 300 million EUR for face and fingerprint recognition](#) (Matthias Monroy, link):

"The companies IDEMIA and Sopra Steria are setting up a biometric recognition system for the EU. For this purpose, fingerprints and facial images from five databases will be stored in a single file. Completion is planned in two years, but in an earlier large-scale IT project of the EU, one of the partners was seven years behind schedule."

3. [Hostility towards migrants and those working to support them continues as state policy in Lesvos](#) (Lesvos Legal Centre, link):

"Police fines for migrants seeking legal aid, the prolonged lockdown on refugee camps, the detention of new arrivals in the Mytiline port (again), and government measures targeting organizations working with migrants are four recent threads in the Greek authorities' growing hostility towards migrants and those working to support them."

4. [Responses across the UK and Europe to the death of George Floyd](#) (IRR News):

"The death of George Floyd in Minneapolis on 25 May, after a policeman knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes as he pleaded he could not breathe, sparks protests across the UK and Europe. This roundup details those protests and related developments."

5. [George Floyd death: Thousands join UK protests](#) (BBC News, link):

"Thousands of people have gathered across central London to protest against the killing of an unarmed black man by police in the US."

They held up signs saying "Justice for George Floyd", who died in police custody while an officer knelt on his neck to pin him down.

Derek Chauvin has been charged with his murder in Minneapolis. The white police officer has been sacked from his job."

See also: [Anti-racism protests spread to Berlin and London](#) (DW, link) and: [INCLC condemns the use of excessive force and the misuse of less-lethal weapons against protesters in the USA](#) (link)

6. [Michel Barnier says EU is open to Brexit delay of up to two years](#) (parliamentmagazine.eu, link):

"Barnier, the EU's chief Brexit negotiator, wrote to the Westminster leaders of the Scottish Nationalist Party, Liberal Democrats, Plaid Cymru, Social Democratic and Labour Party, Green Party and Alliance Party to state that the option of an extension to the current transition period is available if the UK requests it."

7. [Illegal floating prisons | Carla Camilleri](#) (Malta Today, link);

"We need to ask ourselves why Malta still operates migration through management-by-crisis, without long-term vision or contingency plans for emergencies and instead chooses to use human lives as pawns in a bid to find a solution to a global crisis."

8. [Politically-motivated crimes in Germany at second-highest level since 2001](#) (euractiv, link):

"Germany's number of politically-motivated crimes has increased significantly over the past year. Offences perpetrated by both the left and right wing have spiked. For the first time, crimes committed online were also included in the statistics. EURACTIV Germany reports.

The number of politically motivated crimes in Germany in 2019 rose by about 14% compared to the previous year to around 41,000.(...)

This puts politically-motivated crime at its second-highest level since it was introduced to the statistics back in 2001."

9. EU: [Increase in cumulative charges for terrorism and war crimes](#) (Eurojust, link):

"Prosecutors in the EU are increasingly cumulating charges against returning foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), members of ISIS and its affiliates, with genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, so-called core international crimes. In over 20 cases in five Member States, judgments have been delivered or investigations and trials are ongoing where FTFs are charged not only with membership of a terrorist organisation but also with core international crimes, increasing the possibility of higher sentences and of getting justice done for victims. This is the main conclusion of the report 'Cumulative prosecution of foreign terrorist fighters for core international crimes and terrorism-related offences', which will be presented on the occasion of the 5th EU Day against Impunity for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes on 23 May 2020."

See the report: [Cumulative prosecution of foreign terrorist fighters for core international crimes and terrorism-related offences](#) (pdf)

10. [Racial discrimination in education and EU equality law](#) (pdf)

"This thematic report analyses national and international (case) law and assesses the jurisprudential and practical impact of the Racial Equality Directive on racial or ethnic discrimination in education. The report is based on information and analysis provided by the national experts of the European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination by means of a questionnaire addressing the major themes. The report indicates the contribution of each national expert and, where available, refers to the primary sources of the analysis. The report hereafter comprises an introduction followed by 5 sections: the first maps out the multiple sources of European equality law on racial or

ethnic discrimination in education. Section 2 presents up-to-date information about national legislation and its compliance with EU law and international treaties signed and ratified by the Member States. Section 3 analyses national jurisprudence on racial or ethnic discrimination in education. Section 4 investigates the enforcement of racial equality in education and Section 5 sets out our overall conclusions."

