



press release

Tuesday June 28th 2022

The Observers

« The Bloody Silk Road – The Smugglers of modern-day Iran »

Saturday July 2nd at 10.45am on France 24*
From July 4th on RFI's digital platforms in Persian

*Paris Time**



Duration: 14 minutes

Viewing link available on demand

From the [France 24 Observers](#): an in-depth investigation into smuggling networks of Iran.

With more than 36% of its economy coming from the informal sector, a significant proportion of consumer products sold in Iran are smuggled (alcoholic beverages, clothing, electronic products, food supplements, vehicle spare parts, etc.)

The goods are transported by three types of smugglers: **The “Kulbars”** are active in the West, bringing consumer goods across the mountains from neighboring Iraqi Kurdistan. **The “Soukhtbars”** haul gasoline and diesel across the desert plateaux in the east, to Pakistan. And **The “Shootis”** transport all kinds of goods from city to city across the country in cars that have been customised to carry heavier loads at high speed.

Ershad Alijani, journalist for the France 24 Observers and RFI's Persian service, has been following these three groups of smugglers since 2019.

« **The Bloody Silk Road – The Smugglers of modern-day Iran** », seldom-seen images offer an immersion into the depths of a world that is little known, even in Iran.



From **Monday July 4th** this in-depth investigation will be available on [RFI's digital platforms in Persian.](#)



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