

## Charlene Sumnall successfully prosecutes UK's largest ever clandestine channel crossing

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Charlene Sumnall led by Tony Badenoch QC (6KBW College Hill) and instructed by the CPS Eastern Region Complex Crime Unit successfully prosecuted the organisers and crew of the largest ever clandestine channel crossing of illegal migrants the UK has so far seen in a case investigated by the National Crime Agency.

The 69 Albanian's were transported from Belgium to the UK on board a converted fishing trawler "the Svanic". The Court heard expert evidence as to the unseaworthiness of the vessel and the risk to life and limb it posed to those being trafficked on board in its squalid and dangerous conditions. The case involved multi-jurisdictional evidence from Latvia as well as other European agencies. The case also involved expert nautical evidence. The 3 organisers and a crew member all received substantial custodial sentences with the ring leader having a starting point of 13 years just one year off the statutory maximum for the offence. The court heard that this one trip alone would have netted the conspirators in excess of £1 million. A further defendant is to be sentenced at a later date and POCA timetables have been set.

The case attracted substantial press coverage, a selection of which can be found below:

Four men jailed for bid to smuggle 69 migrants into UK on converted fishing boat | The Independent

Gang who tried to make millions smuggling 69 Albanians are jailed for more than 35 years | Daily Mail Online

Harwich: Men convicted over 69 Albanian migrants found on boat - BBC News

Convicted: people smuggling gang who plotted to bring hundreds of migrants into the UK - National Crime Agency

Four men jailed for bid to smuggle 69 migrants into UK on converted fishing boat | Evening Standard

Harwich: Men jailed for trying to smuggle 69 people on boat - BBC News