



Issue 18/23, 2 November

- **UK-EU facial recognition plan challenged**
- **Subordinating search and rescue to law enforcement?**
- **More EU support for abuses in North Africa**

And: Campaign celebrates success as three English universities divest from the border industry /// EU: More surveillance, funding and operational cooperation to fight migrant smuggling /// Database delays: new timetable for interoperable EU policing and migration systems by 2027 /// Extensive round-up of new material

UK-EU facial recognition plan challenged

MPs must ensure thorough scrutiny and a meaningful democratic debate on potential UK participation in a pan-European police facial recognition system that is unnecessary, disproportionate and undesirable, says a statement coordinated by Statewatch and signed by 13 other civil society organisations.

The [statement](#) concerns the UK's participation in the Prüm system, a network of police databases that currently allows for the cross-border searching of fingerprint, DNA and vehicle registration data.

Full story [here](#).

Subordinating search and rescue to law enforcement?

Draft European Commission proposals would impose intelligence-gathering requirements on any ships that engage in search and rescue (SAR) operations at sea, in the name of "addressing the needs of those onboard as well as facilitating a smooth disembarkation and first reception". An employee of a search and rescue organisation has warned that "civil assets used in sea rescue operations should not be tasked with any law enforcement duty."

Full story [here](#).

EU to step up support for human rights abuses in North Africa

In a letter to last week's European Council meeting trumpeting the EU's efforts to control migration, European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen highlighted the provision of vessels and support to coast guards in Libya and Tunisia, where refugee and migrant rights are routinely violated.

Full story [here](#).

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News

2 November

[**EU mulls intelligence-gathering obligations for search and rescue operations**](#)

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2 November

[**Campaign celebrates success as three English universities divest from the border industry**](#)

Three English universities have divested from companies profiting from border violence in a major win for the Divest Borders campaign. However, over £300 million of university endowments still remain invested in the border industry.

31 October

[**UK participation in “unnecessary” police facial recognition system needs “open, thorough, democratic debate”**](#)

MPs must ensure thorough scrutiny and a meaningful democratic debate on potential UK participation in a pan-European police facial recognition system that is unnecessary, disproportionate and undesirable, says a statement coordinated by Statewatch and signed by 13 other civil society organisations.

27 October

[**EU to step up support for human rights abuses in North Africa**](#)

In a letter to the European Council trumpeting the EU's efforts to control migration, European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen highlighted the provision of vessels and support to coast guards in Libya and Tunisia, where refugee and migrant rights are routinely violated.

24 October

[**EU: More surveillance, funding and operational cooperation to fight migrant smuggling**](#)

A Spanish presidency note to member state representatives in the Council identifies cross-border organised crime as a key threat to the correct functioning of the Schengen area, calling for additional impetus in 2023-2024 to fight "cross-border, serious and organised crime". Crimes involving smuggling and exploitation (including of children, trafficking, sexual exploitation) are deemed challenges for external border management and the Schengen area.

23 October

[**Database delays: new timetable for interoperable EU policing and migration systems by 2027**](#)

EU interior ministers have agreed another revised timeline for the plan to make all justice and home affairs databases "interoperable", with the aim now to have the systems up and running

by 2027. Mandatory biometric border checks may now be introduced progressively, in the hope of limiting delays at border crossing points.

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Upcoming events

Brussels, 7 November

[Still reporting without fear? The future of media freedom and protection of journalists in Europe](#)

“The ability of journalists to report freely is a vital part of democracy. However, it is becoming more difficult and dangerous for journalists to do their work. Journalists are facing not only an increasing politicisation of the media but also digital surveillance and spyware, censorship, insults, intimidation and in some cases even murder. Safeguarding media freedom and ensuring the protection of journalists is paramount. The European Union has been addressing these critical issues through initiatives like the European Media Freedom Act and the anti-SLAPP directive.”

Graz, 7 November

[The Media As A Tool of Intervention: House of Cards](#)

“This book explores the role of external powers and international organisations in media assistance in post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Through analysis of key documents, media reports and interviews with key participants, it examines the main actors, their roles and the way in which they influenced the media and society.”

