

MONTHLY REVIEW: JUNE 2023

This monthly press review covers Eurafrikan migration control, migration and displacement in African countries and news on the European border regime. In case there is a news item, report, or campaign you would like to flag for in next month's review please write us to: migr-contr@ffm-online.org or on Twitter [@MigControl](https://twitter.com/MigControl)

NEW ON MIGRATION-CONTROL.INFO

Blog CEAS, Meloni and the situation in Tunisia: Despite the German koteau, despite sacrificing protection for women and children, for the sake of EU unity alone, the new asylum deal will not work. The EU member states have yet been able to agree on FRONTEX and arming the borders, but not on anything more. The coalition has sacrificed women and children, the rights of migrating people, for something that will turn out as just as badly as the Yugoslavian war did in Joschka Fischer's time. The blog entry is also available in **German**.

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ALL AFRICA

All Africa

29.06.23: Le Monde: Africa is among the stakes of Wagner insubordination: "[...] the African continent became the scene of its expansion from 2017 onward. It made inroads in Sudan, the Central African Republic (CAR), Libya and Mali. Wagner's opportunistic strategy in these countries has been based on a recurring model of offering security in exchange for the

predation of resources. But Africa has also been a source of tension between Wagner and its backers in Moscow and it became, along with how the war in Ukraine is being conducted, one of the factors involved in the split that came to light on Saturday. "We were told that Africa was needed, and after that, it was abandoned because all the money that was intended for aid was stolen," Prigozhin said."

See also

24.06.23: Jeune Afrique: Prigojine accuse Poutine et l'armée russe d'avoir abandonné l'Afrique (Prigozhin accuses Putin and the Russian army of abandoning Africa);

26.06.23: Washington Post: Prigozhin's

rebellion raises questions about Wagner's African footprint: "“Everyone is scared,” said a political analyst in Bamako, the capital of Mali, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to be candid about the tense situation. “Everyone knows that what happens in Russia will affect us.””

NORTH AFRICA

Libya/Nigeria

21.06.23: africanews: Over 100 Nigerian migrants deported from Libya: “Libyan authorities deported over a hundred Nigerians back home on Tuesday (June 20). [...] The deportation was supervised by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as part of an ongoing joint program with the Libyan government to deport illegal migrants.”

Libya

30.06.23: Al Jazeera: Drone attacks hit Wagner base in Libya; no casualties reported: Reports carried by Libyan and Arab news websites said the air raids were launched from aircraft belonging to the UN-recognised government in divided Libya. Wagner mercenaries remain active in oil-rich eastern Libya as well as the country's south, though some left to fight in Mali or in Ukraine, supporting the Russian army's invasion.

WEST AFRICA

West Africa/G5

21.06.23: Anadolu: 5-member African bloc force fails to configure on ground, unable to fight terrorism: Niger president: “The Group of Five for the Sahel Joint Force, or G5 Sahel, an institutional framework for regional cooperation in development policies and security matters in West Africa, has never functioned properly, even before Mali's withdrawal on June 30 last year, the president said, while citing its configuration, which he claims does not fully correspond to the needs on the ground.”

Mali

24.06.23: Tagesschau: Mali bekommt eine neue Verfassung (Mali gets a new constitution): The military-ruled West African crisis state of Mali is getting a new constitution that will give the president and the armed forces more power in the future. 97 percent of the participants in last Sunday's constitutional referendum voted in favor of the new basic law, with a turnout of 39.4 percent, according to the electoral authority in the capital Bamako.

Mali

30.06.23: Al Jazeera: UN Security Council ends peacekeeping mission in Mali: “The UN Security Council ended a decade-old peacekeeping mission in Mali after the ruling military demanded the withdrawal of the international force battling an armed rebellion “without delay”. The 15-member council on Friday [June 30] adopted a French-drafted resolution asking the mission to begin on Saturday [July 1] “the cessation of its operations, transfer of its tasks, as well as the orderly and safe drawdown and withdrawal of its personnel, with the objective of completing this process by December 31, 2023”. UN peacekeepers are credited with playing a vital role in protecting civilians against an armed

rebellion that has killed thousands. Some experts have feared the security situation could worsen when the mission departs, leaving Mali’s underequipped army alone with about 1,000 Wagner fighters to combat fighters who control swaths of territory in the desert north and centre.”

