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APRIL 2025 NEWSLETTER

THE QUOTE OF THE MONTH

It was on 15th April, at the end of the food distribution. A gentleman came to thank us:

"You help us and yet we don't know each other"

Marie Simar (Volunteer in Dunkirk).

EDITORIAL



"We cry stupidly because we have been unable to wake up our local government rulers. If one comes to the field, if one sees this, if you see them leave and you do nothing, one deserves the court."

Jean-Claude Lenoir, in "Calais border town" (FR3 region doc of 24 Nov 2022).

And to do something is not to make a fortification of our bodies or to burst rubber dinghies, it is to fight to obtain for them a welcome in France that no longer forces them to use the deadly routes to escape our camps, squalid and without water points, without toilets and with police evacuation at a pace that defies common sense... to get a welcome in France that no longer gives them the conviction that only the United Kingdom can give them a job that will allow them to earn a salary and lead a normal life...

Excerpt from Salam's December 2022 newsletter, "Events of the month".

EVENTS OF THE MONTH

DEATHS:

No one wants to count anymore, but we all do it with fear...

There were two more deaths in April, and there were fourteen for 2025 by the end of this month.

On 11th April, the information was first sent by Roots on the inter-associative WhatsApp of Dunkirk: 10:05 a.m., "a police ambulance and the SAMU are the distribution point"...

And then, very shortly after, at 10.13am: "Unfortunately, the lady could not be resuscitated." Because she's a lady... A 57-year-old woman, probably of Sudanese nationality... She reportedly had health problems. How can you not have it if, at 57 years old, you find yourself on the roads of exile, in all weathers, faced with a violence(s) that you can imagine, for lack of knowing the details...

On 17th April, it was in Dover, on the other side of the channel, that the body of a man was found.

He must have spent several days in the water...

Nothing is known about him.

As always, the commemorations took place at 6.30pm, the next day in Calais (on the 12th and 18th) and the day after in Dunkirk (on the 13th and 19th).



Dunkirk, 13th April



« Voix du Nord » readers' letter 20th April

And no, it's not going to stop, whether we like it or not, we know that. All the conditions are in place for the list of deaths to grow even longer...

THE PASSAGES IN ENGLAND.

Most of the time the weather was not good, except for a few exceptional days. When there was sunshine, it was accompanied by a fairly strong wind that blew in an unfavourable direction.

Yet they tried their luck,
and some have succeeded...

4,432 passed through in April, on 80 dinghies (between 55 and 56 people per dinghy), including the arrival of only one dinghy (according to the Home Office) on the 19th (with 24 people) and on 23rd April (with 15), and also with days when one is impressed by the number: 656 on 12th April and 705 on the 15th...

At least 60 people were even counted per boat: 180 out of 3 on the 11th (60 people per boat), 184 out of 3 on the 21st (more than 61) and 63 out of one on the 22nd...

and even three canoes with 70 or 71 people each on the 17th: 211 people!

As of April 2024, 2,132 people had arrived in the United Kingdom (less than half) on 42 boats (between 50 and 51 people per dinghy). It already seemed huge...

The police pressure is terrible...

... although it could get worse:

An article by Aïcha Noui in the "Voix du Nord" magazine of March 21, 2025, reports on a draft agreement between France and the United Kingdom to stop boats at sea, within a radius of 300 meters near the coastal strip.

Fortunately, the end of the article is reassuring: "When contacted again, the Ministry of the Interior believes that "a European agreement" is needed to apply a new intervention doctrine "because there is no longer a framework to regulate the movement of people since Brexit, we are told. The problem of migrants in Northern France is a European problem. Legal channels and at the same time a readmission system are needed to deter what would be illegal crossings. There are also international conventions on law and assistance at sea which oppose any interception at sea in this specific context off the North and Pas-de-Calais. »

(the full article can be found on our website, in the "News" section, on 24th March)

But the exiles can no longer wait in our unsanitary camps,

There are many: last year we gave an average of 330 meals a day in April in Dunkirk. In April 2025, we had no distribution less than 500 meals. On the other hand, the number decreased in April 2025 in Calais (an average per day of 659 in 2024 compared to 506 in 2025) with 620 breakfasts given on April 27th, 820 on the 28th and 705 on the 30th!

In addition, everything is complicated because of the closure of the premises of the Auberge des Migrants in Calais: on the evening of Thursday, 3rd April, the volunteers present were victims of a very violent attack with a box cutter.

The closure the next day was understandable but after almost four weeks, their premises are still only open twice a week to allow the associations that are housed there to take equipment, which is very limited.

RCK, which prepares hot meals in this hangar, has stopped completely and it is at this point that we can notice that the distributions of the Active Life are clearly insufficient.

It also has an impact on the lives of the exiles of Dunkirk: since the end of Emmaus Grande-Synthe distributions on Friday lunchtime, MRS has been in charge of hot meals prepared by RCK. Since 4th April, the exiles have been deprived of it.

The exiles of Calais are also deprived of water: CFC volunteers (who are in charge of filling the IBCs in the camps) line up at the barrier of the Auberge des Migrants to fill their tanka (on the two days when the barrier is open) and they complete by taking water from the association "La Margelle". But, of course, they pay for it!

There are many arrivals of families and also arrivals from Germany. A striking and distressing example: a gentleman, a rather old chap from Kuwait, showed up on 26th April at breakfast in Salam: he had just arrived from Germany, where he had spent 20 years, he said, with papers that were constantly renewed for a few months. And then... all of a sudden... nothing... "Goodbye sir..." »

His only hope was England.

