

03/03/2019

“While waiting [at the hospital] the men asked the police again for the asylum process. There the officers said: 'This is not on our level.' [...] 'You have nothing, why are you acting like this?!'”

**Date and time:** March 3, 2019 15:00

**Location:** about 200 to 300 meters across border of Slovenia, close to Čakovec, Croatia

**Coordinates:** 46.62142441518931 , 16.283825139115265

**Demographics:** 2 men from Algeria (interviewed 23 years), witnessing catchment of a third Algerian man

**Minors involved?** No

**Violence used:** making to sign documents without translation, denying right to proper medical help, detention

**Police involved:** Croatian police officers, caught and soon joined some officers (normal black/blueish police uniform with the official sign of the Croatian police, white/blue police car with official police sign on it), at the first police station 10 officers (including the officers from the border apprehension, one talking English), taking to hospital and at the second police station some officers, deported by 3 officers (dark blue/black uniforms, no hat, a van), at the border 4-5 officers

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

**What was the reaction to this intention?:** Denied access, instead: taking pictures and fingerprints, making to sign documents written partly in Croatian (without translation), push back to Croatia

**Peculiarities:** One man injuring his leg before being caught, taken by the police to hospital for examination, not receiving any explanation or treatment. Another man caught directly after the Bosnian-Croatian border close to Bosanski Brod (BiH) about at 2-3 am on the 3rd March, still in detention. The officers deporting the men buying beer on the way to the border.

**Reported by:** [Re:]ports Sarajevo

## Original Report

A group of three men started their journey from Bihać (BiH) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2019. They took a bus up to Bosanski Brod (BiH). From there they crossed into Croatia over the official bridge around at 2-3 am the following night. They got seen by the border police and had to escape. All the men ran into different directions. The interviewee jumped down from stairs and hurt one of his foot. He and another man of the group could hide from the police. The third one got apprehended on the bridge right away, and this man is now in detention, the interviewee says. The two who got away from the police hid themselves for about 1.5 hours until the police stopped looking for them.

*“ They were looking for us with flashlights all over .”*

After that, about at 7 am on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March the two men walked into the next town and took a bus from there up to Zagreb (HR). They had no problems with buying their bus tickets. Around 10:30 am the two men took another bus from Zagreb to the Slovenian border to Varaždin (HR). The interviewee had real pain in his injured foot. The men were looking for medicine in the town. It was Sunday and very calm. They found a pharmacy where the woman wanted 22 euros for the medicine. It was too expensive for them so they left again. They walked to the next town, Čakovec (HR). There they found an abandoned house where they slept for a few hours. Later that day, they

started walking towards the border of Slovenia. Their phone was down and they didn't have GPS, so it was hard to find a good way. Twice a police car passed them. They could hide and did not see the police. Around the border of Slovenia a car stopped, where a woman and a man were sitting inside.

*"The woman knew directly what was happening and saw my injured foot."*

The couple offered them to take them into their car over the border for 100 euros. The two didn't have this much money. The men could only give 50 euros and the couple took the men anyway into their car. Right away about 200 to 300 meters across border police car turned up. The group got stopped by the police.

*"Moi comme je vu la police. J'étais brisé."*

The officers asked for the documents of the group. The woman and the man showed their ID's, and the interviewee told the police that he and his friend do not have any documents. The police asked if the men paid for getting taken over the border by car. The interviewee denied and explained that the couple took them because of his injured foot. The police officers were wearing normal police uniforms (black/blueish with the official sign of the Croatian police). They made a call and another officer came by car (white/blue with official police sign on it) turned up. The interviewee and his friend got taken to a police station in Čakovec (HR).

There at the police station were about 10 police officers, including the officers from the border apprehension. One police officer talked English. The interviewee and his friend got a piece of paper, where they had to write down their name, name of their father, nationality and from which country they entered Croatia. No fingerprint or photos were taken at this time. During the detention the police gave some food and water to the men. The interviewee expressed several times to the officers his intention to seek for asylum. The officers answered him:

*"Step by step – first we will go to the hospital and then we will see."*

The police officers drove the interviewee and his friend to the hospital. In the hospital the interviewee got a wheelchair and they took a radiography of his foot. While waiting the men asked the police again for the asylum process. There the officers said: *"This is not on our level."* The doctor came back and talked only to the officers. The interviewee didn't get explained the results of the radiography or anything else. One police officer said then: *"You have nothing, why are you acting like this?!"* and the men got taken back but to a different police station.

*"I had tears in my eyes – I wanted asylum!"*

At this second police station the men had to fill in an official form. It was written in English and Croatian. What was exactly written in the form, they did not understand. The men signed it and gave it back. After about 20 minutes the police officers came back with another paper, which they had to hold while pictures were taken of them. The interviewee asked, if this all was for asylum, but the police answered:

*"We will take you back to Bosnia. We can do nothing for you."*

Three police officers, different than the ones in the morning, drove the men by a van to the border of BiH around the area of Velika Kladuša. Those three officers were wearing dark blue/black uniforms and no hat like the earlier ones with the official Croatian police uniform. The officers gave the men a bottle of water for the ride. Around 6 pm the following evening they started in Čakovec (HR) and about three hours later, around at 9 pm, they got to the border. The interviewee explains that during the way there he saw how the police officers stopped at a small shop to buy some beer for themselves. At the border the officers opened the door of the van. The interviewee saw

another police car standing there with about 4 to 5 police officers. He and his friend got taken out of the car and ordered to towards the border for about 500 meters. On the Bosnian side, the men continued to Velika Kladuša (BiH). They walked to the official camp of Miral but got turned away. The followibg night they spent it in the doorway of a mosque in Velika Kladuša and the next day (on the 4 th March) they made their way back to Sarajevo.



04/03/2019

“"We don't like homosexuals here, and we don't want homosexuals here."”

**Date and time:** March 4, 2019 08:45

**Location:** Slunj, Croatia

**Coordinates:** 45.1150317 , 15.585484299999962

**Demographics:** 3 men, 1 woman, Algeria, Morocco , 25-30 years old

**Minors involved?** No

**Violence used:** denying access to asylum procedures, stealing, insulting, destroying of phones

**Police involved:** 5 police officers

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

**What was the reaction to this intention?:** ignoring, laughing

**Reported by:** Border Violence Monitoring

## Original Report

On the 5th of March 2019, a group of 4 persons left Velika Kladuša at 6:30 am to reach Croatia. They crossed the border a few hours after and walked until Slunj in Croatia.

On the 6th of March 2019, after 14 hours of walking with some rest in the forest, the group took a bus in Slunj at 8:30 pm to reach Zagreb. The whole group entered the bus but after 10 mins the bus was stopped and a police officer came into the bus, asking for passports. The group expressed that they did not have passports but wanted to seek asylum in Croatia. The officer didn't reply anything.

They had to follow the officer outside and went into a police van. They were droven to the police station where one officer asked them for personal items. One officer took all phones, money and cigarettes. Two members of the group explained that they need to have asylum and that they are members of the LGBT community and it's forbidden by law in their country. The officer, after "laughing" said:

*“We don't like homosexuals here, and we don't want homosexuals here.”*

The two members of the LGBT felt afraid because all members of the police station were watching them with hostility and were laughing about them. After asking again for asylum the whole group had to give fingerprints, sign documents and they were photographed. They don't know about what they signed even after asking for it.

The interviewee told that he was frozen up by fear at the police station because of the hostility of all officers around them.

After one hour they had to leave the van, and had to go into another van, where they saw another group of 4 people. The 2 people of LGBT community didn't feel comfortable cause the group shared their hostility caused by their sexual orientation.

*“They saw it with my way of talk and my way of dress, everywhere I'm going it's dangerous for me just because I want to be as I am.”*

They described the way of driving like “crazy driving”. “We were afraid cause we also didn’t know where we were going.” Finally the car stopped near a road. The officer asked all people to get out of the van aggressively, one officer who had all phones, took them and destroyed them in front of them with his baton. All the officers were laughing and said things like:

*“You are criminal, never come back here or we will do the same with your face.”*

After a few minutes the officers showed them a direction and said :

*“Now you will go back to Bosnia and never come back!”*

They are at around 20 km from Velika Kladusa, without knowing where they were, without something to drink or to eat.

*“I wanted to go to Europe to be safe, to live as a human, and look I’m just an animal here! Now I don’t have anything to live, what am I supposed to do? You know, when you are homosexual, even in the official camp it’s dangerous. I’ve been raped in the IOM camp shower, and now I am supposed to go back there?”*

The interview was conducted in cooperation with *Thé et Café pour les réfugiés*.



06/03/2019

“without having the right to apply for asylum, without knowing where we were, without our phone, without our money, we felt suddenly like animals, not like humans”

**Date and time:** March 6, 2019 03:00

**Location:** Glina, Croatia

**Coordinates:** 45.3382624 , 16.090970900000002

**Demographics:** 2 persons, 1 woman from Algeria and 1 men from Morocco, both 24 years old .

**Minors involved?** No

**Violence used:** kicking, destroying personal items

**Police involved:** 5 police officers

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

**What was the reaction to this intention?:** The officers ignored the request for asylum

**Reported by:** Border Violence Monitoring

## Original Report

On the 6th of March, 2019 at 6 am, a group of two people left Velika Kladusa and crossed the Croatia border. From there, they walked all day long through the forest and mountains. Exhausted by the previous walk the group decide to sleep a few hours in the forest. They were around Glina, Croatia.