11. CYPRUS: [Syrian refugees in Cyprus pushed back to Turkey](#) (EuroMed Rights, link):

"On 15 May 2020, the administration of the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) forcibly sent 100 Syrian refugees, including unaccompanied children, to Mersin, Turkey. They have been transferred to Kilis, near the Syrian border, where they are now. Most of the 100 Syrian refugees – 56 – are children and women and girls are in the majority."

12. FRANCE: [First victory against French police drones](#) (La Quadrature du Net, link):

"The Conseil d'État, the French administrative highest court, has just issued its decision on our case against surveillance drones deployed by the Parisian Police during the Covid lock-down. This decision is a major victory against drone surveillance. It sets as illegal any drone equipped with camera and flying low enough, as such a drone would allow the police to detect individuals by their clothing or a distinctive sign.

According to the Conseil d'Etat, only a ministerial decree reviewed by the CNIL could allow the police to use such drones. As long as such a decree has not been issued, the French police will not be able to use its drones anymore. Indeed, today's decision is all about the Covid health crisis, a much more important purpose than those usually pursued by the police to deploy drones."

13. 37. [UK Supreme Court quashes Adams' Long Kesh escape convictions](#) (rte.ie, link):

"The UK's highest court has said Gerry Adams was imprisoned illegally by the British government when he was interned without trial in the early 1970s.

The Supreme Court has quashed his two convictions for trying to escape from Long Kesh Prison.

Lawyers for the former Sinn Féin President had argued that those convictions were unlawful as his detention was unlawful.

They said his detention order was flawed because it had not been "personally considered" by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in accordance regulations at the time.

In a judgment this morning, five judges, led by the former Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland Brian Kerr, agreed."

Summary of judgment: [Press release](#) (link) and [Full judgment](#) (link)

14. GREECE: [Tents at Sea: How Greek Officials Use Rescue Equipment for Illegal Deportations](#) (Just Security, link):

"In at least 11 incidents since March 23, migrants have been found drifting in orange, tent-like inflatable life rafts without motors or propellants and that cannot be steered. Members of the Turkish Coast Guard reported these apparitions, but Greek authorities neither explained nor documented them. Images of these life rafts, fluorescent triangular structures afloat between black sea and dark sky, looked strange enough to seem superimposed. Relying on testimony and footage we obtained from multiple sources, including asylum seekers in the area, our investigation verifies this latest show of violence at the Greek-Turkish maritime border.

Far from Australia's flashier orange vessels from five years back, these are more modest structures. Importantly, the Greek life rafts have appeared in a very different maritime environment: compared to

the oceans surrounding Australia, the Aegean Sea is a relatively placid and narrow body of water. Yet like the Australian vessels, these too have been put in place by State authorities, in an organized way, violating fundamental rules of international law. The two sets of deportation craft share visible similarities and are each used in dangerous ways, shedding light on the legal and moral risks that states are now willing to take, just to keep out unwanted populations."

15. HUNGARY: [No more transit zones, now asylum seekers will have to apply abroad](#)

(Hungarian Spectrum, link):

"People were stunned this morning when Gergely Gulyás, head of the Prime Minister's Office, announced that the government had decided to shut down the much criticized transit zones at the Serbian-Hungarian border where about 300 refugees had been waiting, some for over a year, for a decision on their asylum status.

...Later in the day, Gergely Gulyás announced the unexpected news during his Thursday government press conference, which was promptly reported on by all the foreign correspondents. He also announced that, from here on, those seeking asylum from the Hungarian government will have to present their requests at one of the Hungarian diplomatic missions abroad.

