

## **Evidence Submission: The effects of Britain's juxtaposed border controls**

### **1 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The UK's juxtaposed border controls have direct implications upon the safety and security of prospective asylum seekers.
- 1.2 The measures narrow the legal channels available in order to seek UK asylum, and have contributed to the development of a bottle-neck scenario in Northern France whereby refugees have very few alternatives available to a current reality characterised by precarity, insecurity and rough sleeping.
- 1.3 This consequentially increases the reliance on clandestine and treacherous methods in order to try and reach the UK.

### **2 About Refugee Rights Europe (RRE)**

- 2.1 Refugee Rights Europe (RRE) is a human rights organisation and registered UK charity (No 1168841).
- 2.2 Founded in 2016, our organisation uses its first-hand research on the situation for refugees and displaced people seeking protection in Europe, to encourage human rights-centred policy development at national and regional levels, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- 2.3 Further information can be found here: [www.RefugeeRights.org.uk](http://www.RefugeeRights.org.uk)

### **3 Britain's juxtaposed border arrangements**

- 3.1 The UK operates border controls in France and Belgium, this means that UK officials check freight and passengers before they cross the Channel.<sup>1</sup>
- 3.2 The juxtaposed border arrangements were established in 2003.
- 3.3 These controls exist at the Eurotunnel terminal at Coquelles, Calais and Dunkirk ports and several railway stations which operate Eurostar services.
- 3.4 The controls mean that border checks precede arrival in the UK and therefore prospective asylum seekers are unable to reach the UK legally in order to lodge an asylum application. Therefore, individuals wishing to seek asylum – if they do not fit within the narrow legal criteria for family reunification – have to reach the UK clandestinely before they can seek protection through its asylum system.
- 3.5 This form of 'externalisation' of the UK borders has therefore contributed to the severe curtailment of the legal options available for displaced persons when trying to seek asylum in Britain.

---

<sup>1</sup> Home Office News Team (2017) *Fact Sheet: The UK's juxtaposed border controls*. (Updated: 16<sup>th</sup> January 2018) <<https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2017/07/11/fact-sheet-the-uks-juxtaposed-border-controls/>> (Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

#### 4 Britain's juxtaposed borders and the lack of viable alternatives

- 4.1 The juxtaposed border arrangements leave prospective asylum seekers to the UK without a mechanism to file their asylum claim; a right which is enshrined under international law.<sup>2</sup>
- 4.2 Legal means are only accessible to a very small minority who fit specific criteria. For example, a minority of individuals may be eligible for family reunification via the Dublin protocols. Yet this only applies within very narrow parameters, your partner in the UK must either have humanitarian protection or refugee status or in the case of parents in the UK, the applicant must be under the age of 18.<sup>3</sup>
- 4.3 For minors there are two legal routes available. Either, via family reunification or via the Dubs Amendment. Yet these can be immensely complex processes to navigate and waiting times are lengthy. The UK's family reunification policies are also restrictive – based upon concepts of the nuclear family. Over the age of 18 you are unable to apply for younger siblings join you and unaccompanied children are unable to apply to bring their parents to the UK.
- 4.4 The lack of safe and legal routes for displaced persons has led to an escalation in the risks that individuals take in order to seek sanctuary in the UK.
- 4.5 Both the academic and humanitarian communities have heavily documented the human consequences which come in tandem with the increased securitisation of the border arrangements.
- 4.6 Preceding the closure of the Calais camp in 2016, the UK pledged £36 million to clear the camp and bolster security provisions at the border.<sup>4</sup> This has led to increased investment in border technologies such as motion detection and infra-red technology. New high-security fencing, CCTV, and lighting has also been installed at the Coquelles Terminal and both the Calais and Dunkirk ports.<sup>5</sup> The deployment of security officers and detection dogs has increased alongside the creation of a joint command and control centre and an Organised Immigration Crime Taskforce. This process of securitisation continued throughout 2018, as exemplified by the increased barbed- and razor wire and fencing surrounding petrol stations near the ferry ports.<sup>6</sup>
- 4.7 As tightened border security has made crossing the channel more difficult, this may result in increased reliance by prospective asylum seekers upon smugglers

---

<sup>2</sup> Crawley, H. (2010) *Chance or choice? Understanding why asylum seekers come to the UK*. Refugee Council <<https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/Chance-or-choice-2010.pdf>> (Accessed: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