New material

[Asylum, immigration and borders](#)

[Civil liberties](#)

[Law](#)

[Military](#)

[Policing](#)

[Privacy and data protection](#)

[Racism and discrimination](#)

[Secrecy and transparency](#)

[Surveillance](#)

Asylum, immigration and borders

European Policy Centre, 2 November

[EU-Tunisia like UK-Rwanda? Not quite. But would the New Pact asylum reforms change that?](#)

“EU law only allows sending asylum applicants to third countries if they can be considered safe and have a reasonable connection with the applicant. However, if the New Pact reforms go ahead, the safe third-country concept may be used to further shift protection responsibilities outside the EU. While the EU would be unable to conclude a UK-Rwanda-style agreement, the pressure for reforms, as well as the recent Memorandum of Understanding with Tunisia, signal the threat of diminished human rights protections and safeguards.”

Gisti, 2 November

France: [L'assignation à résidence à perpétuité subie par Kamel, Sandra, et leurs quatre enfants doit être levée](#)

Gisti comments on a case in which a family has suffered due to a long-term house confinement measure, after the ECHR rejected an appeal.

Security Architectures in the EU, 1 November

[Fewer boat crossings, visit to Frontex: EU and Tunisia implement migration pact](#)

“Despite an alleged repayment of funds for migration defence, Tunisia is cooperating with the EU. Fewer refugees are also arriving across the Mediterranean – a decrease by a factor of seven.”

InfoMigrants, 31 October

[Spain sends drones, personnel to Senegal to stop boats departing for Canary Islands](#)

“Spain has delivered surveillance drones to Senegal, a main country of origin of migrants arriving on Spain's Canary Islands. The number of people reaching the archipelago from West Africa is nearing a record-high.”

InfoMigrants, 31 October

Lampedusa mayor collects award for welcoming migrants

“The community of the Italian island of Lampedusa has received an award for welcoming and sheltering migrants. The prize was collected by the mayor, Filippo Mannino, who said the island has a 'different level of humanity'.”

DW, 31 October

Slovakia sends troops to Hungarian border to curb migration

“The government said more than 40,000 undocumented migrants had been detected within its borders this year. Slovakia is often used as a transit points by migrants crossing into countries in the west of Europe.”

Border Criminologies, 30 October

Demographics of the deportation of Foreign National Offenders from the UK since 2010

“The UK Borders Act 2007 introduced a requirement for prisons to ascertain and record the citizenship of prisoners and share details with immigration and border force agencies, using a centralised computer system. Of more than 160 nationalities returned, more than half of the returns come from five nationalities, according to the Office for National Statistics. We concentrate on the top ten in our analysis of trends in the demography of 'Foreign National Offender' (FNO) deportees.”

InfoMigrants, 27 October

Most migrants eligible for French state medical aid have not accessed their rights -- Médecins du Monde

“A large number of migrants give up seeking treatment in France because of complex procedures and lack of sufficient information and support, according to a report by Médecins du Monde (MDM).

In its latest annual health access report, MDM highlights the "immense difficulties" encountered by migrants to access health coverage despite being eligible for French state medical aid (AME).”

Verfassungsblog, 27 October

Turning the Exception into the Rule

“Having promised its electorate a strong stance towards immigration, in January 2023 Italy's new government adopted a reform that heavily curtailed immigrant rights to speed up return procedures. However, between September and October, several judgments issued by the Catania Tribunal declared it in violation of EU law. In particular, when requested to review the detention of asylum applicants, the judges found the new Italian asylum border procedure contrary to the Procedures Directive 2013/32 and the Reception Conditions Directive 2013/33.”

Rivolti ai Balcani, 27 October

Controlli ai confini con la Slovenia: divieto di circolazione, libertà di respingimento

Checks at borders with Slovenia: free movement curtailed, freedom to push back. Rivolti ai Balcani on an "instrumental and unfounded" internal border reintroduction.

Politico Europe, 25 October

Von der Leyen pushes aid deal with Egypt in bid to stem migration to Europe

“The European Commission is pushing a deal to provide aid to Egypt as concerns grow over the potential fallout from the Israel-Hamas war.

In a letter to EU leaders ahead of a summit on Thursday and Friday, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen pledged greater support to the Middle Eastern country.”

InfoMigrants, 24 October

What Poland’s elections and new government may mean for migration

“As Europe applauds the victory of the liberal opposition led by Donald Tusk in Poland’s elections, observers say the new government will not necessarily break with the previous government’s anti-migration stance.”