Ferri testifies to the living conditions and distributions in the Calais camps, in a text of 27th April:

A quiet Sunday is starting for many people of Calais.
The streets are empty, the seagulls are looking for their food.
It is cool but a little sun will soon warm hearts and bodies.
Beach, ice cream and donuts at the RV.
However, the city is not so quiet because when you open your eyes you see a life in Calais that is not so peaceful.

Salam starts the day as we do every day.
Volunteers, activists, 2 interns from Sciences Po Lille.
We cut the bread... We prepare the trucks.
Distribution begins.

Stop 1 / the quay in the city centre.
Men stranded between the rocks... hungry, they seek a little comfort... a hot drink, a piece of bread or a banana.

Stop 2 / there are more than 100 men and women in the area of rue des Huttes.
They are soaked and have experienced moments of horror standing in the icy water... their crossing boat broken.
After... The police... and return on foot, cold and hungry.

"Active people" are also on site.
Salam gives them coffee, milk, chocolate.
A change of clothes and a lot of comfort... A very young girl taken ill because of too much stress and horror.

Stop 3/ A little further behind a wall, women, men and a little boy... Let's start again the breads, milk coffee etc

Stop 4 Bmx / a place that became very hard after their dismantling.
Young women and men are gradually coming out of the little wood that remains.
We eat, we drink, we savour the chocolates and we feel a little better.

Stop 5 / le squat Orange.
We get a bit of a fight because we arrive late... It happens when you find 100 shipwrecked people!! ...
A long line of men is waiting for us and as everywhere provided is, coffee, milk, bread and today chocolate.
Plus a few sweet words to nourish their interior as well.

And here we are back to the Salam premises.
We unload the trucks, and we know that tomorrow and the day after tomorrow and again and again it starts again.
Not because all these volunteers have nothing else to do with their lives... but because the life of the refugees in Calais has become harder and harder... increasingly Inhuman.
We are also here to fill a terrible gap... a lack of humanity and responsibility on the part of the French State.
Because our world belongs to everyone... white or coloured skin, we all have the right to the same dreams and hopes
Open the Borders!

Ferri Mattheeuwsen, Sunday, April 27th 2025.
(Ferri, a volunteer in Salam, is Dutch).

The next day, the team found more than 200 people on the Quai de la Moselle. There are women and children... They are soaked, barefoot, and unfortunately all the "shipwreck kits" were distributed the day before... We didn't have time to replenish the reserves...
That day was the worst of the month: 820 breakfasts given that morning...

THE DISMANTELINGS.

It's spring, the police are confused with the daisies...
But the month of April was no more cheerful than the previous ones for the exiles.



Four in the month near Dunkirk (on the 8th, 17th, 25th and 29th).

A view of the atmosphere:

The operation of the 29th targeted almost only the stalls on the edge of the distribution site. Moreover, the AFEJI shelter bus only arrives when the operation is over. Roots' showers were respected.

The destruction was done with an excavator.



The second photo is of the last shop.

On the 8th, the evacuation could have gone unnoticed:

At 8:23am, the exiles spread the news that the police were on the camp and an evacuation was underway. In the absence of the Human Rights Observers and Utopia, the information was passed on through the associations present on the ground.

The police were spotted on the bridge, at Total, at motocross and at Esso.



There are no less than twelve CRS vans, The police don't understand why people leave the field on foot rather than get on a bus... They have certainly not been told that the bus takes them to CAES, where the reception is limited to one month and where they are obliged, if they stay until the end of the month, to apply for asylum...

On the 17th, the CRS Republican Security Corps were first spotted at the Pont à Roseaux, then at Total. There are at least 5 CRS (Republican Security Corps) vans, more than 110 people are moving on their own with at least ten women and three children, a lot of material is seized, we hear the chainsaw, a sign of deforestation...

On the 25th, the presence of the police on the camp was reported at 8am by exiles.

There are 12 CRS (Republican Security Corps) vans, an impressive amount of "cleaning" equipment: an excavator, a small orange dumpster, a large red dumpster, a tractor, a construction machine, a chainsaw. Indeed, a lot of equipment is seized...



Tents were removed:

The dump truck is full:



But the term "cleaning" leaves us dreaming, when you see the state of the place after the convoy has passed...



About 150 people are displaced, including six children, escorted by the CRS (Republican Security Corps). Two arrests were made (one of the two in the photo, preceded by a strip search).



There are at least two shelter buses (the HRO has nine people in them).

The legal basis given by the police is "decision of the Dunkirk judicial court".

The sites visited are: Total, Gracht Mardyck, Esso and Matthews.

The policemen are extremely polite that day with the HRO (Human Rights Observers).



In Calais, there was little derogation (exemption from or relaxation of a rule or law) from the rule of evacuations three times a week (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays).

On 10th April, a Thursday, a Facebook message reported an evacuation at 6 a.m. near exit 44. The HRO moves in vain, but in the afternoon the signs of a police passage are there...

Every day, the same three sites are dismantled, the City Centre, the BMX and the Rue de Judée.

The legal basis was announced on April 16th at BMX: "it's an operation to prevent people from setting up in a permanent position" and then "there is no investigation".



Police officers move in large numbers (the photo, from April 21st, is an example)

but they never approach the orange “squat” where the exiled population is by far the most numerous... 420 breakfasts out of 580 were given by our team on April 6th , 450 on the 13th out of 635: the number would not work in favor of the Forces of Law and Order in the event of resistance!



Weapons are often present as a means of intimidation: a baton was reported by the Human Rights Observers at the Pont de la Batellerie on 25th April, shields on BMX on 11th April, an LBD in the hands of a CRS (Republican Security Corps) on 7th April on BMX.

