



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

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 :

	At least 93 evictions of informal settlements.		At least 346 tents and 168 tarps seized.
	At least 12 arrests during evictions.		At least 194 unaccompanied children met**.
	At least 34 backpacks and plastic bags seized.		At least 47 sleeping-bags and blankets seized.
	At least 8 bicycles seized.		Clothes have been seized at least 19 times.
	At least one phone and one power bank seized.		Other objects were entered such as: a electric generator, a life jacket, a pump, a large amount of food, hygiene products.

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.

HRO has recorded an increase in large-scale dismantling operations since the 10th July, concurrent with the appointment of Gerald Darmanin as Minister of the Interior.



On 2 occasions, displaced people were chased by numerous police officers. On 2 occasions displaced people were surrounded by police officers without the presence of translators to explain to them the situation at hand. On at least 1 occasion, a displaced person was aggressively body searched by police officers. On at least 1 occasion, inhabitants of a living site were prevented from recuperating their personal belongings that were in the process of being seized – the police officer present at the time explicitly said, "No he does not have the right to take his tent"

Harassment of human rights observers during observations :



22 intimidation attempts :

On at least 2 occasions, HRO observers were subjected to receiving demeaning comments from police officers. ("Rude children like you should be slapped and sent to bed"). On 8 occasions, HRO observers were subjected to arbitrary ID checks. On at least 1 occasion, police officers took photos of the ID documents of HRO observers. On 21 occasions, HRO observers were photographed/ filmed by police officers on their professional and personal devices. On 28 occasions, HRO was prevented from carrying out their essential work due to the strategic placement of an extra-large perimeter around the living site by police officers. On 26 occasions, HRO team members were escorted out of living sites by police officers during evictions. On at least 1 occasion, HRO observers were arbitrarily blocked by police from entering the security perimeter during eviction even though the general public (e.g dog walkers and joggers) were freely granted access to entering.

* 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 May 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.