



EU & USA against encryption

Criminalizing activists

Call to halt international police data plans

And: “whole-of-government approach” for EU border externalisation; fresh €600m for EU borders; member states want blanket surveillance of all mass transport; and our extensive round-up of news and reports from across Europe and beyond.

Please note: our next issue will be published on 27 April.

EU and USA reaffirm commitment to breaking encrypted communications

Two weeks ago EU and USA senior officials working on justice and home affairs issues met in Stockholm to discuss an array of different topics – amongst them, their ongoing commitment to destroying encrypted communications, a priority issue for members of the G7.

[It is not possible to have private and secure communications whilst building in direct access for governments and companies](#), which the EU is attempting to do via its “chat control” legislation. The UK, meanwhile, has the Online Safety Bill, which will **[have the same effect](#)**.

The minutes of the Stockholm meeting indicate say the EU wants “to reinforce (also in in public discourse) law enforcement’s legitimacy to investigate,” a point “echoed by the US delegation, which concurred on the need to mirror privacy by design with lawful access by design.”

The meeting also covered the topic of the USA’s proposed “Enhanced Border Security Partnerships” – on which point there is “intention to have a first set of data transferred under a ‘proof of concept’ currently being developed,” a plan for which the legal basis is unclear.

Read the full article **[here](#)**, and a report from last year on the Enhanced Border Security Partnerships **[here](#)**.

Ongoing criminalization of Dutch activist exemplifies police attitude to dissent

The Dutch pacifist activist Frank van der Linde has spent years trying to find out what data the police are storing about him. In the course of doing so, he has found out that his data has been shared with the German police and Europol, that he was labelled as a terrorist by the Dutch police, and that one officer included in his file a statement that he should be referred to a psychiatric facility.

Today (30 March) he is heading to court for the umpteenth time – this time, to seek a court order for an independent audit of the Dutch police database, in order to clarify once and for all exactly what information is held about him. If the court rules in his favour, it could open up new avenues for access to effective remedies against police forces in Europe.

Read our analysis **[here](#)**.

EU's plan for international police data-sharing system unjustified and dangerous

The European Commission plans to set up a “security-related information sharing system between frontline officers in the EU and key partner countries,” aimed at allowing instantaneous access to data for police and border guards in both EU and non-EU states.

The UK is one of those states. Having been locked out of the Schengen Information System since the end of 2020, the Westminster government has been keen to find ways to share data across borders, and it seems that the Commission's plans may align neatly with its own. Papers published by the Commission also refer obliquely to “initiatives e.g. by the United States”.

While police and border officials may be enthusiastic for the plans, we argue that they should be scrapped due to the risks of privacy invasions, political repression and human rights violations. We have put forth our arguments to the Commission a consultation submission drafted along with a number of other groups.

The submission includes case studies looking at the Middle East and North Africa, and the Western Balkans region, to highlight some of the potential problems with such a scheme.

Read a brief summary [here](#) and the full submission [here](#).

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Our reports

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News

29 March

[EU plan for international border data-sharing system “should not proceed”](#)

The European Commission’s plan for a “security-related information sharing system between frontline officers in the EU and key partner countries” should be scrapped, says a paper signed by 10 organisations, including Statewatch, who warn that it may aid political repression and underpin human rights violations.

29 March

[EU-USA cooperation on biometric data, breaking encryption, radicalisation](#)

The minutes of the recent EU-US Senior Officials Meeting on Justice and Home Affairs, held in Stockholm on 16 and 17 March, demonstrate cooperation on a vast range of topics - including a "proof of concept" of the "Enhanced Border Security Partnership" involving the transatlantic sharing of biometric data, the need to "reinforce law enforcement’s legitimacy to investigate" in debates around breaking telecoms encryption, and US "concerns on radicalisation among police forces."

27 March

[Netherlands liable for human rights violations in Greek refugee camps](#)

Press released issued by Boat Refugee Foundation on 20 March 2023.

23 March

[EU: Member states ponder blanket police surveillance of ferry, rail and bus passengers](#)

Legislation is incoming to step up surveillance of air travel, and the possibility of extending the scheme to ferry journeys has been raised in the Council. The Presidency is concerned about delaying the air passenger surveillance plans but has set out options for maritime transport, whilst proposing the Commission launch a study on the surveillance of international bus and coach travel.

