



Issue 10/23, 8 June

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- **Tracking the Pact: agreement on new rules?**
- **Turkey's pursuit of dissidents via Interpol must end**

And: Schengen: more border controls and law enforcement; German response to Commission's Mediterranean search and rescue roadmap

Frontex coordinated deportation of almost 25,000 people last year

Following [our previous report](#) about Frontex taking on a leading role in the organisation of deportation operations, it has now emerged that the agency assisted in the removal of almost 25,000 people last year.

The information is contained in a report on deportation operations in the second half of 2022, when the agency supported 151 return operations by charter flight to 24 countries, 90% of which were organised by France, Germany and Italy.

The figures contained in the report demonstrate that the increased powers given to the agency through a 2019 legal reform are now very much starting to be put into use, with plans to further expand the agency's role in this area – and others – in the works.

Full story [here](#).

Tracking the Pact: agreement on new rules?

Today the EU's Justice and Home Affairs Council met to discuss, amongst other things, contentious proposals for migration and asylum rules that have been under discussion since late 2020. At the time of writing, the outcome of the vote on the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation and Asylum Procedures Regulation is unknown.

If there is no agreement, discussions in the Council will rumble on into the term of the Spanish Presidency, which begins in July. Whatever the outcome of the vote today, the eventual result will be bad for migrants and refugees, who will face an increased likelihood of detention and fewer safeguards and rights protections.

Find the most recent documents and links to all our previous coverage [here](#) – and if you want to support our Tracking the Pact series, you can support our work [here](#).

Turkey's pursuit of dissidents via Interpol must end

Interpol must do more to prevent the Turkish government misusing its databases to target political dissidents abroad, says an open letter to the organisation's secretary-general signed by more than 25 individuals and organisations, including *Statewatch*.

The letter calls for Turkey to be suspended from using Interpol databases - in particular, the

Stolen and Lost Travel Documents (SLTD) system - until the problem is dealt with.

Read the full letter [here](#), and don't forget to check out our [special report from 2021](#) on the Turkish government's use of a dubious algorithm to pursue alleged dissidents and government opponents.

Stand up against state secrecy

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News

8 June

Schengen priorities: full steam ahead with border controls and law enforcement

A meeting of the Schengen Council, put in place under the French Presidency to improve governance of the Schengen area, is taking place today. A note from the Swedish Presidency of the Council outlines areas requiring “additional focus and impetus” if progress is to be made in the 2023/24 ‘Schengen Cycle’.

8 June

Search and rescue in the Mediterranean: German response to Commission roadmap

Ahead of the upcoming meeting of the European Commission's Contact Group on Search and Rescue on 16 June, the German authorities have issued a response to the Commission's draft roadmap that was published by Statewatch last month. The response is published here.

7 June

Tracking the Pact: Council prepares to approve negotiating positions

The Council is hoping to approve its negotiating positions on the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation (AMMR), Asylum Procedure Regulation (APR) and Single Permit Directive on legal migration at the Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting tomorrow. The texts, published here, were circulated in the Council yesterday (AMMR and APR) and at the end of May (Single Permit Directive).

6 June

Frontex aided the deportation of almost 25,000 people in 2022

EU border agency Frontex aided the deportation of almost 25,000 people from EU territory in 2022, a record high. The number of people removed via scheduled flights and “voluntary” return proceedings has been increasing steadily, and the deployment of Frontex return teams supported the removal of almost 4,000 people over the course of the year. The agency has confirmed that deportations remain a “core priority”.

6 June

Interpol must halt Turkey's use of databases to pursue dissidents

Interpol must do more to prevent the Turkish government misusing its databases to target political dissidents abroad, says an open letter to the organisation's secretary-general signed by more than 25 individuals and organisations, including Statewatch. The letter calls for Turkey to be suspended from using Interpol databases - in particular, the Stolen and Lost Travel Documents (SLTD) system - until the problem is dealt with.

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Upcoming events

Sheffield Doc Fest, 15 and 17 June

Phantom Parrot

“When a human rights activist, returning to the UK, has his electronic devices confiscated by border authorities, it highlights an unsettling programme of state surveillance.”