The police are not very respectful of the equipment of the exiles, and the rule that says that whoever is present can take his tent with him, is not always respected:

On 4th April, in the city centre, a person is forced by the police to empty his tent, and the police prevent him from taking it, the person leaves with his belongings under his arms.

April 7th , also in the city centre, the Police explain to the HRO that the tents can be collected at the Ressourcerie. The Human Rights Observers replies that it is not that simple, but the dialogue is very little audible. On April 24th , Utopia 56 reported on an inter-associative WhatsApp that an exile was waiting in front of the Ressourcerie, during opening hours, and that there was no one there. And, in fact, we never hear anyone tell us that they were able to recover equipment there...



In any case, the seized tents are systematically dragged on the ground, often with the poles that walk around, often full of heavy equipment that weakens them even more when they scrape the ground.



Equipment of all kinds is collected:
especially pallets, which are important for making fires for heating and making some tea or cooking.

At least, we read several times in the HRO's findings that families were spared during the evacuations: Quai de la Gironde, on April 11th, 16th and 23rd. We don't know if they are the same people... Same thing on April 30th Quai de la Meuse: a family with four young children (between five and one year old)..

Arrests of adult men are not exceptional: for example, two people on April 4th, 16th and 25th in the city center. Also on the 25th, the HRO later heard on the policemen's walkie-talkie that two Kuwaiti adult men had been arrested.

Associations, the HRO (Human Rights Observers) in particular, are always kept at a distance from events by very distant security perimeters. Most often they are sent "over there... after the gate, or elsewhere... But sometimes we still have ranks of police officers who prevent them from passing (photo taken on rue de Judée on April 30th).



ASSOCIATIONS AND JUSTICE:

The evacuation of the Orange squat was decided by the judge on 11th April 2025:

In December, the owner of the place asked the court to evict them from the warehouse so that he could use it again.

On April 11th, the judge granted a five-month delay before the place could be evicted. This means that the place cannot be evicted for 5 months, so not before September 14th. After September 14th, the place may be evicted (probably by the police)...

Two members of the Human Rights Observers in police custody on 7th April, awaiting the judgment in September, according to the lawyer of their team:

Two HRO observers were arrested and taken into custody on Monday, 7th April, at the end of the day for almost 20 hours for "entering and circulating without regular authorization in the parts of the railway or its dependencies that are not assigned to public traffic [...]". At the end of their custody, they were issued with a court summons for September 2025.

A POSITIVE NOTE ON THIS SAD OBSERVATION:

The volunteers are present and do not give up.

Claire Millot.

A RATHER DISTURBING ATMOSPHERE...

**MEETING BETWEEN THE POPULATION OF LOON-PLAGE AND THE STATE AUTHORITIES
(prefect delegate for security and defence of the northern zone and sub-prefect of Dunkirk).
28th April 2025, Salle Coluche in Loon-plage.**

**Faced with the undignified conditions of survival of the exiles, which we know well,
This meeting showed:**

- **a population exasperated by the proximity of exiles, who are perceived as a source of insecurity,**
- **State authorities powerless, but obliged to remind people of the law and respect for the human persons.**

All this raises' fears of an acceleration of the rise of the far right on the ground and at the ballot box...

COMPTE RENDU DE LA RÉUNION PAR UN BÉNÉVOLE DE SALAM, PRÉSENT

REPORT OF THE MEETING BY A VOLUNTEER FROM SALAM, PRESENT.

The atmosphere was quite disturbing....

A lot of people, 400 to 450 people, people standing for lack of space. CRS (Republican Security Corps) are clearly visible at the entrance to the room.

6:00 p.m., Mr. Rommel, mayor of Loon-Plage, who will lead the meeting, the Sub-Prefect of Dunkirk, Mr. Loiseau, and the Prefect Delegate for Security and Defence of the Northern Zone, Mr. Lagoguey, (who arrived from Seine Saint Denis in November 2024) were present on the stage.

In his introductory remarks, Mr Rommel said that this meeting was taking place on his own initiative, that it was the first of its kind to bring together representatives of the State and citizens living near the camps on the migration problem. He greeted the mayors of Gravelines and Mardyck, as well as Mr. Allaert, Commissioner of Dunkirk, and Mr. Pidoux, Director General of the CUD services.

He recalls that he recently joined the group of mayors of the coast (it is the only one in Dunkirk to date) to try to put pressure on the Ministry of the Interior.

He insists (heavily) on the fact that this meeting is a Loon-Plage initiative, aimed at the people of Loon to find solutions for the people of Loon and that non-Loonians are just tolerated.

His words are quite brutal since he speaks of "invasion", a term that he will later say he uses as a spokesman for his population without adhering himself to what he represents. He speaks of growing insecurity, environmental damage, hygiene problems, various nuisances in the streets, bus shelters or on public transport. He speaks of a population of Loon-Plage at bay and very worried and of rumours that are circulating.

He regrets a situation that has worsened due to deforestation and the establishment of fenced areas by the State, thus and predictably shifting the problems to Loon-Plage.

The two representatives of the State say they are part of a new approach of proximity to listen and therefore act as well as possible, of modesty because they do not have an objective of results but ... of means and that they are facing a very old and for the moment insoluble geopolitical problem, and of truth because France is a state of law bound by rules and procedures to be respected and international commitments and treaties.

From the beginning of the questions and testimonies, one senses an exasperated population, crossed by a strong feeling of abandonment. The discrepancy between the feeling of insecurity felt by the residents and what we experience in the camp during the distributions is obvious.

The inhabitants of Loon-Plage, for a certain number, are not or are no longer able to have empathy for the exiles.