Reuters, 24 October

Italy likely to extend border controls with Slovenia into 2024

“Controls at the border between Italy and Slovenia will probably continue into next year, Rome’s interior minister said on Tuesday, citing the risk of terrorists among the migrants in transit on the Balkan route.”

ARTE, 24 October

Migrants, les failles de l'Europe forteresse

“Comment l’Union européenne a externalisé sa politique migratoire vers des pays tiers. Cet état des lieux très documenté expose l’hypocrisie européenne à l’égard des réfugiés.”

Melting Pot, 24 October

Trattamenti inumani e degradanti: l’Italia condannata a risarcire tre migranti detenuti illegittimamente a Lampedusa

Italy violated articles 3 and 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights but practices persist in proliferating hotspots and informal structures.

The Guardian, 23 October

Plan for UK to host thousands of Gaza refugees drawn up by charities

“They are urging the UK government to introduce an emergency family reunion scheme modelled on the initiative for Ukrainians and carry out a medical evacuation for people in need of specialist care.”

Apollo, 23 October

Ideas about nation, territory and identity are thrown into disarray

“Visitors to Giacomo Veronesi’s performance piece Border Euphoria, staged in a disused office complex on the outskirts of Graz, Austria, are asked to surrender a piece of ID on entry. Uniformed border police swap each one in turn for a grey Välismaalase Pass – Estonian for ‘alien’s passport’ – before the visitors are ushered en masse into a nondescript waiting room.

The visitors are made to wait in a crowd at one end of the room; at the other, a group of women file in and out. The women – four older, four younger – enter the room in varying combinations. They inspect one another; they throw disco shapes. The younger women examine the older, holding their limbs aloft and pinching their bellies. They kiss. Then, the visitors are ushered into another room and things get really weird.”

Security Architectures in the EU, 23 October

[EU agency criticises repression against sea rescuers: States initiated over 63 proceedings in seven years](#)

“In the past seven years, Germany, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands and Spain have initiated dozens of administrative or criminal proceedings, obstructing search and rescue operations by civil society actors. This is according to an overview published by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency on its website. The measures have a deterrent effect and intimidate civil society actors, the report says.”

The Local, 20 October

[France: 'No papers, no Olympic Games': Hundreds of unregistered migrant workers protest for regularization](#)

“Several hundred unregistered migrants working in France began a strike on Tuesday (October 17) in the greater Paris area known as Ile-de-France. Many of them are working on construction sites preparing for the Olympic Games. They are calling for the current immigration laws to be scrapped, and for the granting of regular residence permits.”

Anadolu Agency, 20 October

[EU aims to step up return of 3rd-country nationals who have no legal right to stay](#)

“The European Union aims to speed up the return of people who do not have a legal right to stay in the bloc to their countries of origin, its commissioner said Thursday.

European Commissioner for Home Affairs Ylva Johansson's remarks came at a press conference alongside Spanish Interior Minister Fernando Grande-Marlaska which was held after a meeting of interior ministers.”

Avvenire, 20 October

[Il Consiglio di sicurezza Onu conferma le sanzioni ai guardacoste-trafficanti](#)

“Approvato all'unanimità l'inasprimento delle sanzioni per i boss del traffico di esseri umani, petrolio e armi. Dal guardacoste "Bija" ai capi della "polizia petrolifera" fino al direttore dei "lager””

Melting Pot, 20 October

[Bulgaria: lottare per vivere, lottare per morire](#)

Fighting to live, fighting to die. About unburied dead, sleepless nights & questions that won't be answered.

Alarm Phone Dakar, 20 October

Crossings from Senegal to the Canary Islands: a society in the grip of economic despair, political repression and European interference

“The Senegalese population, and especially young people, are faced with an impossible dilemma: to stay and die slowly in that misery, or to leave in the hope of having some chance of a dignified life in Europe. The deep economic crisis (the breakdown of livelihoods due to overfishing in Senegalese waters and the consequences of climate change) is compounded by the injustice of Europe’s visa policy, which are virtually impossible to obtain. The political crisis in Senegal makes the situation catastrophic: many demonstrators are being abused and arbitrarily imprisoned, and there have even been deaths. This is driving young people to leave the country, using even the riskiest means of transport. We express our anger at this situation and our grief for the hundreds of people who died at sea this summer.”

