



News

17 December (Issue 20/21)

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Welcome to our last issue of the year, covering the last three weeks. Features:

- **EU asylum and borders proposals: the only attack taking place is the attack on peoples' rights**
- **Greece: The new hotspots and the prevention of “primary flows”: a human rights disaster**
- **EU: Data retention strikes back? Options for mass telecoms surveillance under discussion again**

Plus, all our other news, links and documentation.

We will be back with you in January – until then, from everyone at Statewatch, we wish you a safe and restful break.

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EU attack on asylum rights

The arrival of thousands of people at the borders between Belarus and Poland, Latvia and Lithuania has been branded by national governments and EU institutions as a “hybrid attack” designed to destabilise the EU. While undoubtedly orchestrated for geopolitical purposes, it is evident that the only real attack taking place is the attack on peoples' rights.

At the beginning of the month, the European Commission published “temporary” emergency measures that would restrict access to asylum procedures and downgrade reception conditions to a bare minimum. Two weeks later, these were followed by proposals that would make the temporary powers permanent and available for use whenever the Council decided that people were being “instrumentalised” by a non-EU state. Not only will the new measures violate peoples' rights, they will do little to resolve the situation.

Read more [here](#), and see our news listings below for more coverage from our '[Tracking the Pact](#)' series, monitoring the EU's new asylum and migration proposals.

Greece: human rights in the new hotspots

The Greek government and the EU have evicted various self-managed hospitality structures and are now closing down the squalid, state-run refugee camps on the Aegean islands. People are being transferred to newly-built "closed controlled access centres".

These prison-like facilities, which are coming into use at the same time as the services available to refugees are being cut back, are having injurious effects upon people's mental health and wellbeing. Nevertheless, with the Greek government focusing on preventing "primary flows", it seems the new camps are set to play a growing role in the detention of people awaiting deportation.

In this special report from Greece, Wasil Schaesil looks at the structures and systems being put in place and the support being removed as part of Greece and the EU's migration and border control agenda.

Read more [here](#).

Mass telecoms surveillance back on the agenda

In 2014, citing serious fundamental rights concerns, the Court of Justice struck down an EU law that required telecommunications companies to retain data on the phone calls and internet usage of everyone in the EU, in case law enforcement agencies later wanted access to it. Ever since then, member states have been keen to introduce new EU-wide measures, and in June 2021 the European Commission circulated a questionnaire seeking views on different options.

We filed a request for the responses from member states. The responses we received show a divergence of views on what data to retain and when, but a majority favour new EU legislation. Any new proposals will require strong opposition if they are to be defeated.

Read more [here](#).

News and analysis

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Police stopping migrants can help save Schengen, EU says

France identifies victims of Channel migrant boat tragedy, mainly Iraqi Kurds

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Ex-Danish minister convicted over 2016 asylum ruling

Spain: Information about financial aid to Morocco for immigration and border security declared a matter of "national security" and kept under wraps by interior ministry

Legal challenge seeks to end UK's jailing of asylum seekers who steer boats

Julian Assange can be extradited to US to face espionage charges, court rules

New Report: 'The Crackdown' against lawyers in Turkey

EU Commission plan allows police officers to cross borders, shoot and arrest suspects

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Slovak secret service labels party in Renew group 'left-wing extremists'

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UK: Government primed for new assault on judges - report

Croat police kept handwritten logbook of likely pushbacks

EU solidarity with Poland on migration: a violent response to an imagined threat

England and Wales's Police Bill threatens anyone with a cause they believe in

Swiss tech company boss accused of selling mobile network access for spying

Fortress Europe: the millions spent on military-grade tech to deter refugees

EU: Sanction NSO Group Over Abusive Spyware

Morocco and Switzerland plan to increase cooperation in all areas of mutual interest – Joint Statement

Asylum seekers left waiting more than two years to be allowed to stay in Ireland

Editorial: Commission Proposal Leaves Little Solutions but Plenty of Contradictions

UK: Lamont Roper: Family of student who drowned in canal demand answers after inquest

ECJ adviser backs rule-of-law measure in blow to Poland and Hungary

Greece: Police seek more upgrades to Evros fence

E.U. Interpreter Says Greece Expelled Him to Turkey in Migrant Roundup

EU: New asylum proposals threaten to 'throw out the rule book' on human rights

New legislation perpetuates restrictions and obstacles to protection of human rights on Poland's eastern border

Jailed for 51 weeks for protesting? Britain is becoming a police state by stealth

Deaths and push-backs through calculated non-assistance in the Channel

Draconian border security doesn't work and costs lives. Why is Britain pushing it?

