

14/08/2018

## "THE OFFICERS TOLD THE MEN TO GET OUT OF THE CAR AND PHYSICALLY ATTACKED THEM WITH BATONS"

**Date and time:** August 14, 2018 10:00

**Location:** Croatian inner land, Croatia

**Coordinates:** 45.29957857882797 , 15.573196796133175

**Push-back from:** Croatia

**Push-back to:** Bosnia

**Demographics:** 12 person(s), age: 16-40 , from: Afghanistan

**Minors involved?** Yes

**Violence used:** beating (with batons/hands/other), exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, reckless driving

**Police involved:** 6 Croatian police officers, 1 woman and 5 men, two of them were dressed in casual clothes but proved their identification through showing their police badges

**Taken to a police station?:** no

**Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?:** Yes

**Reported by:** No Name Kitchen

### ORIGINAL REPORT

The interviewee and the other men walked from Velika Kladuša to Croatia. After two days of walking, the men crossed the first motorway in Croatia and were walking through an unmarked pathway in a forest. Between 10am and 11 am, they were detected by two police officers, a woman and a man, who were dressed in casual clothes but proved their identification through showing their police badges. The police shouted at the men to come out and searched their bodies. Then, the officers questioned the men about how they entered Croatia and about their intentions in the country. The police took the men's mobile phones but returned them back just before they were deported back to Bosnia. The interviewee stated that he asked the police for asylum in Croatia but got a negative response:

*We told them that we wanted asylum in Zagreb. But they said "no, you can't stay here". The two under 18, minors, they were also deported. They were shouting at us and using very abusive language*

According to the interviewee, the police rejected taking them to a police station and access the asylum procedures. Instead, the men were picked up by four other police officers (all males) and a van, and where deported back to Bosnia. During the journey to the Bosnian border, the men struggled to breathe inside the van as there was a lack of oxygen:

*It was like a closed van. Everyone started vomiting there because there was too hot and no air. We told the police can you please switch of the AC, but no AC. The car drove very fast and moved like this and this [showing sharp curves]. The car was driving maybe for one and half hour*

The police drove the men to the Croatian-Bosnian border, close to the town Starlik, in abandoned location. The interviewee said that the van stopped on the top of a hill, in a forest. After that, the officers told the men to get out of the car and physically attacked them with batons.

*They [police] gave us two or three sticks and said: "Go!". And I was just running. They gave me two sticks into my back. But I wore a jacket and bag so that protected me. And no one got injured. When they started hitting us, we were just running down of that hill*

After the violent incident, the whole group walked back to the makeshift camp in Velika Kladuša. The interviewee has been trapped in the Bosnian transit for the last two and a half months. He stated that he came from the district of Jalalabad (Afghanistan), which has been occupied by ISIS, and has no possibility of returning. Although the interviewee has attempted to cross the border to Croatia ten times, with the intention to apply for asylum there, he has continuously been denied access to any formal asylum procedures and violently pushed back to Bosnia.