<sup>3</sup> Home Office 'Settlement: refugee or humanitarian protection.' <<https://www.gov.uk/settlement-refugee-or-humanitarian-protection/family-reunion>> (Accessed: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Home Affairs Committee (2019) 'Oral Evidence: English Channel migrant crossings,' 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 <<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/home-affairs-committee/english-channel-crossings/oral/95434.pdf>> (Accessed: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019)

and traffickers. In oral evidence to the Home Affairs Committee, a representative from the Refugee Council outlined that reports from staff working at the immigration unit in Dover indicate that, 'security measures, walls, fences and so on, have an impact on the route that people take. It is inevitable, in a way, that people are going to try a different route if the original route that they planned is cut off.'<sup>7</sup> If the same push factors remain in France – police brutality, insecure living conditions and interminably long asylum processing times – increased securitisation may not deter individuals from embarking on the journey to the UK; rather it just multiplies the risks they face during the process.

4.8 This investment in border security has been accompanied with an increasingly securitised rhetoric which designates displaced people as threats. Within Home Office documents, heightened investment in border security is outlined to 'keep communities in the UK safe' and the policies are justified as necessary to prevent both criminal activity and 'people looking to enter the UK illegally.'<sup>8</sup> This rhetoric therefore increases the public perception that displaced people can be directly equated with criminality. The designation of refugees as 'threats,' can then be used to legitimise even greater securitisation, which has direct consequences for displaced communities.

4.9 In Northern France, increased security at the UK border has been accompanied by increased hostility by the French state towards displaced individuals in the area. This is characterised by high-levels of police harassment, intimidation, violence and frequent evictions from living spaces.<sup>9</sup>

4.10 According to research conducted by Human Rights Watch (HRW), police in Calais regularly use pepper spray on children and adult refugees whilst they are sleeping, spray or confiscate sleeping bags, clothing and blankets and on some occasions have used pepper spray on food and water sources. HRW conclude that this has negative implications for child service access and the desire of individuals to seek asylum.<sup>10</sup> The same report also outlined instances when the police had actively disrupted the work of humanitarians who were providing essential aid, such as food and water.

4.11 Written evidence submitted to the Home Affairs Committee by Help Refugees in January 2019 indicates the causal connection between increased securitisation and greater risk taking. They note that human rights observers in Calais have observed that a, 'recent increase in arrests and detention has prompted greater fears of deportation among the community, prompting people to take greater

---

<sup>7</sup> Home Affairs Committee (2018).

<sup>8</sup> Home Office News Team (2017).

<sup>9</sup> Refugee Rights Europe (2018) *Vision for Change in 2018-2019* <[http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/RRE\\_VisionForChange\\_2018-2019.pdf](http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/RRE_VisionForChange_2018-2019.pdf)> (Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

<sup>10</sup> Garcia Bochenek, M. (2017) 'Like Living in Hell': Police Abuses Against Child and Adult Migrants, Calais.' *Human Rights Watch*, 26<sup>th</sup> July (online) <<https://www.hrw.org/report/2017/07/26/living-hell/police-abuses-against-child-and-adult-migrants-calais>> (Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

risks.’ They also noted an increase in police violence and evictions of people’s living spaces over recent months.<sup>11</sup>

- 4.12 In France, shelters and accommodation provision are also severely lacking. Many individuals lack viable accommodation and have no alternatives to living in makeshift and informal camps. Combined with high levels of police violence and a hostile climate from the local authorities,<sup>12</sup> this can deter some displaced persons from seeking asylum in France and instead motivate them to reach the UK by any means possible.
- 4.13 Overall, juxtaposed border arrangements have created a ‘bottle-neck’ scenario whereby, the hostile climate deters individuals from wanting to stay in France, yet at the same time their ability to safely reach the UK is diminished.<sup>13</sup>

## 5 The Effects on Unaccompanied Minors

- 5.1 Members of the humanitarian community have voiced concerns that unaccompanied minors are at increasing risk of trafficking and exploitation at the UK-French border. As police violence continues and individuals live in increasingly poor living conditions, this situation of precarity increases the exploitation risks faced.<sup>14</sup>
- 5.2 According to the Refugee Youth Service (RYS), who are operating in Northern France, the exploitation of minors is visible on a daily basis.<sup>15</sup> RYS try to establish trust with their young people in order to track them once they move on. If RYS track children who have reached the UK, they then report them to the NSPCC and the children trafficking advice centre. Four children have recently been rescued from exploitation following a notification by RYS.<sup>16</sup>
- 5.3 In 2017, a representative for RYS also observed that minors in Calais were facing, ‘poor sanitation conditions; food insecurity; poor access to health care, legal advice and information along with exposure to sexual exploitation and abuse, and human trafficking and being subject to police violence on a daily basis.’<sup>17</sup> The excessive use of force by the police and the seemingly indiscriminate use of tear

---

<sup>11</sup> Help Refugees (2019) ‘Supplementary written evidence submitted by Help Refugees.’