Tahrir Institute, 19 October

The EU-Tunisia Memorandum of Understanding: A Blueprint for Cooperation on Migration?

“On July 16, 2023, a memorandum of understanding, known as the “migrant deal”, was signed between the EU and Tunisia, at a time when the EU is trying to find ways to limit the arrival of irregular migrants into its territory. The memorandum, however, raises some concerns regarding its content, form, and human rights implications.”

TV5 Monde, 19 October

France : des centaines de travailleurs sans-papiers obtiennent leur régularisation après un jour de grève

“Des centaines travailleurs sans-papiers du bâtiment étaient en grève depuis le mardi 18 octobre et bloquaient plusieurs sites en Ile-de-France. Tous exigeaient leur régularisation. Après négociation, un accord a été trouvé.”

Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, 18 October

Externalizing the EU Borders: Frontex and Other Security Actors in West Africa

“The European Union’s border control is increasingly expanding towards West Africa. Since the mid-2000s, European security actors like the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) and the Spanish Guardia Civil have been present in different countries of the region. Following the EU Commission’s announcement in 2022 to conclude Frontex Status Agreements with both Mauritania and Senegal, these operations are set to deepen further.

Despite their unprecedented nature and profound implications for human rights and state sovereignty, these initiatives lack transparency and public scrutiny. This must change.”

EU Law Analysis, 15 October

Analyzing the legality of the EU Commission’s proposed withdrawal of preferential tariffs for third countries when cooperation on migrant returns ‘fails’—an unholy alliance of trade and migration?

“Initiated in 2021, the EU Commission’s reform of Regulation EU 978/2012 Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) for developing and least-developed countries, proposes to expand by the area of migrant readmission, the cooperation the EU requires from beneficiary

countries for exports from those countries to benefit from a lower or zero import duty on two-thirds of tariff lines under standard GSP, a zero duty on the same tariff lines, conditioned on the ratification of 27 conventions (GSP+) or a zero import duty on all products from LDCs except for arms and ammunition (Everything-but-Arms, EBA) into the EU.”

RESF, 4 October

Mercredi 27 septembre : « à Lampédusa » et « l’illégalité des contrôles aux frontières intérieures de la France »

“Avec Brigitte Espuche, co-coordinatrice du réseau Migreurop et Laure Palun directrice de l’ANAFE”

Civil liberties

Rest of World, 2 November

The chilling power of Gaza’s internet blackout

“On Friday night, after weeks of bombardment, Gaza disappeared from the internet. Cellular towers, landlines, and internet connections all dropped at once, making it all but impossible to get digital information in or out of the territory. The cut coincided with a ground assault by the Israeli military, commencing what Prime Minister Netanyahu called “the second phase of the war.””

The Guardian, 1 November

The UK government is about to make some disabled benefits claimants even poorer

“Cost of living payments for those receiving Pip have been quietly axed, forcing many to choose between charging their wheelchairs or staying warm”

Politico, 31 October

UK, US slated to announce AI safety partnership

“London and Washington are to announce a “close collaboration” on AI safety as early as Wednesday, a U.K and U.S. official confirmed to POLITICO.

The collaboration is expected to marry new guardrails the White House placed on artificial intelligence development in this week’s executive order (EO) with existing work by the United Kingdom’s “Frontier AI Taskforce.””

The Guardian, 31 October

How the UK’s emphasis on apocalyptic AI risk helps business

“In the spring of 2023, the UK government set out its plans to address the rapidly evolving AI landscape. In a white paper titled “A pro-innovation approach to AI regulation” the secretary of state for science, innovation and technology described the many benefits and opportunities she believed the technology to hold and explained the government’s decision to take a “principles-based approach” to regulating it. In short: the UK didn’t plan to create new legislation, instead opting to clarify existing laws that could apply to AI.”

European Commission, 30 October

Commission welcomes G7 leaders' agreement on Guiding Principles and a Code of Conduct on Artificial Intelligence

“The Commission welcomes today's agreement by G7 leaders on International Guiding Principles on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and a voluntary Code of Conduct for AI developers under the Hiroshima AI process. These principles and the voluntary Code of Conduct will complement, at international level, the legally binding rules that the EU co-legislators are currently finalising under the EU AI Act. President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, was among those who subscribed to the G7 leaders' statement issued by the 2023 Japan G7 presidency.”