22 March

[Border externalisation needs “whole-of-government approach” says Swedish Presidency](#)

The Swedish Council Presidency has reiterated the longstanding call for “a true whole-of-government approach and sustained engagement” at all levels to implement EU plans to externalise migration and border control, in a document setting out plans to follow up on European Council conclusions agreed in February.

21 March

[Von der Leyen letter: "key border between Bulgaria and Türkiye" is first target for €600 million fund](#)

The European Commission is about to make €600 million available to "substantially support Member States with border control and technological equipment," and "a first objective" for that money "would be the key border between Bulgaria and Türkiye," says a letter to the European Council from Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

Analysis

29 March

[Submission to European Commission consultation on "security-related information sharing"](#)

The Commission's initiative for a 'Security-related information sharing system between frontline officers in the EU and key partner countries' is a further development along the path of problematic border externalisation, and a trend of increasing use of large-scale processing of the personal data of non-EU citizens for combined criminal law and immigration control purposes, that civil society has been speaking out against for years.

28 March

["Call them crazy": Criminalisation of activists undermines rule of law in the EU](#)

The Dutch police continue to disregard the rule of law to criminalise the pacifist activist Frank van der Linde. In recent years, his personal data has been sent to Europol, he has been labelled a terrorist, and police have suggested he be referred to a psychiatric facility. Far from an isolated case, van der Linde's story shows just how far police in Europe will go to criminalise the right to protest and stifle political dissent.

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Upcoming events

Politique migratoire européenne : Analyse des réformes en cours et de leurs impacts tout au long des parcours d'exil

Dans le cadre du réseau Migreurop, La Cimade organise avec plusieurs associations partenaires un webinaire d'analyse des réformes européennes en cours sur la migration et l'asile le 19 avril 2023 de 9h30 à 13h00.

In the framework of the Migreurop network, La Cimade and multiple other partner organisations are organising a webinar to analyse the reforms underway to EU migration and asylum laws. 19 April, 9:30-13:00 (CET).

In French and English.

Register [here](#).

New material

[Asylum and immigration](#)

[Civil liberties](#)

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Asylum, immigration and borders

Council of Europe, 30 March

[The Council of Europe anti-torture Committee \(CPT\) calls for an end to illegal pushback practices and for increased safeguards against ill-treatment](#)

“Indeed, according to the findings of the CPT, illegal pushback practices are regularly carried out in the context of forced removals and under deplorable conditions at the land and sea borders of several Council of Europe member states. All too often, the Committee has met with many foreign nationals who have given credible allegations of deliberate physical ill-treatment by police and border guards, which have been supported by the findings of the delegation’s medical doctors, particularly at the external borders of the European Union. Their allegations also concern removal to another country without prior examination of their individual situations and without sufficient safeguards in place to ensure that they are not sent back to a country where they run a real risk of ill-treatment.”

UK Home Office, 29 March

[Asylum seekers to be accommodated on surplus military sites](#)

“The Immigration Minister updated Parliament on the progress the government is making in delivering the Prime Minister’s priority to stop the boats.”

And see: **[Asylum seekers in UK face being moved to army bases or disused ferries – reports](#)** (The Guardian, 25 March)

Total Croatia News, 28 March

[Croatia to Sign Trilateral Agreement to Control Illegal Migration](#)

“Therefore, the two countries, which are only transit for illegal migrants, together with Italy, the country that is their final destination, will start a trilateral cooperation for monitoring migration.

The Slovenian Prime Minister said that Slovenia and Italy are not going in the direction of directly helping Croatia to protect the border because that is within Croatia’s jurisdiction and “it has enough of its forces,” but rather “in-depth” surveillance, from the border to the final destination, is being considered.”

InfoMigrants, 28 March

[It’s the perfect place’: Luzy village, a refuge for asylum seekers](#)

“Since 2018, the village of Luzy in central France has welcomed asylum seekers. Five years years on the local residents have no regrets, and a couple of refugees have decided to establish their new lives there.”

The Guardian, 28 March

[NGOs, MPs and academics call for withdrawal of UK’s illegal migration bill](#)

“More than 60 NGOs, MPs and academics have written to Rishi Sunak urging him to withdraw the UK’s **[illegal migration bill](#)**, warning that it will drive **[modern slavery](#)** underground and “cost lives”.”

