



Monthly Report of observations of evictions by the Human Rights Observers in Grande-Synthe, Nord - October 2021

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

Data collected during evictions of informal living sites :



At least 4 evictions of informal settlements



At least 145 tents and tarps destroyed



At least 25 shelters destroyed



At least 73 sleeping bags and blankets destroyed



98 unaccompanied children met



At least 1 arrest during the evictions

The political strategy of avoiding "fixation points" has led to increasingly frequent evictions in Grande-Synthe. Some sheltering options, with buses, are forced, as those who resist are arrested by the Police aux Frontières. During these operations, all shelters, along with personal belongings and basic necessities, are seized and 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. These arbitrary ID checks and arrests are daily, outside the context of evictions as well.



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 13/10, the police refused to allow a woman to leave the so-called "security" perimeter, preventing her from joining her family.

On the 20/10, the police carried out an eviction without any legal basis and destroyed the personal belongings of 7 people.

On the 26/10, a large-scale eviction involved more than 500 inhabitants of the evicted living site. 130 tents and shelters were lacerated and destroyed by the cleaning company "Ramery", without any possibility for the inhabitants to keep their belongings beforehand. The clothes, at least 70 sleeping bags and blankets, clothes, bags and personal belongings were thrown into the mud and trampled on.

Harassment of human rights observers during observations :



8 intimidation attempts :

On the 13/10, a deputy mayor present at the evicted living site was aggressive and threatening towards HRO observers saying "Stop filming or I'll break your phone"; On the 26/10, HRO observers were subjected to arbitrary identity checks on 4 occasions ; the same day, HRO members were mocked, pushed 5 times ; a police officer grabbed and pushed an observer, and touched another HRO member's chest. This officer did not want to show his RIO.

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

** The number of reports made to authorities is below the actual number of unaccompanied children present and in danger in Grande-Synthe during October. On this territory, contrary to Calais, no association that is not mandated by the State has any specific activity targeting UACs or is able to carry out this precise identification work. One observation remains: repeated evictions are a source of increased fragility and even disappearance of these children, both girls and boys, and therefore of increased risks of trafficking and exploitation (Source: Utopia 56).