



Monthly Report of observations of evictions by the Human Rights Observers project supported by l'Auberge des Migrants in the Calais area, Pas-de-Calais - December 2022

Since 2017, the aim of the Human Rights Observers project 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 1 00 evictions in 14 informal settlements



At least 13 arrests during evictions



At least 71 unaccompanied children met**



At least 133 tents, including 20 full and 39 tarps stolen



At least 2 plastic bags containing personal belongings and 2 cardboard boxes, used as insulation have been stolen



At least 4 clothes and a cell phone battery have been stolen

The political strategy of avoiding "fixation points" has led to daily evictions in the Calais area, 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 stolen and/ or destroyed. ***. In Calais, a place for the recovery of belongings has been set up without people being systematically informed of its existence by members of the Prefecture or the police. HRO has received several testimonials from people who claim they were not made aware of the case of this recovery system.

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.



During the evictions operations, HRO members witnessed violent intimidation of displaced people. Our observations are non-exhaustive. These are some examples of instances of violent intimidation perpetrated by police against displaced people during evictions in december 2022.

During all the operations, HRO noted the over-armament of the police forces, who are very often armed with LBDs, tear gas, tonfas, shields, helmets... This armament is intimidating and disproportionate to the operations in question.

On December 2, a CRS officer kicked a tent while one person was inside. On the 19th, a BAC officer shook a tent to get the resident out and rushed the exiles so that they did not have time to retrieve their belongings. On the 29th, a CRS officer addressed an exiled person as follows: "Don't get too excited, you". These police practices are intimidating and are intended to create fear of violence. They are part of the state's policy of harassment and are an attack on the physical and psychological integrity of exiled persons.

On December 10, the police prevented three people from retrieving their belongings, and on December 12, a group of CRS urinated on the observed living space, LBD in hand.

Harassment of observers during evictions :



Obstacles to observation are numerous. Without counting the perimeters arbitrarily deployed to prevent the observation of operations by members of HRO, 8 attempts at intimidation and/or obstacles were recorded. Among these, HRO members were filmed without their knowledge at least 8 times, including 2 times with personal phones, and had their identity checked 6 times.

On a regular basis, aggressive and intimidating comments are made to HRO members. For example, on December 7, a CRS tells the HRO team that he has a Tera of video available and can therefore film HRO members for hours. On the same day, a HRO member was pulled by the arm by a CRS to force him to stay within the perimeter, and the CRS stationed himself a few centimeters from his face. On the 16th, a CRS yells at HRO to "get out of the area", before adding "Mademoiselle be cute please". On the 29th, CRS vans driving at high speed brushed past HRO's mission car.

* Our data are based on our observations and are therefore not exhaustive.

** Number of self-reported unaccompanied children met by the ECPAT association (not mandated by the department) in July who were in a street situation. This number is an underrepresentation of the number of children living on the streets because outreach activities are not carried out daily in all living areas by these actors; some children do not communicate with the associations; others access shelter directly via the mandated association and are therefore not included in this figure. One observation remains: repeated dismantling operations are a source of increased fragility or even disappearance of these children, both girls and boys, and therefore of increased risks of trafficking and exploitation.

*** During each eviction operation, the personal belongings of displaced people are seized by agents of the private company APC, mandated by the State, under the supervision of the police.

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