Around 3:00 pm while they were sleeping on the ground, both of them received several kicks and when they opened their eyes, they saw 5 men around them with masks and dark uniforms. They were asking and asking again for asylum but the 5 police officers didn't reply. One of the 5 officers asked the couple in an aggressive way about their origin and why they tried to come to Croatia. The couple was asking for asylum again but for a second time the police officer ignored it.

While one officer with mask took all the clothes from the couple's bag and put them on the dirty ground to make everything useless, another one took 200€ and broke the mobiles phones. Finally, the officer put the broken phones in a plastic bag and gave them back.

The group were terrified, and had to enter a van. The driver was driving like “a crazy man”, and “played by suddenly stopping the car, start again, stop, then start again”- to make them sick. After one hour, the van stops in a forest near the border. One officer brought them with violence out of the van. It was dark and one officer showed them a direction shouting them to go back to Bosnia.

“We were walking in the direction of Bosnia, without having the right to apply for asylum, without knowing where we were, without our phone, without our money, we felt suddenly like animals, not like humans.”

It took them one day to return to Velika Kladusa, exhausted. They went to the Miral Camp (camp run by IOM), but since the officers had taken their camp cards, they could not have access to medical care and food.

The interview was conducted in cooperation with *Thé et Café pour les réfugiés* .

08/03/2019

“They find it funny to let you walk for 20 kilometers and take you back again.”

**Date and time:** March 8, 2019 00:00

**Location:** Croatian-Serbian border and Serbian-Bosnian border

**Coordinates:** 45.1629298 , 18.0081565

**Demographics:** 2 persons, both male, both aged 35, 1 Algerian, 1 Libyan

**Minors involved?** No

**Violence used:** slapping into face, kicking into legs and backside

**Police involved:** >10 police officers involved in different places (all male). Darkblue uniforms Different police cars in different places

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

**What was the reaction to this intention?:** The policemen laughed at the migrants and said that this is not possible.

**Peculiarities:** pushed back to a third country, two illegal push-backs on the same “game”, humiliating treatment

**Reported by:** [Re:]ports Sarajevo

## Original Report

The journey of the two migrants started around 7 March 2019 near to Bosanski Brod (BiH, coordinates 45.1253588,18.0053567). They entered Croatia by crossing the Save river in the night around 3 a.m. To cross, they used a small, abandoned boat that they found on the Bosnian bank of the river.

On the Croatian side, they walked for about one hour into Slavonski Brod (HR). On their way, they saw a group of policemen but they managed to stay undetected.

Around 4 a.m., they reached the bus station of Slavonski brod (coordinates 45.1629298,18.0081565). They wanted to look for a bus that could take them to Zagreb. Instead, they saw a taxi with an official taxi sign on its roof. It was a grey Mercedes. They talked to the taxi chauffeur and he offered them to take them to Zagreb for 200 €. While the two migrants were discussing among them whether they would accept this offer, the taxi chauffeur made a call. As it turned out, he called the police. Apparently he had noticed that they are refugees. The interviewee mentioned that according to his knowledge, the Croatian police rewards citizens who report refugees to the police.

After a short time – they were still standing outside the taxi – the police arrived. They arrived by two cars, they were about 8 to 10 male policemen, wearing darkblue uniforms. Among these policemen were also the ones whom the two migrants had seen before. They were told to get into a white Mercedes van. The police then drove with them to a nearby Croatian-Bosnian borderpost (probably 45.1568823,18.0022095) where the Croatian policemen talked to Bosnian officials (policemen or borderguards).

Then the Croatian police drove them back to a police station in Slavonski Brod. The two migrants stated that they want to ask for asylum. The policemen, however, just started to laugh and said no. At this point of the interview, the interviewee said that he feels that the policemen were racist and hated Arabic people.

The police took the cigarettes, the money (100€ and a smaller amount of Bosnian Marks), the Bosnian camp IDs of the two migrants – in the words of the interviewee “ *everything that we had with us, except our phones and the part of the*

*money that I managed to hide from them. They took even the perfume bottle that my friend had with him*". He did not disclose where he had hidden the money. They were never given back their belongings. When the policemen took the camp IDs and the Bosnian money, they looked at it and laughed; the interviewee had the impression that they were deriding these Bosnian documents.

Inside the police station they were led to a cell. The interviewee mentioned that he saw the flag of the European Union at the wall of the corridor leading to the cell. When they had been brought to their cell, four policemen came to beat them. One of the policemen slapped the interviewee in his face, and the interviewee's friend was kicked into the back and the legs. While they exerted this violence, the policemen were talking to each other but not to the two migrants.

In the police station the two migrants were told to fill several papers. For example, they had to write down the names of their parents. The police also took their finger prints. On the instrument used to take their finger prints, there was also a sign with the flag of the European Union. The interviewee was then told to write his name on a paper and to hold it in front of his chest; the police took a picture of him in this position. The policemen explained them that they take this information in order to register them for a camp in Croatia where their request to stay in the EU would be considered. However, as it turned out, this explication was only to make fun of the two migrants.

Around 7 a.m., i.e. after some 3 hours in the police station, two policemen came to their cell and took them into the same car (white Mercedes van) by which they had been brought to the police station. After a drive of some two hours, the car stopped in front of a building on which there were the flags of the EU and of Croatia. A man wearing civil clothes came out of the building. He had some papers with him and the two migrants were told to sign them inside the car. The papers were in Croatian language. The two migrants do not understand Croatian and were not explained what the content of the papers was. They were not even given time to have a closer look at them before signing. Next to the field where he was asked to sign on one of the papers, the interviewee recognised the sign of a flag resembling the flag of Croatia.

After that, the two policemen in the car asked them "*Where do you want to go? To Bosnia?*" The migrants said yes. In fact, however, they were brought to the border between Croatia and Serbia. The interviewee stated that the policemen obviously aimed at humiliating them by their misleading question.

After some 15 minutes of further driving after the signing of papers, the car stopped in a forest and they were told to leave the car and to go to Serbia. The two migrants replied that they did not want to go to Serbia but to Bosnia. The policemen answered that they should now just leave. The migrants were not returned their belongings that had been taken away in the police station.

The two men first started to walk in the direction of Serbia but after a while decided to change their direction and head towards Bosnia. They used the GPS of their phones for this. During the interview, the interviewee could not recall the exact location. They had followed a railway track for a few hours (the interviewee estimated the walking distance to have been almost 20 kilometers) when they were stopped by four policemen in a car. After the latter had made a phone call, the same two policemen who had driven the migrants to the Serbian border before arrived with the same van. They told them to get into the van and drove again to the same point in the forest where they had let them out before. They laughed at them and told them to go back again. The interviewee felt humiliated by this treatment. He said "*They are treating us like animals, they don't see us as normal humans. They find it funny to let you walk for 20 kilometers and take you back again.*" He further mentioned that during the several hours in the custody of the police – meanwhile it was about 1 or 2 p.m., and they had been arrested at 4 a.m. –, they were not given anything to drink or to eat, not even water. He said that he did not ask the police for it because he felt it would be pointless: "*Even if you ask them, they would not give it to you*".

The two men reached a Croatian village a few kilometers from the border. The villagers were friendly to them, and a boy



helped them to buy some food and to charge their phones.

Around 6 p.m., some 15 hours after they had entered Croatia, the two migrants crossed the border to Serbia. They walked for some 8 hours; the interviewee estimated the distance to have been 30-40 kilometers. They saw Serbian policemen on their way but they did not take notice of them. The two migrants crossed a first river and then reached the Save river which marks the border between Serbia and Bosnia. Around 2 a.m., they found a bridge by which they were able to cross the border river (probably 44.9095444,19.2961859). They used a walkway underneath the main lane of the bridge. They accessed the walkway through a door. The bridge was very long.

After 1,5 hours of walking in Bosnia, they found a gas station where they ate something. A man at the gas station called a taxi to take them to the next bus station, however no taxi arrived. They thus continued to walk. It was raining. When they went to a market to buy some food, two locals called the police. The Bosnian police arrived by car and drove them back to the border to Serbia and told them to cross it.

They walked in Serbia until they reached the same walkway underneath the Save bridge to come back to Bosnia again. They walked in the forests in order to stay undetected. They finally reached Tuzla (BiH, 44.5428788,17.5550128), and from there, they were able to take a bus to Sarajevo. They arrived to Sarajevo seven or eight days after they had entered Croatia.

In the end of the interview, the interviewer asked the interviewee whether he wanted to add anything. The interviewee replied: “ *The Croatian police behavior is cruel, I just wish that this will change.* ”

08/03/2019

*“no, you will not get asylum here!”*

**Date and time:** March 8, 2019 09:00

**Location:** near Komesarac, Croatia

**Coordinates:** 45.10001096018364 , 15.772490684475088

**Demographics:** 6 men, 25-30 years old from Irak, Morocco, Eritrea

**Minors involved?** No

**Violence used:** stealing personal belongings, insulting

**Police involved:** 5 police officers

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

**What was the reaction to this intention?:** The officer at the police station were laughing and said : "no asylum here!"

