



## News

30 July (Issue 14/21)

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This is the last issue of *Statewatch* news before we take a well-earned break over August. We will be back in September with more news, analysis and action on civil liberties in Europe. Thanks for following our work, and we wish you all a good summer.

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## Swiss intelligence agency spying on migrants' rights groups

Switzerland's Federal Intelligence Service (*Service de renseignement de la Confédération*, SRC) has been monitoring the activities of *Solidarité sans frontières* (SOSF), an organisation that advocates for the rights of migrants and asylum-seekers, since 2006.

The information was disclosed after SOSF made a request to the parliamentary committee responsible for overseeing the intelligence services. That request followed in the footsteps of one made by *droitsfondamentaux.ch* – whose activities the FIS had also been monitoring.

Find out more [here](#).

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## Frontex series continued

In the middle of July we published the first in a series of articles taking a closer look at some under-examined issues related to the powers and activities of EU border agency Frontex. Parts two and three were published over the last fortnight, the former looking at [the legal firewalls that create blurred responsibilities in cases of search and rescue and pushbacks](#), and the latter looking at [problems with Frontex's public image and supposed commitment to transparency](#).

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## **UK: Home Office data strategy: digital infrastructure for 'law and order'**

The UK Home Office plans to maximise the gathering, matching and processing of personal and other data, making it possible to deploy "automation, machine learning and artificial intelligence" for the purposes of law enforcement, border control, customs and various other activities.

Read more [here](#).

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### **News and analysis**

Frontex, secrecy and story-telling: control of information as super-strategy

To SAR or not to SAR, part 2: Legal firewalls of a very political agency

UK: Home Office data strategy: digital infrastructure for 'law and order'

Switzerland: Federal Intelligence Service has spied on migrants' rights group for 15 years

Bulgaria, Denmark and France condemned by the European Court of Human Rights for asylum and border policies

In the wake of the Pegasus revelations, states must halt the use and export of surveillance technology

Frontex: newly-published document highlights parliamentary inquiry's limits

EU: Rule of law: reports of Council hearings of Hungary and Poland

Europol on anarchism: more information is needed on an "increasing and evolving" threat

EU: Tracking the Pact: Proposed cooperation with North Africa received with "interest"; external cooperation "state of play"

EU: Spying on foreign nationals: member states want to stay in the driving seat

UN: Agenda towards transformative change for racial justice and equality

Interview: "European border control degrades migrants by ruining their life expectations"

# Analysis

29 July

## [Frontex, secrecy and story-telling: control of information as super-strategy](#)

EU border agency Frontex spends a significant amount of time and money on its public image, and insists that its activities are fully transparent. However, that public image is - unsurprisingly - heavy on spin, and panders to far-right narratives. Meanwhile, its commitment to transparency is questionable - to say the least.

22 July

## [To SAR or not to SAR, part 2: Legal firewalls of a very political agency](#)

The second part of an analysis looking at the legal firewalls that create blurred responsibilities in cases of search and rescue and pushbacks, shielding EU border agency Frontex from accountability measures.

# News

29 July

## [UK: Home Office data strategy: digital infrastructure for 'law and order'](#)

The UK Home Office plans to maximise the gathering, matching and processing of personal and other data, making it possible to deploy "automation, machine learning and artificial intelligence" for the purposes of law enforcement, border control, customs and various other activities.

28 July

## [Switzerland: Federal Intelligence Service has spied on migrants' rights group for 15 years](#)

The Swiss Federal Intelligence Service has been monitoring the activities of Solidarité sans frontières (SOSF), an organisation that advocates for the rights of migrants and asylum-seekers, since 2006, papers obtained by SOSF show. SOSF is one of many such groups that the FIS keeps tabs on.

28 July

## [Bulgaria, Denmark and France condemned by the European Court of Human Rights for asylum and border policies](#)

Bulgaria, Denmark and France have all recently been found to have violated human rights by Europe's top court: Bulgaria for pushing back a journalist to Turkey; Denmark for making a refugee and his family wait almost three years before permitting their reunification; and France for detaining a young mother and her baby for 11 days whilst they tried to deport them both to Italy.

28 July

## [In the wake of the Pegasus revelations, states must halt the use and export of surveillance technology](#)

States must place an "immediate moratorium on the sale, transfer and use of surveillance technology," says an open letter signed by over 150 human rights organisations (including Statewatch) and more than 30 independent experts in response to the Pegasus Project

revelations, which have shown how spyware developed by the NSO Group has been used against some 180 journalists.

27 July

**[Frontex: newly-published document highlights parliamentary inquiry's limits](#)**

The Frontex Scrutiny Working Group (FSWG) published its final report of a four-month fact finding investigation into alleged violations of fundamental rights on 15 July. This annex to the report highlights the limitations of the investigation.

27 July

**[EU: Rule of law: reports of Council hearings of Hungary and Poland](#)**

On 22 June the Council held hearings of Hungary and Poland as part of the Article 7 procedure concerning the risk of a breach of the EU's founding values. The Council's summary reports, published here, give an overview of what was discussed.

27 July

**[Europol on anarchism: more information is needed on an "increasing and evolving" threat](#)**

Europol has called for authorities to gather more information on "violent left-wing extremism and anarchism" due to an "increasing and evolving" threat, at the same time noting that "no organisation or group can be considered to pose an imminent threat".

23 July

**[EU: Tracking the Pact: Proposed cooperation with North Africa received with "interest"; external cooperation "state of play"](#)**

Two internal EU documents circulated in the Council: one containing the former Portuguese Presidency's assessment of North African states' responses to a proposed "enhanced political dialogue" on justice and home affairs issues; the other, the Commission's overview of "the main external migration dialogues and processes since 2019."

23 July

**[EU: Spying on foreign nationals: member states want to stay in the driving seat](#)**

Member states want to take hold of proposed new powers that would step up the surveillance of third-country nationals in the Schengen area, in a blow to the European Commission's plans to increase the role of EU policing agency Europol.

19 July

**[UN: Agenda towards transformative change for racial justice and equality](#)**

"Prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 43/1 and in recognition of the unprecedented opportunity for change, the present comprehensive report—to be read in conjunction with an accompanying conference room paper—presents an agenda towards transformative change for racial justice and equality."

19 July

[Interview: “European border control degrades migrants by ruining their life expectations”](#)

An interview with Julien Jeandesboz, expert on border control, about the nature of “zoopolitics”, changes to the Eurodac biometric database, the development of the European Travel Information and Authorisation System, and vaccination passports.

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