



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

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

Data collected during evictions of informal living sites :

	At least 94 evictions of informal settlements.		At least 436 tents and 285 tarps seized.
	At least 14 arrests during evictions.		At least 203 unaccompanied children met. **
	At least 54 mattresses seized.		At least 16 bike seized.
	At least 86 backpacks seized.		Clothes have been seized at least 44 times.
	At least 5 chairs seized.		

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 04/06, 11/06 and the 19/06, HRO recorded large-scale dismantling operations, during which inhabitants were forced onto buses and transported out of the city.

On the 06/04, the eviction operation of the FricheMagnésia, some people testified that they had been victims of police violence. A 14-year-old minor was gassed by the police, and was told "here it's France, it's not an Arab country". Law enforcement representatives forced him to go out of his tent, pushed him and prevented him from recovering his personal belongings. He also saw one person being pushed and then beaten by the police. One person had his tent slashed and gassed while he was still inside. One person tried to recover his medicines, but the police prevented him from doing so. One person was woken up by a kick. He expressed his wish to stay there, the police beat him with batons, grabbed him by the collar and dragged him to the bus by force. All personal belongings were taken: on 06/04, 53 tents and 48 tarps were taken.

During the large-scale eviction operation on 11/06, people were woken up without the presence of translators and were then escorted in small groups by law enforcement representatives and systematically palpated before being forced to get on the sheltering (MAB) buses. All personal belongings were taken: on 11/06, 97 tents and 23 tarps were taken.



On 06/02, HRO observers observed a disproportionate use of force and violence by the police. Indeed, were found on site following this disproportionate use of force :

- At least 13 LBD (Defensive Bullets Launchers) bullets were fired ;
- At least 6 sting-ball grenades (one of which had not exploded) ;
- At least 10 pieces of MP7 tear gas grenades ;
- At least 1 piece of CM6 tear gas grenades ;
- A colossal number of tear gas delay propulsion devices : white (range 100m), black (range 50m) and green (range 40m).

Harassment of HRO observers :



34 intimidation attempts :

An observer was threatened for outrageous behaviour against an officer after having denounced the state system of evictions and seizures of personal belongings. A HRO observer was arrested and remanded in custody for outrageous behaviour as well. A law enforcement representative requested that the faces of the observers be filmed to fill out a report on HRO's presence on a private land. HRO observers were subjected to arbitrary identity checks 20 times, a law enforcement representative told an observer that a driving license was not a sufficient proof of identity and that a national identity card or passport was required. Law enforcement representatives asked twice HROs observers to change their main postal address for the one in Calais on their identity documents. The HRO observers were escorted at least 10 times. The law enforcement convoy carrying out the evictions endangered observers by stopping on the motorway and blocking the HRO team.

* 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 June 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.