**Reported by:** Border Violence Monitoring

### *Original Report*

*On the 8th of March 2019 at 7:00 am, a group of 6 men aged 25-30 started to walk from Velika Kladusa to Sturlic. Then they walked 5-10 km and crossed the border to Croatia. They kept walking for 3 hours through the Croatian forest. After hearing the sound of a drone in the forest, and seeing a camera, the group faced 3 men in military uniforms telling the migrants to stop.*

*“We were in a kind of military area”*

*The military brought them to the police station. At this point, their phones and personal items (money, cigarettes, IOM camp card) were taken by the police officers. The whole group applied for asylum but they got a negative answer.*

*“They were laughing and said ‘no, you will not get asylum here!’ “*

*After they took all personals belongings, the migrants also had to write their names, nationalities and parents names before being photographed. Finally they had to sign documents without any translation, not even after asking for it. The whole group was held at the station for 5 hours. After applying for asylum again and being ignored again, they were brought by “two cars” to the border without food, water, camp’s card, money, phone.*

*“At this moment we were far away from the first city and you know, without phone means without map!”*

*A few days later, one of the stolen phones was obviously used by the Croatian police to get information about other people on social networks.*

08/03/2019

**“After that, the police poured ice water on their necks and bodies and forced them to go back to Serbia.”**

**Date and time:** March 8, 2019 22:30

**Location:** Kelebija

**Coordinates:** 46.17141663636664 , 19.563007363909378

**Demographics:** 5 men from Afghanistan: 14, 15, 16, 22, 27 years old

**Minors involved?** Yes

**Violence used:** Insulting, hitting with stones toward legs, hitting heads and backs, pouring ice water on bodies

**Police involved:** 6 Hungarian police officers with uniforms, cars involved

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

**What was the reaction to this intention?:** The police shouted at the refugees: “Return to your country, terrorist! Don’t try to come here again!”

**Peculiarities:** They hit strongly with one big stone to the knee of one of the minors. The police hit with iron bars the back of several of the refugees. The police hit the head of one minor. The police asked for their mobile phones and money and removed them all. The police poured ice water on their bodies, and they were forced to leave to Serbia.

**Reported by:** Escuela Con Alma

## **Original Report**

A group of 5 men were retained by the Hungarian police border in the border of Kelebija, on the night of 8 of march, at 10:30 p.m. A number of 6 police were in 2 cars. They stopped the 5 refugees shouting and insulting them as

*“What are you doing here, terrorist? Go back and don’t try to come again!”*

They hit one of the children (15 years old) with one big stone, to his knee, provoking serious damage that made it difficult for him to walk. The police attacked the refugees with iron sticks, hitting their heads and their backs. The police asked the refugees for their mobile phones and money and they removed all of them. They also forced one of them to undress. After that, the police poured ice water on their necks and bodies and forced them to go back to Serbia in the middle of the cold night.



11/03/2019

“My head was hurting so badly and I was feeling so sick. I was feeling as if I would be dying”

**Date and time:** March 11, 2019 09:00

**Location:** near Zilje, Slovenia

**Coordinates:** 45.4597271 , 15.2956027

**Demographics:** 13 persons (1 from Afghanistan, 7 from Iraq, 5 from Iran): 5 children between 7 and 14 years, 3 women, 5 men (oldest was 50 years old)

**Minors involved?** Yes

**Violence used:** Unclear (alleged repeated use of gas to make people vomit in cars)

**Police involved:** >10 police officers in different locations. Slovenian Police: Darkblue uniforms with guns, batons, handcuffs and sprays on their belts. Hexagonal or pentagonal emblem with the Slovenian flag and the letters “Policija” on the sleeve. Croatian Police: Darkblue uniforms. Several vans in different locations

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

**What was the reaction to this intention?:** The son of the reporting family was told “You can't stay in Slovenia”, the father was answered “No, just go back!”

**Peculiarities:** Striking accumulation of vomiting during all van transfers. A minor was temporarily separated from his parents without any information what is happening. Policewoman held gun on a man's temple. Asylum requests ignored. Signing of documents without translation or explanation

**Reported by:** [Re:]ports Sarajevo

## Original Report

The group of initially 24 migrants started their journey on 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2019 in Velika Kladuša (BiH) and crossed the border near Miljkovici (BiH) approximately at the coordinates 45.2027349, 15.8023509.

The group walked mostly in the nights and slept in the forests. After several nights of walking, the group ran out of food (except of some bread, walnuts and raisins). Their approximate coordinates at that point were 45.4240133,15.6283776. Eleven persons decided to leave the group and to voluntarily go to the Croatian police who then took them back to Bosnia. The rest of the group (13 persons, among which 5 children between 7 years and 14 years, 3 women and 5 men) continued their journey towards Slovenia and tried to speed up as much as possible.

After a total of eight nights and two days of walking, on 11 March, they reached the border between Croatia and Slovenia. They entered Slovenia around 9 a.m. near Zilje (SLN) approximately at the coordinates 45.4597271,15.2956027. They crossed the Kolpa river by foot, with the water reaching their upper thighs. The father of the reporting family had to cross the river twice because his wife, who had her menstruation and was generally weakened after the long walking, was not strong enough to carry any luggage through the river. There was heavy rainfall and they were all wet and cold.

After another hour (ca. 2 kilometres) of walking into Slovenia, they were apprehended by two Slovenian police officers who had a Renault Megane police car. One police officer was male and of young age. The other officer was a woman. She seemed very angry, pointed with her gun at the migrants and shouted at them. She then put her gun directly at the temple of an Afghani man.

The two police officers made a call and there arrived two vans with two or three policemen in each of them. The police officers were wearing darkblue uniforms and had guns, batons, handcuffs and sprays on their belts. On their sleeves, there was a hexagonal or pentagonal emblem with the Slovenian flag and the letters "Policija".

Two policemen led the son of the reporting family (aged 14 years) away from the group without telling the parents where they would take him. The parents were very worried. During the interview it was still noticeable how much this experience had unsettled them. The father told the policemen he wanted to go with his son, but they denied that, took him gruffly by his arm and pushed him into one of the vans. All men were told to get into the same van, while the women and the children had to get into the other van. The backspace of the vans had no windows and was very dark. There was just a small plastic window of maybe 7 centimeters height through which they could see into the driver's cabin. On the ceiling of the backspace, there were two ventilators. It was very cold in there. The father of the reporting family said that the air in the car was very bad. He pointed out that he had never before had to vomit in a car, but during the 30 minutes transfer which followed he had to throw up twice. All other persons in the men's van had to vomit as well. In the floor there was a kind of a hole where the vomit would go. When he put his nose to the crack between the wings of the backdoor and got a little bit of fresh air, he could get some relief. He believes that there was let some kind of gas into the backspace to make them vomit. He did not recognise a particular smell or a colour of the air in the van. The men knocked on the van's walls and shouted to stop the car and let them out. The policemen, however, just shouted back "*Šuti! Šuti!*" ("Shut up!"). In the women's car, several people vomited as well, but the mother of the reporting family could not specify whether most or all of the persons in there were vomiting because she was so much absorbed by worrying about her son. After some 30 minutes of driving, the vans reached a police station near Veliki Nerajec (SLN, coordinates 45.5096867, 15.1864282). Once outside of the car, the sickness faded soon.

Meanwhile, the policemen who went with the son told him to show them where and how the migrants' group had crossed the border. By using the proper road (instead of the way through the forest which the group had taken), they reached the river within some 30 minutes. The policemen asked the teenager "*Would you like to stay in Slovenia?*". When the boy said yes, they asked him why. The teenager said that Slovenia is part of the Schengen area and the economic and employment situation is much better than in Bosnia. The policeman answered "*ok*". The teenager asked him "*What can we do so that we can stay in Slovenia?*". The policeman just replied "*You can't stay in Slovenia*". The teenager asked him several times why they could not stay, but each time the policeman just answered "*I don't know*". The teenager was then taken into a police car (a Volvo), driven to the same police station as the rest of the group and reunited with his parents.

In the police station, the migrants were given fastfood. One by one of them was asked a series of questions, for example where they come from. The father of the reporting family told the policemen that he wanted to stay in Slovenia. They asked him "*How do you want to live here?*". He replied that he wants to work. After that, they just said "*No, you just go back!*"

After a while, the policemen took all bags of the migrants, put them into plastic bags and searched everybody including the children. The migrants were also taken away their money and their phones: "*They took everything except the clothes we were wearing. They took even our shoes and gave us slippers instead.*" All belongings that contained metal, such as their razors, nailclippers, scissors, needles and earrings, were thrown in a bin.

The father of the reporting family then had to sign three or four papers, all of which were in Slovenian language. There was a translator present, however he did not explain them what was written on the papers. The father did not know why the translator did not give any explanations. He did not get a copy of the papers he had signed.

After an estimated three hours in the first police station (near Veliki Nerajec), they were told to get into two vans again. Inside the van, they again had to vomit.

After ca. 20 minutes of driving, they reached another police station. In there, they were assigned one room per family. The room was warm, they were given food, blankets and sheets. The room did not contain a bathroom, but there was a toilet. They stayed in this location for one night.

In the next morning, two cars transported them to the border to Croatia. The bordercrossing was on a highway. No river was visible. The Slovenian police gave the migrants their luggage back and handed them over to the Croatian police. The Croatian policemen were wearing darkblue uniforms. They told the whole group of 13 persons to get into one van and to take their luggage with them into the van. During the following transfer, they had to vomit again.

After approximately one hour, the car stopped at a Croatian police station of unknown location. The two employees inside were wearing civil clothes. The migrants were told to write their name on a paper and to hold this paper in front of their chest. The officers took pictures of them in this position. This was done one by one, also for the children.

After that short stop, the transfer in the van continued. Again there was vomiting. The father of the reporting family described this transfer as follows: “ *I just wished that nobody would speak to me, my head was hurting so badly and I was feeling so sick. I was feeling as if I would be dying.* ” His son reported that there were no seats with seatbelts in the van, just a board at the wall where they could sit. Some children and also his mother fell down on the van’s floor. “ *We were like zombies. I did not feel anything else but vomit and headache.* ”

After some 1.5 hours, the van stopped. It was located at the border between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, east of Velika Kladusa. It was in the mountains and there was just a small road for tractors etc. There were villages nearby. The reporting persons located the push-back to have taken place around the coordinates 45.218623, 16.011921 (near Veliki Obljaj CRO). They were returned their phones and their money but not the metallic items which the Slovenian police had put into a bin. The Croatian policemen then said “Hajde! Ideš, marš!”.

