

Vietnamese in

(August 22)

- is a fake name he came up with, and he refused to give out his real name.
- was born in , so he is 26 years old this year

was born and raised in Phu Tho, Northern Vietnam. After finishing his high school in Phu Tho, moved to Ha Noi (capital city, located in the north of Vietnam) and entered the University of Transport and Communications, majoring in transport construction engineering from 2008 to 2011. After graduation in 2011, he got a job at a quasi-corporation for railway and tunnel bridges in Ca Mau – in the Mekong Delta of southern Vietnam

worked for 2 years in Ca Mau with a salary of 9 million VND a month (equal to 360 Euro) and his living and travel expenses were all covered by the company. The type of his work required him to move from one place to another in a couple of months, which he found it difficult.

At the end of 2015, quitted his job in Ca Mau and worked for a smaller company in Ho Chi Minh City, which didn't require him to be on the site. However, the payment wasn't getting any better and he wanted to find another way to make more money.

After hearing from friends and family members who went to England as asylum seekers, was fascinated by how easy is it to make 2000 – 2500 English pound a month in England. He doesn't need to work outside on the roads anymore. He could finally get his permanent place without having to move from one place to another in couples of months. In 2016, after a year working in Ho Chi Minh City, decided to move back to his hometown and started planning his smuggling trip to England.

left Vietnam by car to China (he went from the border in Lang Son, Vietnam as a tourist to Nanning, China in March, 2016. From China, continued his trip for 3 months by cars and on foot to Russia, Ukraine, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Germany, and France.

In France, stayed for 2 months in one of the Vietnamese illegal refugees' houses in Lens, Northern France. The place is known as Vietnam City and is used for all the illegal refugees from Vietnam to stay while waiting for their turns to go to England. The house is located behind a bush, 30-minute walk to the next gas station/ resting point for truck drivers. told me that there are 2 ways they could do to get to England:

1. Pay the fee of 1000 euro to the smugglers. The truck driver will let them hide inside the secret compartment.
or pay the fee of 1500 euro and you get to sit next to the driver.
2. Don't pay anything and try to sneak inside one of the containers at night when the truck drivers are sleeping. The trucks usually don't have the secret compartments (they might not have connections with the smugglers), but the risk of being discovered is really high.

In the Vietnam City, met (the Vietnamese boy who came to Jade BO twice. He was one of the first Vietnamese in in September 2015 and was brought back by the police to in March 2016). During the 2 months in France, and had been trying a couple of times to smuggle inside the containers to go to England at nights to save money, but they weren't succeeded.

Beginning of last week (on the 15 or 16 August, doesn't remember), decided to pay the smuggler for the trip to England. After a long time waiting and several failures, he didn't want to do it himself anymore. , on another hand, was lucky to sneak in the same truck as without being seen, and without paying. The two boys, 3 other Vietnamese people, and 1 Syrian went with a truck to the Netherlands, hoping to go from Rotterdam with a boat to England. On their way to the harbor, they picked up the other 4 Vietnamese boys –
– (they ran away from on Saturday, August 13rd).

The truck is designed with an invisible hidden compartment inside the container, where 10 people can be packed up inside. The hidden compartment is divided into 2 floors, leaving

enough room for 5 people to sit each floor. said was with him in the truck, but when the police discovered their hiding place and took them out of the container, wasn't there.

 believes that was still hiding in the container and somehow he managed not to be found.

Under 18

When I asked why everyone lied about their ages, told me that was the instruction from the smugglers. In France, if you are under 18 years old and travelled without a ticket in trains or buses, the police won't place charges on you. (and everyone else who came to the NL so far) thought that the law applies to everywhere in Europe, therefore, they just kept on lying about being under 18.

 knows that there are 2 Vietnamese girls in the Netherlands. Not sure whether he heard it from the other 4 Vietnamese boys (who were in 2 weeks ago) or from someone else (smugglers). I asked him how and where he found the smugglers. told me that there are several places in Northern Vietnam that are famous for people trafficking, but the most famous ones that everyone knows are in Yen Thanh, Nghe An province and Hai Phong. People who smuggled away from these two places all went to England to work for either a nail salon or a weed farm. Some people have to pay the whole fee from Vietnam to England upfront, but some smugglers allowed the fee to be paid in 2 or 3 installments:

1. The fee for administration (getting visa to Russia or a third country, flight tickets, etc.)
For people like who goes by cars and on foot, they don't have to pay the first instalment.
2. From Vietnam to France: around 2300 euro
3. From France to England: around 1000 – 1500 euro

I asked [redacted] if someone comes here and decides to ask for an asylum seeker in the Netherlands, do they still have to pay the last installment? [redacted] said that for sure no one wants to stay in the Netherlands. They can't work here and even after a long time waiting for the 5-year permit, they can't make as much money as they do in England. Moreover, there are Vietnamese communities in several cities in England and people there also smuggled into England the same way as [redacted] and other Vietnamese people in BO have been trying to do.

[redacted] believes that there are jobs available immediately for Vietnamese in England with high salaries. He said everyone wants to live with their own people, not with foreigners like this in the Netherlands.

I asked [redacted] if someone already stays for a couple of months here in the BO, does he think he/she will stay for sure? (I was thinking of the 2 Vietnamese girls in [redacted] here). [redacted] said no. He thinks that person might just stay for a while and wait until he/she gets enough money for a train ticket to France or something like that.

Later that day I talked to the Vietnamese girls in [redacted] and they still said that they don't want to run away. [redacted] said that she wanted first to cancel the appointment with Red Cross to find her parents, but the translator thought that was a wrong idea and convinced her to find her parents. [redacted] told me that she hates her parents for leaving her alone in a foreign country and she doesn't want to go back to Vietnam. She's been here for almost 4 months and already got used to the life here. If she goes back to Vietnam now, it would be hard to readjust to the life back there and redo the high school year. Finding her parents is ok, but even if they are found, she wants to ask if she can stay. [redacted] feels the same way. She said that they are happy being here. Everyone is taking care of them and they don't have to think about anything.

However, I noticed that [redacted] and [redacted] have been actively learning English. I'm not sure if they just want to learn it for their own knowledge or if they are really planning to leave for England.