Precise and sometimes poignant testimonies reinforce this feeling and people prevent or forbid themselves.... to let their teenagers take the bus or train, to let them go alone to sports activities, to walk, to use the cycle paths, to go jogging or to walk their dog... Settling of scores between smugglers or the installation of tents with nuisances near homes are reported as very traumatic.

The residents' grievances range from the degradation of their immediate environment, from green spaces, to litter and scattered waste, to the embarrassment and humiliation they suffer from each other when you come across an exile who has no toilets available.

Depending on the interventions, one feels a divided audience but more concerned with the daily presence of the exiles and the nuisances induced than with the inhuman conditions of survival suffered by them.

It is difficult to intervene for the few people who dared to speak of a duty of humanity and the harsh condition of exile on the coast.

Paradoxically, the Prefect and the Sub-Prefect had to be moderating elements by reminding us that although representatives of the public force, there were procedures to be respected and that by virtue of its history and influence, France had duties in terms of respect for the human person...

They make the fight against smugglers and networks (gangs) their absolute priority, while recognising that Dunkirk and Loon-Plage in particular, were at the end of the road to exiles and whatever is offered to them (CAES for example) the exiles are determined to get through at all costs and that their determination is immense.

Harassing the smugglers and making the passage through the Loon-Plage camp strategically complicated, and therefore economically risky for the smugglers, is their goal, even if it means moving the problem a little further along the coast.

The Dunkirk area is currently on a peak in attendance with families with children of all ages.

The representatives of the State assure that the human and material resources are well financed by the British but recognize that they are not infinite and that they must make choices and target their deployment according to the priorities of the moment.

To respond to the population of Loon Plage, additional resources will be deployed (police, transport police, brigades). The CUD's actions (skips, garbage collection) are also financed by the British (Saunders fund) and therefore made permanent (intervention by Mr. Pidoux).

Mr. Allaert, commissioner, took note of some more sensitive places in the municipality.

There was practically no mention of the associations except for a very calm but sometimes heckled intervention by the representative of the League of Human Rights calling for the duty of humanity and the rights to be respected for the most disadvantaged.

It was neither the time nor the place given the context and it is a shame that a counter-productive intervention by an X "militant" personalizing and radicalizing things and above all hitting the point off the point turned a good part of the assembly upside down. This will not serve the cause of the associations...

The Prefect and the Sub-Prefect also acknowledge a disagreement with the elected representatives of the coast who want the State to finally let the exiles cross. A readmission project with the establishment of a legal route is under discussion with Great Britain but it is only in the draft stage.

The Le Touquet Accords seem to be set in stone and therefore inviolable. They remain the pure and hard rule.

In conclusion, dialogue has existed, but it has not led to very concrete progress for the inhabitants of Loon-Plage. They will have been listened to, but will not leave much more reassured.

Exiles will not be treated better because they are necessarily undesirable everywhere... and therefore wanted to leave as soon as possible while being prevented from leaving!! Above all, no good reception conditions to avoid a possible draught!

In conclusion, Mr. Loiseau recalled that it was important not to oppose suffering.

Loon-Plage gives the impression of being a powder keg ready to burst into flames and at the mercy of the slightest incident or the slightest rumour and... at the ballot box, the soil cultivated by the status quo and the inability of the state to find a solution to the situation of the exiles is likely to greatly push extreme and nauseating votes in the next elections.

The meeting was adjourned a little after 8 p.m.

Volunteer D.P. in Salam.

AND EVERY DAY WE HIT ROCK BOTTOM A LITTLE MORE.

And every day we hit rock bottom a little more.
They are prevented from getting on a train.
And yet they are escorted to the station!
They are made to walk for hours all over the coast.
Without really knowing where.
Because we don't know what to do with them anymore.
And even the 427 bus skips the stop at Calais station so as not to take them...
them!

"We" are the police... the gendarmes, the CRS (Republican Security Corps)... the railway police.
Them... it's the migrants... refugees... the others.
Because the other is frightening
The other is not welcome
The other is always the culprit.
And we... poor us... one believes oneself to have all rights.

Ferri Matheeuwsen, April 11, 2025.
(Ferri, a volunteer in Salam, is Dutch).

***INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS -
SIGNALS OF THE FUTURE FOR NATIONS.***

Youth, and its future prospects, are the best indicators to assess the dynamism and attractiveness of a country. We talk about mobility and expatriation when we have chosen to leave for positive reasons "pull factors". We talk about migration or exile when we are forced to leave our country "push factors".

For young Europeans, mobility has been encouraged through the flagship programme "Erasmus". Since 1987, it has enabled the exchanges of millions of young Europeans. These are semesters (educational terms) spent in schools/universities in a member country of the European Union allowing students to obtain a diploma awarded by one (or more) universities/schools. It can also be several months spent on a humanitarian/voluntary commitment in a non-profit organisation, as part of the European Voluntary Service (EVS) (1). A third possibility is an internship abroad – Erasmus + mobility projects make it possible to finance these apprentices' stays in Europe.

In any case, these European experiences have been very fruitful for all the young people who have left - discoveries of countries or cultures that are close but different, meetings with other young people who have not had the same educational paths, learning about otherness and diversity, emancipation also from their familiar surroundings (families and friends)... Many young people talk about positive destabilization, awareness of their abilities, acquisition of real autonomy (2)... They have developed intercultural competence by learning to study and/or work with multicultural teams in foreign environments. A survey carried out by the magazine "L'Etudiant" in January 2025 indicated that the international dimension was the first criterion for choosing the best students, particularly in engineering or business schools (3).