On their way to Velika Kladusa, they noticed dozens of broken phones on the roadside. After an estimated 25 kilometres of walking, the enfeebled mother of the reporting family fell down. It was already dark. They then reached a restaurant and asked the Bosnians inside for help. The latter called the Bosnian police who then took them to a hospital. The Bosnian police was acting friendly, according to the reporting family. After some two hours in the hospital, the mother was given a serum and the family went to Miral camp in Velika Kladuša. From there, the IOM brought them by car to the camp in Bihac. They arrived around 3 a.m. on 13 March in Bihac camp.

In the end of the interview, the mother of the reporting family stressed that she will never forget this experience. “ *Our deportation from Slovenia is one of the worst experiences I have ever had. This journey is a very difficult memory for me.* ”

The father nodded and added: “ *And nonetheless, we will have to try again. We do not have another choice. Where else should we stay?* ”

12/03/2019

“We begged them to give us asylum. We begged them to tell us what will happen to us. But they didnt answer.”

**Date and time:** March 12, 2019 00:00

**Location:** Delnice, Croatia

**Coordinates:** 45.3987305 , 14.801610799999935

**Demographics:** 5 men from Marocco, Algeria, Syria, Iraq ; 19-30 years old

**Minors involved?** No

**Violence used:** speeding up the car and slow down suddenly, so that the group would fall back and forth

**Police involved:** Slovenian police officers, Croatian border officials

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

**What was the reaction to this intention?:** denied access to asylum procedure twice (one time by Slovenian police, one time by Croatian police), instead: chain push-back via Croatia to Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Peculiarities:** 24 hours detention in Slovenia before pushed back

**Reported by:** Border Violence Monitoring

## Original Report

On 3rd March 2019, a group of 5 men left from Bihac at 1 am towards Croatia. After 9 days of walking they reached Slovenia. After a long hike up a mountain, the group felt very tired and hungry. In the hope to buy some food and water, they entered a small village called Lozec. They were recognized by some citizens of the town, who used their phone to call the police.

Suddenly a big dog, followed by a couple of policemen, attacked one member of the group.

*„I understand that the locals get scared when they see us. After 9 days of walking we were dirty and exhausted. But if I would have known that they are going to call the police, I would have stayed in the forest. I can endure hunger, thirst and exhaustion, but not another pushback to Bosnia.“*

At the police station, the group asked for asylum, but their request got ignored. Their names, nationalities were asked, their fingerprints and photos taken. Following this procedure, each member of the group received an official paper, that everyone was asked to sign – but no translator was present at this time.

*„I asked them what the paper says, but they only said that we crossed the border illegally and have to pay 500 euros. They made us sign it.“*

The police took all their personal belongings away and put them in a closed room. They got detained 24 hours in this room.

*„We begged them to give us asylum. We begged them to tell us what will happen to us. But they didnt answer.“*



After being released from the room, they were brought to a van. During the transfer, the group asked repeatedly if they were taken to Ljubljana.

The officers said „Yes, Ljubljana.“

*„You know when I knew they won't bring us to Ljubljana? When I felt the road. The road towards Croatia is a bad one. I felt we were on that road.“*

Once at the border, they were handed over to the Croatian officials. They are brought to the police station. The group asked again for asylum, but the police men just said „No“. The officers asked for the paper, that the group received by the Slovenian police and threw it in the bin. Without any formal procedure, they were put in a van again.

The ride to the Bosnian border took around 3 hours. During this whole time, the driver used to speed up very fast and slow down suddenly, so that the group would fall back and forth. It made them feel extremely dizzy and sick.

*„They do this to scare us. They want us to stop. But I will not give up. I will try again.“*

They were allowed to leave the van at a spot 22km away from Velika Kladusa. Their personal belongings were handed over to them, but the officers confiscated their money. They were told to go back to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The interview was conducted in cooperation with *Thé et Café pour les réfugiés*.

13/03/2019

## “The two police officers told him to kneel and take out his shoes”

**Date and time:** March 13, 2019 00:00

**Location:** Maljevac

**Coordinates:** 45.203306, 15.793667

**Demographics:** 3 Algerians, all male, 23, 27, 31 years old

**Minors involved?** No

**Violence used:** beating with stick, insulting

**Police involved:** 2 police officers, white IVECO van

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

**What was the reaction to this intention?:** Police officers replied: "No asylum. Go Bosnia"

**Reported by:** [Re:]ports Sarajevo

### Original Report

The group left from Bihac on the 12th of March 2019 around 12:00pm to Izačić (12 km) walking. They arrived to Izačić and slept in the woods a pair of hours. Around 3:00am they walked into the village of Jazera (20km) where they arrived around 11:00am. They stopped in a bus station and two police officers came to them. The interviewee described them: “Black uniform, with hat and military boots”. They told them to enter in the car (White IVECO van). The interviewee said that they were in the back of the van in the darkness, the air conditioner was on (“it was very cold”) and they were changing the speed of the van constantly to make them fall and butt. After 30 minutes of driving they bring them to the Slunj police station. When they arrived to the Police station the officers were asking for his documentation: “Give me papers” While they were checking them papers they seek asylum so the police officer answers them: “No asylum. Go Bosnia” After they checked the documentation they took all his personal belongings: tobacco, lighters, money (250 EUR) and mobiles (one of them a Samsung A5 2017). Once they finished frisking them they were brought to a room where they stayed around 4 hours, without food and water (they did not ask for neither).

Around 18:00pm two police officers entered in the room and told them to follow. The interviewee describes them: “Black uniform, 1.90m height, man, hooded and both of them blue eyes” The group of three they were brought to the White IVECO van. They drive around 30 minutes, again with no light, the high air conditioner and changing the speed of the vehicle. The car stopped around 18:30pm and make them go down from the car one by one. The interviewee was the first to get off the van. He described the place as: “It was a forest and there was a river”. The two police officers told him to kneel and take out his shoes. He told them that he had a problem in the feet. They hit him so he took his shoes out and one of them cut their soles. They started to hit him with a stick in the feet and all around the body while they were shouting him:

*“Fuck Algerian” “Go Bosnia” “Don’t come to Croatia”*

After a while been kicked he could wake up and run away barefoot about 5km to arrive to Velika Kladusa.



13/03/2019

## **“The car stopped and the police told him ‘Go to Bosnia’.”**

**Date and time:** March 13, 2019 23:30

**Location:** Metkovic

**Coordinates:** 43.0493 , 17.663492

**Demographics:** 1 Iranian, Male, 38 years old

**Minors involved?** No

**Violence used:** None

**Police involved:** 2, Croatian police, deep blue uniforms. 1 car, sedan.

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

**Reported by:** [Re:]ports Sarajevo

### **Original Report**

Heading to the bus station, the man encountered 2 police officers waiting for him after a tip off at the north end of lucki most bridge. Standing outside the car, they asked for passport and he replied ‘I have no passport. I am tourist.’ They asked him ‘what hotel are you staying in?’ He said he was catching a bus to Zagreb. They asked him why he was going to Zagreb and he didn’t answer. The police then patted him down and found his camp ID from Ushivack (camp in the east of Sarajevo). They took his phone temporarily but returned it to him at the border. They asked him to sit in the car. They drove for 5 minutes back over the border where they encountered 2 police officers at the border. The car stopped and the police told him ‘Go to Bosnia’. They gave him back all his belongings and let him go. No further questions were asked. He was not asked if he wished to claim asylum. He walked for 5 minutes down the road where he encountered 5 Bosnian police officers who asked to see his ID card. They said that he needed to go to Bosnia. From there he walked for 2 hours back to the nearest bus station and traveled back to Sarajevo.

17/03/2019

## “Taliban, Taliban", Slovenian police said”

**Date and time:** March 17, 2019 21:00

**Location:** Croatia-Slovenia border, with mountains surrounding them. The border police station was in front of them.

**Coordinates:** 46.428376278520666 , 14.26660312118463

**Demographics:** 2 men from Afghanistan, 17 and 15 years old.

**Minors involved?** Yes

**Violence used:** Beating with fists, kicking. Also insulting by calling them "talibans"

**Police involved:** 4 Slovenian border officers with Slovenian flag on the arm and one small white car. Unknown number of Croatian police officers in a grey car

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

**Reported by:** No Name Kitchen

### Original Report

They were already deported between 16 and 17 times, sometimes from Croatia and sometimes from Slovenia or Serbia. This report is the first time that they were deported from Slovenia.

They are two brothers of 17 years old and 15 years old. They started the “game” at 9 pm the 17th of March. The smuggler opened the door of a truck with shears and then locked the door. They spent 3 days in the truck, without food and water.

They crossed the Croatian and Slovenian border. They were caught by the Slovenian police at the 20th of March at 5 am, inside the truck, when the truck passed through the scanner. When they were caught it was very dark (5 am) and they saw a mountain on the right and on the left side and the border police station in front of them. The police opened the door of the truck and then opened the fabric of the truck with a knife. In this moment, it was snowing. When Slovenian police caught them, they didn't beat them. The Slovenian border police was regular police, dressed in blue, no special force. They had the Slovenian flag on their arm. The police asked them if they can speak English, and T said no. He didn't know if they were speaking in Slovenian language because he didn't understand.

