



**Unjustifiable terrorism charges against protesters in Spain**  
**Environmental activism under EU counter-terror microscope**  
**New UK law will help mask illegal police data access**  
**Colonial continuities in European migration policing**  
**Border security with drones and databases**

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## Spain: Protesters face unjustifiable terrorism charges

Protests might be disruptive – indeed, that is often the point – but does that amount to terrorism? The authorities in Spain think so, with terrorism charges laid against 12 protesters who participated in blockades of Barcelona’s airport and a motorway heading towards France, in protest at the jailing of Catalan independence leaders.

A letter signed by 20 organisations, including *Statewatch*, calls for the Spanish authorities to respect international human rights and democratic standards and to drop the charges. Read it [here](#).

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## EU counter-terror officials discuss climate protests

Next week, EU and member state officials will discuss “the role of climate change and environmental concerns in violent extremist and terrorist radicalisation.” Under the heading “violent left-wing and anarchist extremism” a number of prominent environmental protest groups are mentioned.

The inclusion of peaceful but disruptive groups in the paper may legitimate further police surveillance and infiltration, legal harassment and government crackdowns – a problem identified as “a major threat to human rights and democracy” by a UN Special Rapporteur.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## New UK law will help mask illegal police data access

Should police officers have to provide a justification for accessing personal data held in police computer systems? The law currently requires that they do – but new legislation going through parliament will remove that requirement. The recent prosecution of an officer for illegal data access shows how this change will remove a key tool for accountability.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## Colonial continuities in European migration policing

A special guest article by Eva Magdalena Stambøl and Leonie Jegen looks at Civipol, a French public-private actor owned both by the French state and major security companies. It has specialized in building African states' internal security capacity and since 2020 alone has received €212m in public funding for its work on migration and border controls in West Africa.

A closer look at Civipol highlights how contemporary European policies in West Africa mirror the historical entanglements between colonial logics, corporate interests and policing, argues the article, showing how a form of “neocolonial revolving credit” has been put in motion.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## Border security with drones and databases

The EU's borders are increasingly militarised, with hundreds of millions of euros paid to state agencies and military, security and IT companies for surveillance, patrols and apprehension and detention. This process has massive human cost, and politicians are planning to intensify it.

Read the full article [here](#), and the report it is based upon – *Europe's techno-borders* – [here](#).

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## New material

Bosnia and Herzegovina opened Negotiations on the Cooperation Agreement with Frontex -----  
“Weapons of mass migration”: how states exploit the failure of migration policies -----  
Search and rescue ships call for immediate halt to the obstruction of lifesaving activities at sea -----  
Erik Prince Calls for U.S. to Colonize Africa and Latin America -----  
Catalonia: Expert says police infiltration could amount to torture -----  
Slovenia: ECHR finds a violation of the right to privacy and to a fair trial -----  
UK: Met Police to scrap and replace “racist” Gangs Violence Matrix

## Stand up against state secrecy

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## Upcoming events

Brot für die Welt, online, 12 March

**[Tracked, scratched, destroyed: smartphone of people on the move in the focus of state authorities](#)**

Mobile phones are essential tools for migrants - and have become the focus of state authorities. This webinar will shed light on the ambivalent role of the smartphone for people on the move and discuss how we can protect their rights and digital sovereignty. The webinar is based on our new online-tool.

## New material

**[Asylum, immigration and borders](#)**

**[Civil liberties](#)**

**[Law](#)**

**[Military](#)**

**[Policing](#)**

**[Prisons](#)**

**[Privacy and data protection](#)**

**[Racism and discrimination](#)**

**[Secrecy and transparency](#)**

## Asylum, immigration and borders

Ireland: **[Over 1,000 asylum seekers now without accommodation](#)**

“It is hard not to conclude that this policy is an attempt to deter people from seeking international protection and that this situation is by choice and not inevitable”

Italy: **[Today marks one year since the horrific and preventable tragedy off the coast of Cutro \(Calabria\)](#)**

In remembrance of the 94 lost lives, a demonstration in Milan this weekend brought together several organisations working to prevent more disasters.

Italy: **[Continued contradiction in the Libyan search and rescue zone](#)**

A review of another ruling that involvement in returns to Libya is unlawful, contrasting it to the continued EU cooperation with the so-called Libyan coast guard. Article in Italian.

**[Bosnia and Herzegovina opened Negotiations on the Cooperation Agreement with](#)**

## **Frontex**

"This agreement would mean BiH would cease to be the only country in the Western Balkans that does not cooperate with FRONTEX."

## **UK: Academics call for 'debordering higher education'**

The call highlights the importance of not viewing migration as a policy arena in isolation, making it clear that "every change to the visa regime affects us all."

## **UK: Home Office refuses visa for Palestinian refugee supported by prestigious scholarship**

"In addition to her studies Ashkar is also a commentator for publications including Middle East Eye writing extensively on the plight of Palestinian refugees."

## **"Weapons of mass migration": how states exploit the failure of migration policies**

"For a wide range of actors who claim to confront the perceived threat things keep going wrong in the right way."

## **France: Updates on the Darmanin reform of immigration asylum and integration law**

Le Gisti webpage keeps latest news and next steps for reform to the code of entry and stay of foreigners and the right to asylum (CESEDA).

## **"EU leaders always seem to be able to agree on additional funding for migration and border management"**

Read more from this op-ed by Chiara Catelli at ECRE detailing the four major takeaways from the EU Council's newest budget agreement.

