

# Slideshow presentation: Afghan refugees in Paris speak out

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Last October marked the tenth anniversary of the US-led military assault and occupation of Afghanistan. The ongoing neo-colonial war has had a devastating impact on the Afghan people. According to some estimates, up to 100,000 refugees left Afghanistan in the first five months of this year alone, most of them youth.

Only a few thousand Afghan refugees complete the long and dangerous trip to Europe. Those with English-language skills attempt to make the UK their final destination but closure of the Calais detention centre in 2009 has meant that most are unable to cross the English Channel and remain stranded in France.

The following multimedia presentation tells the story of three homeless Afghan refugees in Paris. These young men, like their older companions, face tremendous suffering. Homeless and lacking food or money, they spend their days in public parks or walking the city searching for a warm place to sleep. On weekdays some secure a rudimentary meal from refugee or welfare organisations. During the weekends and public holidays they are left to starve. Police harassment is constant.

According to a 2010 UNHCR report, Afghanistan had the largest number of refugees—a total of three million spread across 75 different countries. The same report concluded, however, that there were no Afghan refugees in France. In other words, the refugees interviewed in Paris for this slideshow do not even exist as a statistic.





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