New material

[Asylum and immigration](#)

[Civil liberties](#)

[Law](#)

[Policing](#)

[Privacy and data protection](#)

[Racism and discrimination](#)

[Secrecy and transparency](#)

[Security and intelligence](#)

[Surveillance](#)

Asylum, immigration and borders

InfoMigrants, 6 June

German rescue ship defies Italy's disembarkation rules

A ship that saved migrants in the Mediterranean has taken them to another port than that assigned by Italian officials. The NGO that owns the ship now risks a fine.

[Borderline Europe](#), 6 June

“Findings from a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) reveal what’s behind the EU relocation system. In this series, we will expose how EU Member States (MS) use relocation as a testing ground for pre-screenings, fast-track procedures and deportation.”

Politico Europe, 6 June

A price tag to reject migrants? It's not the only fight threatening a reform package

Allowing countries to pay up instead of accepting asylum seekers was meant to unblock tense talks. But long-entrenched divisions remain.

Free Movement, 5 June

UK: Reaction economy: the Home Office's use of social media

“We live in a reaction economy. The age of social media means that governments, companies, and others in the public eye are not ruled by accountants assessing their bottom line or journalists scrutinising their actions, but by voters tapping onto their screens at home. Few government departments have embraced this age as whole-heartedly as the Home Office.”

Lighthouse Reports, 2 June

The Crotone Cover Up

“Italy lied about its role in a shipwreck that killed 94 people – including 35 children – and the EU border agency Frontex helped cover it up”

Migration-Control.info, 2 June

“This is a shame for humanity” – Update on the ongoing protest of the Refugees in Tunisia

“For about three months, around 200 migrants and refugees have been protesting in front of the offices of UNHCR and IOM in Tunis to demand their rights. Especially with the escalation of racist violence against Black people in Tunisia at the end of February, their lives in Tunisia are in danger and they turned towards these institutions to demand their evacuation to a place of safety. Their protest camp in front of the UNHCR has been neglected by the responsible authorities and violently evicted by police forces on April 11, 2023. But the refugees and migrants continue their sit-in under the worst conditions in front of the IOM and their protest in front of the UNHCR, most recently on May 17, May 26 and May 29.”

EurActiv, 31 May

Frontex risk analyses based on unreliable information, EU watchdog says

“The EU border management agency Frontex produces untrustworthy risk analyses on migration due to the ‘low reliability of the data collected’, an **investigation** conducted by the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) found on Wednesday (31 May).”

Coda Story, 31 May

How an EU-funded agency is working to keep migrants from reaching Europe

The ICMPD’s clients are all either EU states or intergovernmental organizations — it receives more than half of its budget from the European Commission, the executive branch of the EU. Because the ICMPD is not a government institution, it can enable states to carry out operations along EU borders with much less transparency, accountability or regulation than what would be required of any EU government.

Radio Blackout, 29 May

War on Migrants: ICMPD e FRONTEX

“All'interno del capitolo sulla Guerra alle Persone Migranti affronteremo il ruolo che stanno assumendo due strutture: ICMPD e FRONTEX.”

Migration-Control.info, 26 May

[How the European Union finances oppression](#)

“For decades, the European Union (EU) has been cooperating with non-European actors to control migration far from European shores. This cooperation, among others, happens with actors known for their brutal rule – such as in Sudan. The EU has time and again been accused of financing the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a paramilitary structure in Sudan that has its roots in the militias that committed war crimes and genocide in Darfur. The EU denies this support and hard proof of direct support is rare. More important though, is to consider the logic and structures of the EU and European member states’ cooperation with Sudan in the area of migration and border control to understand the connection of the EU to the RSF.”

InfoMigrants, 26 May

[500 missing migrants stranded in the Mediterranean pushed back to Libya](#)

A migrant boat stranded at sea carrying over 500 people has been pushed back to Libya, according to information shared by the search-and-rescue hotline Alarm Phone late Friday afternoon.

The Guardian, 30 May

[Braverman bill could lead to 3,000 asylum seekers being deported a month](#)

Exclusive: leaked documents on illegal migration bill also say legal aid fees will need to rise in order to ensure legal cover

Slices, 30 May

[Escaping Libya](#)

Multimedia story about escaping Libya.

Border Violence Monitoring Network, 30 May

[NGOs Sound the Alarm: Evidence of Systematic Pushbacks Now Also at the German-Austrian Border](#)

The Border Violence Monitoring Network, Pushback Alarm Austria and Bayerischer Flüchtlingsrat release evidence of pushbacks from Germany into Austria. The detailed testimonies documenting a total of six incidents, between November and December 2022, underline the allegations of unlawful pushbacks at the German-Austrian border. Today, Pushback Alarm Austria has published them on the Border Violence Monitoring Network database and the Frankfurter Rundschau reports.

