

Over 11,000 Migrants Found Hiding in Trucks This Year As They Cross Into UK From France

In a treacherous and potentially lethal tactic, more than 11,000 migrants have been discovered this year trying to get to Britain from France by hiding in the back of trucks.

Thousands of people have crossed over into Britain in recent months but the migrants have been met with anti-immigration views.

Many refugees who have left for Britain seek economic opportunity or because of family ties. French authorities say another big draw is lax British rules toward migrants without residency papers.

Only migrants with more money can pay for boat passage to Britain; others have decided to take a leap of faith and jump onto commercial trucks that pass each week between Britain and France.

Police have heavily surveilled the English Channel by using technology to scan trucks for body heat and moving shadows.

Last year, more than 18,000 refugees were found in trucks, according to the Associated Press.

In an effort to deter migrants, truck drivers check to see that no one enters their rigs, or stop to tell would-be stowaways that they're not going to Britain and there's no point in climbing aboard. Police in patrol cars come by often, too, their sirens blaring.

If migrants do make it aboard a rig, they pay close attention to the truck's route.

Only one sequence of left and right turns will lead them to the promised land across the Channel. If the combination is the wrong one, they get off and start over again.

And even if the vehicle is going in the right direction, more challenges and danger

await the stowaways. If discovered, they are forced out of the vehicles by police.

Refugee advocacy groups and human rights observers report receiving calls for help from migrants in refrigerated trucks who say they are suffocating or about to die from hypothermia. Some say they have been roughed up by police when caught.

Some suffer broken bones or worse from trying to jump onto moving trucks. In late September, 20-year-old Yasser Abdallah was crushed to death by a truck.

Abdallah, too, had fled Sudan. He dreamed of being a taxi driver in Britain. The Calais migrant community grieved for him, and a week later, more than 300 came out to march in his memory.

In a written appeal to truck drivers, the marchers asked: "When you notice a refugee in the truck, you shake the truck and brake again and again until we let go. Why can't we continue our travel?"

The truck jumpers have kept on trying.

At night, they sleep in the forest around Calais, in a tent if they're lucky, but usually under trees. Police raid the encampments every morning, arresting them, tear-gassing them and confiscating their belongings, according to human rights observers.

Source:

<https://www.newsweek.com/over-11000-migrants-found-hiding-trucks-this-year-they-cross-uk-france-1640464>

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