

Since 2017, HRO has the mission of observing, documenting and denouncing daily state violence at the Franco-British border. Obstacles to such eviction being common, these figures should be taken as extreme minimums.

This month in numbers

At least:

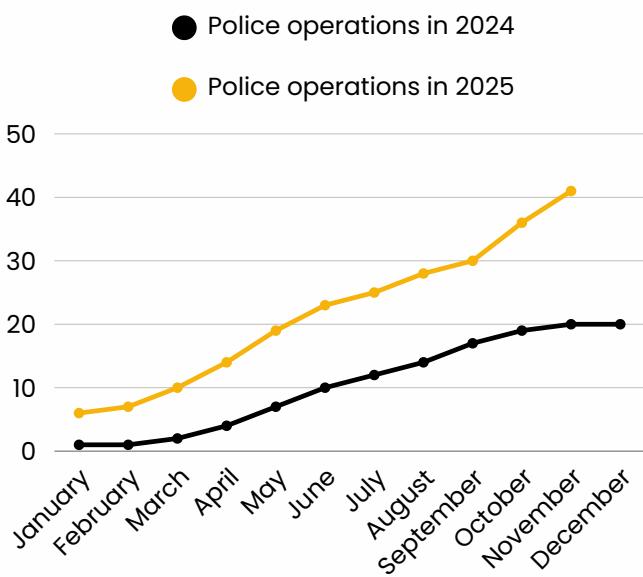
 **12** evictions of living sites during **5** police operations

 **189** people evicted

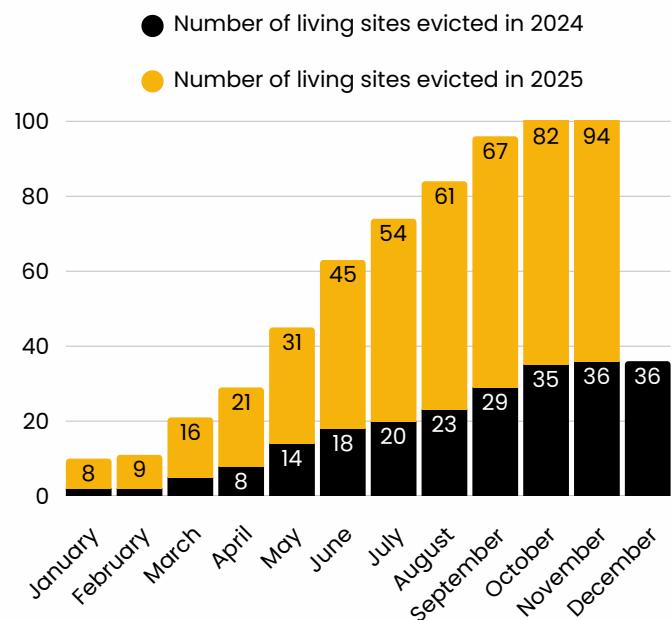
 **90m³** of personal belongings seized

 **31** tents seized

This year so far



The **number of police operations** has more than **doubled** between 2024 and 2025



Between january and october :
at least 94 evictions in 2025
against 36 in 2024

Temperatures fall, evictions continue

Winter is coming, and the living conditions on encampments harshen with the cold weather and muddy ground.

In November evictions have not slowed down, despite the continuous decrease of temperatures. This month's last eviction on the 20th of November took place while temperatures were at around 5 degrees Celsius.

Experiencing 'zero fixation points': relentless harassment

On the encampments near Dunkirk, **precarity, geographical isolation and instability restrict access to basic services**, like medical care, hygiene and electricity. **Dismantlement operations intensify these restrictions**. They mobilise massive police forces at least once a week. Police intimidation, ID checks, arrests and increased control over inhabitants' movements come in addition to the theft of people's belongings like cash, medicine or identity documents during evictions.

Security perimeters are set up and patrolled during evictions. Inhabitants are stopped from returning within the perimeter: **those who want to take their personal belongings or avoid having them destroyed are refused access**.

Those who remain inside the perimeter are, on the contrary, stopped from leaving, which **restricts their access to the distribution point** where organisations offer their services.

