Issue 25/09, 23 May

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Analysis: From Cutro to Pylos: what two shipwrecks reveal about Europe's deadly migration policies

The anniversary of the shipwreck in Crotone on 26 February was marked by relatives and supporters of at least 94 people who died on the morning of that same day in 2023. They gathered on the beach in Cutro, in the city of Milan, and elsewhere in Italy: the names of the dead were read at public events, and survivors gave their testimonies.Three months later, it will also be the first anniversary of the Pylos shipwreck, in which at least 500 people lost their lives, and similar events will mark that anniversary. Full story **here**.

New EU migrant smuggling law: member states keen on maximum criminalisation

The EU is moving towards adopting a renewed law to criminalise migrant smuggling, and member states in the Council have started making progress towards a position for negotiations with the Parliament. Some governments appear to favour maximum criminalisation, calling for a broad definition of smuggling to facilitate prosecutions – a position that has been taken on board by the Belgian Council Presidency in an initial compromise text

Full story **here**.

Who's a "potential terrorist or violent extremist threat"? Plans to exchange information about "future" criminals

EU member states have finalised a set of "non-binding" criteria for assessing when someone may be labelled a potential terrorist or violent extremism threat. The intention is to feed European databases such as the Schengen Information System (SIS) and the Europol Information System (EIS), as well as Europol analysis projects such as "Hydra" and "Traveller", according to a note circulated by the Belgian Council Presidency last month.

Full Story **here**.

New material

Asylum, immigration and borders

Civil liberties

Law

Military

Policing

Prisons

Privacy and data protection

Racism and discrimination

Surveillance

Asylum, immigration and borders

Greece: **Report by Eleftherios Chelioudakis of HomoDigitalis looks at #AI-enabled border management tech**

Reviewing the transparency & adherence to data protection of their deployment, it provides an overview of companies & #EU funding schemes that enable them

UK: **Labour leader intends to scrap #RwandaBill & use counter-terror powers against Channel crossings**

This would include "a new Border Security Command to work with Border Force, MI5 and the National Crime Agency on prosecuting gangs operating small boat routes..."

This new unit would be "led by a former police, military or intelligence chief, who would report directly to the home secretary."

Italy: **Iranian Kurdish women's rights #activist on trial for "allegedly assisting with clandestine immigration after fleeing Iran"**

She was charged as a "smuggler" of the boat she arrived on. She denies the accusation & Amnesty International has intervened to appeal

Gaza and the European border regime: Connecting the struggles

Migretion-Control.info: We cannot remain silent on #Palestine. In the past months we have been witnessing the unfolding genocide in #Gaza w/ great sadness & concern. During this

time, we wrote down our collective reflections on how the European border regime and Gaza are connected in the current conjuncture and how to join the struggles against borders and occupation.

"On Thursday 25 April 2024, Interior Minister Annelies Verlinden's Frontex bill will be put to the vote of federal parliamentarians. This text provides the legal framework for the deployment of Frontex on Belgian territory, to assist the Federal Police in border management and the Aeronautical Police in escorting people subject to forced return measures."

Northern Ireland : **Parts of UK Illegal Migration Act ruled illegal**

The ruling covers large aspects of the Act, and determines that those "should not apply in Northern Ireland because they breach human rights laws"

It was ruled that aspects of the #IllegalMigrationAct conflict with:

❎ the Windsor Framework

❎ the European Convention on Human Rights

❎ the rights of asylum seekers in Northern Ireland under the Good Friday Agreement

Lebanon: **EU Migration deal in Lebanon**

Caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mitaki says "Lebanon cannot be considered a border police for any country"

Yet, their parliament is debating an EU cash deal that critics say is meant to encourage Lebanon to keep Syrian refugees from moving on to Europe

Tunisia: **Tunisian police are accused of torturing a lawyer & have arrested journalists, lawyers & opposition members**

–Yet, this is where the #EU has plans for externalisation.

The arrests & detention are said to relate to a "controversial law known as Decree 54 which the president signed in September 2022"

Around 60 have been held under decree, and those found guilty of defamation face up to 5 years in prison

We have covered the recent developments of #EU-#Tunisia #externalisation agreements and their potential for HumanRights abuses.

See more:

🟩 **"Action file" on plans** 📎

🟩 Critique calling for greater oversight

UK: **UK bolsters collaboration with Albania against migration–now with automatic number-plate recognition (ANPR) cameras**

"new drones will allow authorities to track migrants who try to get through the region via the mountainous areas of Albania"

UK & EU also participated in a conference on security & migration control cooperation in #WesternBalkans

At which **IOM Albania** apparently led discussions on the "interoperability" of Advance Passenger Information (API) & Passenger Name Record (PNR

Military

Ireland: **GLAN, Al-Haq and Sadaka challenge Ireland Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF) over investments linked to Israeli war crimes**

 submitted a complaint today to the Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB) over Ireland Strategic Investment Fund's (ISIF) investments in companies supporting #Israeli war crimes

The complaint is the first of its kind, using the Proceeds of Crime Act to outline how the revenue generated from ISIF's investments (which have a total value of 4.2 million) is the proceeds of crime–making it liable to seizure by CAB

France and New Caledonia: State of emergency

 12-day state of emergency declared Wed 15 May, due to riots over a bill to let French residents vote in provincial elections

Beyond banning gatherings, this meant:

🟩 soldiers were placed at island's airports

🟩 TikTok was banned

Policing

Northern Ireland: **Legal case raises serious concerns about police #surveillance of lawyers & journalists**

"The industrial-scale harvesting of sensitive journalistic communications data by the PSNI is akin to East German secret police in the early 1980s."

Spain**: Undercover officer infiltrated two political collectives for over three years**

"María Peres" joined Distrito104 and AntirrepreMad in May 2020. Only after raising suspicions in August 2023 did she cease involvement.

This follows many recent cases uncovered in #Spain, including one that **we reported on with La Directa last year**. In that case, an officer used sexual relations with women in the organisations to gain access to assemblies, events and demonstrations

New German-Swiss police agreement to combat cross-border smuggling

German-Swiss police agreement to "allow officers from both countries to cross the border in emergencies & establishes liaison offices & joint operational units"

It "aims to combat terrorism, violent extremism, people smuggling and arms trafficking"

Privacy and data protection

UK: **Watchdog under pressure to probe Met Police over use of facial recognition tech**

A coalition of 16 campaign groups, including Statewatch has called on the Information Commissioner to investigate

Racism and discrimination

UK: **Article in London Review of Books Frances Webber reviews treatment of racialised youth as adults**

It considers the cases of Shamima Begum & Ibrahima Bah as examples "of the dismissal of youth and vulnerability in fav-our of political imperatives"

"Between race and animality"

 explores weaponisation of dogs at **#EU** borders: "canines have been systematically deployed by colonial & white supremacist powers against racialised bodies as tools to enact & secure racial order"

UK: **70% of people stopped at UK ports under anti-terrorism laws since 2021 were from black, Asian and minority ethnic**

Data on those stopped under Schedule7 of the Terrorism Act, revealed by freedom of information request, shows considerable racial bias

Of the 8,095 of those stopped in the last 3 years, nearly 70% were Black, Asian or minority ethnic

Muhammad Rabbani of Cage International has called for the UK's Schedule 7 to be repealed

They explain that the stops "serve as long-term deterrents for people doing the work I do, in an attempt to quash dissent and censor essential human rights investigations"

Wa Baile c. Suisse: A victory against racial profiling?

The ruling "could become a central component in the fight against #RacialProfiling across Europe"

The article reviews the possibility of the case influencing future rulings & how "non-binding standards...may morph into "hard law""

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