Gulyás made it clear that "the government does not agree with the court's decision," but, "as a member of the European Union, we are naturally obliged to comply with every court decision."

See: [European Court declares authorities broke EU law by detaining asylum-seekers in transit zone](#) (AI, link)

16. GERMANY: [In their current form, surveillance powers of the Federal Intelligence Service regarding foreign telecommunications violate fundamental rights of the Basic Law](#)

(Bundesverfassungsgericht, link):

"In its judgment pronounced today, the First Senate of the Federal Constitutional Court held that the Federal Intelligence Service (Bundesnachrichtendienst – BND) is bound by the fundamental rights of the Basic Law when conducting telecommunications surveillance of foreigners in other countries, and that the statutory bases in their current design violate the fundamental right to privacy of telecommunications (Art. 10(1) of the Basic Law, Grundgesetz – GG) and the freedom of the press (Art. 5(1) second sentence GG). This applies to the collection and processing of data, the transfer of data thus obtained to other entities and the cooperation with foreign intelligence services. However, statutory bases for foreign telecommunications surveillance can be designed in conformity with the Constitution."

17. [EU data watchdog 'very worried' by Hungary's GDPR suspension](#) (EurActiv, link):

"The European Data Protection Board, the EU's umbrella organisation overseeing the application of EU data protection rules across the bloc, has voiced its concern over the suspension of EU data protection rights in Hungary.

In early May, the Hungarian government put forward plans to suspend obligations to a number of protections outlined in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), as part its new emergency powers passed as a result of the coronavirus outbreak in the country."

18. [Hungarian Supreme Court: Romani children deserve financial compensation for school segregation](#) (romea.cz, link):

"The Hungarian Supreme Court has confirmed a lower court verdict according to which Romani children from the town of Gyöngyöspata are entitled to compensation for having been segregated in school. According to the judgment, the school in northern Hungary, the local authority and the local education department must pay a total of 100 million forints (EUR 282,105) to the families of 60 Romani children for separating them away from non-Romani pupils and delivering them a worse education.

Defenders of those institutions, according to the MTI press agency, had asked that they be able to offer the children courses instead of money. The court ruled that "the only possible compensation for this non-material harm is payment in money."

19. UK: [Artificial intelligence in the police force: a force for good?](#) (RSA, link):

" This short paper explores how police forces in the UK are communicating their use of artificial intelligence (AI) and automated decision systems (ADS).

Through freedom of information requests, we asked every police force in the UK whether they were using AI or ADS to make policing decisions, what training and guidelines they offer to staff, and whether they had consulted with the public.

Key findings

We discovered that only a small minority of police forces were prepared to confirm to us whether they are using AI or ADS for policing decisions, and of these very few have offered public engagement."

20. UK: [Prison sentences for any serious crime to be increased for 'terrorist connection' under government plans](#) (The Independent, link):

"Judges will be able to increase prison sentences for any serious crime by finding a "terrorist connection" under new government proposals.

Currently only specific offences, including murder, hijacking and causing explosions, can be subject to the measure.

But plans being considered by MPs would see judges consider whether there is a "proven terrorist connection" for any crime punishable by more than two years in prison.

The Counter Terrorism and Sentencing Bill, which is being introduced in parliament on Wednesday, would also force terror offenders to spend longer in prison and increase monitoring following their release."

21. [Risk of Repression: New Rules on Civil Society Supporting Refugees and Migrants in Greece](#) (RSA, link):

"Recently, however, political discourse against non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the field of asylum and migration has intensified and fuelled unprecedented hostility by local groups against civil society, ranging from generalised, vague accusations of illicit activities such as smuggling, to racist incidents and violent attacks against organisations and their staff."

22. [Syrian refugees in Cyprus pushed back to Turkey](#) (EuroMed Rights, link):

"On 15 May 2020, the administration of the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) forcibly sent 100 Syrian refugees, including unaccompanied children, to Mersin, Turkey. They have been transferred to Kilis, near the Syrian border, where they are now. Most of the 100 Syrian refugees – 56 – are children and women and girls are in the majority."