<<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/home-affairs-committee/english-channel-crossings/written/95368.pdf>> (Accessed: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

<sup>12</sup> Refugee Rights Europe (2018) *A Brief Timeline of the Human Rights Situation in the Calais Area.*

<[http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/History-Of-Calais\\_Refugee-Rights-Europe.pdf](http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/History-Of-Calais_Refugee-Rights-Europe.pdf)> (Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

<sup>13</sup> Refugee Rights Europe (2019) *Vision for Change in 2019-2020.* <[http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/RRE\\_VisionForChange\\_2018-2019.pdf](http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/RRE_VisionForChange_2018-2019.pdf)> (Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

<sup>14</sup> Grant, H. (2019) ‘Transfer of vulnerable child refugees from France to UK to end, charities say.’ *The Guardian* 17th May, (online) <<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/may/17/transfer-of-vulnerable-child-refugees-from-france-to-uk-to-end-charities-say-home-office>> (Accessed: 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019)

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Regan, A (2017) ‘On This Day: Unaccompanied Children in Calais.’ *Refugee Youth Service*

<<https://www.refugeeyouthservice.net/single-post/2017/10/24/On-This-Day-Unaccompanied-Children-in-Calais>> (Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

gas and/or pepper spray are regularly reported to RYS child protection specialists working in Calais.

- 5.4 Following the demolition of the Calais camp in 2016, RYS announced that one third of the children they had been tracking had gone missing.<sup>18</sup>
- 5.5 A 2018 report by NSPCC also echoes similar concerns. It states that ‘children were sleeping in unsafe environments, taking significant risks to get onto lorries, and spending time with concerning adults. For these children, food, shelter and clothing were not guaranteed, and children had to seek them out themselves.’<sup>19</sup>
- 5.6 The waiting times for legal mechanisms for children to enter the UK, such as via the Dubs amendment or a Dublin transfer request, remain long. When giving oral evidence to the Home Affairs Committee regarding English Channel migrant crossings, a representative for the organisation Help Refugees highlighted that there are currently 30 children in the reception and orientation centre in St Omer who have passed the Dubs criteria for transfer. Yet all these children are still waiting to be relocated to the UK.<sup>20</sup> One minor, who was eligible and had passed all the criteria for family reunification, had been waiting in the centre for over a year. In the centre, there is no access to education or psychosocial support and squalid conditions have been reported.
- 5.7 Long legal waiting times can in itself push minors into situations with an increased likelihood of exploitation. For example, in the evidence provided to the Home Affairs Committee, Help Refugees that reported one child, who having seen friends wait over seven months within the child protection system, had decided he had a better chance of getting to the UK by lorry. Therefore, at the age of 12, he was living amongst adults in a makeshift tent and extremely vulnerable to exploitation.<sup>21</sup>
- 5.8 The following reports of deaths of unaccompanied minors have been recorded, but are unlikely to constitute an exhaustive list due to the likelihood of deaths within this context going unreported:<sup>22</sup>
- 5.8.1 28th March 2018: A 16-year old Eritrean boy succumbed to his injuries, five days after being hit on the highway near the Calais port.
- 5.8.2 21 December 2017: Abdullah – a 15-year old from Afghanistan – was killed after being hit by a car on the highway.