International Press Institute, 26 October

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Media freedom in survival mode

“Following a press freedom mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina from 22-25 October 2023, the International Press Institute (IPI) today joins in partners in the Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) in warning that media freedom in the country is in decline against a backdrop of new restrictive laws, hostile rhetoric and denigration of journalists by public officials, and ongoing systemic challenges to the independence of public service media.”

Craig Murray, 24 October

UK: Incredibly, I Face Investigation for Terrorism – Defence Funds Appeal

“My phone is not being returned to me by police as, astonishingly, I am now formally under investigation for terrorism. Whether this relates to support for Palestine or for WikiLeaks has currently not been made clear.”

The Guardian, 23 October

UK officials use AI to decide on issues from benefits to marriage licences

“Government officials are using artificial intelligence (AI) and complex algorithms to help decide everything from who gets benefits to who should have their marriage licence approved, according to a Guardian investigation.”

Al Jazeera, 23 October

The Take: Censorship and disinformation – the online war on Gaza

“Social media have been one of the few available ways for Palestinians to tell their stories under the Israeli occupation and blockade. But censorship and account suspensions threaten that outlet. As the war on Gaza escalates, social media companies have tightened their grip further. This is mixed with the rapid spread of disinformation and conflicting narratives like those about the deadly blast at the al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza. So how far is disinformation and censorship steering the conflict?”

The Guardian, 22 October

'An atmosphere of fear': free speech under threat in Israel, activists say

“Two activists from a Jewish-Arab peace movement were recently detained in Israel for putting up posters with a message that the police deemed to be offensive. The message was: “Jews and Arabs, we will get through this together.””

TBIJ, 22 October

UK: 'All that is missing is a whip': Home Office ignored migrant worker abuses on farms

“On a farm in Herefordshire, thousands of miles from her home in Bolivia, Julia Quecaño Casimiro went on strike for the first time in her life.

Julia had worked on farms in Chile for several years but said she had never experienced bullying, discrimination or wage deductions until working in the UK.

“As soon as I started, I saw that it was exploitation,” she said. “It was modern slavery.””

The Guardian, 21 October

UK government keeping files on teaching assistants' and librarians' internet activity

“The government has been monitoring the social media accounts of “dozens” of ordinary teaching staff, including teaching assistants, and is keeping files on posts that criticise education policies, the Observer has learned.”

Access Now, 16 October

Civil society organizations' call for tech companies to respect Palestinian digital rights in times of crisis

“We, a collective of human rights and civil society organizations, urge tech companies to immediately take strict measures to protect their users from harm in light of the escalating events in the region. These events have inevitably led to increased discrimination against Palestinian content and a rise in anti-Palestinian racism across various online platforms, and demonstrate the critical link between the digital realm and the reality on the ground.”

Law

Verfassungsblog, 31 October

Strasburg Weighs In On Political Persecution In Turkey

“The judgment is crucial as it may trigger retrials (and acquittals) of 100,000 individuals who have been convicted for membership in armed terrorist organizations over their links to the Gulen Movement – called FETO/PDY by the Turkish Government – that has been designated a terrorist group. Further, Strasburg's reading of Article 7 of the Convention, the principle of no punishment without law, is especially noteworthy as the Court identified a violation of Article 7 in only 60 out of its 25,000+ decisions since 1959.”

European Data Protection Supervisor, 24 October

EDPS' Final Recommendations on the AI Act

"The EDPS published today its own-initiative Opinion on the Artificial Intelligence Act (AI Act) as this proposed Regulation enters the final stages of negotiations between the EU's co-legislators. The AI Act aims to regulate the development and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems in the EU, including in the EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies (EUIs). With this Opinion, the EDPS provides specific suggestions focusing on the EDPS' future tasks as the authority in charge of overseeing AI systems in the EUIs."

Military

EUobserver, 24 October

The EU's funding and support for Israeli arms companies

"Following the deadly 7 October attacks by militant group Hamas, European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen and European Parliament president Roberta Metsola reassured Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu that "Israel can count on the EU"."