New Lines, 27 March

[On the Hungarian Border, No Refugee Escapes Violence](#)

“On a damp, pale afternoon in mid-January, a few dozen young men stood outside a gutted farmhouse on the outskirts of Horgos, a Serbian village on the Hungarian border. Most came from Algeria and Morocco. Most had gone days without a proper meal or a change of clothes. Everyone had tried several times to pass through Hungary and travel elsewhere in the European Union. Everyone said Hungarian border police had clubbed them with batons, detained them and forced them back across the border.”

Yahoo! News, 26 March

[Group says Libyan coast guard fired shots over rescue ship](#)

“Libya’s coast guard fired warning shots over a humanitarian vessel as it attempted to rescue a rubber boat carrying migrants off Libya’s coast, a sea rescue group said. The coast guard went on to return some 80 Europe-bound migrants to Libyan soil.”

ECRE, 24 March

[Balkan Route: EU Interior Ministers Agreed on Deportation Scheme from the Balkans in Secret, Enhanced EU-Serbia Cooperation Amid Increased Violence Towards Migrants, EU Commission Making 600 Million Euro Available to Support Member States with Border Control & Equipment](#)

“European interior ministers secretly signed a statement to increase financial and material support for effective deportations from the Balkans. EU Commissioner for Home Affairs visited Serbia to strengthen partnership on migration and border management amid ongoing violence towards people on the move in the country. The EU Commission launches a new pilot project with Bulgaria to “address current migration challenges”.”

Hungarian Helsinki Committee, 24 March

[Russian refugee who fled to Hungary from the secret services cannot be deprived of her refugee status without a clear reason](#)

“On 23 March, the court annulled the earlier decision to withdraw Ms Gáborné Nagy’s international protection and ordered the authorities to start a new procedure. The judgement ruled that if the National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing (OIF) still wants to deprive her of her refugee status, it has to find properly founded, reasoned objections, and make them available to the person concerned so that she can express her views.”

InfoMigrants, 23 March

[Several dead, scores missing after migrant boat sinks off Tunisia](#)

“At least five African migrants died and another 28 are missing after their boat sank off Tunisia. They had tried to cross the Mediterranean to Italy. This was reported by a local rights group. “

Solomon, 23 March

[Pushbacks: MEPs ask for explanations after a report by Solomon & El País reveals mistreatment and exploitation of refugees](#)

“The president of the LIBE Committee and Spanish MEPs have asked the EU to investigate recent revelations and have proposed making adherence to human rights law a condition for the allocation of EU funds to Greece.”

InfoMigrants, 23 March

[Italy: Anti-migrant cameras to be set up on Slovenia border](#)

“New items of surveillance equipment known as 'camera traps' are to be installed along the border between Slovenia and Italy. The devices will be used to detect undocumented migrants and smugglers on this part of the so-called Balkans route.”

EUobserver, 22 March

[Sweden worried by EU visa-free deal with Venezuela](#)

“Sweden has resumed EU talks on tightening visas for countries with lots of "unfounded" asylum-seekers, mentioning Colombia, Georgia, and Venezuela.

In what it called "serious abuse" of EU visa policy, the Swedish EU presidency warned that numbers of people claiming asylum after arriving to Europe from visa-free countries were on the rise.”

And see: **[Simplify visa suspension to limit asylum applications, says Swedish Presidency](#)** (7 March)

Medico International, 21 March

[Accountability in the Sahara](#)

“The investigative agency Border Forensics on the conditions that have led to mass death and disappearance of migrants traveling cross-Saharan routes through Agadez.”

Euractiv, 21 March

[EU to train Libyan coast guard ‘whenever Libyan side is ready’](#)

“The EU is ready to re-start training the so-called Libyan coast guard whenever the Libyan side is ready under the mandate of the operation EUNAVFOR MED IRINI, EU Commission spokesperson Peter Stano told the press on Monday (20 March).”

Gisti and Migreurop, 20 March

[Les nouveaux camps d’enfermement](#)

“Épisode 7. Les îles grecques, réputées pour leurs paysages, cachent une autre réalité depuis la construction d’immenses prisons à ciel ouvert pour mettre à l’écart et « invisibiliser » les personnes exilées.”

El Salto, 17 March

[La banca española financió con 13.500 millones de euros la militarización de las fronteras entre 2020 y 2022](#)

“Banco Santander, BBVA y otras 42 instituciones financieras con sede en España destinaron, en los dos últimos años, más de 13.500 millones de euros a la militarización de fronteras, según expone un informe del Centre Delàs.”