---

<sup>18</sup> Refugee Rights Europe (2018) *A Brief Timeline of the Human Rights Situation in the Calais Area.* <[http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/History-Of-Calais\\_Refugee-Rights-Europe.pdf](http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/History-Of-Calais_Refugee-Rights-Europe.pdf)> (Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

<sup>19</sup> NSPCC (2018) *Uprooted and Unprotected.* <<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1072/uprooted-and-unprotected-ctac-report.pdf>> (Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

<sup>20</sup> Home Affairs Committee (2019) ‘Oral Evidence: English Channel migrant crossings HC 1900.’ 22<sup>nd</sup> January (online) <<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/home-affairs-committee/english-channel-crossings/oral/95434.pdf>> (Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019)

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Calais Migrant Solidarity (2019) ‘Deaths at the Calais border.’ <<https://calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com/deaths-at-the-calais-border/>> (Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019)

- 5.8.3 22 July 2017: Omar – a 17-year old boy from Sudan – was crushed by a bus to which he was attached, in Brussels.
- 5.8.4 16 September 2016: A 14-year old boy was killed in a hit and run incident on the highway.
- 5.8.5 16th October 2015: A 16-year old from Afghanistan was killed by a train in the Eurotunnel.
- 5.8.6 30th January 2014: A 17-year old boy from Iran was killed by a lorry whilst trying to cross the UK border.

## 6 The Effects on Women

- 6.1 Several organisations operating in Northern France have outlined the multiple and specific ways in which the situation of precarity affects women refugees.
- 6.2 As security has tightened at French-UK border ports, actors on the ground have reported an increased empowerment and availability of smuggling networks, which comes with an increased costs of smuggler passage.<sup>23</sup> For example, in an independent research study, conducted with women in Grande Synthe in Northern France, all the women interviewed acknowledged that they felt unable to negotiate with smugglers without risk or to try to climb onto the back of lorries alone.<sup>24</sup> In this environment, it has become common practice for solo women to be paired with a single man, for ‘protection.’ Staff working for Gynécologie Sans Frontières (GSF), who operate a safe house for female refugees, have also outlined their observation of this practice in Calais. For example, one humanitarian spoke of women being paired with ‘brothers,’ and “these ‘brothers’ keep them ‘safe’, usually in exchange for sexual favours.”<sup>25</sup>
- 6.3 Staff from GSF have also observed the gynaecological health implications of life in makeshift tents. Lacking basic hygiene, many of the women GSF work with have developed vaginal infections and this can then lead to more severe complications.<sup>26</sup>
- 6.4 GSF outline that the majority of women, in the makeshift camps and forests, survive by forming friendship groups, often based around shared language or nationality. This leaves solo women particularly at risk.<sup>27</sup>
- 6.5 Even for women travelling as part of family units, challenges remain. For example, in the independent research study, several interviewees spoke about

---

<sup>23</sup> Timberlake, F. (2019) ‘Hardship and Solidarity: Interviews with Kurdish Refugee Women in Grande Synthe, Northern France.’ *Refugee Rights Europe* <[http://refugeerights.org.uk/2019/03/06/hardship-and-solidarity-interviews-with-kurdish-refugee-women-in-grande-synthe-northern-france/#\\_ftn3](http://refugeerights.org.uk/2019/03/06/hardship-and-solidarity-interviews-with-kurdish-refugee-women-in-grande-synthe-northern-france/#_ftn3)> (Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Rowsome, A. (2016) ‘From periods to pregnancy – the sexual health crisis for Calais refugees.’ *The Guardian*, 26<sup>th</sup> February 2018 (online) <<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2018/feb/26/periods-to-pregnancy-sexual-health-crisis-calais-refugees-volunteers-gynaecology-without-borders>> (Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*

the guilt and fear attached to asking their children to take grave risks each night in order to try and get to the UK.<sup>28</sup>

- 6.6 Language is also a pervasive issue. In the same study, many of the women had left school at a young age and lacked knowledge of foreign languages. Other women with higher levels of education, outlined that their limited public role throughout their lives had made it hard for them to speak to strangers in order to access services. This consequentially increases the dependency on others to act as interpreters and conduits for advice.<sup>29</sup>
- 6.7 Police brutality is also a source of fear for women. Of the women interviewed in the aforementioned research, the unanimous view was that the police presented their biggest threat. This contrasts with the pervasive assumption that gendered vulnerability primarily stems from refugee men.<sup>30</sup> Police brutality in Belgium was of particular concern to the women interviewed,<sup>31</sup> one woman stating: ‘the police in Belgium threw the food at us like we were animals. I’m pregnant with two children.’<sup>32</sup>
- 6.8 The 2016 research of Refugee Rights Europe particularly highlighted the risks women in the Calais Camp were exposed to, yet three years on, many of the same concerns remain.<sup>33</sup> A lack of security, permanent shelter, the presence of smugglers and the pervasiveness of police violence still remain long after the closure of the Calais Camp. The brutal suppression of any form of makeshift settlements and the consequential situation of precarity, has pushed women further into the margins, making them harder to identify and harder to support.
- 6.9 The following reports of deaths of women and girls have been recorded. As above, it is likely that additional deaths have occurred but gone unreported.<sup>34</sup>
- 6.9.1 17th May 2018: Mawda – a 2-years old Kurdish girl – living in Grande Synthe, died when she was shot by Belgian police.
- 6.9.2 12th July 2016: Samrawit – a 19-year old woman from Eritrea – was killed in a hit and run accident on the highway near Calais.
- 6.9.3 15th October 2015: A 30-year old Syrian woman was killed on the highway approaching the Eurotunnel.

