

## Monthly Report of observations of evictions by Human Rights Observers, Pas-de-Calais - July 2023

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\*.

HRO started observing evictions again in April, and due to the extremely limited capacity of the field team, some evictions could not be documented. These figures should therefore be taken as an extreme minimum.

### Data collected during evictions of informal living sites :

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
|  | <b>At least 67 evictions from 6 informal settlements</b>  |  | <b>At least 61 tents including 6 full of personal belongings and 10 tarps stolen</b> |
|  | <b>At least 8 displaced people arrested during evictions and several others arrested at Calais town station</b> |  | <b>At least 1 mattress</b>   |
|  | <b>At least 46 unaccompanied children met**</b>   |  | <b>At least 5 bikes stolen</b>   |

The political strategy of avoiding "fixation points" has led to daily evictions in the Calais area, which mainly take place between 8am and 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 informed about the existence 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 eviction operation, HRO members witnessed violent intimidation against displaced people. Our observations are non-exhaustive. These are some examples of violent intimidation perpetrated by police against displaced people during evictions in July 2023. 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 and even famas. This armament is intimidating and disproportionate to the operations in question.**

*On 1 July, members of the national police force shook several tents violently, forcing people out,, saying "Hello everybody, police! Wake up Wake up!"*

*On 3 July, a man was stopped and pushed out of the perimeter. He was pushed out of the perimeter by national police officers. This month, at least 3 people were not allowed to collect their belongings and remained stuck on the perimeter.*

*The police have had regular exchanges with displaced people without using translators. On 31 July, four living sites were evicted without a translator.*

### Harassment of observers during evictions :

#### Several attempts at intimidation:



**There were many obstacles to observation. Not to mention the perimeters arbitrarily deployed to prevent HRO members from observing operations. The HRO team has had a perimeter imposed on it at least 51 times this month, and HRO members have been escorted outside these perimeters 9 times by the police. Numerous attempts at intimidation and/or obstruction were recorded. HRO members were filmed 5 times, including 3 times without prior warning, and had their identity checked 5 times.**

*On 11 July, a CRS officer forbade HRO members to publish images of him, threatening to check on social networks, using the team's first names.*

\* 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 May 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)