



Monthly Report of observations of evictions by the Human Rights Observers in Grande-Synthe, Nord - may 2021

Since 2017, the aim of the Human Rights Observers project has been to observe and document the daily state violence 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 305 tents seized.



At least 12 arrests during evictions.



At least 107 unaccompanied children met. **

The political strategy of avoiding "fixation points" has led to increasingly frequent evictions in Grande-Synthe. Some sheltering options, with buses, are forced, as those who resist are arrested by the Police aux Frontières. During these operations, all shelters, along with personal belongings and basic necessities, are seized and destroyed. 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. These arbitrary ID checks and arrests are daily, outside the context of evictions as well.



Knives are routinely used to destroy tents and other personal belongings by the cleaning team in Grande-Synthe. The tents continue to be torn apart by the cleaning under the supervision of the police. The police woke people up without an interpreter on a regular basis. The strengths of the order rocked tents shouting "hello, hello" at least three times. The CRS blocked a person who had been authorized to collect their belongings by the head of the device at least once. We heard "don't let him in, otherwise it's a mess."

Harassment of human rights defenders during observations



20 intimidation attempts :

Observers have been subjected to arbitrary identity checks 12 times; the identity document of the observers was photographed by a law enforcement at least twice; the observers were photographed and/or filmed by law enforcement officers with their professional and/or personal telephone at least 3 times; a CRS officer positioned himself extremely close to the observers to look at the screen of their personal phone. When one of the observers reported to this officer that social distancing was not being respected - he began to stare at her threateningly for several minutes then refused to give to the observer his RIO. A member of the civilian police force informed the observers that they were not allowed to film them and that they would write a report.

* 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 Grande-Synthe during mai 2021. On this territory, contrary to Calais, no association that is not 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).