OpenDemocracy, 18 October

UK has 'no plans' to stop arms sales to Israel despite civilian deaths

"The UK has approved millions of pounds' worth of licences for military equipment to Israeli forces since 2015. They include components for F-35 fighter jets, which can deliver ground strikes and have been recently pictured in social media posts from the Israeli Air Force."

European Commission, 16 October

EU launches Humanitarian Air Bridge operation to bring aid to Gaza

"Following the horrific terrorist attack by Hamas terrorists against Israel and the aftermath, which has led to a disastrous humanitarian situation for the people of Gaza, the EU continues to step up its emergency assistance to the Palestinian people. The EU is now launching an EU Humanitarian Air Bridge operation consisting of several flights to Egypt to bring lifesaving supplies to humanitarian organisations on the ground in Gaza."

Policing

The Guardian, 1 November

UK: Amnesty calls for Prevent strategy to be abolished over 'human rights abuses'

"Amnesty International has called for the abolition of the government's counter-extremism strategy Prevent, accusing it of severe human rights abuses and of encouraging a culture of "thought policing".

A report by the group said Prevent's legal duty on public sector workers, such as in schools and health, to report their suspicions was "fundamentally incompatible" with international human rights obligations."

EU Law Analysis, 1 November

Europol's Joint and Several Liability Regime: Revolutionizing EU Fundamental Rights Responsibility?

“The Europol Regulation introduces a system of joint and several EU liability for unlawful data processing in violation of Article 7 and 8 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. This nascent EU liability regime features at the heart of the dispute in the Marián Kočner v Europol saga, and much like the recent WS and others v Frontex case before the General Court, highlights the urgency for clarification on joint responsibility for human rights violations as a result of shared conduct between the EU’s operational agencies and the EU Member States.”

Public Interest Law Centre, 31 October

UK: Video: 'Spycops: When the public is the enemy' report launch

“Live recording of the Public Interest Law Centre’s event to mark the end of Tranche One of the Undercover Policing Inquiry.”

Morocco World News, 30 October

Moroccan, German Interior Ministers Hold Talks on Boosting Security Cooperation

“Morocco’s Minister of Interior Abdelouafi Laftit held a meeting today in Rabat with German Minister of Interior and Territorial Administration Nancy Faeser to discuss issues of common interest and explore ways to enhance security cooperation between the two countries.”

And see:

- [Deportation tourism: German interior minister returns from Morocco almost empty-handed](#)
- [Germany reaches agreements on migration with Morocco, Nigeria](#)

The Guardian, 29 October

UK: Police urged to double use of facial recognition software

“Police are being encouraged to double their use of retrospective facial recognition software to track down offenders over the next six months.

Policing minister Chris Philp has written to force leaders in England and Wales suggesting the target of exceeding 200,000 searches of still images against the police national database by May using facial recognition technology.”

See: [Letter to police on AI enabled facial recognition searches](#)

Computer Weekly, 27 October

UK: 'Egregious' to link passport data with facial recognition systems

“The Scottish biometrics watchdog has spoken out against the UK policing minister’s plans to integrate passport data with police facial recognition systems”

Interpol, 27 October

[**INTERPOL Dialogue: Moving towards a global data-sharing model**](#)

“Representatives from regional law enforcement and security organizations have taken the first in a series of actions towards establishing a global data-sharing model for law enforcement.

The important step was agreed at the 7th INTERPOL Dialogue on an Effective Multilateral Policing Architecture against Global Threats, hosted by the Gulf Cooperation Council-POL with the support of the United Arab Emirates’ Ministry of Interior.”

Wired, 24 October

[**EU: A Controversial Plan to Scan Private Messages for Child Abuse Meets Fresh Scandal**](#)

“An EU government body is pushing a proposal to combat child sexual abuse material that has significant privacy implications. Its lead advocate is making things even messier.”

European Data Protection Supervisor, 23 October

[**Briefing note on the CSAM proposal: “The Point of No Return”**](#)

“The Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) proposal aims to prevent and combat child sexual abuse online and offline by detecting the dissemination of child sexual abuse material and grooming. Whilst there is a consensus about the paramount importance of this task, many stakeholders question the effectiveness, necessity and proportionality of the proposed measures.”