They both asked for asylum but the Slovenian police denied it. “Taliban, Taliban”, Slovenian police said. The Slovenian police took 5 pictures of both of them with two different cameras. The pictures were portraits holding a paper with their names: he didn't know what was written on the paper. They took the pictures in the truck. Then, they went out of the truck and took more pictures. After that, they went to the border police station and the Slovenian police asked them the name, father name, nationality, and some other details and took more pictures of them. They had to sign a document which they did not understand. No fingerprints were taken. No translator present. No lawyer present.

They said that they had to go into a white car. The police drove them for 2 hours until they arrived to the border with Croatia, and changed the car to a grey one with Croatian police. The police took their phones and powerbanks at the police station of Slovenia and gave them back when they changed the car at the Croatia border.

Then, Croatian police drove them to the Serbian border and when they got out of the car, the Croatian police beat them. They kicked them and punched them in the back (A) and on the arms and chest (T).

18/03/2019

***“Each time, when two people went out, the doors were closed behind them. The others inside the van could hear the voices and screams of their friends outside of the van, while they got beaten up several times.”***

***Date and time: March 18, 2019 00:00***

***Location: Near Maljvac, Croatia***

***Coordinates: 45.19729580140959 , 15.789128335762257***

***Demographics: 10 men from Algeria, Morocco, 20-34 years old***

***Minors involved? No***

***Violence used: insulting, beating with stick, gunshot in the air***

***Police involved: 6 Slovenian officers, 3 Croatian border officers***

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

***What was the reaction to this intention?: denied access to asylum procedure twice (one time by Slovenian police, one time by Croatian police), instead: chain push-back via Croatia to Bosnia and Herzegovina***

***Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring***

## ***Original Report***

***On 9th March 2019 a group of 10 men left Velika Kladusa and walked into Croatia close to Maljevac. From there they went through Croatia towards Slovenia, passing forests, mountains, walking day and night. After 9 days, the group crossed the border to Slovenia.***

***On 18th March in the morning, the group crossed the Kupa's river and reached Metlika, exhausted, wet and hungry. At some point a local recognized them, took his phone and called someone. A few minutes later, the group was picked up by 6 Slovenian police officers on the road.***

***The policemen drove the group in a van to the police station of Metlika. Their personal belongings and their baggage was taken from them. The whole group asked for asylum but the officer said: “You won’t stay here!”. Then the group was put in a cell for one hour, before their fingerprints and pictures of each man of the group were taken .***

***Afterwards the group received their personal items back and 6 officers drove them in a van to the Croatian border where they got handed over to the Croatian border police. The officers asked again for their personal belongings. All phones, IOM Cards and all the money were confiscated and the group was put in a van. All the men haven’t eaten for one day and were in the van without knowing where they are. They asked again for asylum but the police officer pretended not to understand.***

***After few hours of driving, at the beginning of the night, the van stopped.***

***“It was dark, and they asked us to go out from the van two by two.”***

***Each time, when two people went out, the doors were closed behind them. The others inside the van could hear the voices and screams of their friends outside of the van, while they got beaten up several times.***

*The procedure always remained the same: Two people were taken out of the van and 3 officers were waiting outside to beat them up with a stick. They couldn't see their faces because they were wore masks.*

*„They treated us like animals, they were beating us and we were laying on the ground.“*

*One of the men described that when he was laying on the ground, one of the officers took a knife to cut his jacket and trousers (see picture).*

*After the beating, one officer gave them the plastic bag with their broken phones inside. He kept around 100€, all the cigarettes and the IOM Cards. They were close to the border, so one officer ordered them to run towards Bosnia, and another one fired in the air with a gun, shouting: ” Never come back here! ”*

*The group was left 30km from Velika Kladusa, they walked back in the dark without gps or lights for hours .*

*“We came back exhausted, without money to buy food, without phones to call our families..., we are not animals, we just want to live a real life!”*

*The interview was conducted in cooperation with Thé et Café pour les réfugiés .*



19/03/2019

“He talked about a “very dangerous room”, and “no weather room” to explain that there were no windows and no light.”

**Date and time:** March 19, 2019 09:00

**Location:** Border crossing Batrovci / Croatian side

**Coordinates:** 45.04757221833792 , 19.10244131504851

**Demographics:** 2 men from Afghanistan, 16 and 18 years old

**Minors involved?** Yes

**Violence used:** Imprisoning, denying of food and water

**Police involved:** 15-20 Croatian border officers, walking, plus 5-10 Serbian border officers, walking, plus 1 Serbian police van

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

**Reported by:** No Name Kitchen

## Original Report

X is 16 years old, he was with his friend Y, 18 years old. Both are from Afghanistan. They stayed in the squat of Sid, on the old factory Grafosrem.

They went on game on the 19/03 late evening, walked until the Batrovci border, and entered in a Bulgarian truck, parked right before the border.

On the morning, the truck turned on and passed the Serbian scanner. Just after passing the Croatian one, the border police opened the truck and found X and Y. It was around 9 am. The policemen were between 15 and 20. X precise that most of them were very tall, quiet fat, and had shaved hair. There was also a woman on the group. They were speaking with a low level of English. When they found X and Y, they told them “talibans”.

They brought them into a room at the Croatian border side by walk. 6 migrants were there, including X and Y. They made a short interview with each of them, asking for the name, family name, country, signature. When X say that he was 16 years old, the policeman wrote 20.

After 2 hours waiting on this small room, between 5 and 10 Serbian border policemen came by foot and moved them to a similar room but on the Serbian side of the border. Inside the building, there were many little rooms. They put X and Y in one of them for 5-6 hours. They didn't get any food or water during the whole time and had the authorization to use the toilet (located 10m from the room, but outside), only for 1 minute, not more. X talked about a “very dangerous room”, and “no weather room” to explain that there were no windows and no light. They of course didn't get any information about anything while they were detained.

Finally, the police put them in the “prison Serbian van” (see picture) on the direction of Sid. While Sid is located a 20 minutes drive from the Batrovci border, they were 3 hours inside the car. At any point the doors were open, there is no window, and it was very cold because it was night time (around 1 or 2 degrees outside). X and Y were “doing tac tac” for have information about the situation but didn't receive any answer. Finally, the policemen opened the doors. They were in front on the Chinese market of Sid, located at few meters from the police station. Samiullah didn't remember the face



of the policemen, they just tell him to go to a camp in Belgrade.



20/03/2019

“Go and don’t come back. If you come back we will attack you.”

**Date and time:** March 20, 2019 02:30

**Location:** Melinovac

**Coordinates:** 44.738539 , 15.906933

**Demographics:** 2 males, Moroccan, 29 and 26, pushed back with around 60 people

**Minors involved?** Unknown

**Violence used:** beating with large metal torches

**Police involved:** 2 police officers and one military officer. Deep navy blue uniforms, caps, Croatian police symbols, carrying pistols and batons. Military officer carrying a 60 cm wooden baton, the color of wood, in his hand, jacket and trousers, no hat, green color uniform. 2 police vans and one police car, with visible insignia, white in colour with blue line in the middle, with ‘Policija’ written on the side

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

**Reported by:** [Re:]ports Sarajevo

## Original Report

The 2 men stopped in an abandoned house inside the village of Glibodol in Croatia at 11:00am on the 19/03. The house was small with one storey, bare white brick, with a red tiled roof. The men slept outside the house on the terrace, which was covered, in sleeping bags. The men slept until they were woken at 16:30 by 2 police officers and one military officer. The officers woke the 2 men by saying, ‘Hello, Hello.’ The officers spoke only a little English. They told the men to stand up and searched the men taking their phones and power banks; the men would not see either of these again. The officers then took pictures of the men. They told the men to pick up their things, the men collected their belongings, one man forgot his sleeping bag in the hurry to collect his things. The men were led 400 meters to another house. On the way one officer asked one of the men why he had come here? The man replied “There’s a storm, we just want to hide from the snow”. The man then asked if the officer could help them and that the man needed a doctor. He asked to be taken to a camp, not specifying any particular camp. The officer said ‘Ok, ok’. They led the men inside the other house where there was around 40 Pakistani men who had also been caught by the police. Here there were around 7 officers, 2 women and 5 men. There were also 2 military officer with semi-automatic rifles. All the Pakistani men were standing up. They put the two interviewees in a separate room for around one and a half hours. They searched the men and their bags but didn’t take anything further, having already taken their phones and power banks. Occasionally the police would check on the men but did not ask any questions. They told all the men to leave the house one by one, leading them out of the building into a police van. The interviewees were the last 2, leaving after the Pakistani men. The group of Pakistani men were lead to a van nearest the house which was empty. The men all got into the van except 2. These 2 men joined the interviewees and walked to a second van on the opposite side of the road from the house that contained around 20 people, all Pakistani, who had not been held in the house. The 4 men got into this van. At this point there were 2 police vans and 2 police cars. They closed the doors, there were no windows in the van and they could not see where they were going. They drove for around an hour and a half. The journey was very bumpy and around 5 people were sick, including one of the interviewees. They were unable to speak to the officers in the front of the van. The van was cold. They took the men to a place “like a big garage.” It had 3 brick walls and one metal shutter. All the men exited the van. They saw the other van that had been at the house, but it was empty and they did not find out what happened to the men who had been inside it. The garage had a stone floor with a thin plastic covering the floor. On one wall was lined rubbish, some in plastic bags, some in open bins. The pile was several meters long and smelt like urine. “It smelt like a bad

toilet". The men were left in this place for 4-5 hours. "It was freezing cold, you couldn't sleep because of the cold. Our clothes were wet from walking in the snow." Inside the garage there were no police officers, they were shut inside with no water, no food and no toilet. People were forced to urinate in the corner. After 2 hours the shutter opened and 2 officers entered. They took 15-20 of the men and led them outside and then closed the shutters again. After a further 2 hours, the shutters opened and the men were led to an open area around 300 meters from the garage, walking in a single file straight line. The men described that the garage appeared to be inside of a small military area. To keep people in line the men were hit with large metal torches on the legs and arms. The men were led towards 2 military officers with black fabric masks covering their faces and holding semi-automatic rifles. "We were like chickens, I didn't want to remember that moment. We were like animals". The men then stopped. The officers with the rifles then asked the men, 'Who speaks English?' One of the interviewees responded that he did. "The men said, tell everyone, that if you come back we will attack you". One officer with a rifle walked at the head of the line and the other at the rear, the men were made to walk. One of the men walked outside of the line to use his inhaler, he is Asthmatic, and was hit on the chest with the butt of a rifle, but not hard enough to leave visible marks. They walked for around 15 minutes through the snow and ice. They walked over a mountain. After 15 minutes the officers led them to a track that was well trodden. They then told them, 'Go and don't come back. If you come back we will attack you.' "It was snowing, it was really hard to keep walking." They then walked for an hour until they reached a main road. They then walked all the way back to Bihac, arriving back at 6:00am. On the way they met many people also making the trip back to Bihac, who had also been pushed back.



