# Undercover investigation exposes British high street shop aiding Channel smuggling ring



An investigation by The Telegraph has revealed that certain businesses on British high streets may be facilitating people smuggling operations, specifically those related to migrants attempting to cross the English Channel. The inquiry highlighted a particular money transfer shop in Birmingham, allegedly linked to a global smuggling ring, which the investigation claims is actively working to evade law enforcement detection.

Central to the investigation was an undercover operation wherein a reporter contacted a smuggler operating out of Calais, identified by the alias Sangari. Posing as an Afghan national wishing to send a relative from France to the UK, the journalist engaged in discussions about transferring funds needed for the smuggling operation. Following this, Sangari provided a contact based in Birmingham, known as Esmat, and directed the reporter to make a cash payment of £1,500 at the designated money exchange shop.

Upon arriving at the establishment, two undercover reporters followed instructions from Esmat, who spoke to one of them over the phone. The conversations were covertly filmed, capturing Esmat urging the reporter to deposit the money directly into his account. During this exchange, Esmat confirmed: "Ok, that’s good. Should I add it to your account? Do you have my WhatsApp? Send me a hi." He further clarified the payment procedure, suggesting that along with the cash, a passport was required to ensure processing was documented. He implied that the funds would eventually reach the intended recipient in Afghanistan, although he refrained from providing specific details regarding the final destination.

The investigation comes against a backdrop of heightened scrutiny over Channel crossings, with over 10,000 individuals reportedly having arrived in the UK by boat in the current year. This surge has prompted increased cooperation between UK and German authorities to dismantle smuggling networks operating across borders. The developments raise pressing questions about the role of local businesses in facilitating these operations and the measures being taken to combat such illicit activities.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/uk/lbc-investigation-traces-money-laundering-operatio/> - An LBC investigation traced a money-laundering operation for a smuggling ring to a shop in Birmingham, highlighting the role of local businesses in facilitating such activities.
2. <https://www.politico.eu/article/money-laundering-britain-high-street-foreign-exchange-shops/> - This article discusses how money remittance and foreign exchange shops on British high streets are being exploited for money laundering and organized crime, corroborating the claim about businesses facilitating illicit activities.
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/met-busts-violent-gang-that-shipped-ps300m-overseas-using-cash-transfer-shops-in-london-a4148591.html> - The London Evening Standard reports on a violent gang that laundered £310 million overseas using cash transfer shops in London, supporting the assertion about businesses being used for illicit financial operations.
4. <https://tdpelmedia.com/bureau-de-change-stores-in-london-and-birmingham-exposed-as-key-players-in-global-money-laundering-and-drug-trade/> - This article exposes bureau de change stores in London and Birmingham as key players in global money laundering and the drug trade, aligning with the claim about businesses facilitating such operations.
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6. <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/05/17/money-laundering-on-londons-streets-264793> - This article discusses how money remittance and foreign exchange shops on British high streets are being exploited for money laundering and organized crime, corroborating the claim about businesses facilitating illicit activities.
7. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2050141/uk-high-street-shops-helping-people-smugglers> - Please view link - unable to able to access data