

## Towards a dispersal of crossing?

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Posted by [passeurenglish](#) in [Non classé](#)

There are many similarities between the closure of the Sangatte Center in 2002 and the destruction of the Calais shantytown in 2016. A media operation aimed at making people believe that a “problem” was being solved, while all that had been done was to hide it. The huge number of police in order to force people to hide and therefore to be less visible (see [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)). The harassment of people showing solidarity (see [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)). And also the CAO scheme, which is in its conception a copy of [Operation Ulysses](#) that followed between 2002 and 2006.

In fact, the dispersal of camps along the coast and the motorways leading to it was initially linked to the increasing controls in the port of Calais and the development of security measures along the perimeter of the Channel Tunnel, the closure of the Centre just accentuated it. On the other hand, it had a more direct effect in Paris, with the appearance of the camps near the Gare de l’Est. It is further from the coast that people orient themselves, make contacts, wait for a possibility to go to the crossing places.

The ways of crossing have also evolved. At that time, small airports were less monitored, and they were used with fake passports.

Compared to the Sangatte Centre, the shantytown of 2015-2016 was also a place of waiting for people who had chosen to seek asylum in France and who, because of the government’s non-welcome policy, were without accommodation, or because of the European Dublin III regulation they had to wait for long months before France would become responsible for their asylum application. For these people, the departure towards the Welcome and Orientation Centres (CAO – see [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)) was a solution, partial and surely not perfect, due to the very unequal and often insufficient support received there and the doubts of those under Dublin procedure, but at least offered accommodation.

For people who will still want to go to the United Kingdom, it is likely that the dispersion of 2014 with the increased number of people stuck at the British border, along the coast from Brittany to the Netherlands and further inside on the land along the motorways, will be accentuated. It is also likely that the role of the Paris region as a place of orientation and waiting will be strengthened, with groups probably even more dispersed due to the high police pressure. And it is also likely that other ways of crossing the border rather than hiding in vehicles, mainly trucks, will become more important. The role of the smugglers will in any case be bigger.

It is still too early to know how the passage will reorganize, but the destruction of the shantytown is far from being the end of the (hi)story.

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