EU Immigration & Asylum Law and Policy, 17 March

[Planned destitution as a policy tool to control migration in the EU: Socio-economic deprivation and international human rights law](#)

“The increased use of social and economic exclusion as a policy tool with a view to managing certain groups of ‘undesirable’ migrants is one of the major trends in European asylum and migration policy. While this already occurs under the current legislative framework, the most recent reform proposals tabled by the European Commission appear to tighten such policies.”

ECRE, 17 March

[Working Paper: Assessing legal grounds for protecting Afghan asylum seekers in Europe](#)

“The working paper analyses the practice of Belgium, Germany, and Sweden in response to the situation in Afghanistan and the available routes of protection, primarily focusing on analysing policies relating to subsidiary protection status in those EU Member States (EUMS) for newly arrived Afghans as well as those who have been in Europe for some time.”

Wall Street Journal, 17 March

[‘It’s Like a Graveyard’: Record Numbers of Migrants Are Dying at the U.S. Border](#)

“Local officials keep a refrigerated truck to hold the bodies of migrants who drown in the currents of the Rio Grande while trying to cross the border into the U.S.”

Border Violence Monitoring Network, 16 March

[Risks and opportunities of technical standard setting processes for the protection of human rights of migrants in the context of pushbacks at external EU borders](#)

“Input for the thematic report to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the relationship between human rights and technical standard-setting processes for new and emerging digital technologies at its 53rd in 2023.”

The Guardian, 16 March

[Social workers should not assess asylum seeker ages for Home Office, professional body says](#)

“The professional body for social workers has urged its members not to work with the Home Office to assess the ages of asylum seekers, saying that political pressures could undermine their professional judgment.”

MSF, 16 March

[MSF condemns appalling conditions for migrants abandoned in Assamaka](#)

“Thousands of migrants deported from Algeria and abandoned in the desert of northern Niger are stranded without access to shelter, healthcare, protection, or basic necessities, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) said today.

Between 11 January and 3 March 2023, 4,677 migrants arrived into Assamaka – a town in northern Niger’s Agadez region – on foot after being deported from Algeria and stranded in the desert. Fewer than 15 per cent of them were able to access shelter or protection when they arrived.”

And see: **[Appel urgent: Crise humanitaire à Assamaka, frontière nigéro-algérienne: des milliers de personnes en situation de vulnérabilité expulsées d’Algérie et livrées à elles-mêmes au milieu du Sahara, sans abri ni soins](#)** (Alarme Phone Sahara, 17 March)

Refugee Support Aegan, 16 March

[The EU-Turkey deal is collapsing 7 years after its signing](#)

“The EU- Turkey statement, which was signed in March 18, 2016 is still sold as the model of how a future European refugee policy could look like.

The fact is: the so-called refugee deal is in ruins on both sides of the Aegean. In Turkey, literally: over 1,5 million protection seekers are also among the victims of the catastrophic earthquake and face being left with nothing. In Greece, tens of thousands of protection seekers have been deprived of their rights and degraded on the Greek islands since March 2016.”

The Civil Fleet, 15 March

UK: **[Deaths in Home Office asylum-seeker accommodation more than doubled in 2022 over the previous year](#)**

“Home Office figures provided to The Civil Fleet in response to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request shows that 21 people died in the first six months of last year — more than the 19 deaths for the whole of 2021 — and a further 25 people died in the last six months of 2022.”

Dialogue Migration, 14 March

[UE-Sénégal : Zoom sur Frontex et son protocole d'impunité pour freiner les candidats à la migration irrégulière](#)

“Le 28 juin 2022, la Commission européenne a rédigé un Protocole d'accord qu'il a soumis à l'Etat du Sénégal pour validation. Dans l'Annexe de ce document dont Dialogue Migration détient copie et qui est intitulé : « DIRECTIVES POUR LA NÉGOCIATION D'UN ACCORD ENTRE l'Union européenne et la République du Sénégal sur les actions menées par l'Agence des garde-frontières et garde-côtes en République du Sénégal », il y a six (6) points essentiels sur lesquels la Commission européenne se base pour négocier un nouveau statut pour ces agents de Frontex sur les côtes sénégalaises. Parmi ces points, il y en deux (2) qui ont particulièrement attiré notre attention.”