Catalan Parliament, 3 October

[**El Parlament crea una comissió d'investigació sobre la infiltració de policies dels cossos de l'Estat en moviments socials i polítics**](#)

The Catalan parliament agrees to set up an inquiry into the infiltration of social and political movements in Catalunya by national police forces, as requested by the CUP, ERC, JxCat and ECP groups.

Privacy and data protection

Security Architectures in the EU, 1 November

[**Refugees against German Register of Foreigners: Constitutional Complaint against “Second Class Data Protection”**](#)

“Several organisations and associations support a constitutional complaint against the Central Register of Foreigners. They argue that the data collection is out of control and violates fundamental rights.”

Computer Weekly, 30 October

[**Greek data watchdog to rule on AI systems in refugee camps**](#)

“A forthcoming decision on the compliance of surveillance and security systems in Greek refugee camps could set a precedent for how AI and biometric systems are deployed for ‘migration management’ in Europe”

Racism and discrimination

Kathimerini, 1 November

21 members of Italian neo-fascist group arrested in Athens

"A group of 21 Italian neo-fascists were apprehended at Athens International Airport late on Tuesday, as reported by the police.

The group, members of the far-right group CasaPound, intened to attend a rally on Wednesday afternoon, commemorating the 2013 killing of two members of the now-defunct neo-Nazi Golden Dawn outside the party's offices in Neo Iraklio, northern Athens."

IRR, 27 October

UK: Anti-Palestinianism, suspect communities and racist backlash

An essential overview from IRR.

Security Architectures in the EU, 24 October

Murder of policewoman: German police may have overlooked a motive of right-wing terrorist NSU

"The policewoman Michèle Kiesewetter may have foiled a neo-Nazi meeting in a restaurant run by a friend of right-wing terrorist Beate Zschäpe. That would be a motive for the last known NSU murder."

The Guardian, 23 October

UK: MP stopped from boarding Air Canada flight as 'his name was Mohammad'

"An MP was stopped from boarding a flight to Canada with other members of parliament "because his name was Mohammad", the Commons heard on Monday.

Mohammad Yasin, Labour's MP for Bedford, was due to fly to Canada with other MPs from the Commons levelling up, housing and communities committee when he was delayed for questioning "for a considerable period" at airports in both countries last week."

El Periodico, 20 October

Spain: Los ultras de Combat 18 se financiaban con ayuda francesa

Combat 18 'ultras' were getting financing with help from France, including police operation leading to 16 arrests.

Secrecy and transparency

EUobserver, 2 November

It's time to open up the European Court of Justice

"A lot of attention has been paid in recent years to how the European Union regulates different sectors, from renewable energy to digital markets and artificial intelligence. Much less has been given to a crucial tenet of democratic accountability — how the EU institutions regulate themselves."

Surveillance

Amnesty, 31 October

Global/India: Apple notifications highlight the unabated threat of unlawful targeted surveillance

“Responding to the reports of Apple sending a new round of threat notifications globally, including to Indian opposition leaders and journalists, noting that their iPhones may have been targeted by “state-sponsored attackers”, Likhita Banerji, Amnesty International’s Researcher and Advisor on technology and human rights, said:

“This latest round of Apple threat notifications confirm that the abuse of highly invasive spyware by state-actors around the world continues unabated, targeting human rights defenders, journalists, and politicians. Despite repeated scandals and revelations, a shameful lack of accountability and transparency has contributed to an atmosphere of impunity, leading to what appears to be yet another surveillance scandal.””

The Guardian, 29 October

Britain is ‘omni-surveillance’ society, watchdog warns

“Britain is an “omni-surveillance” society with police forces in the “extraordinary” position of holding more than 3m custody photographs of innocent people more than a decade after being told to destroy them, the independent surveillance watchdog has said.”

The Guardian, 28 October

Major UK retailers urged to quit ‘authoritarian’ police facial recognition strategy

“Some of Britain’s biggest retailers, including Tesco, John Lewis and Sainsbury’s, have been urged to pull out of a new policing strategy amid warnings it risks wrongly criminalising people of colour, women and LGBTQ+ people.”

Politico, 25 October

How Europe became the Wild West of spyware

“The spyware deployed against Roberta Metsola, president of the European Parliament, was made and marketed by a European company.

A link sent to Metsola as a reply to a post on X was designed to infect the device of anyone who clicked on it with Predator surveillance software.”

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