

SYNOPSIS :

SANGATTE: Migrants in CALAIS

Photo story by

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I have been working on this project since the permanent closure of the Red Cross Center in Sangatte* in November 2002. The situation has been worsening and spreading to Calais and the long of the French north coast.

The migrants' nationalities change every year due to the wars and crisis developing all around the world. After each new conflict, each hardening of the situation in the world, new migrants arrive in Calais. Their ultimate destination is England. They come from Irak, Afghanistan, Iraki Kurdistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia and countries of the ex USSR.

The migrants « profile » has greatly changed in the last seven years. At first, there were only single men. The most of them were around 20 to 40 years old. With time, the centre has accommodated entire families: men, women and children. And after a while, a few single women. However, there aren't many of them compared to the number of migrants.

I noticed that the migrants' mean age had lessened, especially among Afghans and Eritreans.

This photo story shows two different aspects of Calais' situation. On one hand, the volunteers' work on the field and how they try to make up for the lack of temporary reception facilities for these persons in transit. On a second hand, this work focuses on the Afghans camp, called "The Jungle", situated in a wooded area near the industrial park of Calais. Four hundred migrants are packed in this unhealthy place. They are Afghans and most of them are minors. They live in makeshift shelters.

This photo story was produced with the help of the SALAM association.

*Sangatte is a French district situated in Nord-Pas-de-Calais. The French station of the Channel Tunnel is located there. It used to be known for its refugee camp. The center was permanently closed in 2002.