'We must become more open, to stay secret': MI6 chief says spies must work with tech firms to counter threats

UK: Third probe over Anthony Grainger shooting clears officers

Frontex implicated 'to some extent' in violations, says officer

Victims of sexual violence let down by UK asylum system, report says

Greece: PRESS RELEASE: RESPONSE TO RECENT CHANGES TO ASYLUM REGISTRATION

Libya: The Secretive Prisons That Keep Migrants Out of Europe

The Impact of COVID-19 on the EU's Mediterranean Migration Policies: The Case of Libya

Solidarity wins: dismissed charges against Italian volunteers

Italy and France heal their rift with a treaty

EU border agency plans to monitor French coast following Channel deaths

German coalition backs ban on facial recognition in public places

UK: Use of stop and search rises 24% in England and Wales in a year

Analysis

14 December

[Série Frontex : résumés](#)

Depuis le lancement de ses opérations conjointes, Frontex a été accusée de détourner le regard de ses obligations légales en matière de respects des droits, et en particulier concernant le sauvetage en mer. Statewatch, membre de Migreurop, à travers la plume de Jane Kilpatrick, chercheur et membre de l'équipe salariée de Statewatch, et Marie Martin, collaboratrice de Statewatch, a publié une série de trois analyses sur les aspects juridiques et politiques qui ont amené à cette situation « d'impunité choisie ». Vous trouverez ci-joint un résumé en anglais et français, ou qui souhaitent accéder aux arguments principaux émis dans ces analyses.

13 December 2021

[Greece: The new hotspots and the prevention of “primary flows”: a human rights disaster](#)

The Greek government and the EU have evicted various self-managed hospitality structures and are now closing down the squalid, state-run refugee camps on the islands of the Aegean. People are being transferred to newly-built "closed controlled access centres". These prison-like facilities, which are coming into use at the same time as the services available to refugees are being cut back, are having injurious effects upon people's mental health and wellbeing. Nevertheless, with the Greek government focusing on preventing "primary flows", it seems the new camps are set to play a growing role in the detention of people awaiting deportation.

News

16 December 2021

[EU: Tracking the Pact: Member states against a search and rescue "solidarity mechanism"](#)

The vast majority of member states are opposed to a separate "solidarity mechanism" for people rescued at sea under the proposed Asylum and Migration Management Regulation. The proposal foresees this solidarity consisting of relocation or "capacity building". Some states would like to be able to offer "solidarity" in other ways - for example, Austria proposes support for externalisation measures as an alternative option to relocation of people rescued at sea.

16 December 2021

[European Commission against Racism and Intolerance: opinion on the concept of "racialisation"](#)

"The use of the concept of "racialisation" has the potential to aid understanding of the processes underpinning racism and racial discrimination and to ensure that the voices of racialised groups are heard and taken into account, in particular in the areas of awareness-raising, education and policy making."

16 December 2021

[EU: Asylum and borders proposals: the only attack taking place is the attack on peoples' rights](#)

In response to the arrival of thousands of people at the EU's borders with Belarus, the

European Commission has published a raft of new proposals that would weaken asylum rights and strengthen border surveillance and controls. Described as “temporary” on 1 December, proposals published this week would allow their enactment whenever the Council deems migrants are being “instrumentalised” to “attack” the European Union.

15 December 2021

[EU-USA meeting to include discussion on "the re-activated EU-US Migration Platform"](#)

The agenda of the EU-USA Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial Meeting, taking place tomorrow, will include discussions on artificial intelligence; counter-terrorism; "relevant developments" regarding Passenger Name Record travel surveillance; and "Reporting on first meeting of the re-activated EU-US Migration Platform".

15 December 2021

[Germany: New website documents fatal police shootings](#)

Since German reunification, 309 people have been shot dead by the country's police; there were also 148 fatal police shootings in West Germany from 1976 to 1990. A new website launched by the magazine CILIP documents these cases, seeking to shed light on the individual cases hidden behind the interior ministry's statistics.