People find themselves stuck inside a wide, intimidating and unpredictable perimeter, leaving some unable to attend their scheduled appointments.

It was in this way **a pregnant woman was left unable to attend her pregnancy follow-up appointment** on the 12th of November, as she couldn't cross the perimeter line to go where it was arranged she would be driven to her appointment.

On the 5th of November one such security perimeter provoked an important stampede as inhabitants were trying to take distance from police being deployed. On that day the presence of police disrupted food distribution, as well as charging sessions taking place near the encampment to give people temporary access to electricity.

The Border Police (PAF) is also frequently present during evictions. Inhabitants are therefore not shielded from arbitrary arrest, which can lead to detention at an Administrative Detention Center (CRA) and an Obligation to Leave French Territory (OQTF).

These arrests are unpredictable and quick, leaving people unable to gather their belongings or warn their relatives. These tactics are all part of the government's "zero fixation point" policy in application since 2016.

This policy has a clear objective: harass, disturb and arrest to leave no peace of mind to people, no stability, and no certainty as to their own safety.

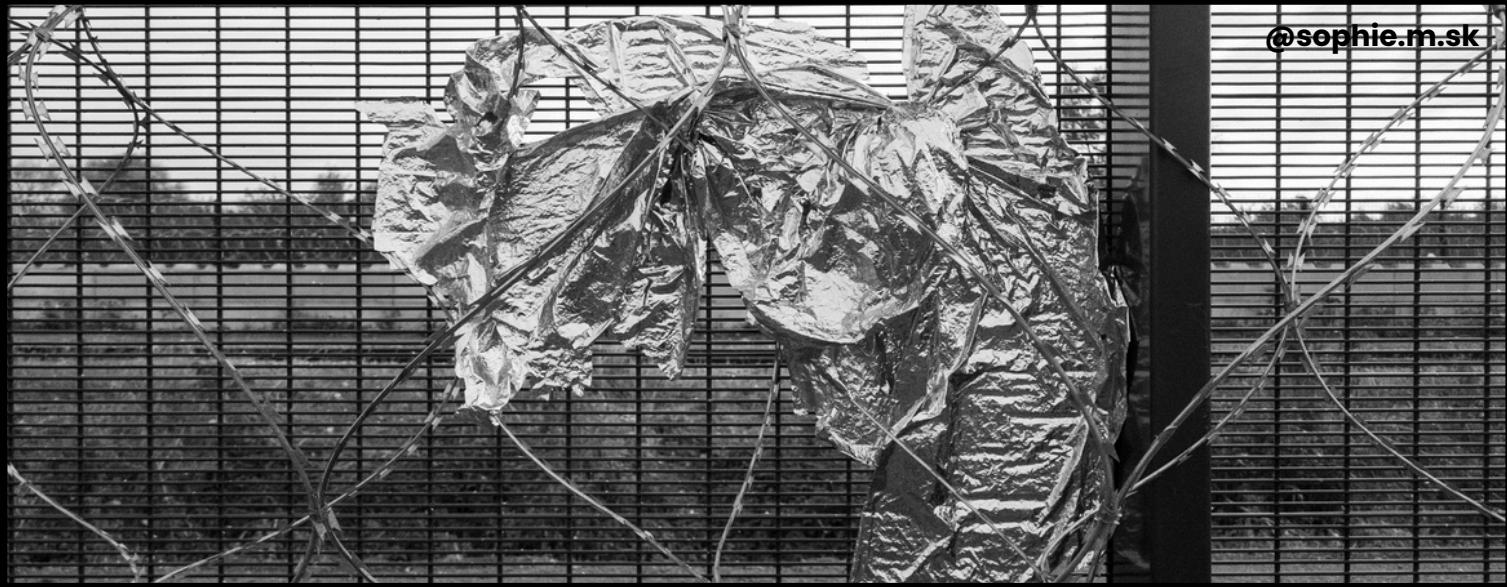
HRO acts to demand basic amenities

Until recently **the state provided no access to basic services and amenities to the encampments near Dunkirk**, including water and sanitation.

This winter, with a group of organisations active in the Dunkirk area, HRO filed a petition for protection of fundamental liberties at the administrative court of Lille, **alleging grave violations of inhabitants' fundamental rights** as a result of absent basic service and amenities. We demanded **urgent measures** be taken as remedy.