Expatriation is when national students leave; impartation refers to the reception of foreign students in our country. The national agencies for the promotion of higher education regularly conduct opinion surveys to find out the reasons that guide students' choice (4). In 2020-2021, the German foreign student exchange management body (5) reported that 81% of respondents cited professional prospects in Germany after their studies as the main reason, ahead of academic level and the low cost of study. In France, Campus France in 2018 (6) highlights that the cultural influence of France is the most cited reason by international students (78%), ahead of economic prospects (33%). A 2020 study by Campus France (7), based on focus groups of students from six countries, identifies three main factors for mobility: the search for a stimulating personal experience, the desire to strengthen one's competitiveness on the job market and the desire to emigrate to build a life project in the host country. For these three factors, France is perceived positively by foreign students.

They highlight the quality of training, the international recognition of certain diplomas or programmes, the prestige of certain institutions, the level of research and the quality of study conditions. Anglo-Saxon students prefer short mobilities (*summer schools*) while Chinese, Ivorian, Indian and Mexican students are looking for a degree mobility, with the main objective of following an internationally recognized curriculum. For non-French-speaking students, French higher education is perceived as less visible internationally, complex and less easy to integrate with teaching mainly in French (language barrier).

The attractiveness of a country for foreign students is one of the most decisive indicators for assessing its influence. After having been the leading host country for international students during the interwar period, France has experienced, since the 2000's, a steady increase in the number of international students enrolled in its higher education (9) but lower than that of some Anglo-Saxon countries or Germany. France was the second largest host country in 1980 after the United States; the fourth in 2017 behind the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia; in 2022, it is seventh behind Canada, Germany and Russia (8). For more than 20 years, the geographical areas of origin of international students in France have changed little. French higher education primarily attracts French-speaking students. The fast-growing contingents of mobile students from China (10), and more recently from India and Nigeria, choose English-speaking courses provided in the United States, the United Kingdom or Germany.

The choice of students is also guided by geopolitics and the political, economic, social and cultural context of a country. The negative messages sent by an aggressive, isolationist or even xenophobic American administration (anti-immigration rhetoric) since President Trump's inauguration on 20th January, 2025 can be very dissuasive on the decisions of the best people. The Trump team's attacks on science and research, which have resulted in the *indefinite* dismissal of thousands of the most renowned researchers in their field, and drastic budget cuts for internationally renowned national agencies complete the cataclysmic picture of the United States in 2025. After having long attracted the best people through a competitive ecosystem that is very stimulating for many researchers (prestigious MIT, the attraction of Silicon Valley, etc.), America has disappointed.

In the unbridled competition between nations, brains are resources that are just as decisive and more durable than the "strategic minerals" coveted by the Trump administration (Ukraine, Greenland, etc.). Western Europe, with the United Kingdom, which has moved closer to the EU since the arrival of the Trump team, can play a decisive card to attract the most promising young talents in the most competitive sectors (AI, economy 3.0 or even 4.0...).

After a phase of shock and reserve, the European Commission has multiplied announcements since January 2025 to relaunch itself on the international scene with programmes for the future (competitiveness, European industry, rearmament, etc.) (11).

"There is no wealth but men," wrote the French economist Jean Bodin in the sixteenth century. It is not by brutalizing men and nations that we build a future. The American anti-example (Trump 2024-2028) should inspire us. Long live Europe!

Dr Bénédicte Halba, President of IRIV (www.iriv.net), April 2025

Bénédicte Halba runs a research institute (iriv) which has been working on the theme of migration since 2003, she has led a club at the Cité des Métiers for a migrant public (2012-2022) and has been publishing a weblog dedicated to migration since 2024-<https://actions-migration.blogspot.com/> <https://actions-migration.blogspot.com/>

(1) the first version of which (still experimental) was launched in 1996 (thanks to a French Commissioner, Edith Cresson)

(2) a European eMocc project made it possible to interview young people who had had a mobility experience in four countries - Germany, Spain, France and Italy - to find out their motivations, the expected satisfactions and/or the difficulties encountered

(3) survey by L'Etudiant cited in their 2025 ranking of engineering schools - <https://www.letudiant.fr/classements/classement-des-ecoles-d-ingenieurs/region-ile-de-france.html>

(4) Court of Auditors "An assessment of the attractiveness of French higher education for international students" - 10 March 2025 - Paris- <https://www.ccomptes.fr/sites/default/files/2025-03/20250310-Attractivite-de-la-France-pour-les-etudiants-etrangers.pdf>

(5) Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst – DAAD cited by the Court of Auditors' report, survey of 15,000 foreign students enrolled in German higher education