13 December 2021

[EU: Draft border proposals: "drones and motion sensors, as well as mobile units to prevent unauthorised border crossings"](#)

Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Regulation (EU) 2016/399 as regards the response to threats to the area without controls at internal borders: "SENSITIVE UNTIL ADOPTION"

10 December 2021

[UK: "Quasi-detention" of asylum seekers must be replaced with "decent, safe accommodation," say MPs](#)

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Immigration Detention has released a report condemning the government's use of an abandoned barracks in Kent to house asylum seekers, and demanding that plans to extend the use of such sites of "quasi-detention" be halted. The report says people seeking asylum should be "housed in decent, safe accommodation in the community that supports their well-being and recovery from trauma, facilitates their engagement with the asylum process, and allows them to build links with their community."

09 December 2021

[EU: Tracking the Pact: Presidency wants JHA Council to find "sustainable solutions" on legal proposals](#)

A working paper circulated on 7 December by the Slovenian Presidency of the Council looks at the state of play of discussions on the legal proposals that are part of the EU's Pact on Migration and Asylum. It calls on national ministers in the Justice and Home Affairs Council - meeting tomorrow - to find ways to move forward with negotiations.

09 December 2021

[Book review: 'EU Migration Agencies: The Operation and Cooperation of Frontex, EASO and Europol'](#)

David Fernández-Rojo's comparative analysis, published by Edward Elgar Publishing, explores

the way in which the three agencies have grown together, and what this means for the future of migration management.

07 December 2021

[UK: Home Office publishes latest report on financial allowances for asylum-seekers](#)

The Home Office has released its 2020 report into the pitiful living allowance paid to asylum-seekers and failed asylum-seekers, who are barred from working legally. The amounts paid, which are around half that paid to individuals on Jobseekers' Allowance (unemployment benefit), have long been condemned by charities and human rights organisations for leaving people in poverty.

07 December 2021

[UK strengthens policing cooperation with Malta](#)

Press release published by the UK Home Office, 6 December 2021.

07 December 2021

[UN Convention on Transnational Organised Crime: EU competences](#)

More than a decade after the Lisbon Treaty entered into force, the European Commission has decided to notify the United Nations of the competences of the EU under the Convention on Transnational and Organised Crime, and its protocols on migrant smuggling and human trafficking.

06 December 2021

[EU: Tracking the Pact: Council restricts rights in latest Screening Regulation text](#)

The Council is aiming to water down rights protections in the proposed Screening Regulation, which will see most individuals who enter the EU in an irregular fashion detained at the borders with a view to their swift expulsion.

06 December 2021

[UK: Police monitoring, suspect communities, racism and policing reform – learning from the past to inform the present](#)

Statewatch Library & Archive goes online after event in Bristol

01 December 2021

[EU: Data retention strikes back? Options for mass telecoms surveillance under discussion again](#)

In June 2021 the European Commission sought the views of member states on ways to reintroduce the bulk retention of telecoms traffic, location and internet connection data on everyone in the EU. Responses from seven member states, published here, show a divergence of views on what data to retain and when, but a majority in favour of new EU legislation.

01 December 2021

[EU: Spin it to win it: Frontex seeks public relations support](#)

Earlier this year we analysed the time and money Frontex invests in its public image. Media expertise has remained a high priority for Frontex, with a total of €315,000 set aside for three various media contracts this year.

30 November 2021

[EU: Artificial Intelligence Act must put human rights first](#)

115 civil society organisations, including Statewatch, have today published a collective statement calling for EU institutions to prioritise fundamental rights in the Artificial Intelligence Act (AIA), which is currently under negotiation.

30 November 2021

[EU: Tracking the Pact: Presidency compromise proposals on revamped Eurodac database](#)

The controversial expansion and extension of the Eurodac database is moving ahead, with compromise proposals circulated by the Slovenian Presidency of the Council last week. The legislation would extend Eurodac from a system concerned with supporting the implementation of the EU's asylum rules, to a more general "migration management" database, with a big emphasis on providing data for deportations.

29 November 2021

[EU: Frontex seeks expertise on "camp management and administration" and "intelligence gathering education"](#)

Frontex is creating an external experts database and has published a list of the roles it is seeking, ranging from a "civil engineer for camp management and administration," to experts in social media surveillance and an "expert in intelligence gathering officers education".

