

02/11/2018

## **"I SAID TO THEM I WAS 16, AND THEY SAID: 'NO 16 YEARS OLD!' AND SLAPPED MY FACE. I WAS CRYING"**

**Date and time:** November 2, 2018 21:30

**Location:** Bosanci, Croatia

**Coordinates:** 45.43738304747329 , 15.247328793090787

**Push-back from:** Croatia

**Push-back to:** Bosnia

**Demographics:** 7 person(s), age: 16-19, three minors , from: Pakistan

**Minors involved?** Yes

**Violence used:** beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, no ventilation in the van's backspace/ lack of oxygen

**Police involved:** 7 Croatian officers, part of them with ski masks and black clothes, four officers at police station

**Taken to a police station?:** unknown

**Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?:** No

**Reported by:** No Name Kitchen

### **ORIGINAL REPORT**

The group of seven , including three minors, traveled by foot from Bihać ( BIH ) to Croatia. They intended to walk all the way to Italy to apply for asylum there. The y walked for 15 days, the last five days without any food or water. While they were walking in a Croatian forest , they were detected by a group of seven Croatian officers. When the y caught the boys, they questioned them about where they were heading to. They responded honestly, explaining that they were traveling to Italy and did n't want to stay in Croatia. The officers responded aggressively:

*" They say no, you are not going to Italy, you go back to Bosnia."*

The officers then hit the respondent on his eyebrow and pushed him so that I fell. Afterwards, they ordered the group of seven to sit down and frisked their bodies. They confiscated all their mobile phones, power banks and money.

Afterwards they were transported to a place which the respondent called "*deportation center*". It was a police station where they were investigated by a different group of four Croatian officers. Then, they were driven for two hours to the Bosnian border in a van.

*"They drove us with a closed combi car. It was freezing inside and there was no air, we cannot breathe."*

In addition to the cold, there was a lack of oxygen in the van so that they had difficulties to breathe. When they arrived at the border Bosnia, the respondent's older brother asked the officers if they could return their phones. One officer responded to this by threatening him with a pistol.

*“ When my brother asked if they could give us our mobiles back, the Croatian police man pulled his gun out and placed it to the head of my brother. They just said to us to go back to Bosnia”.*

When the group was told to get off the van one by one , they were again physically attacked by the officers wearing balaclavas and black clothes, while being pushed back to Bosnia. The officers were aware of the minor's young age, but refused to pay special attention.

*“I said to them I was 16, and they said: “No 16 years old!” and slapped my face. I was crying. Two [officers] had guns and they were shooting into the air and saying: “You go to Bosnia, if not, I will fight you.” Three men were crying. But he [police] was saying to us: “Go, go, go!” I did not eat food for four days. My shoes were full of water and I had wet clothes. After they pushed us back, I was walking on the road and drunk a water from the road from the ground from my hands because no one gave me water or food. When I came here to Bosnia, one man gave me water, after two hours, one group gave me food and to my brother”.*

The seven of them walked back to Velika Kladuša (BIH) , where they stayed one night on the street. The following day, the No Name Kitchen volunteer which conducted this interview met the respondent who explained what had happened to them the previous night. He showed them his bandaged hand and explained that he was in big pain. The volunteer walked with him to a hospital in Velika Kladuša , where he was refused to be treated by medical staff with the words:

*“ No doctor here for you .”*

Two days later, he was treated by MSF.