Niger

22.06.23: Africaintelligence: Brussels to play key support role in border protection: “To help Nigerien troops in their battle against armed groups, the EU is financing and overseeing the construction of a chain of military posts along Niger’s border with Mali and Burkina Faso. A handful of French and Italian operators have been snapping up the construction and supply contracts.”

EAST AFRICA

Egypt/Sudan

27.06.23: Al Jazeera: Stuck in limbo: Frustration, despair at Sudan-Egypt border [Background Report]: “Thousands of people fleeing the war in Sudan are stranded in the town of Wadi Halfa, by the border with Egypt, facing an uncertain future. [...] Sudan descended into chaos in mid-April after months of rising tensions exploded into an open conflict between rival generals in the Sudanese army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) who are seeking to control the country. Thousands of Sudanese have been trapped between the violent clashes and the increasingly dire conditions at the congested border crossings.”

leads to suffering and deaths in Tigray: “A freeze on the delivery of food assistance in Ethiopia by the country’s two largest food donors is having a devastating impact in Tigray, with more people dying of hunger “as a direct result of no aid”, according to one of the northern region’s top relief officials.”

Sudan

26.06.23: taz: RSF-Miliz rückt in Khartoum vor (RSF advances in Khartoum): “In Sudan’s capital Khartoum, the bloody power struggle between the army and the paramilitary militia RSF (Rapid Support Forces) may be about to be decided. The RSF, commanded by former Vice President Hamdan Daglo Hametti, reported on Monday the capture of one of the most important headquarters of the Sudanese security apparatus: the headquarters of the Central Reserve Police

Ethiopia/Tigray

22.06.23: TNH: USAID/WFP food aid freeze

(CRP) in the south of Khartoum and the neighboring Awad Khogali military camp.”

See also

13.06.23: Al Jazeera: Ethnic violence in Sudan raises genocide alarm as war rages on;

15.06.23: Al Jazeera: West Darfur governor abducted, killed as war in Sudan spreads;

16.06.23: Al Jazeera: As Sudan war rages,

rival sides accused of looting, diverting aid;

19.06.23: Al Jazeera: Donors pledge nearly \$1.5bn for Sudan crisis response, UN says;

27.06.23 UN: Soudan : difficultés d'acheminement de l'aide dans un contexte d'escalade du conflit (Sudan: difficulties in delivering aid as conflict escalates)

29.06.23: taz: Darfur: Verbrannte Erde, verwesende Leichen (War in Darfur: Scorched earth, decaying corpses)

WEST ASIA

Syria

14.06.23: Zeit: UN kündigen Kürzung der Lebensmittelhilfen für Syrien an (UN announces cut in food aid to Syria): “Instead of the 5.5 million in need, the World Food Program will soon be serving only three million people. The reason is an “unprecedented funding crisis”.”

Syria

30.06.23: Al Jazeera: UN to investigate fate of 130,000 people missing in Syria war: The United Nations General Assembly approved a resolution that will establish an independent body to determine what happened to more than 130,000 people missing as a result of the conflict in Syria. Syria, Russia, Belarus, China, North Korea, Cuba and Iran were among those voting against UN resolution.

EUROPE

Bulgaria/Romania

19.06.23: Statewatch: Bulgaria and Romania speed up asylum and deportation procedures with EU support: “As revealed by Statewatch in March, “the key border between Bulgaria and Turkey,” was to be the first target of €600 million being made available to reinforce border controls and speed up removals. Of that funding, the Commission recently announced that it will make €140 million available “for the

development of electronic surveillance systems at land external borders” and €120 million to “support reception and asylum systems,” in particular for the reception of unaccompanied minors and “reception capacity at the border”. Both Bulgaria and Romania have recently circulated notes within the Council to update other member states on the projects, and the Commission also trumpeted the “progress made” in a press release.” These accelerated procedures are also a key element of the

Asylum Procedure Regulation, a law that is yet to be agreed – and so the implementation of the accelerated procedures is itself being accelerated through the projects.