29 November 2021

[JOINT STATEMENT of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Kingdom of Belgium, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the French Republic on migration issues and police and judicial cooperation in the Channel and the North Sea](#)

The statement published following the meeting on Channel crossings, to which the UK was "disinvited", is entirely concerned with law enforcement and migration control measures, with no mention of humanitarian issues despite the drastic situation in Calais and other sites along the French and Belgian coasts. It is noteworthy that the statement announces the first major deployment of EU resources that aims to prevent departures from - rather than arrivals into - the EU.

29 November 2021

[EU: Artificial Intelligence Act: Council aims to simplify use of mass biometric surveillance by law enforcement](#)

The Council of the EU wants to make it possible for private actors to operate mass biometric surveillance systems on behalf of police forces, and intends to extend the purposes for which such systems can be used under the EU's proposed Artificial Intelligence Act.

The Roundup

Material we have shared on our [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts in the last fortnight.

Netpol, 16 December

UK: [Respect or Repression? An independent report of the COP26 Conference in Glasgow](#)

“Our report ‘Respect or Repression? An independent report on Operation Urram (Respect), the policing of the COP26 Conference in Scotland’ exposes systemic abuses of power from Police Scotland throughout the COP26 Climate conference. Police Scotland then lied to the public, to campaigners, and to Scottish Police Authority about their actions. We conclude therefore, that Police Scotland not only failed to protect human rights during their policing of COP26, but in many cases actively hindered or violated human rights.”

Asylum Matters, 15 December

UK: [New Joint Report: ‘In a place like prison’: voices from institutional asylum accommodation](#)

“Today, Asylum Matters alongside Action Foundation, Birmingham Community Hosting, Birmingham Refugee and Asylum Seekers Solidarity (BRASS), Life Seeker’s Aid Charity and Stories of Hope and Home are launching a new joint report, ‘In a place like prison’: voices from institutional asylum accommodation, which looks at the experiences of people seeking asylum who have been housed in hotels, hostels, barracks and initial accommodation centres. The report demonstrates that this type of institutional accommodation causes harm, and that the UK Government’s plans to introduce new large scale ‘accommodation centres’ for people seeking asylum must be abandoned.”

Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons, 15 December

UK: [Report on an unannounced inspection of the detention of migrants at Dover and Folkestone](#)

“This report covers inspections of the detention facilities at Tug Haven and Kent Intake Unit (KIU) in Dover, and Frontier House in Folkestone. The facilities mainly held people who had arrived from France on small boats after undertaking sea crossings from France.”

EUobserver, 15 December

[Police stopping migrants can help save Schengen, EU says](#)

“The European Commission wants to reduce internal border checks by shoring up joint-police patrols against irregular migrants.

The move comes with extra surveillance powers, entitling police to send back the person to the member state they left in a wider bid to curb so-called secondary movements.”

InfoMigrants, 15 December

[France identifies victims of Channel migrant boat tragedy, mainly Iraqi Kurds](#)

“French authorities said Tuesday they had formally identified 26 out of 27 migrants who drowned last month in a Channel boat accident, with most of them Kurds from Iraq.

A statement from the Paris prosecutor said that there were 17 men among the deceased aged 19-26, seven women aged 22-46, as well as a 16-year-old teenager and a child aged seven.”

Irish Legal, 15 December

Ireland: [Hooded Men 'vindicated' by UK Supreme Court decision](#)

"Lawyers for the "Hooded Men" say they have been vindicated by a UK Supreme Court ruling that the PSNI's decision not to investigate their allegations of torture by the British Army in 1971 was unlawful."

ECRE, 14 December

[ECRE Comments on the Commission Proposal for a Council Decision on provisional emergency measures for the benefit of Latvia, Lithuania and Poland \(COM\(2021\) 752\)](#)

"ECRE does not support the measures proposed, which will have an adverse effect on the right to asylum without adequately responding to the situation at the EU's borders with Belarus."

Migreurop, 14 December

[The Channel, Europe's other graveyard](#)

"In the Channel, as elsewhere, European migration policies are killing and hindering the right of every person to move freely"

EurActiv, 14 December

[EU court asks Bulgaria to give passport to baby of lesbian couple](#)

"The EU's top court Tuesday (14 December) ruled that Bulgaria must issue an identity document or passport to the stateless baby of a same-sex couple from Bulgaria and Gibraltar."