Civil liberties

[Refugee Support Aegean](#), 7 June

“#Thread on the targeting of Panayote Dimitras in #Greece

1/9 We remain firmly on the side of those who defend human rights and in particular refugees and migrants.”

[The Bristol Cable](#), 7 June

“Today marks 3 years since the Colston statue was toppled in #Bristol.

Since then, the UK has seen a huge crackdown on protest, which the UN Human Rights Chief called “deeply troubling”.

Here's a thread of our coverage since the moment itself”

Law

La Quadrature du Net, 5 June

[Criminalization of encryption : the 8 December case](#)

“This article was written on the basis of information relating to the so-called “8 December” case in which 7 people were indicted for “association of terrorist criminals” (“association de malfaiteurs terroristes”) in December 2020. Their trial is scheduled for October 2023. This will be the first counterterrorist trial targeting the “ultra-left” since the fiasco of the Tarnac case.”

EurActiv, 8 June

[EU's AI ambitions at risk as US pushes to water down international treaty](#)

“Just as the timing of the world's first AI treaty starts aligning with the EU legislative agenda, an American-led push to exclude private companies might make it not worth the paper it is written on.”

Verfassungsblog, 1 June

[An Honest Broker? Three Avenues for Postponing Hungary's and Poland's Presidency of the Council of Ministers](#)

A timely piece when the CJEU ruled on 5 June in case Case C-204/21 that the reform of the Polish judiciary violates #EU law.

See also: [Meijers Committee comment](#)

Questione Giustizia, 18 April

[Riace, Piacenza, Padova. Associazioni a delinquere ovunque?](#)

“E' sempre più frequente la contestazione da parte di Procure della Repubblica del reato di associazione a delinquere nei confronti di quanti - partecipando a forme non ortodosse di protesta sociale, di azione sindacale, di solidarietà – possono incorrere in violazioni della legge penale. E' una tendenza che si è manifestata in tre recenti vicende giudiziarie tra di loro diversissime -Riace, Piacenza e Padova – e che ha un inquietante tratto comune: induce a guardare fenomeni sociali complessi attraverso la lente monocromatica della criminalizzazione che trasforma gruppi ed aggregazioni in altrettante associazioni criminali ed i mezzi illegali eventualmente utilizzati negli unici e veri scopi dell'azione collettiva.”

Policing

StopWatch

UK: [Interactive stop-and-search tracker](#)

Impressive resource making it possible to track the use of the police's stop-and-search powers in England and Wales.

Wired, 7 June

[È stata presentata una interrogazione parlamentare su Giove, il sistema predittivo della polizia](#)

“È stata depositata stamattina in Senato un'interrogazione parlamentare sul sistema Giove, il software italiano di “polizia predittiva” annunciato ieri dal Dipartimento di pubblica sicurezza del ministero dell'Interno e che sarebbe destinato a tutte le questure italiane.”

The Guardian, 7 June

[Five Italian police accused of torturing migrants and homeless people](#)

“Five police officers in the Italian city of Verona have been arrested on charges of torture and bodily harm against migrants and homeless people.

Two of the suspects are also accused of racist hate crimes against black people and African migrants.

According to investigators, the officers beat migrants and homeless people during identification processes. The suspects have been placed under house arrest.”

Lundi, 6 June

[Vague d'arrestations en France dans les milieux écologistes](#)

“Nos lectrices et lecteurs s'en souviennent probablement, samedi 10 décembre dernier, à Bouc-bel-Air, dans les Bouches-du-Rhône, 200 personnes s'étaient rendues sur le site de l'usine du cimentier Lafarge pour y entamer son démantèlement. 15 personnes sont actuellement en garde à vue, a priori pour ces faits. Nous republions ci-dessous le communiqué et le reportage photo que nous avions publié à l'époque.”

Mirror, 4 June

UK: [Toxic trio police squad of racists, sexists and bullies guilty of gross misconduct](#)

“Three cops from the same squad have been found guilty of gross misconduct after subjecting colleagues to racist, sexist and bullying behaviour for three years.