The court date was on the 18th of November. The petitioning organisations testified during the hearing and evidenced the grave precarity on living sites :

- the absence of sanitation,
- the absence of drinkable water,
- the difficulty of accessing medical care from the living sites,
- the saturation of ill-adapted emergency housing facilities, far away from the coast



HRO also tried to attack the state's policy regarding **evictions**. We highlighted that inhabitants of Loon-Plage camps receive no preliminary information, and are therefore unable to defend themselves in court or prevent the seizing of their personal belongings. **There exists no system for people to recover their personal belongings, which** are systematically destroyed. In Calais, an item deposit system was obtained by the organisations. Though this system in Calais is faulty, it allows some people to retrieve essential items, like passports or phones, when they are deposited by the cleaning team following evictions.

Therefore, **we demanded the end of eviction operations**, or at minimum the implementation of pre-emptive evaluations to find alternative housing options, and a protocol for personal items to be retrieved, as is required by law.

This petition led the three judges assigned to the case to visit the camps of Loon-Plage, where they could directly witness the failure of the state's policy. During the visit, a representative of the prefecture had to admit that the inhabitants are not notified prior to evictions, in contradiction to procedures mandated by law, which require an adapted social diagnostic prior to an eviction. This procedure consists in assessing what housing alternatives can be offered to those at risk of eviction.

HRO holds that it is crucial to attack the eviction practices of the state in court: these unlawful practices are the cornerstone of the state strategy in response to the presence of persons in exile in the Dunkirk region. During the court hearing, the spokesman for the prefecture repeatedly insisted on the necessity and efficiency of eviction operations. As for the violence and precarity they cause, these were left unaddressed.

But **on the 4th of December the state was condemned by the court**, proving the failure of its policies. 24 hours before the verdict, a massive police convoy was deployed on the encampments near Dunkirk. According to testimonies gathered by HRO, the police lacerated the tents, seized belongings and insulted inhabitants. In court, the state's strategy was made evident: evict, drive away, and make people's living conditions more precarious to thwart crossings to the United Kingdom.



Intimidation and forced displacement

In November, HRO documented at least **three eviction operations that were differed from usual evictions by court order.**

On November 12, national police was present on a plot of land that had previously been evicted in the end of October. During the late October operation, at least 282 inhabitants had been evicted. Following this operation, works begun to seal the area with fences and prevent the return of inhabitants. For a week, police remained present day and night on the worksite. The practice of modifying an empty lot into a hostile landscape is not new: in 2024 HRO had already documented the eviction, cutting down of trees, and fencing of one the Dunkirk area's largest encampments, thereby preventing any re-installation.

On November 12, at least 28 people thus evicted anew from the same site. Two police vehicles drove into the plain, coercing people to move their homes. **No notification, no legal basis, no way to contest the action legally is communicated to the inhabitants.** In the Dunkirk region, it is the first time HRO documents a unilateral deployment of police forces to prevent people from returning to a site, without a bailiff or a cleaning team present. It is still unclear whether this type of operation is established practice that has remained undocumented, or if it represents a change in the police's practices.

On November 20, following the early-morning eviction of two living sites leaving at least 42 people displaced, a police van returns on the site in the afternoon. According to the testimony of an organisation present, police forces had come to inform inhabitants that "**they do not have the right to be there. And that they did not want to see anyone here tomorrow when they will return. They did not leave any document or anything.**" The inhabitants, who rushed on the site fearing the loss of their belongings, testified of regular visits from the police to destroy their tents.

These events show the **continuous and arbitrary nature of police harassment** in the Dunkirk area. HRO is present regularly to follow and document the evictions and has documented only part of the harassment. In addition to the massive deployment of police during eviction operations, police forces are often present around encampments, as well as around the shops and bus stops a few kilometres around the encampments.

Significant events towards HRO

During the month of November, the police continued to intimidate HRO members during their observation and documentation missions.

- This month the identity of HRO members was checked 4 times in total
- **On November 13, a member of the riot police threatens to bring a volunteer to the police station if she continues to film.**



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