Press release [here](#) and judgment [here](#) (pdfs).

The Independent, 14 December

UK: [The police could soon seize the homes of Gypsies and Travellers – this is not who we are as a nation](#)

"Part four of the Police, Crime Sentencing and Courts Bill will, for the first time in centuries, criminalise trespass. It will make it a criminal offence to reside, or to intend to reside, on land in a vehicle (including caravans) without consent. And it will enable the police to seize such vehicles. This means Gypsies and Travellers who keep to their traditional nomadic culture could have their homes seized.

This is appalling. It fails to address the fundamental problem, as identified by both the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), that there is a "lack of sufficient and appropriate accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers" to rent. And it is not who we are as a nation."

Politico, 13 December

[Ex-Danish minister convicted over 2016 asylum ruling](#)

"Inger Støjberg, a former Danish immigration minister and high-profile government figure during Europe's 2015 migration crisis, was sentenced to 60 days in jail on Monday after an order she issued in 2016 was ruled illegal. "

OK Diario, 13 December

Spain: [Information about financial aid to Morocco for immigration and border security declared a matter of "national security" and kept under wraps by interior ministry](#)

“En el último lustro España ha entregado a Marruecos más de 350 millones de euros bajo la consigna de todo tipo de ayudas: transferencias, créditos o pago en especie han salido de Madrid para la mejora de infraestructuras, del sistema educativo o, y aquí está lo mollar, la lucha contra la inmigración ilegal y el narcotráfico. Compras millonarias de coches 4x4, visores nocturnos o quads han ido llegando hasta Rabat pagados desde fondos estrictamente españoles y también procedentes de la hucha de la Unión Europea. Sin embargo, nada de esto ha frenado ni la mayor ola de inmigración ilegal de la historia, dos años consecutivos con cerca de 80.000 llegadas irregulares, ni el aumento del tráfico de drogas a través del Estrecho de Gibraltar. Si España sigue ayudando a Marruecos no puede saberse desde hace 6 meses ya que según el Ministerio del Interior es un asunto de Seguridad Nacional... desde junio.”

The Guardian, 12 December

[Legal challenge seeks to end UK's jailing of asylum seekers who steer boats](#)

“The UK government is facing a major legal challenge against its policy of prosecuting asylum seekers who steer boats across the Channel under smuggling laws.”

The Guardian, 10 December

[Julian Assange can be extradited to US to face espionage charges, court rules](#)

“WikiLeaks co-founder's lawyers say they will seek to appeal, as Amnesty International says decision is a 'travesty of justice'”

Full-text of the judgment [here](#) (pdf)

The Arrested Lawyers, 10 December

[New Report: 'The Crackdown' against lawyers in Turkey](#)

*“The report, titled *The Crackdown*, reveals that more than 1,600 lawyers have been arrested and prosecuted while 615 lawyers have been remanded to pretrial detention. Subsequently, 474 lawyers have been sentenced to a total of 2,966 years in prison on the grounds of membership of an armed terrorism organization (Art. 314 of Penal Code) or of spreading terrorist propaganda.”*

The Telegraph, 9 December

[EU Commission plan allows police officers to cross borders, shoot and arrest suspects](#)

“Officers would be allowed to cross borders when in 'hot pursuit' of criminals, and arrest and shoot suspects, under EU Commission proposals”

EuroMed Rights, 9 December

[NEW COMMISSION PROPOSAL ON MIGRANTS AT EU-BELARUS BORDER SETS DANGEROUS PRECEDENT](#)

“The proposal raises several concerns in terms of reduced access to asylum, increased accelerated border procedures with reduced rights guaranteed, increased detention and basic reception conditions. At the time of writing, at least 13 people had already died at the EU-Belarus border, including children, babies and women. Hundreds more are currently living in the woods, under freezing temperatures with neither food nor water. They are also facing continuous violence and abuses from border forces.”

EurActiv, 8 December

[Slovak secret service labels party in Renew group 'left-wing extremists'](#)

“The liberal party and Renew Europe member Progressive Slovakia have been labelled as “left-wing extremists” in an annual report of the Slovak Intelligence Service published last week, representatives of the party claim.”