Greece

14.06.23: Alarm Phone: Europe's "shield": Hundreds presumed to have drowned off Greece: "Off the coast of Greece, a large fishing boat has capsized. We fear that hundreds of people have drowned. [...] In the early hours of today, 14 June 2023, the boat capsized. [...] After the fishing boat capsized, Greek authorities were quick to publicly justify their failure to rescue. The reality is that they had been alerted many hours before the vessel capsized and had been informed by different sources that this was a boat in distress. Reportedly, assets of the Hellenic Coast Guard and a Frontex aircraft were on scene. European authorities could have sent out adequate rescue resources without delay. They failed to do so because their desire to prevent arrivals was stronger than the need to rescue hundreds of lives."

Greece

22.06.21: SZ: Schwere Vorwürfe gegen die griechische Küstenwache (Serious accusations against the Greek coast guard): Witnesses report how the Greek coast guard attached a rope to the boat, which contained people, and pulled it behind them in such a way that the ship finally lost its balance and sank. [...] A video is another document incriminating the Greek coast guard. "Our destination was Italy," the refugees say in it. When the Greek coast guard arrived, they attached a blue rope to the boat. They were dragged along for about five minutes, then the Coast Guard vessel pulled the cutter to the right, to the left and to the right again until it overturned.

See also

15.06.23: Solomon: "They are urgently asking for help": the SOS that was ignored;

16.06.23: Al Jazeera: Protests across Greece as hope to find shipwreck survivors fades;

16.06.23: Frontex: Frontex statement following tragic shipwreck off Pylos;

17.06.23: Tagesschau: Überlebende berichten von drei Pushbacks (Survivors report three pushbacks);

21.06.21: taz: Vom Nildelta in den Tod (From the Nile Delta to Death);

27.06.23 NYT: E.U. Border Agency Considers Pulling Out of Greece Over Migrant Abuses;

28.06.23: Die Zeit: Geflüchtete aus Pakistan: "Ich verfluche den Tag, an dem ich ihm erlaubt habe zu gehen" (Refugee from Pakistan: "I curse the day I allowed him to leave");

28.06.23 SZ: Schiffbruch von Pylos: Trauer im Nildelta (Shipwreck of Pylos: Mourning in the Nile Delta)

Italy/Mediterranean

09.06.23: taz: 1.400 aus Seenot gerettet (1,400 rescued from distress at sea): "The Italian Coast Guard is on a large-scale rescue mission in the Mediterranean. The post-fascist Meloni government is trying to conduct the mission as quietly as possible. [...] Only about ten percent of the people in distress off Italy are rescued by NGOs; the large remainder are taken on board by coast guard vessels or arrive in Italy's ports under their own power."

Spain/Morocco

22.06.23: HRW: No Justice for Deaths at Melilla Border [Background Report]: "There has been no credible investigation or justice for the victims of the horrific violence and

deaths of asylum seekers and migrants at the border between Morocco and the Spanish enclave of Melilla a year ago, Human Rights Watch said”.

UK

29.06.23: Al Jazeera: In blow to Sunak, UK court rules Rwanda deportation plan unlawful: “A British court has ruled that the

government’s controversial plan to deport asylum seekers to Rwanda is unlawful as the African nation cannot be considered a safe third country. In a major setback for Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, who has pledged to deter people from arriving across the Channel in small boats, three Court of Appeal judges on Thursday [June 27] said the “removal of asylum seekers to Rwanda” would be “unlawful”.

EUROPEAN UNION

CEAS

30.06.23 SZ: Orbán: „Im Sitzungssaal spielte sich ein Migrationskrieg ab“ (Orbán: “A migration war was playing out in the boardroom”): Because the Hungarian prime minister and Poland resist, the EU summit does not adopt a joint declaration on immigration and refugee policy. This is important mainly symbolically, it does not stop the legislation.

