



Monthly Report on observations of evictions by the Human Rights Observers, project supported by l'Auberge des Migrants, in Dunkirk and the surroundings, North - July 2022

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

Data collected during evictions of informal living sites :

 At least 4 evictions of informal settlements	 At least 88 blankets and sleeping bags destroyed
 At least 4 displaced people were arrested during the evictions	 At least 5 mattresses destroyed
 At least 205 tents and tarps destroyed	 At least 36 unaccompanied children met**

The political strategy of avoiding "fixation points" has led to increasingly frequent and violent eviction in Dunkirk. Some sheltering options are not communicated to the inhabitants of the evicted places. During these operations, all shelters, necessities, and personal belongings are destroyed. These operations of harassment are accompanied by identity checks that are often abusive (Cour de Cassation, 25 avril, 1985, n° de pourvoi 84-92916) followed by arbitrary arrests and illegal stays in administrative detention centres. These arbitrary identity checks and arrests are a daily occurrence, even outside the context of evictions.

As part of the policy of harassment at the border, the State carried out large-scale evictions in Dunkirk on 07, 20 and 27 of July. At each eviction, people's personal belongings (tents, blankets, bags, identity papers, mobile phones, medicines, clothes, etc.) were destroyed on the spot and/or thrown into the skip, without giving their owners the opportunity to take them back. These acts are unlawful (Art 322-1 and following of the Penal Code) and were committed in front of the bailiffs in charge of the eviction. Moreover, on 20 July, a water tank placed in one living site and filled by ROOTS association, the only water point accessible to those living in that site, was seized during an eviction despite the promises of the sub-prefect not to touch it.



The HRO team observed systematic use of heavy machinery, including tractors and excavators, to destroy and empty the areas of the evictees' personal belongings. This is despite the fact that the owners of these belongings were often closeby at the time. Like most evictions, all tents and shelters are destroyed by the company "Ramery" under the supervision of the police and the State. ***



During the eviction, HRO members observe violence and intimidation against the displaced people. Without claiming to be exhaustive, we documented, among other things, on 07 July, 10 CRS surrounded and pushed those being evicted while shouting "Oh, let's go!". On 20 July, a national police officer told the displaced people "go this way mister for the moment after you come back, well yes today it's cold and tomorrow it will be hot". Both exchanges took place in the absence of anyone to translate. On 27 July, a man was body-searched without any explanation of the situation. We also observed that at every eviction the police were disproportionately heavily armed (LBD, automatic weapons, detector dogs, etc.).

Harassment of human rights observers during evictions :



Several intimidation attempts :

The observers had their identity checked three times and were filmed on 07 July twice by officers with their personal phones, which is illegal, and three times with pedestrian cameras, and on 20/07 with a "professional" telephone and a pedestrian camera without warning. Furthermore, on 07/07, a police officer said "go ahead ladies, otherwise I'll do it myself, you'll see it will go much faster", a national police officer shouted at HRO, "we won't tell you 36 times, we ask you to obey, to comply", while another officer said "no, it's not your job at all, you have to comply with our orders, that's all". In addition, HRO members were escorted away from evictions on three occasions to prevent documentation, and perimeters were arbitrarily established at each eviction operation.

* 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 Dunkirk and the surroundings during July 2022. On this territory, contrary to Calais, no association that is 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).

*** Ramery is a company mandated by the State to seize and destroy property during evictions.

Evidence shared on our social networks (instagram @Humanrightsobs, twitter @HumanRightsObs)