VoxEurop, 7 December

Cyprus: Asylum-seekers blocked at Green Line to Europe

“The 184-kilometre demilitarised Green Line that divides Cyprus and its capital Nicosia is the crossing-point that migrants use to get to the southern part of the island, which is part of the EU. Overwhelmed by the flow of migrants, the Cypriot authorities accuse Turkey of deliberately sending migrants through the north. In response they are adopting controversial and drastic measures.”

Bail for Immigration Detainees, 7 December

UK: **8 Reasons to Bin the Bill**

“As we launch our #RingTheAlarm campaign we share 8 reasons that the toxic Nationality & Borders Bill must be binned.”

Migreurop, 7 December

La coopération UE-Égypte sur les politiques migratoires : dépolitiser les enjeux, soutenir un régime autoritaire

“Le présent rapport - fruit d’une enquête de terrain de cinq mois (octobre 2019-février 2020) basée principalement au Caire - s’attache à déconstruire les discours officiels sur la question migratoire en Égypte, en montrant que la coopération euro-égyptienne sur la « gestion migratoire » a servi de prétexte à une forte instrumentalisation de la question des migrations par le gouvernement égyptien depuis 2013-2014. Loin d’avoir garanti les droits des personnes en migration en application du droit international, cette coopération a entraîné une dégradation des libertés et des conditions de vie pour l’ensemble de la population (nationale, immigrée, réfugiée) vivant sur le territoire égyptien. Une coopération, qui répond avant tout aux intérêts stratégiques des États membres de l’UE et de l’État égyptien...”

The Beacon, 6 December

Ireland: **Far-right elements are behind the latest anti-mask push targeting parents and their children**

“A number of conspiracy theorists along with activists linked to far-right parties were involved in an anti-mask rally that was held in Dublin on Friday. On the surface the rally, which attracted roughly 1,000 people, was held to protest against the mandating of the wearing of masks by children in schools in order to combat the spread of COVID-19. As the government has introduced another round of restrictions to deal with surging cases of the virus, the public is rightly angry. But considering the speeches at the rally, as well as those involved in its organising, it seems that a more nefarious agenda was at play. It looks as if the real plan involves luring people down the far-right, conspiracy theorist rabbit hole.”

Brexit Spotlight, 6 December

UK: **Five reasons MPs must reject the Nationality and Borders Bill**

“The bill is one of the most authoritarian presented to the UK Parliament in recent memory. A number of human rights organisations have produced detailed critical briefings on the legislation. These include Detention Action, Liberty, the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, Migrant Voice and Amnesty International, and the British Red Cross (there are also a number of blogs on the website, Freedom of Movement). There are so many problems

with this cruel and inhumane legislation that it is difficult to know 'where to start'. But here are five of the most critical issues."

Law Gazette, 6 December

UK: [Government primed for new assault on judges - report](#)

"Downing Street is planning curbs on judicial review going above and beyond those in legislation currently going through parliament, according to press reports this morning. Quoting 'Whitehall sources', The Times says that Boris Johnson is unhappy with the Judicial Review and Courts Bill and has ordered the justice secretary to toughen plans to restrict judges' powers to rule on the legality of ministerial decisions."

EUobserver, 6 December

[Croat police kept handwritten logbook of likely pushbacks](#)

"Croatian police tried to withhold incriminating evidence of likely pushbacks, documented in a hand-written logbook, from the Strasbourg-based Council of Europe human rights watchdog.

The findings were revealed on Friday (3 December) by investigators from the Council of Europe's anti-torture committee and exposes a pattern of violent abuse and denials also documented by media and NGOs over the past year."

The Conversation, 6 December

[EU solidarity with Poland on migration: a violent response to an imagined threat](#)

"One might think that forcibly pushing people seeking protection back into the hands of a dictator would cause alarm bells to ring throughout Europe. And yet Poland's radical "no entry" policy has earned support from the EU level. The European Commission has made clear that it stands in "solidarity with the Member States on the front line"."

OpenDemocracy, 6 December

[England and Wales's Police Bill threatens anyone with a cause they believe in](#)

"It now proposes new crimes that could criminalise almost any protester and give police alarmingly wide powers of stop and search"

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, 6 December

[Swiss tech company boss accused of selling mobile network access for spying](#)

"The co-founder of a company trusted by Google and Twitter to text security codes to millions of users also ran a service that helped governments secretly surveil and track mobile phones, according to former employees and clients."