Image 3: Drawing of the house where the 2 men were caught by the police. Drawn by the interviewees.

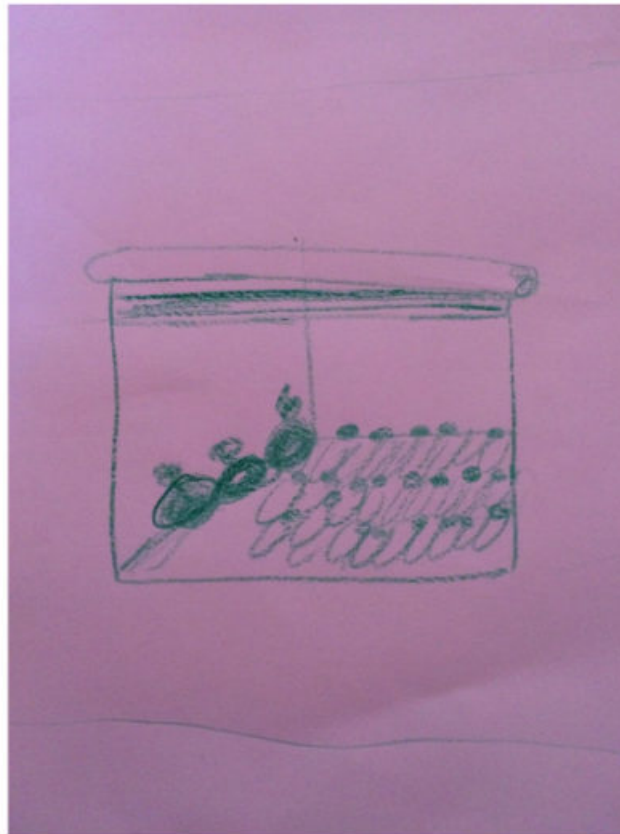


Image 4: Drawing on the 'garage' where the men were held before being pushed back. Drawn by the interviewees

21/03/2019

“"I apologise for the word choice, but there was shit, piss and garbage all over the floor"”

**Date and time:** March 21, 2019 20:00

**Location:** Donji Vaganac, Croatia

**Coordinates:** 44.9071192 , 15.7327089

**Demographics:** 6 persons. 4 Moroccans, 2 Algerians. All male, all between 20 and 30 years old + several dozens of other migrants

**Minors involved?** No

**Violence used:** beating with stick on hands, arms and legs; keeping in cold van; keeping in dirty garage; denial of water

**Police involved:** More than 10 Croatian police officers in different locations (all men), wearing darkblue uniforms. One car and totally six vans. 1 dog.

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

**What was the reaction to this intention?:** The policemen said “Ok asyle”, but did not undertake any further actions to consider the request for asylum.

**Reported by:** [Re:]ports Sarajevo

## Original Report

Around 8 p.m. on 21 March 2019, the group of six men crossed the border from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Croatia by foot. They crossed the border approximately at the coordinates 44.9086187,15.7468935 near Vikici (BiH). After some 300 meters of walking into Croatia, they heard a car approaching. The car's lights were switched off. The car stopped at some distance, then came closer and stopped again. Three policemen got out of the car, pulled out their guns and told the six men to stay where they were. They asked “ *Where do you go?* ” The migrants replied “ *Asyle, asyle!* ”. The policemen said “ *Ok asyle, walk!* ”. They were told to walk some 300 meters further into Croatia.

At that point, a van with more policemen arrived. There were now 8 to 10 policemen in total, and one dog. The policemen wore darkblue uniforms. They told the six men to empty all their pockets. They put their money and phones on the ground and were then told to kneel on the ground and hold their hands behind the head. The policemen then poured the contents of the men's bags on the ground. One of the migrants had a sausage in his bag. When the dog came and started to eat the sausage, the policemen started to laugh and let it happen.

Then, the six men were one by one told to go to the police car where they had to put their hands on the car and to spread their legs. The police then searched them. One of the men had tried to hide his phone. When the policemen found it, they started to beat the man with a stick on his fingers, elbows and knees. The man started bleeding on his knee, his elbow and his knuckles as shown in the pictures below.

The six men were then told to enter the backside part of the van. The airconditioning was put on in the migrants' part of the van, and it got very cold in there. After an estimated 1,5 or 2 hours of driving, the van stopped at a police station.

The six men were told to go into a garage. Inside the garage, there were already dozens of other migrants. The interviewees did not notice women or children among them. One of the interviewees described the garage as follows: “ *It smelt like in a dirty toilet. I apologise for the word choice, but there was shit, piss and garbage all over the floor. The smell*

*was very bad. The garage was not very big, but there were so many people inside.*” The same interviewee told that while entering the garage, he asked the policemen for water to drink but they just laughed and closed the door.

After an estimated 1,5 hours of waiting in the garage, the police came to open and told all migrants to enter five big vans. In the vans, they again started the airconditioning on a very cold level.

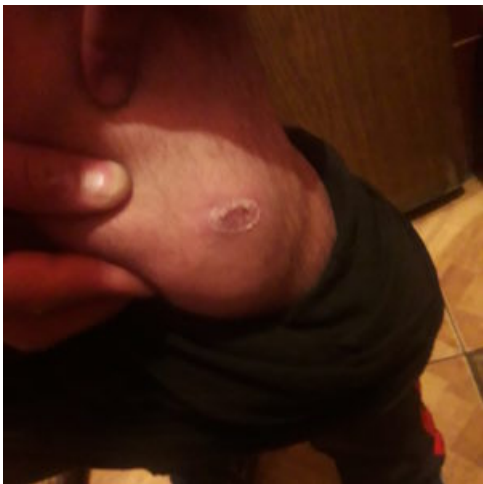
After an estimated two hours of driving, the five vans stopped. The migrants were told to get out and found themselves in a mountaineous area. It was in the middle of the night. The policemen had a bag filled with mobile phones, gave it to one of the many migrants and said “ *here you are* ”. They then stood aside and laughed while watching how the migrants – most of whom did not know each other – had to sort out which phone belonged to whom. The main interviewee said that his phone (a Huawei) was not in the bag, and neither were the phones of several other persons – “ *the more expensive phones are kept by the police. They return only the less valuable phones* ”. He commented on the practice of returning the phones in one bag as follows: “ *They do that in order to cause an affray among the migrants and to make fun of us.* ”

The policemen then asked “ *Somebody speaks English?* ”. The main interviewee said yes. The policemen then looked at him with faces full of hatred and shouted at him “ *This is Croatia, here is Croatia!* ”

Then the group of an estimated several dozens of persons was told to stand in a line (two by two persons), and the policemen started to hit people to push them into the line. Seven policemen who did not have guns with them then walked the line of men an estimated 20 minutes into the forest until they reached what was probably the border. The police then told them to go to Bosnia.

At first, there was no road. Later they found a road and followed it. The group of six men stopped in an abandoned house and slept for a few hours. On the next day (22 March 2019), they resumed walking and arrived to Bihac around 4 p.m. On the same day, they took a train to Sarajevo. The interviewees estimated the total walking distance from the place where they had been left out of the vans to Bihac to have been some 20 kilometres.









22/03/2019

## “Police attacked them with the sticks, hurting heads and legs without making distinctions”

**Date and time:** March 22, 2019 00:00

**Location:** Croatia, one day walking from the Serbian border

**Coordinates:** 42.7011836775152 , 21.601202312492205

**Demographics:** 32 persons from Afghanistan, 3 minors (between 12 and 13 years old)

**Minors involved?** Yes

**Violence used:** Beating with sticks, kicking

**Police involved:** Croatian local police, unknown number

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

**Reported by:** No Name Kitchen

### Original Report

A. actually lives in the old Grafosrem factory in the small border village of Sid (Serbia). He left Kabul because it is dangerous to stay and started being a refugee. Since then it has been a long way crossing borders and countries like Iran, Turkey and now the Balkans.

Last time he went to the “game” it was again like being inside of a horror movie. Three days outside of the squat for nothing, only more frustration.

The group of 35 refugee people was walking on a Croatian road, but split up in smaller groups of about ten migrants. So when the police came they could escape by running into the forest. A. escaped and walked many hours but then the police came again and everybody got caught. In this moment all of them, also the tree children (about 12, 13 years old kids) who were with the group, got beaten. Police attacked them with the sticks, hurting heads and legs without making distinctions. Also they took the money and mobile phones, which they never returned back.