23. [Fears mount over migrants dying 'out of sight' in Mediterranean](#) (euractiv, link):

"More and more migrants are crossing, Europe is closing its ports and no humanitarian ships are carrying out rescues. As the coronavirus pandemic dominates headlines, activists fear the Mediterranean is the scene of an overlooked "tragedy". "

24. GREECE: [14-day quarantine for passengers arriving from abroad extended to end of May](#) (euractiv, link):

"The mandatory 14-day self-quarantine rule on international flight arrivals, first imposed on 16 March, is extended to the end of May, the Civil Aviation Authority said on Monday (18 May), AMNA reported.

All international passengers must also take a Covid-19 test upon arrival. If the test is positive, foreign nationals are denied entry to Greece. Both they and Greek nationals entering Greece must stay in quarantine for 14 days (...)

As of Wednesday (13 May), Greece has recorded 2,760 confirmed COVID-19 cases, 156 deaths and 1,374 recoveries."

25. [Hungary: European Court declares authorities broke EU law by detaining asylum-seekers in transit zone](#) (AI, link):

"This is a damning indictment of Hungary's treatment of asylum-seekers. Today the EU Court has made clear: Hungary held two families seeking asylum in a border transit zone for more than a year, giving them no opportunity to have their situation reviewed by a court, and with no option to lawfully leave that zone of their own free will in any direction. In doing so, Hungary broke EU law. "

26. [40 percent of LGBTI people suffer harassment, finds largest ever EU survey - The survey of 140K people finds little progress in attitudes and striking differences between countries](#).(Politico, link):

"The survey by the [EU's Fundamental Rights Agency](#), the largest of its kind ever done, reveals little progress in the perception of discrimination since the agency's previous survey conducted in 2012 and published the following year."

27. EU: [Ban biometric mass surveillance!](#) (EDRi, link):

"Across Europe, highly intrusive and rights-violating facial recognition and biometric processing technologies are quietly becoming ubiquitous in our public spaces. As the European Commission consults the public on what to do, EDRi calls on the Commission and EU Member States to ensure that such technologies are comprehensively banned in both law and practice.

...The EU regulates everything from medicines to children's toys. It is unimaginable that a drug which has not been shown to be effective, or a toy which poses significant risks to children's wellbeing, would be allowed onto the market. However, when it comes to biometric data capture and processing, in particular in an untargeted way in public spaces (i.e. mass surveillance), the EU has been a haven for unlawful biometric experimentation and surveillance. This has happened despite the fact that a 2020 study demonstrated that over 80% of Europeans are against sharing their facial data with authorities."

28. [France: End Discriminatory Police Checks and Fines](#) (Human Rights Watch, link):

"(Paris) – The French government should take urgent and concrete steps to end discriminatory police stops, 24 local, national, and international organizations said on Wednesday in an open letter sent to French authorities.

In response to the new coronavirus pandemic, France adopted confinement measures on March 17, 2020 and declared a state of health emergency that went into effect on March 24 throughout the country. Under the emergency law, failure to respect lockdown rules is subject to a €135 fine (US\$146), while repeated breaches are punishable by up to six months in prison and a €3,750 (US\$4,065) fine.

Since the beginning of the lockdown, many accounts, some corroborated by videos posted on social networks, reveal police stops that appear abusive, violent, and discriminatory, sometimes accompanied by racist insults."

29. ['A bloody method of control': the struggle to take down Europe's razor wire walls](#) (The Guardian, link):

"Razor wire is cut from galvanised steel, and unlike barbed wire, which was devised to tangle and impede movement, it is designed to maim.

It is one of the most visible symbols of the fortification of the EU's borders. Thousands of migrants have already paid with their lives while attempting to get around those borders: by crawling through pipes, suffocating in the back of lorries, or drowning in the Mediterranean.

In September 2005, a Senegalese man reportedly bled to death from wounds inflicted by deadly razor wire coils topping the fence in Ceuta, one of Spain's two exclaves on the north African coast."