See also

07.06.23: Stellungnahme des Rats für Migration (Statement of the Council for Migration);

08.06.23: Guardian: EU agrees radical reforms on migration and asylum laws;

16.06.23: Dis:orient: EU Asylum-Reform: The Myth of the ‘Safe Third Countries’;

22.06.23: migration-control.info: CEAS, Meloni and the situation in Tunisia;

23.06.23 ECRE: Mediterranean: Ongoing Arrivals and Deaths Amid Negotiations Between Tunisia and EU;

28.06.23: Al Jazeera: EU’s slow move to common asylum policy ‘fails to prevent deaths’;

29.06.23: taz: Das Mittelmeer ist „ein Tatort“ (The Mediterranean is “a crime scene”)

EU/Kenya

19.06.23: Al Jazeera: Kenya signs EU trade deal in boost to Brussels’ Africa ties: “Kenya and the European Union have signed a trade deal in a coup for Brussels as it seeks deeper economic ties with Africa in the face of competition from China. [...] Once ratified and entered into force, Kenya will receive duty-free and quota-free access to the EU, its biggest market where it sends roughly one-fifth of all its exports. Imports from the EU to Kenya such as chemicals and machinery will receive progressive tariff reductions over a period of 25 years, but some sensitive products will be excluded. [...] Kenya’s main exports to the EU are agricultural products, including vegetables, fruits and the country’s famous tea and coffee. More than 70 percent of Kenya’s cut flowers are destined for Europe.”

EU/Libya

23.06.23: Euractiv: EU delivers new patrol boats to Libya despite militia links: “The EU delivered two patrol boats to Libya in

a ceremony on Thursday (22 June) in the Sicilian city of Messina in the presence of European Commission officials, the Italian authorities, and the Libyan coastguard, according to a press statement on Friday (23 June)."

EU/Libya

23.06.23: Statewatch: EU border mission in Libya gets revamp: "The EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) in Libya is about to receive an update to its tasks. [...] It will now include specific references to "the fight against cross-border crime, including human trafficking and migrant smuggling."

EU/Tunisia

19.06.23: Qantara: EU-Tunisia migration deal: Proposal ignores migrant human rights concerns: "Earlier this week, von der Leyen proposed a €900 million (\$971 million) economic aid package for Tunisia as well as another €150 million in immediate budget assistance and a further €105 million for border management and anti-smuggling activities. The last part of the offer, in particular, highlights Tunisia's potential role as a gatekeeper of migration from North Africa to Europe."

See also

15.06.23: Dawn MENA: The EU Cares More About Keeping Migrants in Tunisia Than Saving the Country's Democracy [Background report];

18.06.23: Irish Times: New EU funding deal with Tunisia supporting authoritarian regime, say critics [Background report];

18.06.23: nd: Noch mehr EU-Geld an Tunesien (Even more EU money to Tunisia);

19.06.23: SZ: Faeser in Tunis: Ein schrecklich

netter Freund (Faeser in Tunis: A terribly nice friend);

19.06.23: FAZ: Zusammenarbeit bei Migration: Wie Nancy Faeser in Tunesien um Fachkräfte wirbt (Cooperation on migration: How Nancy Faeser courts skilled workers in Tunisia);

19.06.23: The National News: France to offer Tunisia \$28million to tackle migration influx to Europe;

20.06.23: Tagesschau: Viele offene Fragen (Many open questions);

20.06.23: Pro Asyl: Menschenrechte im Ausverkauf: Tunesien-Deal bahnt sich an (Human rights in sell-out: Tunisia deal looming);

21.06.23: BBC: Migrant crisis: Tunisian fisherman finds dead bodies in his net;

26.06.23: RLS/Sofian Philip Naceur: The Spirit of 1951;

27.06.23: InfoMigrants: Naufrage en Tunisie : "Les rescapés racontent que les garde-côtes ont jeté du gaz lacrymogène dans le canot" (Shipwreck in Tunisia: "The survivors say the coastguard threw tear gas into the dinghy");

27.06.23: Euractiv: Tunisia pact a 'blueprint' for new 'cash for migrant' deals, says EU chief

EU/Ukraine

14.06.23: TNI: How the EU has used the war in Ukraine to expand its border regime [Background report]: "The EU has used the war in Ukraine to expand its deadly border regime in Eastern Europe, in particular the role of Frontex, doubling its efforts to keep out those fleeing other wars and conflicts. Moreover, Ukraine, which has acted as the EU's border guard for nearly two decades, has continued to play this role even as the war rages on."

