



Monthly Report of observations of evictions by the Human Rights Observers in Calais, Pas-de-Calais – March 2020

Since 2017, the aim of the Human Rights Observers project has been to observe and document the daily human rights violations of displaced people at the French-British border¹.

Since 17th March, under the “**responsible and supportive**” lock down, displaced people have been subjected to **135 evictions** and remained **confined outside**. The Sub-Prefect of Calais, M. Tournaire, declared “*the presence of associations in public spaces during dismantling operations which take place daily, could be subject to a fine from police as provided for by decree n°2020-293 du 23 mars 2020*”.² Our work has been restricted, therefore we lack certain data, particularly concerning items seized during these evictions.

Data collected during daily evictions of informal living sites



90 evictions of informal settlements



24 tents seized



1 sleeping bags/blankets seized



2 bags/suitcases seized



6 arrests



98 unaccompanied minors present³



12 Covid-19 sheltering operations

The political strategy of avoiding ‘fixation points’ has led to daily evictions in Calais, which take place between 8am-11am. This involves displaced people being forced to move their tents and belongings, anywhere between two meters to 500 meters. Personal belongings and basic necessities are often seized and/or destroyed. These operations of harassment are also accompanied by often abusive identity checks (*Cour de cassation, 25 avril 1985, n° de pourvoi 84-92916*), followed by arbitrary arrests and illegal stays in administrative detention.

Since 3rd April, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the prefecture of Pas-de-Calais has put in place a special plan to provide shelter for displaced people living in the zone des dunes area of Calais. According to the prefecture, 482 places in accommodation were offered. However, associations estimate there to be 1112 displaced people living in informal camps in Calais.

Harassment of Human Rights Defenders



2 time we were filmed by technical and forensic police



7 intimidation attempts⁴



2 requests to leave and move away from the perimeter of operation

¹ This data is based on our observations, and is therefore not exhaustive.

² In a letter dated 25th March 2020.

³ The number of minors recorded in Calais by the Refugee Youth Service before the Covid-19 pandemic was 189. Due to necessary changes during the pandemic, RYS are currently only in contact with 98 unaccompanied minors.

⁴ 1 verbal warning for not respecting the confinement, 2 identity controls, 2 controls of Covid-19 attestations, 2 fines.