30. [EU court censures Hungary over migrant detentions](#) (BBC News, link):

"The EU's top court has ruled that Hungary's arbitrary detention of asylum seekers in border zones is illegal.

...The BBC's Nick Thorpe in Budapest says the EU Court of Justice ruling paves the way for those asylum seekers - nearly half of them children - to be released, as the ECJ ruling means Hungary must devise new asylum rules.

Two families - from Afghanistan and Iran - sued the nationalist Hungarian government at the ECJ, and they will have to be released, our correspondent says.

Of those detained in the two transit zones, 120 have spent more than a year there."

See: [CJEU press release](#) (pdf), [judgment](#) (CJEU, link, currently available in French and Hungarian) and: [Németh: Govt to Do its Utmost to Keep Transit Zones](#) (Hungary Today, link): "Hungary's government and the ruling Fidesz-KDNP alliance will do its utmost to maintain the fence and military-police surveillance along the country's southern border, and guarantee the continued operation of the transit zones, state secretary of defence Szilárd Németh told public media at the transit zone in Röszke on Sunday."

31. [Swiss lawmakers should review draft legislation on police counterterrorism measures to ensure respect for human rights](#) (Council of Europe, link):

"In a letter addressed to the Chair and members of the National Council Committee on Security Policy, made public today, the Commissioner invites parliamentarians to review the draft Federal Law on Police Counterterrorism Measures in order to ensure that all human rights standards are respected.

In particular, the Commissioner mentions questions raised by the lack of sufficient legal safeguards as to the scope of the administrative measures which may be imposed by the Federal Police Office, outside the context of criminal proceedings, against a person whom it considers to be a "potential terrorist" based on a presumption that they might commit certain acts in the future."

32. [Internal EU report: Far-right terrorist attacks rise](#) (EUobserver, link):

"Right-wing terror threats and their online hate ideology is rising in some EU states, according to an internal EU document.

"Activities from right-wing violent extremists are on the rise," notes the 4 May document, addressed to national delegations, and seen by EUobserver.

The 12-page paper drafted by the EU presidency under Croatia provides a broad overview of terror threats emanating from returning foreign terrorist fighters, right-wing terrorists and - to a much lower extent - the far-left.

Broadly speaking, the overall terror threat in the EU remains elevated and unchanged, it says."

33. ITALY: [Thousands of undocumented migrants to get Italian work permits](#) (Al Jazeera, link):

"Bilongo said the regularisation could also help improve conditions for up to 180,000 people living in shantytowns at a time when the public health emergency is "far from over". Activists have long warned that the informal settlements housing irregular workers lacked access to running water and sanitation and risked becoming coronavirus hotspots.

Yet, human rights groups decried the temporary nature of the amnesty.

"A time-limited amnesty is just a patch, an absurdity which gives priority to production over dignity," said Cesare Fermi, director of migration programmes for INTERSOS, an NGO.

Calling the measure "a lost chance", Fermi added: "How will the workers' conditions change once the permit is over?"

34. GREECE-TURKEY: [During and After Crisis: Evros Border Monitoring Report](#) (HumanRights360, link)

"HumanRights360 documents the recent developments in the European land border of Evros as a result of the ongoing policy of externalization and militarization of border security of the EU member States. The report analyses the current state of play, in conjunction with the constant amendments of the Greek legislation amid the discussions pertaining to the reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and the Return Directive."

35. UK: [It just got more difficult for Europeans to become British citizens](#) (Free Movement, link):

"The Home Office has decided to make it more difficult for European residents to become British citizens. EU citizens with settled status who apply for naturalisation now have to provide evidence that they have been living in the UK legally, according an update to government nationality policy released on 15 May.

...when people with settled status come to apply for citizenship, the Home Office is now saying that the right to reside issue must be dealt with in their application. Simply having settled status is not enough, in this context. Settled status will serve as proof of being free of immigration time restrictions (another of the naturalisation requirements) but will not do in terms of showing that the person's period of residence in the UK was in accordance with immigration law."

