

27/04/2019

"IF YOU ARE SICK GO TO BOSNIA, TAKE MEDICINE, I DON'T CARE ABOUT THIS!"

Date and time: April 27, 2019 14:00

Location: Highway A1 near Gornje Dubrave, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.3062082 , 15.2790608

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 2 person(s), age: 23, 25 , from: Syria, Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, destruction of personal belongings, reckless driving, pushing people into a river

Police involved: Unspecified number of Croatian policemen in police checkpoint. - 1 woman dressed in grey without a cap and 1 man in darkblue uniform without cap in a white van. - Unknown number of Croatian policemen in a police station. - 5 "very big" persons clothed in white-grey uniforms and ski masks without any emblems on the shoulders. - 2 white vans and 1 car.

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: photos taken, personal information taken, papers signed

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: BASIS

ORIGINAL REPORT

The respondent started his journey on Thursday 25th April 2019 with a bus from Sarajevo to Livno (BiH). Once there, he met with a friend and they walked for an hour on foot to a place to change the clothes to be ready for the forest. Subsequently, they walked for several hours by foot, crossing into Croatia. They walked on the street, and whenever a car passed by, the two hid to avoid detection. At around 4:30 am on April 26th, they found an old house. It rained and the two men decided to sleep in the house until 5:00 pm.

The two men waited until around 10:30 pm before continuing walking to Sinj, a small village in Croatia. The next morning, Saturday 27th, they took a bus towards Split.

From Split they took the bus to Zagreb. After two hours, the bus stopped for a break near Gornje Dubrave around which time they were caught in a police checkpoint. All passengers were checked for their passports. The two men had no documents and were asked to leave the bus, it was 2:00 pm at this point. The respondent mentioned seeing a large number of police officers.

The respondent was asked where he was from and where he intended to go to which he responded "I don't have document" and "I am an immigrant". These officer called another detachment of police.

He asked for asylum and said he was sick (he has anemia):

"I want to asylum office. I am sick, I want to take asyl here"

The police answered:

"If you are sick, go to Bosnia, take medicine, I don't care about this"

They waited twenty minutes until two police cars arrived, including a white van. There was a female officer in the white van, dressed in grey without a cap and a male officer, in a dark blue uniform without cap as well.

The two men were searched and frisked along with their luggage. The mobile phone of the respondent was also taken at this time. Subsequently, a police officer told them to get into the windowless van. The officer mentioned the "nice behavior" of these two persons. It was between 2:00 and 3:00 pm at this point.

They entered the van, and as the AC was turned on, cold air came out of two ventilators. They drove for about an hour to a police station.

After arriving in the police station, the two men received back their backpacks but not the mobile phone. Before being taken to a room, they were re-examined, including the backpacks. Later on, they were given some food, and after five minutes of conversation they were given a lighter to smoke. Then, after further questions, they got coffee. After two hours of waiting, police came to take pictures. In addition, they were given papers to fill in, with names, father's name and age. The papers were in English and Arabic.

Again the respondent asked for asylum and described his illness. In response the police officer said "go to Bosnia". Thirty minutes later, seven Algerian people and four Kurdish people (including one woman) joined the two men in the room.

After one hour, all 14 people in the room had to get on a van.

"Like chicken. We could not breathe."

The ride took two hours and some people in the vehicle vomited because of the reckless way to drive the car. They reached another police station and only the interviewed person and his friend were taken out of the car and had to sign papers. The policeman did not want them to see what content was in there, he was covering the content with his hand.

"I know the paper but if I not sign they beat me so hard."

Then they drove for another two hours. Some people in the vehicle were exhausted and slept, others cried and some had to vomit again. It was dark when they stopped and the doors opened. Five "very big" persons clothed in white-grey uniforms and ski masks without any emblems on the shoulders were standing in front of the opened door. They took out of the car a group of three people and closed the door. The people inside could hear screams. Then, the door was opened again and the next three people were taken out of the vehicle. The respondent and his friend were the last ones. They were beaten with the hands of the officers and with batons and were kicked. In this situation the glasses of the respondent were destroyed.

There was a river next to a car and the respondent described how he was taken by the shoulder and pushed into the river. He explained this river was around one meter deep and ten meters wide. They crossed the river to escape from the officers.

They were without orientation and walked in the wet clothes for several hours. After some time they found a house and

a person who was there, this person saw them and said “hajde hajde” and “go go go!” When they arrived in Velika Kladuša they met a man with a dog who wanted to beat them and harassed the men with his dog. Another person passing by stopped him before this could happen. Finally they found friends in Velika Kladuša and got dry clothes, food and blankets. It was Sunday at around 1:00 pm. The following day, the respondent saw his mobile phone with another person and took it back. He mentioned that someone took the bag with all the mobiles and sold it in Velika Kladuša.

After describing the pushback, he said:

“I am feeling like a dog, not like a human. This I will never forget all my life this fucking shit. Why? Catch me, okay: but not like that! Why they beat woman? I cant back to Algeria, I have nothing in Algeria.”