UK government, 10 March

[UK-France Joint Leaders' Declaration: 10 March 2023](#)

“France and the United Kingdom have agreed a joint multi-year operational plan and a joint funding arrangement [on migration]. On top of the substantial and continuing French contribution, the contribution of the United Kingdom, over the next three years will be 141 M€ for 2023-2024, 191 M€ for 2024-2025 and 209 M€ for 2025-2026.”

Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, March

[Love the Stranger: A Catholic Response to Migrants and Refugees](#)

“‘Love the Stranger’ presents a Catholic response to refugees and migrants. It is a 2023 document of the Department for International Affairs.”

Border Security Report, 13 February

[Virtual Borders – Are they really a thing!](#)

“Governments and border agencies across the world, but particularly in the US and Europe have been quick to recognize the potential of AI to dramatically increase the effectiveness of their existing and future surveillance systems.

The so-called ‘smart wall’ linking ground systems such as radar, seismic sensors, fibre optics, cameras, aerostats and drones, with communications and databases promises much, but where are we in terms of delivery?”

Civil liberties

The Guardian, 26 March

[AI expert Meredith Broussard: ‘Racism, sexism and ableism are systemic problems’](#)

“The message that bias can be embedded in our technological systems isn’t really new. Why do we need this book?

This book is about helping people understand the very real social harms that can be embedded in technology. We have had an explosion of wonderful journalism and scholarship about algorithmic bias and the harms that have been experienced by people. I try to lift up that reporting and thinking. I also want people to know that we have methods now for measuring bias in algorithmic systems. They are not entirely unknowable black boxes: algorithmic auditing exists and can be done.”

Middle East Eye, 21 March

[Libya elections: Has the UN lost the plot?](#)

“When it comes to Libya, the United Nations appears to have gone insane - at least according to the cliched definition attributed to Einstein. With Libya dangerously devolving into the type of discord that already produced one regionally destabilising conflict, UN special representative Abdoulaye Bathily last month announced his eagerly anticipated new plan. The problem is, it looks uncomfortably similar to the organisation’s previous plan that failed dismally in 2021.”

Courthouse News Service, 21 March

[Press freedom is under attack in Europe. Greece is Exhibit A](#)

“Greece is the European Union's poster child for a troubling decline in press freedom across the bloc. Journalists there describe being tailed by government agents, having their smartphones hacked and being sued for defamation.”

The Guardian, 18 March

UK: **[Braverman criticised for shutting out Guardian and BBC from Rwanda trip](#)**

“Suella Braverman has made her first trip to Rwanda as home secretary amid criticism that the Guardian, other liberal newspapers and the BBC were not invited on the publicly funded visit.”

EuroMed Rights, 17 March

[In Tunisia Talks, EU Should Privilege Human Rights Over Politics](#)

“At their forthcoming meeting on 20 March, EU foreign affairs ministers should publicly press the Tunisian authorities to reverse their crackdown against perceived critics, four human rights groups said today.”

IPI, 16 March

[Malta: Press freedom groups urge PM to deliver strong media law reforms](#)

“The International Press Institute (IPI) today joined media freedom organisations in writing to the Maltese Prime Minister Robert Abela urging his government to implement recommendations from the recent public consultation into draft media laws and to strengthen the planned legislation in line with international standards.”

European Parliament, 16 March

[Tunisie: récentes atteintes à la liberté d'expression et d'association et attaques contre les syndicats, en particulier le cas du journaliste Nouredine Boutar](#) (pdf)

European Parliament resolution of 16 March 2023.

Torture Journal, March

[“The Darkness”](#): Deprivation of sunlight as a form of torture

“Deprivation of sunlight (DoS) should be considered independently as a method of torture. We review the definition and the spectrum of DoS, and the harms it causes that may rise to the level of torture.”

Law

ECHR, 30 March

Italy: **[Human rights violations in the hotspot on Lampedusa](#)**

Conditions inadequate

Illegal detention

No individual assessment prior to entry ban being issued

Violations of Articles 3 and 5, Article 4 of Protocol no. 4 ECHR.

European Law Blog, 28 March

[ECtHR finds violation of the right to fair trial when national court does not seek preliminary ruling from the CJEU](#)

“The obligation of national courts to seek preliminary reference from the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) is a long-debated topic. In EU law, it is framed as an issue with two players: a national court and Luxembourg. In recent case law, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has made it clear that it, too, has a say in the matter.”