36. [The EU is undermining its democracies while funding its autocracies](#) (Politico, link):

"As the European Union struggles to agree on a joint response to the coronavirus crisis, calls for solidarity are colliding with the reluctance of wealthier northern states to come to the aid of struggling states in the south.

And yet, these so-called northern frugals — which includes Germany and the Netherlands — seem perfectly content to finance autocratic, anti-democratic governments in Hungary and Poland.

This hypocrisy — claiming “moral hazard” when it comes to Southern Europe, but continuing to shower generous subsidies on governments flouting democratic values — is sending messages that could undermine European integration for a generation.”

VIRUS NEWS

1. [UK turns to counterterrorism chief to run Covid-19 risk hub](#) (Financial Times, link):

"The UK's new joint biosecurity centre, an independent body monitoring the coronavirus threat level, is to be set up by a senior counterterrorism official in the running to become the next chief of MI6, the UK's Secret Intelligence Service.

Tom Hurd, director-general at the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism, has been urgently switched from his post in the Home Office to head up the centre, said four government officials with knowledge of the move.

...It will run along the same lines as Britain's joint terrorism analysis centre (JTAC), which determines the terror risk across Britain as either low, moderate, substantial, severe or critical, and helps decide the response accordingly."

2. [Lithuania's Response to COVID-19: Quarantine Through the Prism of Human Rights and the Rule of Law](#) (verfassungsblog.de, link):

"The decisions taken are not simple and require drastic, important measures, which are necessary to control the spread of the virus.' The Quarantine Resolution is a secondary legislation issued on the basis of the Law on Civil Protection and the Law on the Prevention and Control of Contagious Diseases. The initial duration of quarantine was set for 16-30 March, but it has been extended until 31 May."

3. [Coronavirus cases among refugees on Lesbos spark fresh calls for evacuation - NGOs say infections among arriving refugees show urgent need to move more migrants from Moria camp to mainland](#) (Guardian, link):

"135 Migrants from the Moria camp on Lesbos arrive at the port of Piraeus, Athens on 4 May. The Greek government has promised to transfer 2,000 asylum seekers to the mainland.

Migrants from the Moria camp on Lesbos arrive at the port of Piraeus, Athens on 4 May. The Greek government has promised to transfer 2,000 asylum seekers to the mainland.

Two migrants arriving by sea to the Greek island of Lesbos tested positive for coronavirus on Tuesday, leading to increased calls for evacuation of the overcrowded local camps.

The Moria camp in Lesbos has so far not reported cases of the virus, though two other camps and a hotel where asylum-seekers are staying were locked down in April after positive coronavirus tests were returned."

4. EU: COVID-19 and the justice system: [CCBE Statement on the reactivation of justice in Europe: The CCBE sounds an alarm bell for justice in Europe](#) (pdf):

"The CCBE urges the European institutions and all member states to:

- Facilitate the complete reactivation of justice systems in Europe, while promoting health and safety measures*
- Invest in justice and legal aid urgently*
- Provide support to promote access to justice and guarantee citizens' rights"*

5. UN: [Joint Guidance Note on the Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Human Rights of Migrants: Joint Guidance Note on the Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Human Rights of Migrants](#) (pdf):

"The UN Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW) and the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants warn that the COVID-19 pandemic is having serious and disproportionate effects on migrants and their families globally. Migrants who are in an irregular situation or undocumented are in a situation of even greater vulnerability. Migrants in many cases already do not have effective access to medical care, education and other social services, work in unstable jobs -usually without benefits or the right to unemployment benefits -and in some cases have been left out of the social assistance measures implemented by States, despite of their significant economic contributions to society. In some countries they show the highest levels of contagions and deaths from COVID-19 as a consequence of the abovementioned factors."

6. [The dismal UK Home Office response to coronavirus: the wider picture](#) (Migration Mobilities Bristol, link):

"We've learned that closeness does not mean contact, so I hope that this can count as a 'Letter from Afar' even if 'afar' seems a strangely 19th-century way of talking about the distance between Newport and Bristol. I wanted to share with you some of my reflections on the UK Home Office's response to coronavirus and what it means for migrants and asylum seekers."

