

30/03/2019

"WHEN THEY FOUND PHOTOS AND VIDEOS OF HER DANCING, THEY WATCHED THEM LAUGHING."

Date and time: March 30, 2019 06:30

Location: Croatia, on a road 150 km from the Bosnian-Croatian border towards Zagreb

Coordinates: 45.655147756634854 , 16.38708677208615

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 15 person(s), age: 28, 27, 6, 11, 8, unknown , from: Iran, Syria

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: insulting, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: Croatian police officers, detected by officers with one police car, caught by officers with 10 police cars (4 city police cars, 2 border police cars, 2 undercover police cars)/ at the border police station: 5 male officers and 2 female (6 in dark blue uniforms with the flag of Croatia, 1 in a light blue uniform) and the immigration police/ transported by a van

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, papers signed, no translator present, photos taken

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: [Re:]ports Sarajevo

ORIGINAL REPORT

On March 30, 2019, the group of 15 people on the move from Syria (2) and Iran (13) were waiting for two hours on the side of a Croatian car road, 150 km from the Bosnian-Croatian border towards Zagreb. Among them one family of mother (28 years old) and father (27 years old) with their two children (6 and 11 years old), a family of mother, father and one child (8 years old) and eight more individuals. At 6.30am a police car passed them and within thirty minutes two city police cars arrived. Soon after, two more city police cars, two border police cars and two undercover police cars arrived. According to one interviewee, there were ten police cars in total. The people on the move had been in the wilderness for four days and was very tired. Therefore, one of the families had decided to ask the police for asylum, but the police didn't talk to them. They then had to stand in a line until a van arrived. All 15 people had to enter the back of the van which became very crowded. It was very narrow and had a fan, one light and no windows.

"The deportation van was like [a] prison."

The same interviewee reports that they arrived at a police station after a 30-minute drive where the officers let everyone off the van. In the police station, they then started searching each of them, including the children. The interviewee describes the place as a new building with four identical rooms with bed frames inside. He assumes it was built for deportation and that the immigration police was inside. He saw seven officers inside the station, five men and two women. All of them were wearing dark blue uniforms showing Croatian flag, beside one who wore a light blue uniform. Asked by one individual where they were, one police officer answered that they were close to

Bosnia and near a river.

After the officers took all the backpacks and phones from them, stole money and other property, they sent everyone to a room. Then they brought each person out of the room to question them. The individuals were asked about their nationality and age and if they entered Croatia with the help of a smuggler. Using two different phones, the police took photos of all individuals, including the children. The previously mentioned interviewee assumes that they were photographed for two different ministries.

He was further asked for the password of his phone which the officers wrote down and started checking his last call's numbers. He also mentions that the police checked the photo gallery of another female individual. When they found photos and videos of her dancing, they watched them laughing. He was then made to sign papers whereby no translation was offered.

"I think the papers said I would like to deport myself. We asked for asylum and they were laughing at us. I don't know why."

One man in the group could speak English. The interviewee watched the English-speaking man talking with the police officers and saw him starting to cry after hearing the policemen's words.

Following the questioning, the police offered the group food — pork and cheese.

"We said we don't eat pork, and they said we have nothing else then. We asked for water and they said no. We could drink directly from the sink, but the sink was very dirty."

The group was kept in the police station for approximately 12 hours. At 11pm the following evening, they were driven 3,45 hours to "a bad place". There they had to leave the car and walked five hours to a small Bosnian village. As they could find neither a taxi nor a bus so late in the night, they had to wait outside the village until 7am the following day.

The police didn't honor the special rights of children.