---

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> See, for example: International Rescue Committee, ‘Europe Refugee Crisis: urgent action needed for protection of women and girls’ (2016) <<https://www.rescue-uk.org/sites/default/files/document/1041/irc-european-refugee-crisis-women-and-girls-briefing-3-august-2016.pdf>>.

<sup>31</sup> *This follows the shooting of a two-year-old Kurdish girl by the Belgium police on 17 May 2018, during a car chase. The girl had been staying in the winter shelter in Grande Synthe with her family. During the interviews conducted in the shelter, the interviewer noted that the refugee community ‘remained shocked and traumatised at the news of her death.’* (Timberlake 2019) <<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/may/18/belgian-authorities-admit-two-year-old-girl-was-shot-after-police-chase>>.

<sup>32</sup> Timberlake, F. (2019)

<sup>33</sup> Refugee Rights Europe (2016) Unsafe Borderlands. <[http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/RRE\\_UnsafeBorderlands.pdf](http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/RRE_UnsafeBorderlands.pdf)> (Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

<sup>34</sup> Calais Migrant Solidarity (2019)

- 6.9.4 24th July 2015: Ganet, a young Eritrean woman, was hit by a car on the highway. Individuals at the scene reported seeing her receive teargas in the face from the police before the collision.
- 6.9.5 4th July 2015: Samir, an Eritrean new-born, died one hour after birth. The mother, twenty years old, had fallen from a lorry, triggering a premature delivery at twenty-two weeks.

## 7 The Effects on Men

- 7.1 There are no safe legal routes available for single men over 18 as they are unable to apply for family reunification as they do not classify as a dependent under UK asylum law.<sup>35</sup> Therefore for many single men, smugglers are the only means available to attempt the UK journey.
- 7.2 A report released by a collaboration of organisations, including L’Auberge des Migrants, Refugee Info Bus, Utopia 56 and La Cabane Juridique, highlights the extent of police violence and harassment faced by single men in Northern France.<sup>36</sup> Arbitrary arrest and detention are a common occurrence. According to Article R. 434-18 of the French Code of Interior Security, police and gendarme officers can, ‘employ force in the fixed framework of the law, only when necessary, in proportion (...) to the severity of the threat.’ The Auberge des Migrants report is based upon information gained through the Human Rights Observers (HRO) team, formed to collate and monitor rights violations by state representatives. This includes testimonies from volunteers related to hundreds of instances where the police appear to contravene their own guidelines. Such as, instances of, ‘physical violence, abuses of power, destruction and confiscation of property, and forced evictions of living places.’<sup>37</sup> Between November 2017 and November 2018, 972 instances of police violence or harassment were reported to the HRO team.
- 7.3 In 2017, RRE also reported that 92% of the refugees they had interviewed in the Calais area said they had experienced police violence.<sup>38</sup>
- 7.4 Knowledge of asylum and immigration rules is also severely lacking. In research conducted by RRE twelve months after the closure of the Calais Camp, 88.5% of respondents (and 91.1% of minors) reported having no access to information about European asylum and immigration rules. A further 84.7% (82.4% of minors) reported having no access to information about their rights and

---

<sup>35</sup> Home Office ‘Claim asylum in the UK.’ <<https://www.gov.uk/claim-asylum/eligibility>> (Accessed: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

<sup>36</sup> (2018) *Police Violence in Calais; abusive and illegal practices by law enforcement officers.* <[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/5eb73a\\_ae875cd65dcc434588a7a69ed4cf3167.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/5eb73a_ae875cd65dcc434588a7a69ed4cf3167.pdf)> (Accessed: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> Refugee Rights Europe (2017) Twelve Months On. <[http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/RRE\\_TwelveMonthsOn.pdf](http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/RRE_TwelveMonthsOn.pdf)> (Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019).



opportunities to change their situation.<sup>39</sup> This is of particular concern because a lack of information regarding asylum regulation can lead individuals to make decisions which can have detrimental implications for their legal status in the long-run. For example, taking enormous risks to try to get to the UK only to find that they fall foul of the asylum criteria or Dublin Regulation, therefore later leading to potential deportation.

