

01/05/2019

"WHEN THE POLICEMEN APPROACHED THE THREE MEN, THEY PULLED THEIR PISTOLS, RELEASED THE SAFETY CATCHES AND POINTED AT THEM."

Date and time: May 1, 2019 03:00

Location: Forest outside Donje Prilisce, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.468253 , 15.378361

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 17, 17, 25 years old , from: Algeria

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, pushing into river

Police involved: First 2 officers: dark uniforms with a badge saying "RH" on the shoulder, armed with guns, one of them female and one "very young" male. - Later 4 officers in blue shirts and dark-blue trousers, one of them with a star on his shoulder. - Later 4-5 officers wearing ski masks. - One white van with inscription "POLICIJA" on its side

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: [Re:]ports Sarajevo

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of three men (two of them 17-year old minors) set out from Velika Kladusa in the night between the 26th and the 27th of April 2019. After crossing the border to Croatia, they walked for four days. During that time, they crossed three rivers by swimming.

In the night between 30th April and 1st May, they were approaching the border with Slovenia. When they were in the forest between the highway E65 and the villages of Donje Prilisce and Srednje Prilisce (coordinates 45.468253, 15.378361), they were apprehended by two police officers. The respondent suggested that the police may have used night vision devices, because at the moment of their encounter (about 3 A.M.) the group was in the middle of the forest, not even on a path.

One of the police officers was a woman, the other one was a man whom the respondent described as very young. They wore dark uniforms with a badge on their shoulder. There were the letters RH on the badge. They had big headlights with them. When they approached the group, they pulled their pistols, released the safety catches and pointed at the three men. The respondent said he felt intimidated.

The policemen shouted at them “ *Sit Down!* “, then the group was searched and their cellphones were taken. The male officer beat them with a baton and handcuffed them, destroyed the cellphones and then they called reinforcements.

A group of four policemen arrived. One of them was wearing a star on his shoulder and giving orders to the patrol. The group was taken into a white van with the letters POLICIJA written on its side. During the subsequent transport, the

three group members asked multiple times for asylum and declared their age, receiving “Yes” as an answer but with no factual consequences.

The van was driving for approximately 3,5 hours until it reached the border between Croatia and Bosnia near Basara (HR) at the coordinates 45.028003,15.7598213. The three men were told to get out of the van. Outside, four or five policemen with their faces covered by ski masks waited for them and started to beat them. After the beating, they pushed the group into the border river (Korana river) and told them to leave.

The three men then walked to Velika Kladusa which they reached after about four hours of walking.