After the beating, the migrants were brought to a Croatian police station, obligated to stay there in silence for three hours. The only attention of the officers were questions.

*Were do you go? Why you stay in the forest?*

A had to give personal data like his mothers and fathers names, date and place of birth, etc. During the process, the police officers remained silent, not giving any information about the situation or about their rights. They did not even provide a glass of water.

After three hours, some people were sent to the jail and A. and the others were deported back to Serbia by car.

Reported in English language the day 24th of March

22/03/2019

“The man was circled by 5 officers, he couldn't understand what they said to him. One officer pushed him and the others hit him with their fists and legs.”

**Date and time:** March 22, 2019 14:15

**Location:** close to train station, Zagreb, Croatia

**Coordinates:** 454826.06 , 155719.38

**Demographics:** 2 men from Algeria (28 and 36 years), 2 men from Tunisia (28 and 26 years)

**Minors involved?** No

**Violence used:** pushing, beating with fists and kicking (one Tunisian man), pushing to river, destructing a mobile phone, detention in inadequate conditions (cold, no food or water offered)

**Police involved:** Croatian police officers, caught by 2 and joined by 2 officers (male, blue uniforms, pistols, caps, Croatian flag on the arm and insignia on the shoulders, a police van), at the police station 2 officers, deported by 2 officers (a police van) and joined by 3 officers (a police car)

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

**What was the reaction to this intention?:** Denied access, instead: violence and push back to Bosnia

**Peculiarities:** one Tunisian man treated with physical violence, injuries visible bruising on right eye, a cut on lower lip and shins (no photo evidence as the man did not want it to be recorded)

**Reported by:** [Re:]ports Sarajevo

## Original Report

On 22nd March at around 1 pm, a group of migrants arrived into Zagreb (Croatia) bus station and then walked to the train station. They bought train tickets, but they had several hours to wait before their train left – the train was scheduled to leave at around 15:10 – so they left to look for a cafe or restaurant to wait without the chance that the police would question them. The men searched the place to sit for around half an hour before they encountered the police.

A police car drove past them as they were walking on the street, close to the train station around at coordinates 454826.06, 155719.38, about at 2:10-15 pm. The car stopped and two officers exited the vehicle and walked to the men. One man from Tunisia immediately ran away. The policemen did not give chase but the other of them spoke into his radio phone in Croatian.

The policemen asked for the men's passports in English. The interviewee was the only one of the three who spoke English and he responded: *"No I don't have papers, I don't have a passport."* The officers then conferred in Croatian, before the same officer spoke again into his radio phone.

Then the group waited on the street for around 15 minutes, and the men were not bound or handcuffed. After 15 minutes a police van containing a further two officers arrived with the Tunisian man in the back of the van handcuffed with his hands in front of his body. All the four policemen had blue uniforms, pistols, caps, visible Croatian flag on the arm and visible insignia on the shoulders.

The officers did not ask the men any further questions or give them any information. An officer opened the back of the

van and told the men in Croatian to enter the car. They drove for around 10 minutes until they arrived at a police station, which was large, having 3 floors, grey in color, having around 2 metres high metal fence surrounding the building and a gate with single officer in a booth. A car park was at the back of the building.

At this point the Tunisian man's handcuffs were removed. The men were brought out of the van and into the police station and taken into a room on the first floor with nothing in it other than a small table with several chairs around. There were two officers in the room, different officers from the four who they had encountered on the street. One officer searched the men, one by one, laying out all their belongings on the table. Nothing was stolen from the men. After the officer finished searching the men, the interviewee requested seeking for asylum.

*"As he took his gloves off I said 'Sir, we want asylum here in Croatia, we want to do asylum here in Croatia'. He smiled and said 'No asylum here in Croatia. Go to Bosnia'."*

The officers asked no further questions nor gave the men any further information. The two officers then left the room, closing the door on the men. The men were not brought food or water. The men tried to get the officers' attention to request water and find out more information but the officers did not respond. The men waited in the room for 5-10 minutes.

Then two new officers came into the room and said 'Heidi', which the men understood to mean lets go. They then were led outside into a police van and put into the back. There were two officer in the front of the van, both men. These were new officers that the men had not previously encountered. They then drove for around 5 hours. The men were not given any water or food during the journey. The men were cold during the journey as the air conditioning was turned on.

The van stopped and they waited for around 10-15 minutes. The men then heard another car, which they later found out was another police car, arriving and heard the officers talking. They then started driving again, going for a further 20-25 minutes, to Bosnian border about at coordinates 451222.75, 154823.37.

One police officer opened the door and he said to the Tunisian man who had run away in Zagreb "Y ou come" He exited the van and the officer immediately closed the door. They heard them to talk to him, part in Croatian, part in English, but the interviewee could not hear what was said.

They then heard sounds of the man being beaten. The man later informed the interviewee what occurred. The man was circled by 5 officers, he couldn't understand what they said to him. One officer pushed him and the others hit him with their fists and and legs. The interviewee described that the Tunisian man had visible bruising on his right eye, a cut on his lower lip and his shins. No photo evidence exists of this as the man did not want it to be recorded. One officer then took the man's phone and used a lighter to melt the back, breaking the motherboard and ensuring it was not usable and irreparable.

After about 5 minutes, an officer opened the door and gestured for all the men to exit. At this point the interviewee saw that the 2 officers had been joined by a further 3 officers by a separate police car. The men were standing in the forest on a back road, without tarmac. It was dark. One officer then pointed along the road towards the Bosnian border and said "Go". The men then walked 10 or 15 metres down the road to a small river. The road tailed off to the side in a curve, but the officers gestured for the men to carry on straight, off the road and through a river. The men could not see how large the river was due to the dark. The interviewee said to the officer "How I cross this river?" He didn't answer but came and pushed the Tunisian man they had beaten into the river. The river reached up to about knee height. The river was around 5-6 metres wide. The men walked through the river and then walked for around 1 hour, about 5-6 km, back to Velida Kladusa. It was about at 10 pm when the group was pushed back.

24/03/2019

“That it was a big fight, with foot and everything, a very dangerous fight, the shoes were like stones”

**Date and time:** March 24, 2019 00:00

**Location:** Border crossing Batrovci / Serbian side

**Coordinates:** 45.047329561139506 , 19.10694122314453

**Demographics:** 4 men, Afghanistan, 16, 16, 17, 18

**Minors involved?** Yes

**Violence used:** Insulting, Kicking

**Police involved:** 4 Serbian border officers, walking

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

**Reported by:** No Name Kitchen

## Original Report

A is 16, B is 18, C is 16 years old, they were with another friend of 20 years old who was sleeping during the interview. All are from Afghanistan. They stay in the squat of Sid, on the old factory Grafosrem. They went on game on the 23/03 late evening, walked until the Batrovci border, and entered in a Serbian truck, parked right before the border. At 9 a.m., 3 Serbian border officers opened the truck and found first C and his friend.

They describe the police officers as ‘tall’, ‘muscular’, ‘very white’, ‘green eyes’, and ‘without hair’, with a dark blue uniform. They weren’t wearing anything on the head. The policemen asked C and his friend if there were other people on the truck, they answered no. They were beaten everywhere, mostly with foots, with hands, but they didn’t use the baton at any time. C finally confessed that they were 2 others person on the truck. They quickly found A and B and kicked and punched them a lot also.

On the meanwhile, another border officer joined the group. The guys explained that it was a ‘big fight, with foot and everything’, a ‘very dangerous fight’, the shoes were ‘like stones’. C explained that he was protecting his head with his arm. The mobile of B was damaged because it was in his pocket. The jacket of B was teared (see picture), he says ‘the jumper is gift for police’. He also has some mark on the body but he didn’t want to show them. The 2 drivers were beating them also. One was Serbian, the other one Turkish. They were insulting them in their language. From the 4 policemen, 3 were beating while another one was ‘good’.

At the end, they all escaped by running into the jungle. The policemen tried to run after them but they were faster. C showed me a scratch made by the trees during the escape. All the sleeping bags of the guys stayed inside the truck. This happened in the morning of the same day than the interview. It was 6 pm when the report was made and they were preparing themselves to go on game the same night.

*Interview made in English*



24/03/2019

“One police officer [...] collected the bags of the men, turned the entire contents out on the floor and stepped on the belongings in order to “search” the bags. One Croatian police women watched this and laughed.”