7.5 Even for those who do claim asylum in France this is not a guarantee of shelter. Unlike in the UK, whilst you are waiting for your claim to be assessed in France you are not necessarily provided with accommodation in a swift manner. Therefore, during the often lengthy process of status determination, many individuals are forced to live on the streets and in makeshift shelters. Accommodation centres appear to severely lack the capacity to meet the need.<sup>40</sup>

7.6 The following reports of deaths among men at the border have been recorded, but are unlikely to constitute an exhaustive list due to the likelihood of deaths within this context going unreported:<sup>41</sup>

7.6.1 20th May 2019: A young Eritrean man was killed on the motorway near Calais.

7.6.2 8th March 2019: Kiyar – a young Ethiopian man – was found dead in the back of a lorry during border checks at the Calais port.

7.6.3 18th November 2018: Mahamat Abdullah Moussa, a young man from Chad, was found dead in the Eurotunnel terminal in Folkstone in UK.

7.6.4 9th October 2018: Gebre Mariam committed suicide whilst in Vottem retention centre in Belgium.

7.6.5 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018: The body of an unidentified refugee man was found at the Calais port after he died attempting to cross the Channel.

7.6.6 12th June 2018: Louis – a 19-year old Ghanaian man – committed suicide in Croisilles, near Arras.

7.6.7 22nd March 2018: A 22-year old Algerian man was crushed between vehicles at the Zeebruges port in Belgium.

## 8 Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 The lack of legal mechanisms available for refugees in northern France appear to push individuals into increasingly treacherous and clandestine journeys to the UK. We believe that the juxtaposed border arrangements exacerbate this. There is therefore a need for structural reforms to ensure individuals can adequately

---

<sup>39</sup> Refugee Rights Europe (2017)

<sup>40</sup> Forum Réfugiés – Cosi (2019) 'Type of accommodation: France.'

<<https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/france/reception-conditions/housing/types-accommodation>> (Accessed: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019).

<sup>41</sup> Calais Migrant Solidarity (2019)

and safely access the UK asylum system.<sup>42</sup> This needs to include expanded safe and legal pathways which are facilitated by the strengthened presence of British officials in Northern France in order to process family reunification applications and Dubs cases more efficiently. In addition, safe, legal pathways beyond family reunification and Dubs cases appear to be the only viable option to prevent deaths at the border and reduce the life-threatening risks displaced persons are taking to cross the channel.

- 8.2 There is also a need for accommodation to be provided for all individuals who have claimed asylum in France and emergency shelters for all individuals, irrespective of their immigration status. This may help reduce the desperation of many individuals to attempt the border crossing in order to escape their situation of precarity and it would reduce the risks and dangers, especially for minors and women sleeping in makeshift settlements and on the streets.
- 8.3 A reduction in the arbitrary detention of refugees and displaced people and the minimisation of violence by the French authorities is also necessary. This includes reducing the practice of racial profiling and allowing non-governmental aid groups to operate on the ground without fear of reprisals. This also requires police officers to receive greater training on international human rights obligations, safeguarding and protection mechanisms for vulnerable displaced people and complex trauma awareness. This would reduce the push factors which lead some refugees to attempt the journey to the UK, rather than applying for asylum in France.
- 8.4 Finally, a reduction in the use of demonising rhetoric by the UK government, which paints refugees and displaced people as threats and equates them with criminality, is essential. This would reduce the justifications for increasingly securitised policies and should lead to a more nuanced debate which considers the lack of current options available for displaced individuals and the current human rights violations they face on a daily basis.

---

<sup>42</sup> See: Refugee Rights Europe (2019) *Vision for Change in 2019-2020*. <[http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/RRE\\_VisionForChange\\_2018-2019.pdf](http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/RRE_VisionForChange_2018-2019.pdf)> (Accessed: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019).