

New UK-France agreement to reduce illegal crossings

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New agreement between the UK and France to step up patrols and intelligence operations in France to reduce illegal crossings.

The United Kingdom and France today signed an agreement to strengthen operations to combat illegal migration in northern France to prevent crossings to the United Kingdom with a significant increase in dedicated human, technological and intelligence resources.

Since the 2024 UK election, work between the UK and France has prevented more than 42,000 illegal migrants from crossing the Channel. The joint action also led to the arrest of 480 smugglers in 2025.

The new partnership will build on these encouraging results to reduce the number of illegal Channel crossings.

- For the first time, UK funding will include a flexible part to support actions to strengthen the effectiveness of the scheme. These actions will be subject to a regular joint evaluation in order to analyse their impact on reducing the flow of illegal immigration.
- The personnel (nearly 1,200 agents of the police force, the intelligence services and the maritime prefecture) already deployed will be renewed and reinforced in the North to prevent illegal crossings from France.
- The new partnership aims to increase the number of personnel deployed by 53% - 907 personnel funded in the 2023-2026 cycle and 1,392 in the 2026-2029 cycle, as well as a CRS unit dedicated to the fight against illegal immigration, managed by France. This will be accompanied by the deployment of new technologies to reduce the number of departures of small boats, in particular water taxis.

Under the new partnership, £500 million (€580 million) will be invested to strengthen the control system in northern France and a further £161 million (€187 million) will fund new actions based on their impact on crossing prevention. If these new measures do not yield sufficient results, on the basis of a joint annual evaluation, funding will be redirected to new actions.

This new partnership includes:

- Reinforcement of staff on the ground: currently, 907 people are deployed on the ground and have prevented 42,000 crossing attempts since the 2024 UK elections. This new partnership provides for a 53% increase in the workforce, including the creation of a new specialized unit (SIPAF - Interministerial Border Police) of 80 people.
- The completion of major real estate projects and new investments: the administrative detention centre in Dunkirk and the future CRS cantonment in Calais, which will increase the efficiency of the police forces.
- The strengthening of intelligence and judicial police units: this unit, the GAO, composed of 18 people, led to the arrest of 480 smugglers in 2025. The number of personnel in this unit will be increased to 30 in order to intensify the fight against smuggling networks in the northern zone
- Strengthen surveillance capabilities and infrastructure using drones, helicopters and electronic means to better prevent crossing attempts.

These measures are complemented by the desire to combat the phenomenon of illegal immigration to the United Kingdom upstream, by strengthening joint actions in countries of origin and transit.

As the Channel is an external border of the European Union, the partnership between the United Kingdom and France is part of a broader European cooperation that both countries wish to strengthen.

Home Secretary, Shabana Mahmood, said:

Our collaboration with the French has prevented tens of thousands of illegal migrants from boarding the boats bound for Britain.

But we need to go further. This historic agreement will prevent illegal migrants from making the perilous journey and put smugglers behind bars.

French Minister of the Interior, Laurent Nunez, said:

This new agreement gives our security forces the means to continue their decisive commitment in the fight against dangerous Channel crossings and to strengthen the security of coastal residents. I also welcome Frontex's commitment, which is intended to be amplified in the context of enhanced European involvement in the surveillance of this external border of the European Union.

I also recognise Frontex's commitment to be strengthened as part of a stronger European involvement in the surveillance of this external border of the European Union.

A large part of the resources provided for in this partnership will be concentrated from the beginning of the summer and during the summer period, which is traditionally the busiest period for small craft crossings.

This partnership complements the important reforms undertaken by the UK government to reduce the pull factors that push irregular migrants across the Channel and to intensify the expulsion of irregular foreign nationals from British territory.

Nearly 60,000 illegal migrants and foreign criminals have been sent back or deported since this UK government came to power, an increase of 31%.

Immigration control measures to combat illegal working have reached levels unprecedented in British history, with an 83% increase in arrests and a 77% increase in police interventions under this government.

The UK government is also closing all reception hotels for asylum seekers and transferring them to accommodation centres, especially those on former military sites.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-uk-france-agreement-to-reduce-illegal-crossings>