**Date and time:** March 24, 2019 09:00

**Location:** along a highway 106, close to the Kulpa River, Slovenia

**Coordinates:** 45.48677369138069 , 14.900220108394024

**Demographics:** 6 men from Morocco and Algeria, 6 men from Pakistan, all over 18 (interviewed 27 years)

**Minors involved?** No

**Violence used:** making to sign documents without translation, detention (inadequate conditions), destructing property

**Police involved:** Caught by army personnel (1 man and 1 woman with semi-automatic weapons, camouflage color pick up truck) and 8 Slovenian police officers (6 in dark blue uniforms with the Slovenia police badges and Slovenia flags, 2 in plain clothes, 3 police cars, 2 undercover police cars, light green and white color van), at the Slovenian and Croatian police stations and the Croatian border station some officers), deported by the Slovenian light green and white color van and a Croatian police van

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

**What was the reaction to this intention?:** Denied access, instead: taking pictures and fingerprints, making to sign documents written in Slovenian and Croatian (without a proper translation), push back to Croatia and again to Bosnia

**Reported by:** [Re:]ports Sarajevo

## Original Report

7 men left Sarajevo on March 15th, 2019. They reached the border of Croatia in the day time and proceeded to walk through Croatia for almost 12 days. At approximately 5:30 am on the morning of Sunday, March 24th, the group reached the Kulpa River and the border of Slovenia. One man decided to cross the river over a shallower, rocky area that led into a waterfall. The other 6 men decided to cross downriver from him. They all began to cross at the same time. The man giving the interview led the group of six. He says that the water was up to his chest and he navigated with a large stick. The group downriver were about halfway across the river when they heard a shout and saw the man upriver stumble and fall on the rocks. He fell down the waterfall and into the water. He was carrying a blanket and a backpack of clothes and the interviewed believes this caused him to submerge very quickly. All the men were screaming, but the man disappeared very quickly and the other could do nothing for him. The men downriver quickly crossed the river and did not see the submerged man emerge. They were worried about the police and keeping quiet so they proceeded uphill from the river. The man interviewed says:

*“ We were very tired and wet and we didn’t care anymore after seeing what happened to our friend.”*

The group of 6 walked through the forest until they reached highway 106. At this point the man said they felt too tired to continue and were ready to give up. As they walked along the highway, about at 9 am, they were quickly stopped by an army truck. The man described the truck as pick up truck and being camouflage in color. There were two army personnel inside, one man and one woman. They both excited the car carrying semi-automatic weapons. The interviewed one says:

*“ The woman was showing off by pointing the gun at us.”*

The army personnel asked if the men had any weapons on them. The army officers called the police, and soon 3 police cars arrived along with 2 undercover police cars. There were 8 police officers (6 in dark blue uniforms with the Slovenia police badges and Slovenia flags, 2 in plain clothes). The army personnel also called for a van (light green and white in color). Each man was searched and their phones and power banks were taken. The men didn't say anything about their friend to the police, because they had heard about another group that the police responded with more violence when they were told about a died friend of the group.

First, the men were taken with the van to the place along the river they said they had crossed at. The policemen got out of the vehicle and took pictures of the crossing place. Then, around at 11 am, the men were driven to a police station about at 30 km from where they were apprehended. There were no windows in the van and they were driven directly into a garage, so the man interviewed has no idea where they were taken to. The 6 men were taken into a large room and given flip flops, blankets and lunch. There were two bathrooms accessible. The police officer made the interviewed one to take out his ear piercings and everyone had to hand over their jackets. After eating each men were fingerprinted, photoed and asked for names. One man of the group was translating the speech of the police from English to Arabic. Each man was given a paper with his name on it that they thought were their asylum papers. They had to sign many papers (that each man thought were asylum papers). None of papers were translated and no explanation was offered about what they were signing. The man remembered seeing something about the amount €450 and he thought is was said that this was a fine for illegally crossing the border.

*“ We all thought we were getting asylum. One Algerian friend [that was part of the group] who was pushed back from Slovenia before, was very excited, because the police had not registered or fingerprinted him before or given him any papers. The police [of this incident] seemed friendly and said that they would take us to a camp.”*

Then the men were given dinner. They were held in the room for around 24 hours and they slept overnight. At the following morning:

*“ We knew something was wrong when a police officer came to the room in the morning and asked for the blankets and ‘asylum papers’ back.”*

The following morning, on Monday, March 25 th, around at 9:30 or 10 am the men were loaded into the same van than the day before and driven another 30 km. When the car stopped, the men saw through the crack in the door that they had arrived at what looked like a checkpoint or other border area. The police officers exited the car. The men were held in the car for 25 minutes and could hear the Slovenian police officers speaking with someone else outside. The men were not allowed to go to the bathroom so one man had to urinate in the corner of the van. When the men were let out of the van they could see that they were at the Slovenian-Croatian border checkpoint.

The men were led in a border station (probably at the Croatian side). One police officer (probably Croatian one) collected the bags of the men, turned the entire contents out on the floor and stepped on the belongings in order to “search” the bags. One Croatian police women watched this and laughed. The men had to sign a paper without a translation. Then each man was given a card with their names on. The man believed that the Slovenian police had given their information to the Croatian border police. The officers took pictures of each man holding up the card with their name and other information on. The Croatian police officers did not speak to the men at all and explain what was going on.

Then the men were loaded into another van and driven to a Croatian police station. The journey from the border to

the police station took about 2 hours. The men waited at the police station for 20 minutes before 6 Pakistani men were also loaded into the van. All the men were driven approximately 2.5 hours to the Bosnian border. The man tells how the drive was *“very fast and jerky.”* He says that they were falling around in the car throughout the drive. At the end of the drive, later on the 25 th March, the doors were opened and each man was given back his phone. The men were were dropped off at 16 km from Velika Kladuča. It took 2 hours to walk back to the town.



24/03/2019

“While they came out of the car, the three police men were beating them with sticks and the police woman was insulting them in English”

**Date and time:** March 24, 2019 23:00

**Location:** Skradnik, Croatia

**Coordinates:** 45.217334 , 15.319824

**Demographics:** 3 Syrian, 3 Algerian, all male

**Minors involved?** No

**Violence used:** shouting at them, beating with stick, pointing gun at them

**Police involved:** 5 policemen, 1 policewoman, Mercedes Sprinter

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

**What was the reaction to this intention?:** Rejection ("No, not in our country")

**Reported by:** [Re:]ports Sarajevo

## Original Report

At 11 pm on the 24/03/2019 the group of six people were apprehended by the police in the area of Skradnik (HR). There was one police car with two police men, wearing black uniforms. The two police men were pointing the gun on them and made them sit on the ground. One of the police men called the police station and explained that there were 6 people, three from Syria and three from Algeria. The police checked their bags and took their phones and put them in a bag. They asked them where they started their route from, the group told them from Bihac. One guy asked to seek asylum, the police men directly said “no not in our country”. The six guys had to enter the car and this car drove them directly to the bosnian border. They opened the van and there were three different police men and one police woman standing in the same black uniform. It was too dark to recognize the faces. The police made them come out of the car, while they came out of the car, the three police men were beating them with sticks and the police woman was insulting them in english. Whilst trying to avoid the beating they run into the river. The police threw the bag of phones after them. When the six people were crossing the river the police was laughing and shouted at them to go back to Bosnia.

29/03/2019

“The police, that was wearing the official uniform with the Croatian flag, came and beat him all over the body”

**Date and time:** March 29, 2019 00:00

**Location:** Slovenian-Croatian border

**Coordinates:** 45.69057883928325 , 15.502918154384133

**Demographics:** 1 man from Afghanistan, 19 years old

**Minors involved?** No

**Violence used:** Kicking all over the body

**Police involved:** Not specified number of police agents. It was Croatian police, they were wearing the Croatian flag on their uniforms.

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

**Reported by:** No Name Kitchen

## Original Report

He was deported Slovenia to Croatia. It happened on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March. He spent 5 days on “the game”. He took a truck in Serbia which went to Slovenia and he spent two days there. There, the trucked stopped and the driver found out that he was hiding in the truck. In that moment, the driver called the police. He tried to escape but the driver stopped him while insulting him. The police, that was wearing the official uniform with the Croatian flag, came and beat him all over the body, kicking him also. This happened in the same place the truck was parked. Afterwards he was taken to jail in Croatia in a white van. He says he was in a very small room without water and food for one day. The police asked him to sign a document in order to give him food but he refused to sign. He said, “first the food, then I will sign”. The police refused, so food was not given to him. The document he was supposed to sign was written in English, a language he does not understand well. He never had the services of a translator. The police took pictures of him but did not take his fingerprints. Afterwards, he was deported to Serbia in the police car.

30/03/2019

“They asked for asylum but 'they [the police officers] said no'”

**Date and time:** March 30, 2019 00:00

**Location:** Obrežje Croatian/Slovenian border-crossing

**Coordinates:** 45.84605096179892 , 15.693626403808594

**Demographics:** 6 men from Afghanistan, 15, 17, 18, 18, 19, 25 years old

**Minors involved?** Yes

**Violence used:** Insulting, kicking

**Police involved:** 4 Slovenian border officers, 1 Croatian police van, 7 Croatian border officers

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

**What was the reaction to this intention?:** Fingerprints and photos taken / no documents given / no translator present / stay 2 hours on the police station / the border-officer said 'no'

**Reported by:** No Name Kitchen

## Original Report

They were 6 friends from 15, 17, 18 (2), 19 and 25, all are from Afghanistan. They stay in the squat of Sid, on the old factory Grafosrem. They went on game on the 28/03 late evening, walked until the Batrovci border, and entered into a Turkish truck, transporting sewing thread parked just before the border. They stayed 2 days inside the truck while it was driving through Croatia, with only some biscuits.

Then, 4 Slovenian border officers opened the truck and found the 6 friends. They were located at the scanner of Obrežje border-crossing / Slovenian side. The policemen were 'tall' and 'muscular'. They asked them to get out and brought them to the police station at the border-crossing. They stayed there for 2 hours. Fingerprints were taken and a close-up picture of each of them. They asked for asylum but “they said no”. Then, 2 Croatian border-officers came and put them in a police van. They were quite aggressive verbally, saying words in Croatian as “Hajde pičku materinu” (“come on, go back to the vagina on your mother” in English). After 4-5 hours driving, they ended up at Batrovci border-crossing. 7 border officers kicked each of them “one kick to this people” and told them to go back to Serbia “Hajde go Serbia”.

They came back to the squat of Sid after 3-4 hours walking. The translator of the interview (a refugee also living in the squat) precised that “when he come from Slovenia, he is very hungry.”