Mediapart, 24 March

[La cour d'appel de Lyon ne livrera pas Vincenzo Vecchi à l'Italie](#)

“Comme celles de Rennes et d'Angers avant elle, la cour d'appel de Lyon a refusé, vendredi 24 mars, de renvoyer Vincenzo Vecchi en Italie. Ce militant risque 12 ans de prison dans son pays natal pour avoir participé au contre-sommet de Gênes, en 2001.”

RFI, 16 March

[France's Macron forces pension reform through parliament by decree](#)

“The French government deployed its executive powers on Thursday to push President Emmanuel Macron's controversial pension reform through parliament without a vote. The decision to use the constitutional tool was made minutes before a vote on the bill was set to take place in the National Assembly.”

Verfassungsblog, 16 March

[The Begum Case: Why Ministerial Discretion Precludes Human Rights Issues](#)

“The SIAC's refusal to allow her appeal is remarkable for the nearly unlimited degree of discretion it appears to grant the Home Secretary in cancellation cases, even where human rights are at stake.”

Military

Amnesty, 28 March

[Response to Russian invasion of Ukraine exposes an international system unfit to deal with global crises](#)

“Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 unleashed numerous war crimes, generated a global energy and food crisis and sought to further disrupt a weak multilateral system. It also laid bare the hypocrisy of Western states that reacted forcefully to the Kremlin's aggression but condoned or were complicit in grave violations committed elsewhere, Amnesty International said as it launched its annual assessment of human rights around the world.”

ECCHR, 23 March

[Europe's involvement in war crimes in Yemen](#)

“Eight years ago, on 26 March 2015, the Saudi Arabia-led military coalition launched the aerial campaign “Decisive Storm”, escalating the conflict in Yemen and, with it, the suffering of the civilian population. With the upcoming anniversary of the bombardment campaign, 33 organizations are renewing their call to hold European state actors and European arms companies accountable for their involvement in possible war crimes and crimes against humanity.”

Libya Observer, 23 March

[Operation IRINI's Commander says extending mission reaffirms its importance](#)

“The commander of the European Union's (EU) military operation in the Mediterranean, Operation IRINI, Rear admiral, Stefano Turchetto, said that the extension of the operation's mission confirmed that it had achieved important results so far, and revealed the confidence of the member states of the EU that decided that IRINI would continue its work until 2025.”

Drone Wars, 22 March

[Armed drone proliferation update – March '23](#)

“We have fully updated our list of countries operating medium altitude, long endurance (MALE) armed drones as typified by the MQ-9 Reaper and Bayraktar TB2. Just to emphasis, our list does not include states possessing loitering munitions (sometimes dubbed ‘suicide’ or kamikaze’ drones by the media) or other, one-off use smaller systems.”

The Guardian, 22 March

[UK begins inquiry into alleged SAS extrajudicial killings in Afghanistan](#)

“A judge investigating allegations of more than 50 summary killings by SAS soldiers in Afghanistan has issued a call for anyone with evidence to come forward, saying it was critical that law-breakers be referred to authorities.”

Le Monde Diplomatique, 20 March

[Free e-book: Iraq invasion, twenty years on](#)

“On 20 March 2003, a coalition led by the United States (US) launched a ground invasion of Iraq under the false pretext that the country had weapons of mass destruction. Ironically, as Ignacio Ramonet noted at the time, ‘the dossier against Saddam Hussein that President George Bush presented to the UN General Assembly on 12 September 2002 was called A Decade of Lies and Deceit’. The media backed Bush up. ‘Never,’ wrote Edward W Said, ‘has there been such unashamed and scandalous complicity between broadcast news and the government: newsreaders on CNN or the networks talk excitedly about Saddam’s evils and how “we” have to stop him before it is too late.’ Yet, under this ‘intimidatingly unified surface’, civil resistance was strong. As Arundhati Roy argued, ‘When Bush says “you’re either with us or you are with the terrorists,” we can refuse his choices. We can let him know that the people of the world do not need to choose between a malevolent Mickey Mouse and mad mullahs.’”

The Guardian, 19 March

[A million lives later, I cannot forgive what American terrorism did to my country, Iraq](#)

“I had always hoped to see the end of Saddam’s dictatorship at the hands of the Iraqi people, not courtesy of a neocolonial project that would dismantle what had remained of the Iraqi state and replace it with a regime based on ethno-sectarian dynamics, plunging the country into violent chaos and civil wars.”

