

Monthly report of State violence observations documented by Human Rights Observers in the Dunkirk area, North - March 2025.

Since 2017, HRO mission has been to observe, document, and denounce the daily state violence perpetrated against people on the move at franco-british border. Due to numerous obstacles to observations, these figures should be taken as an extreme minimum.

Numbers concerning evictions from informal living sites :



At least **7 evictions** from **5 informal living sites**



At least **119 tents seized**



At least **5 people arrested**



At least **140 people expelled**

Intimidation and/or violence suffered by exiled people and recorded by HRO :

- On march 4, 13 and 28, eviction operations took place in Dunkirk, targeting **vulnerable groups**, including women and childrens. These people despite their vulnerability, were evicted without being offered any alternative solutions.. Many of those present did not speak french, and **no interpreter was present throughout the operation on march 13**, further exacerbating their distress.
- During the operations, **at least 135 people** were expelled, **including at least 12 women and 12 childrens**, and at least 11 were arrested. In addition to the massive destruction of personnals belongings, everything that could serve as shelter or living quarters was demolished or seized : solid shelter, canal bridges, other structures allowing people on the move to protect themselves.
- The means deployed by law enforcement were disproportionate. On march 13, a police officier was overheard saying, « *We are going to try to break as much as possible.*» During the operations, police, accompanied by a cleaning team equipped with heavy machinery (ex : excavators, tractors) destroyed people belongings in the living areas. On march 4 and 13 respectively, chainsaws and



assaults equipement and weapon were also deployed and violence was reported. Most notably a person being kicked while still asleep on the morning of the March 4 eviction.

Some interventions are presented by law enforcement as sheltering operations intended to allow people on the move to find rest in dedicated shelters. However, these sheltering measures are often non-consensual, notably due to the absence of interpreters and to the coercitive nature of the process. Moreover, they are unsuitable, because the accomodations offered are located hundreds of kilometers from the coast, with the aim of deterrence and dispersion rather than effective protection..



Key events against HRO

- **5 identity check et 1 identity check** frequently accompanied by security pat-down.
- **Numerous abusive fines** receive by HRO and others associations present.
- **Physical and verbal intimidation** of HRO members.
- **Arrest** of a team member from a non European country by the border police for a check of his legal residence.

Intimidations and/or obstruction suffered et recorded by HRO and other associations :

- During the eviction operations, the HRO team faced **abusive identity check**, including **pat-downs** and an **unjustified arrest** by the border police (PAF). Upon their arrival on site, the organisation's members were prevented from observing the evictions due to particular extensive security perimeters, thus limiting the documentation and transparency of the interventions. Furthermore, HRO and Utopia 56 team were fined by SNCF railway agents, despite their presence being solely for observation and humanitarian support purposes.
- Despite requests from the HRO team, **no response** was provided by the national police, the CRS, the bailiffs or the commissioner regarding the process of the operation. The lack of communications have reinforced the **opacity of these interventions**.
- Violations of the law were also noted: several officers concealed their identification number and prevented HRO from filming despite this being a fundamental right. In addition, **acts of physical and verbal violence** were reported including shoving, breaking one of the observer's cell phone, punching and **insults**.
- Finally, HRO members were **unknowingly** filmed by law enforcement officers using their personal cell phones, a practice illegal that reinforced the climate of intimidation.

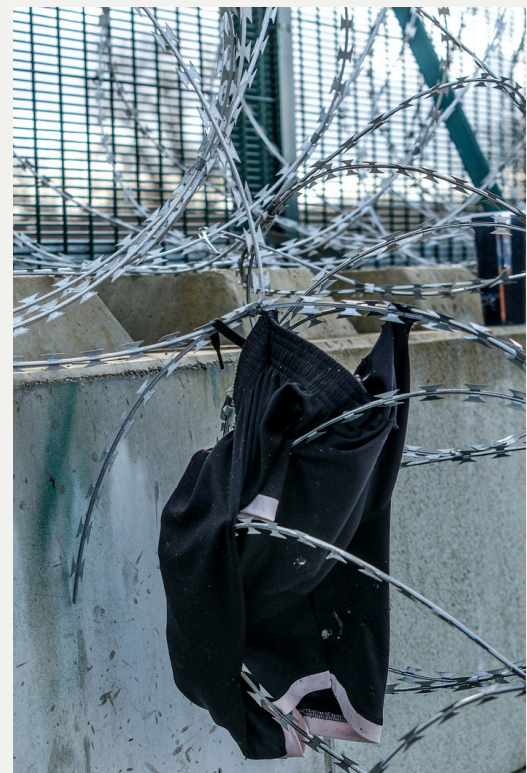


Photo : @elio_j

Testimonies of arrest - evictions of march 28 2025 :

On march 28 2025, during an eviction operation, two HRO members had their identity taken (name and date of birth), without any justification being provided. Subsequently, law enforcement officers conducted a road check, during which an identity verification was carried out. In this contexte, the passenger requested a written order by the public persecutor in accordance with article 78-2 of the code of criminal procedure, to justify to this ID check. This document was provided to her, dated and indicating a geographical limit.

At the same time, the driver of the vehicle was checked. This check resulted in a security pat-down, which appeared to be unjustified. Indeed, according to Article R434-16 of the French Internal Security Code, such a pat-down implies the existence of a real risk of danger to the officers. The HRO observer was arrested and transferred to the Border Police without the officers providing him with a legal reason for the arrest or informing him of his rights.

The individual was then taken to the Border Police station in Loon-Plage. There, the judicial police officer (OPJ) conducted an informal interview without a clear legal framework, questioning him about the length of his stay in France, his status within the association, and details about his personal life.

Furthermore, the judicial police officer mentioned the existence of a form prohibiting entry into French territory (ITF), without providing a copy or formally notifying the person of this measure. He was informed that obtaining this document required a request from the relevant ministry.

Ultimately, he was released without official notification of any administrative or judicial measure, and without any means of returning to Calais. He did not have his personal belongings at the time of his release, having been left behind during his arrest.