



Monthly report of observations of evictions by Human Rights Observers in Calais, Pas-de-Calais - January 2022

Since 2017, the aim of the Human Rights Observers project, supported by l'Auberge des Migrants, has been to observe, document and denounce the daily state violence against displaced people at the French-British border *.

Data collected during evictions of informal living sites:

	At least 137 evictions of living sites		At least 2 large-scale evictions
	At least 329 tents and tarps seized		At least 55 blankets and sleeping bags seized
	At least 21 backpacks seized		Wood seized at least 7 times
	At least 12 mattresses seized		Clothes seized at least 2 times
	At least 1 phone seized		At least 40 arrests during evictions
	At least 43 unaccompanied children met **		

The political strategy of avoiding "fixation points" has led to daily evictions in Calais, which mainly take place between 8am-6pm. 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 often accompanied by abusive identity checks (Cour de cassation, 25 avril 1985, n° de pourvoi 84-92916), followed by arbitrary arrests and illegal administrative detention. In January, HRO recorded that during evictions of living site, no accommodation was offered to the evicted inhabitants. HRO has recorded an increase in large-scale dismantling operations since 10th July 2020, concurrent with the appointment of Gerald Darmanin as Minister of the Interior. On 06/01 and 27/01, HRO observed large-scale dismantling operations, during which inhabitants were forced onto buses without knowing their destination, and taken outside and far away from Calais.



On 02/01, CRS used tear gas and chased displaced people out of their living site; On 06/01, displaced people were escorted by force to buses and were then patted down. HRO members heard CRS screaming at them; On 12/01 and 19/01, heavily armed CRS surrounded displaced people for no reason; On 21/01, CRS chased displaced people. Also, observers saw a CRS kicking a cuddly toy with his foot. An injured inhabitant on crutches was forced by police officers to cross a slippery ditch. A CRS screamed "Are they still sleeping at this time? Fucking wake up!" as he looked inside a tent in which displaced people were sleeping.

Harassment of Human Rights Observers



33 intimidation attempts:

HRO recorded an increase in obstructions to observations: arbitrary perimeters were formed in order to prevent HRO from documenting the evictions. On 04/01, police agents blocked the observers with their shields. On 21/01, 27 CRS escorted two HRO members out of the operation. On 02/01, many CRS chased HRO members. An observer was assaulted by police agents while helping inhabitants to keep their tents. The police chased two observers and violently pushed them. Another observer was injured by police agents when she tried to leave the evicted site. On 04/01 and 10/01, observers were grabbed by CRS. On 19/01, a CRS pushed an observer with his LBD40 gun. On 21/01, a CRS stepped on the feet of a HRO member who almost fell. On the same day, the HRO team was prevented from getting back to their car. On 02/01, 15/01, 17/01 and 23/01, CRS made fun of HRO members' accents. A police officer took the observers' IDs away for 5 minutes. On 30/01, a CRS made the following comments, talking about the two female HRO members: "Don't they have nothing else to do?" and "Honestly, she's beautiful". In total, HRO members have been ID checked 13 times, including 9 times on 06/01. The observers were violently pushed 8 times, none of the CRS indicated their RIO. In total, observers were filmed by the police agents at least 21 times.

* 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 not mandated in January. This number is an under-representation of the number of children living on the streets because the associations marauds don't cover all places where UACs live; some children don't 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, and therefore increase the risk of trafficking and exploitation (Source: ECPAT-FRANCE)