Policing

BBC News, 30 March

UK: [Sister of Christopher Alder on 25-year fight for answers](#)

“More than a decade after his death in police custody, the body of former paratrooper Christopher Alder was discovered lying in a mortuary. At the same time, in a grave bearing his name lay the body of a 77-year-old woman. No-one has ever been held responsible for either incident. Ahead of the 25th anniversary of his death, Mr Alder's sister, Janet, spoke to the BBC about the psychological toll of her battle for truth and accountability.”

La Directa, 30 March

[El govern espanyol reconeix l'existència d'expedients “secrets” dels policies infiltrats](#)

[Spanish government recognizes the existence of "secret" undercover police files]

Responding to parliamentary questions, the interior ministry revealed some more details of the infiltration recently-revealed by *La Directa*.

And see: [Second undercover police officer spying on Barcelona activists unmasked](#) (2 February)

Evening Standard, 30 March

UK: [Chris Kaba fatal shooting by police referred to CPS](#)

“The Met officer who shot unarmed black man Chris Kaba dead was today facing potential criminal charges as the police watchdog announced it was referring the killing to the Crown Prosecution Service.”

Declassified UK, 29 March

[Northern Ireland: Waterboarded by the British army](#)

“A Belfast court has posthumously awarded compensation to a man tortured and assaulted by British soldiers in Northern Ireland in the 1970s. Documents show the use of electric shocks and sexual assault were commonly inflicted on detainees.”

Judgment: [Judgment in William \(Liam\) Holden v Ministry of Defence & Chief Constable of PSNI – 24th March 2023](#) (Harte Coyle Collins)

Euronews, 28 March

[The EU's home affairs chief wants to read your private messages](#)

“A new law is threatening the privacy of the European Union's 447 million inhabitants.

The CSA Regulation, proposed by European Commissioner Ylva Johansson, could undermine the trust we have in secure and confidential processes like sending work emails, communicating with our doctors, and even governments protecting intelligence.”

UK Home Office, 27 March

[Community safety partnerships review and antisocial behaviour powers](#)

“On 27 March 2023 the government launched the Anti-social behaviour Action Plan which focuses on making communities safer and sets out the government response to tackle antisocial behaviour robustly. This consultation forms part of the Anti-social behaviour Action Plan. In addressing community safety partnerships (CSPs), this consultation forms part one of the CSP review, which was announced in 2022 following the conclusion of part two of the police and crime commissioner (PCC) review.”

Bristol Cable, 22 March

UK: **[Two years after Bristol's Kill the Bill unrest, protesters condemn 'unjust' sentences and the media narrative](#)**

“Jasmine York was among dozens of protesters injured by police when a Kill the Bill protest in Bristol descended into violent clashes between officers and demonstrators in March 2021. She is also one of the 34 mainly young people who have so far been sentenced for their involvement in the ugly scenes.

But exactly two years to the day that she suffered severe bruising and haematomas as she was struck repeatedly with a police baton, and after serving her nine-month jail term for arson, she returned to the scene to speak at another protest outside Bridewell police station in the city centre.”

Manchester Evening News, 22 March

[University of Manchester students forcibly 'dragged' out of campus building after weeks-long strike](#)

“Student protesters occupying a building at the University of Manchester were forcibly removed by court bailiffs this morning (Wednesday).

Students in the 'UoM Rent Strike' group have been occupying the Simon building on Oxford Road since February 13 as part of an ongoing protest over rent costs and living conditions in university-owned accommodation.”

INQUEST, 21 March

[INQUEST responds to Casey review of Metropolitan Police](#)

“Baroness Casey’s report is a damning indictment of the racism, misogyny and homophobia institutionalised in the culture and practice of the Metropolitan police.

It comes as no surprise to the bereaved families with whom we work and who inputted into the review. Families reported violence to and neglect of their relatives by police. Their testimony highlights the scale of the denial, defensiveness, insensitivity and inaction from the police following a death.”

See: **[The Baroness Casey Review](#)** (Metropolitan Police)

Sarajevo Times, 21 March

[BiH takes a Step closer to Establishing full Cooperation with EUROPOL](#)

“Full cooperation between the EU’s Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (EUROPOL) and Bosnia and Herzegovina’s law enforcement agencies is now closer to being realised with the signature of the Rulebook on the operation of the National/Joint Contact Point for cooperation with EUROPOL.”

The Guardian, 21 March

[Met police found to be institutionally racist, misogynistic and homophobic](#)

“The Metropolitan police is broken and rotten, suffering collapsing public trust and is guilty of institutional racism, misogyny and homophobia, an official report has said.