The Guardian, 6 December

[Fortress Europe: the millions spent on military-grade tech to deter refugees](#)

"From military-grade drones to sensor systems and experimental technology, the EU and its members have spent hundreds of millions of euros over the past decade on technologies to track down and keep at bay the refugees on its borders."

Human Rights Watch, 3 December

[EU: Sanction NSO Group Over Abusive Spyware](#)

"The European Union should adopt targeted sanctions against NSO Group, the Israel-based company that produces spyware, 88 human rights groups and independent experts said today

in a letter to the EU foreign policy chief and foreign ministers of EU states. The call follows years of credible reporting that the group's Pegasus spyware, which turns an infected phone into a portable surveillance tool, has assisted governments in human rights abuses."

Morocco Telegraph, 3 December

[Morocco and Switzerland plan to increase cooperation in all areas of mutual interest – Joint Statement](#)

"This includes improving technical and operational capabilities, particularly in the areas of document fraud and AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System), returning formally identified illegal residents, including voluntary return, and identifying and protecting victims of human trafficking."

Irish Legal, 3 December

[Asylum seekers left waiting more than two years to be allowed to stay in Ireland](#)

"Asylum seekers who have been waiting more than two years to have their applications processed will be granted permission to stay in Ireland under a new scheme."

ECRE, 3 December

[Editorial: Commission Proposal Leaves Little Solutions but Plenty of Contradictions](#)

"As its President forewarned, the European Commission this week launched a proposal to respond to events at the EU border with Belarus. It was met with exacerbation and bafflement by journalists and fury by political groups in the European Parliament. For civil society trying to respond to events on the ground, including NGOs, the media, lawyers and faith-based groups, the proposal is profoundly frustrating."

Evening Standard, 2 December

[UK: Lamont Roper: Family of student who drowned in canal demand answers after inquest](#)

"The family a student who drowned in a freezing canal after fleeing a Metropolitan Police stop-and-search said they are still waiting for answers as an inquest into his tragic death concludes."

The Guardian, 2 December

[ECJ adviser backs rule-of-law measure in blow to Poland and Hungary](#)

"Court advised to dismiss challenge against law that lets EU block funds to states that curb judicial independence"

Kathimerini, 1 December

[Greece: Police seek more upgrades to Evros fence](#)

"Aiming to further upgrade the capabilities of the fence on the Evros land border, the Hellenic Police is requesting the gradual replacement of the 23 thermal cameras installed in the old part of the fence, from Kastanies to Nea Vyssa, Kathimerini understands."

New York Times, 1 December

[E.U. Interpreter Says Greece Expelled Him to Turkey in Migrant Roundup](#)

"The man's story echoes complaints from human-rights groups that Greek authorities often expel asylum seekers indiscriminately and violently."

Amnesty International, 1 December

[EU: New asylum proposals threaten to 'throw out the rule book' on human rights](#)

"European Commission proposals would allow some countries to hold asylum-seekers and migrants at the border for 16 weeks with minimal safeguards"

"At least 10 people, including a one-year-old child, have died at the EU's Eastern borders in recent weeks"

Council of Europe, 1 December

[New legislation perpetuates restrictions and obstacles to protection of human rights on Poland's eastern border](#)

"Amendments to Poland's Border Protection Act, adopted yesterday, effectively perpetuate many of the restrictive measures put in place by the country's state of emergency, with negative effects on the freedom of movement, assembly, and expression on Poland's eastern border."

The Guardian, 1 December

[Jailed for 51 weeks for protesting? Britain is becoming a police state by stealth](#)

"This is proper police state stuff. The last-minute amendments crowbarred by the government into the police, crime, sentencing and courts bill are a blatant attempt to stifle protest, of the kind you might expect in Russia or Egypt. Priti Patel, the home secretary, shoved 18 extra pages into the bill after it had passed through the Commons, and after the second reading in the House of Lords. It looks like a deliberate ploy to avoid effective parliamentary scrutiny. Yet in most of the media there's a resounding silence."

Calais Migrant Solidarity, 30 November

[Deaths and push-backs through calculated non-assistance in the Channel](#)

"As news began circulating that a boat had sunk in the middle of the Channel and that 27 people, men, women and children, had lost their lives on Wednesday 24 November, both the British and French governments were quick to blame 'people smugglers' for the loss of life. The information that has emerged since shows that it was the decision on the part of authorities not to intervene, nor cooperate with one another, after being alerted to the boat in distress that lead directly to their deaths."

