

Channel migrant 'drugged, raped and strangled' 13-year-old girl before fleeing to UK, court hears

From the [Telegraph](#) and the [Daily Mail](#)

An Afghan immigrant escaped to Britain on a small boat across the Channel after allegedly gang-raping and killing a 13-year-old girl in Austria, an extradition court heard on Thursday.



Rasuili Zubaidullah is accused of the drugging, rape and suffocation of 13-year-old schoolgirl Leonie Walner

Racuili Zubaidullah, 23, is accused with three other suspects

of drugging Leonie Walner with ecstasy pills then suffocating her before dumping her body in a rolled up carpet. Leonie's body was found on 26 June last year in Weiner Neustadt.

Within hours Zubaidullah had run away, dodging Austrian police. He fled hundreds of miles to Dunkirk in France, evading a pan-European manhunt for him before boarding a trafficker's boat across the Channel to Britain. So he has contacts and access to ready money then.

Arriving in Dover on the Kent coast, he duped immigration officials by claiming asylum using a false name and was put up by the Government in the Ibis hotel in Whitechapel, east London, which is being used to house migrants. Acting on a tip-off from Austrian authorities, British police found him hiding in a room at the hotel in late July, little more than a month after Leonie had died.

Zubaidullah faces extradition to Austria for rape and severe sexual abuse of a person under the age of 14.

Wearing a blue, red and white hoodie and a grey jumper, he appeared in custody for a full extradition hearing at Westminster Magistrates Court (yesterday). He spoke through a Farsi interpreter and was flanked by one dock officer and stood maskless as the case against him, involving one charge of rape and another of severe sexual abuse against a person under 14, was laid out.

At (the) hearing, his lawyer Ben Keith objected to his extradition under Section 12A of the Extradition Act 2003, by claiming Zubaidullah has 'not yet been charged or tried' in Austria. "The issue is whether this case is in fact going to proceed to prosecution and whether this defendant is going to be prosecuted. The court could request further information, or it could discharge this case. We say the fact Austrian authorities have tried to interview this defendant is evidence that the reason they have not progressed this far is not

because the defendant is not in the country, but because he is still at the investigation stage. There is enough information to show no decision has been made to charge him.'

District Judge Michael Snow deferred judgement until January 12, to give his lawyer- who is isolating because of the pandemic - time to have an in-person conference with Zubaidullah to discuss whether to appeal if it is decided he should return to Austria.

District Judge Michael Snow will make a judgement on Wednesday January 12 at 12.30pm. *Get rid of him now. If the Austrian authorities decide not to prosecute him that's down to them; We don't want him back either.*