The report by Louise Casey, commissioned by the Met after one of its officers abducted Sarah Everard, taking her from from a London street in March 2021, before raping and murdering her, is one of the most damning of a major British institution.”

PHR and INCLO, March

[Lethal in Disguise: How Crowd-Control Weapons Impact Health and Human Rights](#)

“When states respond violently to assemblies by using crowd-control weapons (CCWs), they escalate tension and create panic that can lead to long-lasting psychological traumas, serious injuries, disabilities and even death.

The Lethal in Disguise project highlights the inherent dangers of some of the weapons used by security forces around the world.

We call on governments to respect the human rights commitments they have made to protect protesters and put an end to impunity when violations are committed by state forces during demonstrations.”

Privacy and data protection

Open Rights Group, 29 March

[Victory for migrants as judge rules immigration exemption is incompatible with GDPR](#)

“A High Court judge has agreed with Open Rights Group and the3million that the immigration exemption in the UK Data Protection Act 2018 is incompatible with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).”

Judgment: [CO/1446/2022](#) (pdf)

Euractiv, 24 March

[EU countries in search of ‘solutions’ over data retention, encryption](#)

“Data retention and encryption emerged as the most pressing issues for law enforcement in the EU government’s comments on the establishment of a High-Level Expert Group on police access to digital data.”

Tech Monitor, 8 March

UK: **[‘Worse than the last version’: Experts unimpressed with new Data Protection and Digital Information Bill](#)**

“The latest Data Protection and Digital Information Bill (No. 2) has been introduced to the House of Commons by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT), promising savings for businesses of up to £4.7bn over ten years. But privacy experts are concerned that the new draft means personal data could end up in the wrong hands.”

BTN Europe, 21 December 2022

[Impending Spanish travel regulation raises serious privacy concerns](#)

“Travellers booking accommodation in Spain or renting a car in the country could be in for a shock in 2023 as new legislation comes into force that requires the submission of an extensive set of personal details and sensitive payment information.”

Security and intelligence

New York Times, 21 March

[Meta Manager Was Hacked With Spyware and Wiretapped in Greece](#)

Artemis Seaford, a dual U.S.-Greek national, was targeted with a cyberespionage tool while also under a wiretap by the Greek spy agency in a case that shows the spread of illicit snooping in Europe.

Tech Monitor, 21 March

[‘Worse than the last version’: Experts unimpressed with new Data Protection and Digital Information Bill](#)

The new version of the bill could remove protections and give businesses more leeway in how they use personal information.

Surveillance

Amnesty, 29 March

[Amnesty International uncovers new hacking campaign linked to mercenary spyware company](#)

“A sophisticated hacking campaign by a mercenary spyware company targeting Google’s Android operating system has been exposed by Amnesty International’s Security Lab.

The technical findings were shared with Google’s Threat Analysis Group, which focuses on countering government-backed cyber-attacks. As a result, Google along with other affected vendors, including Samsung, were able to release security updates protecting billions of Android, Chrome and Linux users from the exploit techniques used in this attack.”

Security Architectures in the EU, 29 March

[EU data hamsters: Atos manager moves to client after trouble with biometric flagship](#)

“Last week, Agnès Diallo took office as the new director of the Tallinn-based Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems (eu-LISA). The EU has thus once again given an important post to a highly-paid employee of the French software giant Atos: in 2019, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen had already appointed the then Atos CEO Thierry Breton as Commissioner for Industry and Internal Market.”

Inside Story, 24 March

[Evidence of a joint National Intelligence Service-Predator surveillance centre](#)

“The case of Artemis Seaford, a former META (Facebook) executive with dual Greek and American citizenship, who, as the New York Times [Meta Manager Was Hacked With Spyware and Wiretapped in Greece](#) | The New York Times reported, was simultaneously monitored by the Greek National Intelligence Service (NIS) and the illegal spying software Predator, marketed by Intellexa, is the latest and possibly the most striking proof that the two methods of surveillance originate from the same principals.”

Carnegie Endowment, 23 March

[Why Does the Global Spyware Industry Continue to Thrive? Trends, Explanations, and Responses](#)

The global spyware and digital forensics industry continues to grow despite public backlash following an array of surveillance scandals, many linked to NSO Group’s Pegasus program. This paper explores the resilience of the commercial spyware market and offers ideas about how to limit the spread of invasive cyber surveillance tools.

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