Frontex

06.06.23: Statewatch: 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”.”

See also

21.05.23: Euractiv: Frontex risk analyses based on unreliable information, EU watchdog says;

27.06.23: Euractiv: 50% of Frontex's boat sightings triggered illegal returns

Turkey/Bulgaria:

04.06.23: Bulgaria.Bodermonitoring: Asylum seekers say that they were tortured and beaten in Edirne's detention center: “Thirty members of the detained 104 members of the religious minority of the religious minority group Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light, including elderly and children, which asked for asylum on the 24th of May 2023. After presenting themselves at the Turkish-Bulgarian border-crossing, Turkish authorities attacked them and detained the whole group. Days later the website of the religious minority published videos and voice records, which documented the violence of the Turkish authorities, that were also taking place during and after the incident at the border in the detention center in Edirne, which is located near the border.”

REPORTS

04.06.23: Guardian: The EU pays Africa's brutal militias to lock up migrants. Britain wants to follow suit: Comment by Kenan Malik: Torture, rape and death are the results of a policy to keep desperate people away from Europe

06.06.23 Hoover Institution: The New Dynamics In The Sahel Region: “While jihadi groups in the Sahel have been constantly adapting to an ever evolving political and security situation, the Western powers seem stuck in old and failed paradigms that greatly limit their maneuverability.”

09.06.23: BVMN: Illegal Pushbacks and Border Violence Reports. Balkan Regional

Report April 2023: “In April, the Border Violence Monitoring Network (BVMN) shared 15 testimonies of pushbacks impacting 398 people on the move (POM) across the Balkans and Greece. This report brings together first-hand testimonies from a range of countries in the region to look at the way European Union states and other actors are affecting systemic violence towards people crossing borders. It also includes general updates and insights from advocacy actions taken by members of the network.”

13.06.23: Statewatch: Externalisation of migration control: from the 1990s to the present: A talk given by Statewatch

researcher Yasha Maccanico at the TransBorder Camp in Nantes, July 2022.

16.06.23: UNITED has just released its yearly update of the **'UNITED List of Refugee Deaths'**, listing 52.760 documented cases of migrant and refugee deaths (since 1993) attributed to the Fatal Policies of Fortress Europe. And this number is daily growing, ten thousands more won't ever be found.

21.06.23 Global Initiative: Labour-trafficking risks in Sahara-Sahel ASGM: This report "assesses risks of exploitation and labour trafficking in gold-mining areas in northern Niger and northern Mali. It examines the modalities of recruitment and employment, the risks they pose to workers and the structural factors that contribute to the vulnerability of gold miners. The report also identifies key opportunities for policy makers to address these risks while recognising the crucial role of gold mining for local livelihoods and stability."

CAMPAIGNS

Petition Sea-Watch: Schiffbruch lückenlos aufklären, Seenotrettung entkriminalisieren (Fully investigate shipwrecks, decriminalise rescue at sea): "On 14 June 2023, a ship capsized off the Greek coast near Pylos: about 750 people on it. We have to assume that up to 600 people drowned. Evidence is

mounting that the Greek coast guard was actively involved in the capsizing of the boat. The European Union and its member states deny people fleeing safe and legal routes to Europe and ensure that they cannot exercise their right to protection. Enough!"

EVENTS

Webinar 10.07.23, 16:30-18:00 CET: Surveillance technology and artificial intelligence: what impact for people on the move?: "European borders have been the stage of decades-long efforts to militarise and securitise the control of migration. Huge sums of public money have been invested in deploying security and defense tools and equipment to curb arrivals towards the EU territory, both via externalisation policies in countries in the Middle East and North Africa and at Europe's borders themselves. In

this strategy of "muscling-up" the borders, technology has played a crucial role. Often presented as promising, objective and infallible, technology is used to surveil, control and allegedly even predict mobility in the Mediterranean region, while making a distinction between those who are allowed to enter the Schengen territory from those who aren't. But is it so? And what are the consequences for the people subjected to these technologies?"