## **Primer: Defending the rights of refugees and migrants in the digital age**

"The proliferation of digital technologies... has created new forms of private-public partnerships and with them a gamut of human rights threats"

## **Nigerian students who fled war in Ukraine are being told to leave Europe**

"Overseas students in Ukraine were granted a two-year stay in the EU when Russia invaded. Now their time is running out"

## **Council of Europe's human rights commissioner warns of disturbing trend of "escalating intimidation" towards groups helping asylum seekers**

This trend is closely tied to the escalation of violent EU border policies and use of invasive technologies.

**[Search and rescue ships are calling on the Italian government to bring an immediate halt to the obstruction of lifesaving activities at sea](#)**

The joint statement marks one year since the harmful Italian Decree came into effect.

**[Greece condemned by ECHR for yet another human rights violation in border management](#)**

The Court also acknowledged how this is part of an EU-wide accountability issue, citing the role of #Frontex.

**[Death, despair and destitution: The human costs of the EU's migration policies](#)**

It calls for the EU to "urgently confront the issues that lie at the root of this violence, including deep-seated dehumanisation, racism and securitisation of refugees and migrants."

**[Editorial: All Pact-ed up and ready to go: EU asylum law reforms](#)**

Catherine Woolard of ECRE picks apart the EU's new asylum laws. The main theme of the new measures? Limiting access to international protection.

**[France decreases returns at France-Italy border, but racial profiling and militarisation remains](#)**

This comes after the CJEU and French Conseil d'Etat called for restraint of questionable practices that had become routine. Article in Italian.

## **Civil liberties**

**[Greece becomes the first Orthodox state to legalise gay marriage](#)**

"Pursuing what should be a given in 2024 is not exactly gratifying as it implies that states and societies treat LGBTQI+ individuals in a fundamentally problematic manner"

## **Law**

**[New report: "No such thing as justice here": the criminalisation of people arriving in the UK in 'small boats'](#)**

Those prosecuted include people seeking asylum, victims of trafficking and other vulnerable groups.

**[German lawyers file genocide complicity case against German Chancellor Olaf Scholz](#)**

"German lawyers representing Gazan families have filed a criminal complaint against German officials for supplying Israel with weapons that aid and abet genocide "

### **EU's democratic safeguards on financial aid fall short, auditors say**

"EU conditions for ensuring rule of law among member states before they can receive financial aid are not strong enough to completely rule out a backsliding in democracy"

Italy: **'Libya is not a safe country, but the Meloni government pretends not to know'**

More on latest ruling of the Court of Cassation and the government's response that things have changed since 2018, despite continuing human rights abuses.

Italy: **Trial against rescue ship Mediterranea shows serious violations of the rights of the defence**

During the 2020 trial, not all investigative material was made available to the defence and lawyer-client conversations were intercepted.

UK: **Jury convicts Ibrahima Bah: Statement from Captain Support UK**

Observing the trial has also made it clear to us how anti-black racism pervades the criminal "justice" system."

It goes on to cite how the vagueness of arguments invited "black racist profiling".

## **Military**

**Erik Prince Calls for U.S. to Colonize Africa and Latin America**

The American mercenary says the U.S. should 'put the imperial hat back on' and take over and directly run huge swaths of the globe"

## **Policing**

UK: **Prevent and the pre-crime state**

In-depth analysis shows "lack of oversight and parliamentary scrutiny over data sharing, processing and storage of Prevent referrals that are inappropriate for Channel interventions"

**Strongmen Find New Ways to Abuse Interpol, Despite Years of Fixes**

A dozen lawyers across the United States and Europe said they had seen an increase in cases involving the politically motivated abuse of... lesser-known Interpol systems."

Italy: **Data tells the story of the war against rescues in the dark year of the Cutro massacre**

Interior ministry data confirm shift from rescue to police operations and the strategy against NGOs.

Catalonia: [\*\*Expert says police infiltration could amount to torture\*\*](#)

"90% suffer from insomnia, 70% have suicidal thoughts, 60% experience traumatic visions involving the police, and between 72% and 85% have experienced a loss of self-esteem"

[\*\*Czech and German interior ministers discuss joining forces to crack down on illegal immigrant smuggling\*\*](#)

The two countries participate in a "joint task force" with Poland "to fight the inhumane smuggling of migrants."

[\*\*UK and Nigeria to step up cooperation in Security and Defence Partnership\*\*](#)

Partnership areas include:

"New lines of defence engagement"

"Policing and civil-military cooperation"

"Maritime security"

"Countering terrorism and violent extremism"

## **Prisons**

Poland: [\*\*Police violate fundamental rights of detained people\*\*](#)

Council of Europe anti-torture Committee (CPT) "received several complaints regarding excessive use of force during apprehension" during visit to Poland.

## **Privacy and data protection**

Slovenia: [\*\*ECHR finds a violation of the right to privacy and to a fair trial\*\*](#)

"Systematic and indiscriminate retention of telecommunications data" used against former judge during his trial is found to have breached his privacy rights

## **Racism and discrimination**

Italy: [\*\*Practice of citizenship denial based on unchallengeable Digos \(special ops police\) notifications\*\*](#)

Investigation covers discretionary power in 'naturalisation' procedures for people born or who have grown up in Italy. Article in Italian.

Italy: [\*\*After a brutal beating on 23 February of young people and schoolchildren, school staff send letter to authorities\*\*](#)

The staff expressed their sadness and outrage at the treatment of their students who were demonstrating in solidarity with Palestine.

UK: [\*\*Met Police to scrap and replace “racist” Gangs Violence Matrix\*\*](#)

“A database used by the Metropolitan Police to identify and track people linked with gang violence is being decommissioned and replaced.”

## Secrecy and transparency

[\*\*European Ombudsman agrees with complaint against Frontex refusal to provide lists of documents it identifies as falling within the scope of an access request\*\*](#)

The Ombudsman recommends Frontex provide a list as long it doesn't breach protected interests.

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