The Guardian, 30 November

[Draconian border security doesn't work and costs lives. Why is Britain pushing it?](#)

"Our politicians say they want to stop smuggling. What they mean is they want to stop migration"

Sky News, 30 November

['We must become more open, to stay secret': MI6 chief says spies must work with tech firms to counter threats](#)

"In a speech on Tuesday, Richard Moore will say the digital environment that hostiles states, criminals and terrorists are able to exploit in ways to harm the UK "is growing exponentially"."

The Bolton News, 30 November

[UK: Third probe over Anthony Grainger shooting clears officers](#)

"An investigation revealed "while national protocols for evaluating and acquiring the canisters

were not followed, the evidence did not indicate that either officer acted dishonestly or in bad faith at any stage".

The inquiry found the relevant code of practice did not expressly prohibit the use of weapons that had not received approval from the Home Secretary."

EUobserver, 30 November

[Frontex implicated 'to some extent' in violations, says officer](#)

"Almost seven months into his new job as the fundamental rights officer of the EU's border agency Frontex and Jonas Grimheden is voicing frustrations.

Without going into details, Grimheden on Monday (29 November) said the Warsaw-based agency was not applying his advice when it comes to possible violations."

The Guardian, 29 November

[Victims of sexual violence let down by UK asylum system, report says](#)

"Victims of sexual violence face further abuse and trauma as a result of the UK asylum process and are systematically let down by authorities, according to a report."

Mobile Info Team, 29 November

Greece: **[PRESS RELEASE: RESPONSE TO RECENT CHANGES TO ASYLUM REGISTRATION](#)**

"A decision by the Greek government to cancel the Skype pre-registration system for applicants applying for asylum in Greece for the first time and force people seeking asylum into prison-like centres is a lose-lose policy change, says Greece-based charity, Mobile Info Team."

The New Yorker, 28 November

Libya: **[The Secretive Prisons That Keep Migrants Out of Europe](#)**

"Tired of migrants arriving from Africa, the E.U. has created a shadow immigration system that captures them before they reach its shores, and sends them to brutal Libyan detention centers run by militias."

Mixed Migration Centre, 26 November

[The Impact of COVID-19 on the EU's Mediterranean Migration Policies: The Case of Libya](#)

"This report in partnership with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) examines the impacts of COVID-19 on EU migration policies and procedures in the Mediterranean and investigates how the latter affected the conditions and experiences of refugees and migrants in Libya, focusing particularly on those attempting to cross the Mediterranean from Libya during the outbreak of COVID-19."

Welcome! Initiative, 26 November

[Solidarity wins: dismissed charges against italian volunteers](#)

"Gian Andrea and Lorena, activists from Linea d'Ombra, are now free from the accusation of facilitating illegal border crossing of refugees. The court of Bologna dismissed the charges against them. For Gian Andrea and Lorena "the gist of this story lies precisely in making clear once again the political nature of the complaints against activists in solidarity with refugees and other migrants: thus the complaint against Mediterranea fell and before that against Carola Rackete. We believe that Andrea Costa of Baobab Experience from Rome will also fall."

Politico, 24 November

[Italy and France heal their rift with a treaty](#)

“Quirinale Treaty to be signed by Macron and Draghi should boost cooperation in sectors from defense to telecoms.”

The Guardian, 28 November

[EU border agency plane to monitor French coast following Channel deaths](#)

“Ministers meeting in Calais also discuss using drones and Frontex border guards”

Politico, 24 November

[German coalition backs ban on facial recognition in public places](#)

“Germany's incoming government is throwing its weight behind a ban on the use of biometric identification technologies such as facial recognition in public places.

According to their coalition deal, the Social Democrats (SPD), Greens and liberal Free Democrats (FDP) want to “exclude” biometric recognition in public spaces as well as automated state scoring systems by AI through European law.”

The Guardian, 18 November

UK: [Use of stop and search rises 24% in England and Wales in a year](#)

“Black people were seven times more likely to be stopped than white people, compared with nine times more likely the previous year. Police have been unable to explain the enduring disparity between the impact of the tactic on black people compared with people of other races.”

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