(6) sample of comparable size, study cited by the Court of Auditors

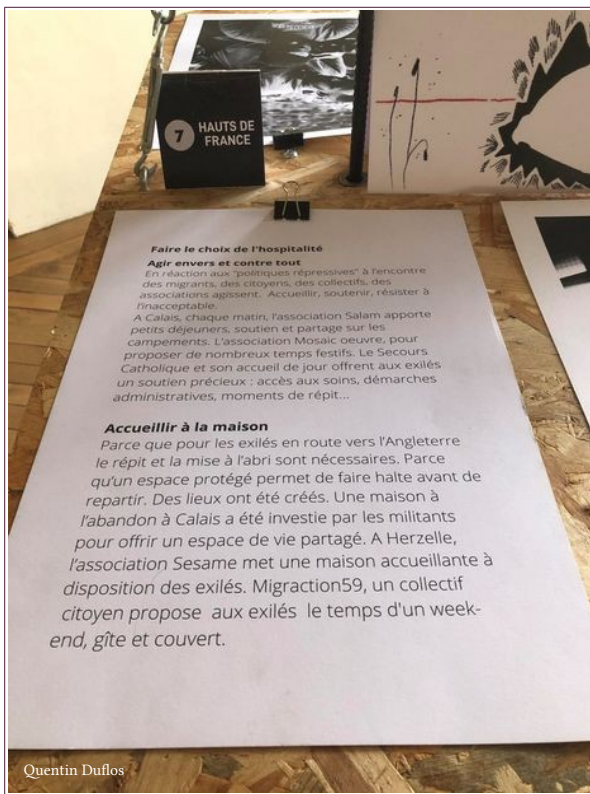
(7) China, Ivory Coast, United States, India, Mexico, United Kingdom, cited by the Court of Auditors(8) Unesco data (number of international students in so-called diploma mobility) cited by the Court of Auditors Accounts(9) Court of Auditors(10) third place of international students behind Morocco and Algeria(11) "competitiveness" council-<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/fr/meetings/compet/2025/03/12/>

THOSE WHO MAKE THE LINK BETWEEN CITIZENS AND ASSOCIATIONS,

THANK YOU FIRST OF ALL TO THOSE WHO MAKE THE LINK BETWEEN CITIZENS AND ASSOCIATIONS,

AN EXHIBITION THAT SPEAKS TO US AND ABOUT US.

The exhibition "Resisting, exiles and activists, from Briançon to Calais" by Laurent Prum was on display from Friday 18th to Sunday 27th April at the "Moulin à café" in Saint-Omer. She mentioned in particular SALAM Calais.



GAUTHIER WROTE TO US ON 6th APRIL :

Hello and thank you for your newsletter, which requires a lot of work and regularity, and which I read every month with attention and emotion.

It is always this contrast of violence between national politics and the generosity of volunteers in the field. Despair and hope. Malevolence and benevolence.

I broadcast on Mâcon and Bourg-en-bresse, because Calais and Dk are the distant "north-north" as the people here say, and few imagine what happens there on the coast for the exiles and the volunteers. Just as the people of the North do not imagine all the actions carried out here, far from the sea, to help and shelter refugees, especially unaccompanied minors, out of silent solidarity.

Yours sincerely and I look forward to coming back to help the great team of Grande-Synthe as soon as I can, as I did last Christmas.

AND WILMA TOO, on 23rd April.

I agree with you, this last newsletter was really rich and varied.

First, there is the usual diligence found in reporting on the daily persecution of migrant people. And next to it is the story of resistance, of the refusal to accept this situation. I really appreciated Paul Roos' editorial.

So many suicides, it's atrocious. Politicians on both sides of the Channel, and elsewhere, are pushing people to despair. It feels so good to know that so many people, like those in Salam and others, are reacting humanely. Fantastic is the help given to migrants crossing the mountains from Italy to France. (...)

With friendship and encouragement as always,

THANK YOU



THANK YOU TO THE VOLUNTEERS,

To those who prepare meals (in the photo Amara of Saturday morning)...

in particular to those without whom the preparation on Tuesday morning would not have been possible, the FTS team in the lead (Charline, Elisabeth, Hubert, Isabelle, Jean-Paul, Marianne, and Véronique), the Maisons-Laffite team (Greg and Sandrine), the Thursday team (Geneviève and Dominique), and Sany alone since 8th April.

To those who distribute them,

Some distributions would undoubtedly have been much more difficult, perhaps even impossible without the help of the "Emmaus" of Brittany on 5th April. We started in "1st line" carnival mode: with our backs to the first in the "line", we held back the crowd! It was the same thing on 8th April, with our friends from Maisons-Laffite.



.. and those who take the time to smile at the little ones (in the photo Sandrine from Maisons-Laffite).

To those who clean up (in photo Henri at the evacuation of the usual flood after a heavy rain)



... and to those who tidy up:

on 9th April Dominique brought some discarded tables to his old establishment, thanks to him too, they were transformed into shelves that allowed our Emmaus residents of Burgundy, the next day, with the help of some of us, to put away the shoes, the blankets, the tote box with plastic bags, the lenses, among other things, and to give a famous sweep.



To those who do the shopping (in the photo the pasta and the cans of tomato bought by Denise)

To those who have taken charge of transport:

Dominique and Sandrine, for the cups bought in Calais:

Pascaline for the blankets brought back from Belgium:



THANK YOU TO THOSE, KNOWN OR UNKNOWN, WHO GAVE US GIFTS FOR OUR EXILED FRIENDS.

As Pascaline wrote on 27th April:

"Thank you to all the people who contribute to this channel... The reserves are emptied and filled up as the weeks go by. It's a huge sorting and tidying job that is carried out continuously! »

Food donations:

On 5th April, a couple dropped off various ingredients and bread.

Abdelkader's meal of the day was offered by Slimane from Roubaix following the death of brother.

Textile donations:

On 3rd April, Cécile, a former Salam student, came to bring us a bag of clothes and shoes, as did Brigitte (Thursday volunteer),

We also received an anonymous donation of blankets.

On 7th April, we received a gentleman with clothes.

On 24th April, a few bags of clothes were found near the staircase (left by an anonymous donor).

On 28th Monday, a lady gave three camp beds and men's clothes.

THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO HAVE HELPED US IN THE NAME OF A FRIENDLY ASSOCIATION OR IN THE PROCESS OF BECOMING ONE...

Our biggest donor in material donations is the Secours Populaire/Copains du Monde, behind Christian Hogard, Caroline and their team, especially Bruno and Evelyne.

Every week, often twice a week, we receive bread and pastries.