7. [Europe's COVID crisis does little to disparage Mediterranean migrants](#) (euractiv, link):

"Having been expelled from Algeria, Alfa Jafo has spent the last few months working in the kitchen at a restaurant in the historic city of Agadez in Niger, a launchpad for irregular migration in the Sahel."

8. [Covid-19 makes it clearer than ever: access to the internet should be a universal right](#) (Guardian, link): By Tim Berners-Lee:

"The internet eased lockdown life for millions. But millions more still can't get online, and that's fundamentally unfair."

9. [Responding to Covid-19: Surveillance, Trust and the Rule of Law](#) (free-group.eu, link) By Valsamis Mitsilegas, Professor of European Criminal Law and Global Security at Queen Mary University of London:

"the purpose of this analysis is to focus on the multi-level challenges that, regardless of its form, what is in effect a post-Covid system of mass surveillance poses on well-established principles of law, rights, trust and citizenship"

Surveillance has been at the heart of the development of state responses to Covid-19. Responses have focused on the surveillance of movement and mobility, including cross-border mobility in the context of re-opening the closed Covid-19 borders in Europe and beyond; and on the surveillance of citizens and populations deemed to have developed Covid-19 symptoms, and those they may have come in contact with, under systems of tracking and tracing."

10. [Coronavirus / Policing; Rights groups demand change to fix unfair policing of lockdown](#) (LIBERTY, link):

*"Unclear rules and conflicting guidance lead to patchy approach to sweeping police powers
- People of colour most at risk and have been left overpoliced and under-protected in the pandemic
- Calls strengthened by report showing BAME people more than 56 per cent more likely to be fined than white people under lockdown powers"*

See: [Letter](#) (pdf)

11. [The Commission encourages Member States not to consider as illegal stay in the EU the periods of stay of third-country nationals in a Member State caused by Covid-related measures](#) (Commission, link)

12. [New Right, old racism – the battlefield of Covid-19](#) (IRR News Service, link):

"As Public Health England conducts its controversial rapid review into Covid-19 disparities, lurking in the background is a new school of 'race realists' whose retrogressive biological arguments must be tackled head-on.(...)"

Whether we be community activists or health care professionals, NHS managers or trades unionists, we need to harness that capacity for change to ensure that investigation into Covid-19 disparities does not compromise with the race realists and explicitly addresses the role of racism in the course of the pandemic. If it does this, it will be likely to expose the extent to which racism today is the hidden public health crisis."

13. UK: [Revealed: How Britain's profiteering spymasters ignored the country's biggest threats like coronavirus—and endangered the public](#) (Declassified UK, link):

"There is money and power in identifying Russia and cyber attacks as the key security threats facing Britain — but not in addressing the more important issues of pandemics and climate change. Former UK intelligence chiefs are personally profiting from the 'revolving door' between government and business, and the public is paying the price.

- Former MI6 chief Sir Richard Dearlove has earned more than £2-million from a US oil company.
- Another former MI6 chief, Sir John Sawers, has earned £699,000 from oil giant BP since 2015.
- Sir Iain Lobban, former head of GCHQ, has become director or adviser to 10 private cyber or data security companies since leaving office in 2014; his own cyber consultancy is worth over £1-million."

14. CORONAVIRUS: [The Netherlands: Of Rollercoasters and Elephants](#) (Verfassungsblog, link):

"This double drive – expertise-based but with a visible concern for public opinion – seems to really guide the communication of the government, in which Mark Rutte constantly acts as explainer-in-chief of what he has dubbed an 'intelligent lockdown', taking his audience step-by-step through the rationales of measures taken.

While this communication strategy may have been rather effective, even leading to initial praise and support of many opposition parties, the tools applied by the government and by local authorities to secure public health and enforce lockdown advice are more problematic. We will discuss a number of such legal issues related to the rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights here."