



Monthly Report of observations of evictions by the Human Rights Observers in Calais, Pas-de-Calais - December 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 border*.

Data collected during evictions of informal living sites

	87 evictions of informal settlements		At least 528 tents and tarps seized
	At least 41 arrests during evictions		270 unaccompanied children met**
	At least 215 blankets and sleeping bags seized		At least 15 bicycles seized
	At least 51 bags and suitcases seized		Clothes seized at least 21 times
	Documents seized at least 4 times***		At least 10 phones and power banks seized

The political strategy of avoiding "fixation points" has led to daily evictions in Calais, which mainly take place between 8am-11am. This involves displaced people being forced to move their tents and belongings, anywhere between 2 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.

This month, 11 places of life, which are located in and around Calais, were targeted by law enforcement for these daily evictions. Up to 6 of these places are evicted by a police convoy over the course of a single morning.

HRO has recorded an increase in large-scale dismantling operations since the 10th July, coinciding with the appointment of Gerald Darmanin as Minister of the Interior. On the 11th December, HRO recorded 3 large-scale dismantling operations, and another on the 30th December, during which inhabitants were forced onto buses and transported out of the city. All tents, furniture and food supplies were seized and thrown away: on 30th December, at least 70 tents and tarps were seized.



At least 8 instances of violence/ excessive force against displaced people were witnessed by the observers: police officers shook and/or kicked tents to wake inhabitants 3 times; a displaced person was patted down aggressively 1 time; displaced people were chased down by police officers 2 times. On another occasion, displaced people were gathered into a dead-end street and forced onto buses.

Harassment of human rights defenders during observations



The observers were fined 14 times for non-compliance with confinement regulations. This targeted harassment has made our observations particularly hard to carry out this month.

14 other intimidation attempts: observers were ID checked 11 times; an observer was called by their name by police officers without having been ID checked 1 time; an observer was encircled, pushed out of the perimeter and separated from their colleague 1 time. On one occasion, the observers were the only pedestrians blocked from passing through the perimeter.

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

** Number of self-declared UACs living in the streets, met by the associations (those not mandated by the State) in December. This number is an under-representation of the number of children living on the streets because the associations marauds do not cover daily all places where UACs live; some children do not communicate with the associations; others have direct access to shelter via the mandated association and are therefore not included in this figure. One observation remains: repeated evictions are a source of increased fragility and even disappearance of these children, both girls and boys, and therefore increase the risk of trafficking and exploitation.

*** Including identity and asylum documents.