And several times their Epicerie Solidaire in Loon-Plage gave us fruit and vegetables that they had in surplus.

Here are our thank you messages:

The one on 4th April:

Thank you, Friends of the World,

Thank you for the donations of bread on 1st and 3rd April.

And it was really not a joke, so happy were our exiled friends to receive them at the breakfasts distributed by Salam. Thank you to our friends, on behalf of our other friends.

The one on 16th April:

Thank you Christian, Caroline, and the Copains du Monde (World Friends)

Thank you for the three deliveries of bread and pastries last week...

We went up to more than 700 breakfasts at the beginning of the week and more than 600 at the end. Thank you for the reinforcement you have given us.

Thank you also for the vegetables donated in Dunkirk on Saturday.

We are in a period of significant shortage of fresh produce, and your input has been beneficial

On behalf of the two poles of Salam, THANK YOU!

The one of 27th April:

Thank you friends, Copains du Monde, (World Friends) for the important contribution the day before yesterday Friday in Calais: bread, pastries, biscuits, gingerbread.

We found ourselves, on rue des Mouettes, in front of a hundred Eritreans, soaked up to their ears after a failed passage. Thank you for giving us something to bring them a little sweetness...

Thank you also for the donation made to our team in Dunkirk, yesterday Saturday, through Marie, of bread, vegetables and bananas from your solidarity grocery store in Loon-Plage.

All this allows us to treat our exiled friends, forgotten by everyone on our seaside, a little better...

THANK YOU!

Emmaus communities have followed one another:

- the team of the Emmaus communities in Brittany (Pontivy, Hédé, Bazouges and Vannes).



- The Saint-Nazaire team, in partnership with a team of young people and their educators from the closed educational centre.

They had come with a lot of food donations (Easter bread and chocolates that were distributed) and clothes/shoes/blankets that were donated after the distribution.

- A team from Burgundy with blankets and full of energy.

The fruits and vegetables of the Maison Sésame were brought to us, during the period of cleaning up of the House.

- On the 10th, it was Clémence (on a training camp there) who brought everything.

- On the 18th, Sylvie dropped off several boxes of fruit (kiwis, oranges) and vegetables (potatoes, onions, tomatoes) as well as nearly 100 eggs.

Quentin, who helped her to land everything, writes to us:

"I allowed myself to give the ripest fruit directly to the guys in camp. The fruit would not have lasted until Monday. »

- On the 25th, Sylvie once again dropped off the boxes of fruit and vegetables at the door of the premises. It was Alexander, a young Ukrainian, who helped Annie bring everything in, shortly after.

- Also on the 29th, Sylvie and Benoît arrived with a full trunk.



The gardens of Cocagne delivered 58kg of vegetables on 3rd April, (potatoes, carrots, red beets, salads etc...)

On Monday 7th April, Martine was back with her full van: **a new collection made at the church of Erquinghem-Lys.**

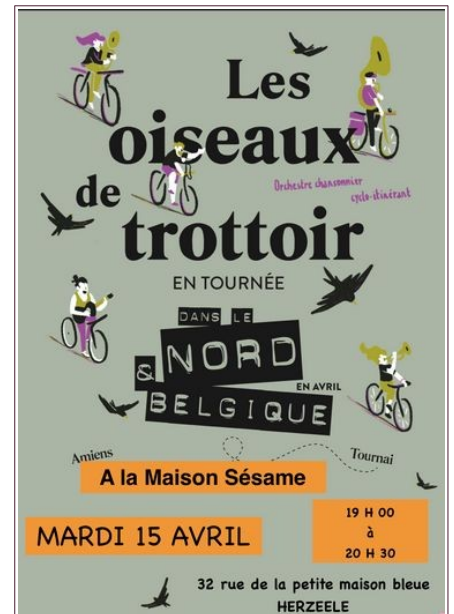
On the same day, we received **another important donation from Aïcha's association in Lens**, passed on by Jean-François (who lives in Courrières-les-Lens), then to her parents, then to her brother Luc, who brought everything to Grande-Synthe, for a share with Calais: dates, preserves, sugar, water, soup, oil, condiments, cakes...

A great cooperation from a family devoted to the cause of Salam!

On 16th April 16, it was the donations that were once again deposited in the neighbouring parishes that arrived to us, **dropped off by our friends Brigitte and Jean-Noël de Templeuve.**



ALEDS, to end the month, had ten boxes of warm Damart clothes (sizes Set M) to give away and kindly diverted after their distribution on Sunday 27th to drop them off in my garage.



AND THANK YOU TO MAISON SESAME FOR ORGANIZING the evening of April 15th, well attended by the volunteers of Salam.



AND FINALLY THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHO GAVE US FINANCIAL DONATIONS, without which we would not be able to maintain the vans, put diesel in the tanks, pay for the water and electricity used in our premises, replace the gas bottles...
Thank you to everyone (close friends and strangers) who slipped us a note, sent a cheque, made a transfer directly or through Helloassos.

THANK YOU TO BETHLEHEM, ABDELKADER AND THE RENAISSANCE ASSOCIATION, TO FLANDRES TERRE SOLIDAIRE, TO THE PROTESTANT MUTUAL AID, TO THE AUBERGE DES MIGRANTS who share with us the ton of bananas offered by CONHEXA once a week, to EMMAÛS who give us surpluses every week, for Calais as well as for Grande-Synthe, to the Maison Sésame who shares with us two mornings a week the surplus fruit and vegetables from the ALDI store from the rue du Kruysbellaert, to the Ressourcerie de Montreuil sur mer ("Il était deux fois") and to the Secours Catholique de Berck which provide every month clothes brought to Calais by André de Merlimont, to the Audotri association which regularly supports us with donations of clothes and blankets, to the Calais bakeries and those opposite the Noordover, "La mie du pain" and "Aux pains du Nord" by Coudekerque. Week after week, they are there to help us.

