



Monthly Report of observations of evictions by the Human Rights Observers in Calais, Pas-de-Calais - July 2021

Since 2017, the aim of the Human Rights Observers project has been to observe and document the daily state violence of displaced people at the French-British border*.

Data collected during evictions of informal living sites

	At least 94 evictions of informal settlements		At least 485 tents and 531 tarps seized
	At least 9 arrests during evictions		At least 127 unaccompanied children met**
	At least 286 blankets and 180 sleeping bag seized		At least 17 bikes seized
	At least 97 backpacks seized		At least 84 mattresses seized
	Clothes has been seized at least 10 times.		

The political strategy of avoiding "fixation points" has led to daily evictions in Calais, which mainly take place between 8am-7pm. 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.

HRO has recorded an increase in large-scale dismantling operations since the 10th July 2020, concurrent with the appointment of Gerald Darmanin as Minister of the Interior. On the 9th of July 2021, HRO recorded large-scale dismantling operations, during which inhabitants were forced onto buses and transported out of the city. All tents, furniture and food supplies were seized and thrown away: 29 tents and 62 backpacks were seized.



Gendarmes told exiles during an eviction: "You have to go faster, go, because you are disturbing us" (04/07). Gendarmes pushed exiles hard to escort them out of the eviction area, saying "hop, hop, hop" and adding, "this is something they understand" without an interpreter being present (26/07). A gendarme snatched a tent from its owner on 26/07. Gendarmes aggressively pushed exiles at least once. CRS (refusing to show their RIO) injured an exiled person by hitting him with a baton on his already injured leg (30/07). CRS used tear gas grenades at least twice (16/07 and 28/07).



Human rights defenders saw tents and tarps being lacerated by the cleaning team on two occasions (01/07 and 19/07).

Harassment of human rights defenders during observations



20 intimidation attempts:

3 HRO observers were pushed aggressively on several occasions (23/07 and 26/07). One gendarme snatched and threw the phone of an observer on the ground. Observers were subjected to arbitrary identity checks 14 times; observers were photographed and/or filmed by law enforcement officers with their work and/or personal phones 14 times; observers were escorted at least 12 times. The gendarmes carrying out the expulsions made inappropriate comments such as "these shitty kassos, they're breaking our balls, do we have the right to break their balls too?" (01/07) and "If you film, it's an identity check and then I'll press charges, you've read the text, it's a 45,000 euro fine. So you stop filming" and "I'll be happy to press charges to get a 13th month's pay" (11/07).

* 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 July 2021. 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.