

10/12/2018

"WE DON'T GIVE YOU ANY FOOD"

Date and time: December 10, 2018 19:30

Location: Primorje-Gorski Kotar County, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.4018856853377 , 14.62745217143538

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 5 person(s), age: unknown , from: Syria

Minors involved? Unknown

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), insulting, threatening with baton

Police involved: 6 police officers in forest green uniforms, police station: 3 female officers, 2 male officers, Pushback: 6/7 officers wearing black ski masks

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: personal information taken, papers signed, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

Previously the group of five men had been living in Velika Kladusa's Miral camp, but traveled to Bihać since they believed that leaving from here would increase their chances of walking undetected. They crossed the border to Croatia by foot from Bihać (B I H) on November, 29 , 2018. It was snowing during the first two days of their journey , so they decided to wait in a secluded area for the weather to get better. T he snow then turn ed into rain which continued for another day and a half , so the five of them waited also for the rain to pass before continuing their journey.

Approximately six days after the weather cleared, they passed through the small town of Vrata in Western Croatia. After Vrata, they continued walking for two days and were approached by six Croatian officers in dark green uniforms at around 7.30 pm. One of them was referred to as Daniel by one of his partners. The boss of this group told the five of them:

"Stop and put your hands down!"

The group of five then had to wait for a police van to arrive and was driven approximately 1,5 hours to a police station in Zagreb. When they entered the station, they saw three female officers and one male. Shortly after this, another male officer arrived to frisk them and their belongings. He asked the five whether or not any of them had any identification or papers and then gave everyone a paper to sign. The respondent couldn't understand the paper but signed it anyway.

All five people on the move were very hungry since they had almost run out of food and therefore been trying to conserve what was left. When they asked one of the officers for food he responded:

"We don't give you any food."

The respondent later was asked to open the Maps application on his phone and from where he had gotten the maps and pinned locations from. He replied that he didn't know. The group then spent the night at the police station.

In the morning they still hadn't received any food. The respondent was desperate and offered to give the officer money to go out and buy them some food. The officer though responded with taking out his baton and threatening the man with it.

At around 1.30 pm, the group of five had to enter a police van along with one Algerian man and one Afghani. While entering the van, the respondent asked if he could have his bag since there was a bit of food left inside, but was told: "No." They arrived at the Bosnian border at 5 pm and had to wait inside the van for one hour until it was dark. Then they were taken out of the van, which was parked above a downward sloping hill, one by one. There were six to seven officers with black balaclavas waiting for them. When they exited the van, they shone bright flashlights into the faces of the individuals which made it difficult for them to see any distinguishing characteristics past this. The respondent ran as fast as he could back to the Bosnian side of the border and, although the officers present swung at him with their batons, he only received one blow to the back. Some of the group of five however, were not as fast and received strikes from batons on their faces and torsos.

After reaching Bosnia and waiting for the rest of his group to come back as well, the respondent walked to a nearby house where he asked the resident for food, since they were so hungry. They and were given something to eat and walked back to the Miral Camp.