Thank you to the Human Rights Observers, Dominique Bommel, ALEDS and Catherine from Emmaüs Vannes, who allowed us to publish their photos.

THANK YOU to the diocesan association of Lille which, through the parish of Grande-Synthe, has been making the premises of the Salle Guérin available free of charge for about fifteen years.

THANK YOU to Michel who has been ensuring the layout of this newsletter, without fail, for years, **to Chris** who translates it into English, month after month, for our website, **to Antoine who has been managing the Facebook Page**, also without fail, since 2017, **to Guillaume who introduced us to the LinkedIn network** three years ago, **and Quentin who opened an Instagram account for Salam in May (almost a year!):**
salam_calais_grandesynthe.

And I ask forgiveness from all those who helped us in one way or another and whom I forgot, or who were forgotten to report to me...

Claire Millot.

OUR NEEDS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Dunkirk:

We need people on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from the beginning of the food peeling chore (8 a.m.) to the end of the dishes (between 2 and 4 p.m.). In between, we distribute the meal.

Call Claire (06 34 62 68 71).

From outside France 00 33 6 34 62 68 71

Calais :

Salam continues to distribute improved breakfasts every morning with tea and coffee.

But we are sorely lacking in volunteers, especially volunteers with driving licenses:

Meeting at 7:45 a.m. at the premises, 13 rue des Fontinettes.

Call Yolaine at 06.83.16.31.61.

From outside France 00 33 6 83 16 31 61

CALL FOR DONATIONS

MONEY NEEDS

Without state subsidies and with a very significant reduction in subsidies from local and regional authorities, we still need money to make the association's work last:

Maintenance of premises and vans, fuel, purchase of missing foodstuffs...

Visit the association's website: www.associationsalam.org
section: "Support us"

Go through HELLOASSO:

<https://www.helloasso.com/associations/salam-nord-pas-de-calais/formulaires/2/widget>

or simply send a cheque to:

Association Salam

BP 47

62100 CALAIS

You are entitled to a 66% tax reduction on these donations, in cash by one of our volunteers, by cheque payable to SALAM, or by bank transfer (direct or by Helloasso) (please check your local tax laws)

A big thank you to all our generous donors!

TENTS AND TARPAULINS!

From dismantling to dismantling, the tents are being removed on both sites and we are unable to replace them. Many people sleep with nothing on them, in all weathers.

You can also buy tarpaulins, pieces of 3 m by 3 m (or 2.50 m by 3 m). They cost much less and allow an honest man to spend a night in shelter.

Otherwise, the most pressing needs at both sites:

BLANKETS (DUVETS, SLEEPING BAGS).

men's clothing from XS to XL: underpants, long johns underpants and thermal leggings and thermal sweaters, socks, jogging pants, jeans, shorts, t-shirts,

MEN'S SHOES: trainers or light hiking boots (sizes 40 to 46),

flip/flops, sandals, caps

backpacks,

lamps and batteries,

water packs,

bags (small backpacks, garbage bags, freezer bags, shopping bags and plastic bags)

Food for Calais:

JAM and MAYONNAISE,

Milk

tea and sugar, instant coffee,

cookies (or pastries, or cake bars or pound cakes etc...)

To drop off your donations, go to 13 rue des Fontinettes, and call 06 83 16 31 61.

And for Grande-Synthe:

Especially canned vegetables of all kinds (we receive much less fresh produce for some time),
bags of pulses, pasta, rice.

Drop off your donations in the Salle Guérin, 1 rue Alphonse Daudet, behind the church of St Jacques on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTION

The membership form for 2025 is attached to this mailing.

If you are not yet a member, do not hesitate to join us.

Whether you are an active volunteer or not, becoming a member gives the association the strength to the union! We were more than 250 members in 2024, help us to exceed the 300 threshold.

CONTACT US

<http://www.associationsalam.org>

salamnordpasdecalais@gmail.com

Facebook page: SALAM Nord/Pas-de-Calais

The LinkedIn page, which can be consulted at the following link : www.linkedin.com/in/association-salam-nord-pas-de-calais

and the brand new Instagram account: [salam_calais_grandesynthe](https://www.instagram.com/salam_calais_grandesynthe)

Association SALAM
13 rue des Fontinettes, 62100 CALAIS
BP 47
62100 CALAIS

Association SALAM,
Salle Guérin, Quartier St Jacques,
1, rue Alphonse Daudet,
59760 Grande-Synthe

Please fill in the form below and return it to the following address:

Association SALAM-Nord/Pas-de-Calais

BP 47
62100 CALAIS- FRANCE

Mr/Mrs :Surname _____ First name _____

Address _____

Postal code _____ City _____ Country _____

Téléphone _____

E mail (important for the invitation to the General Assembly) _____

☐ I join the association by paying the sum of €10.

(5 € for students and job seekers, membership valid until 31/12/2025)

Date and signature :

☐ I make a donation* to the Salam association by paying the sum of: _____

*By cheque payable to the Salam association. A tax receipt will be sent to you

☐ I would like to receive more information about the Salam association..

"With regard to the law n°78-17 of January 6, 1978 relating to information technology, files and freedoms, the association undertakes not to use the data for commercial purposes. As for the member or donor, he or she can exercise his or her right to inspect and rectify his or her personal data in accordance with the GDPR in force since May 25, 2018."