Inspector Nick Mantle, PC Mark Jordan-Gill and PC Paul Perdisat were described as “testosterone-fuelled, neanderthal thugs” whose behaviour belonged in the 1980s.”

DW News, 30 May

[Germany: Viral video prompts debate on police brutality](#)

BBC News, 26 May

[**German police raid climate activists who blocked traffic**](#)

German police have carried out raids in seven states in a probe into climate campaigners suspected of forming or backing a criminal group because of their controversial activities.

Privacy and data protection

Politico Europe, 31 May

[**Europe fixed its poor intelligence sharing. Now it's a privacy risk.**](#)

“Poor data sharing was once Europe's bugbear in its fight against terrorism. Today, that fear may have pushed the bloc to the other extreme, as privacy investigators launch a probe into EU agencies' oversharing of data.

The European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) has started an investigation into the European Union's border agency Frontex for automatically sharing information from interviews of detained migrants and asylum seekers to EU police agency Europol, it announced this week after finalizing an audit of Frontex.”

Racism and discrimination

The New Humanitarian, 31 May

[**How racial profiling within the EU's free travel zone harms asylum seekers and migrants**](#)

“Sitting on a bench in the seaside town of Hendaye, France, just across the border from Spain, Natasha* pulled a baseball cap low over her forehead, sinking into her seat as if she could become part of the furniture.

She didn't notice the grey station wagon until it was already stopped and two men with orange “POLICE” armbands had stepped out, asking for papers she didn't have.”

Amnesty International, 30 May

[**Global: Rohingya reparations and human rights must top Meta shareholders agenda**](#)

“It is way beyond time that Meta fulfilled its responsibilities and provided an effective remedy to the Rohingya people of Myanmar. It is reprehensible that Meta still refuses to repair the harms it contributed to despite the overwhelming evidence that the company played a key role in 2017's ethnic cleansing.”

Secrecy and transparency

European Ombudsman, 31 May

[The time taken by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency \(Frontex\) to deal with requests for public access to documents](#)

“The Ombudsman's inquiry found issues with two practices used by Frontex when dealing with requests that it considers imprecise or that concern a large amount of documents or large documents. (i) When a request concerns a large amount of documents or very large documents, and Frontex tries to find a 'fair solution' in accordance with the EU legislation on public access to documents (Regulation 1049/2001) Frontex decides not to apply the statutory time-limit for dealing with request until after a fair solution has been found. (ii) Where Frontex considers that a request is imprecise, it may also decide to suspend the statutory time-limit for dealing with the request.”

Security and intelligence

The Guardian, 2 June

[Lake Maggiore deaths: why were Italian and Israeli secret service agents on a boat in northern Italy?](#)

“It reads like a pitch for a thriller.

A group of tourists board a boat on a beautiful lake at the foot of the Alps. The boat capsizes in a sudden storm. Four drown as others swim to safety. In the days that follow, as authorities struggle to trace hotel bookings for the passengers, it emerges all were affiliated with the Italian and Israeli secret services.”

Surveillance

Strali

[COME SALVARSI LA FACCIA](#)

“La nostra ricerca su possibili strategie di litigazione per contestare l'uso delle tecnologie di riconoscimento facciale da parte delle forze dell'ordine e dell'autorità giudiziaria”

UK government, 5 June

[Consultation on revised notices regimes in the Investigatory Powers Act 2016](#)

The UK updating "notices regime" for the Investigatory Powers Act with a consultation "to ensure that our investigatory powers remain effective, and to protect the capabilities of our law enforcement and intelligence agencies."

New Journal of European Criminal Law, 29 May

[\(Covert\) Surveillance of Foreign Terrorist Fighters via the Schengen Information System \(SIS\): Towards Maximum Operationalisation of Alerts and an Enhanced Role for Europol](#)

“This article aims to critically evaluate how the legal framework of the Schengen Information System (SIS) and its practical implementation have evolved to address concerns regarding the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and which operational and fundamental rights challenges this evolution poses. In that regard, emphasis is placed on two examples: first, the

article examines the maximised operationalisation of alerts on discreet checks under Article 36 of the SIS Regulation on police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters. Then, focus is placed on the forthcoming registration of alerts on third-country nationals in the interest of the Union based on Regulation 2022/1190. These alerts will be registered in the SIS with the increased involvement of Europol following information received by third countries or international organisations.”

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