

"I HAD TEARS IN MY EYES – I WANTED ASYLUM!"

Date and time: March 3, 2019 15:00

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

Coordinates: 46.62142441518931 , 16.283825139115265

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

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

Minors involved? No

Violence used: no violence used

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 speaking 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

Taken to a police station?: unknown

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: [Re:]ports Sarajevo

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of three started their journey from Bihać (BiH) on March 2, 2019 ,a and took a bus to Bosanski Brod (BiH). From there , they crossed the border t o Croatia over the official bridge around 2 am in the following night. They were seen by the border police but managed to escape. All th ree of them ran into different directions. The respondent jumped down from some stairs and hurt his foot . He and another individual of the group were able to hide from the police , but the third one got caught on the bridge right away and is now in detention . The two others were hiding for about 1.5 hours until the police stopped looking for them.

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

After that, a round 7 am on March 3, the two of them walked into the next town and took a bus to Zagreb (HR V) , buying t heir bus tickets without problems . Around 10 . 30 am the y switched to another bus which brought them from Zagreb to Varaždin (HR V) at the Slovenian border. As the respondent's i njured foot was aching, the two of them started to look for medicine in the town . As it was Sunday, it was very calm, but t hey finally found a pharmacy where the woman asked € 22 for the medicine. They couldn't afford this and were forced to leave ag a in without any medicine. They continued walking to the next town , Čakovec (HR V) , where they found an abandoned house and

slept for a few hours. Later that day, they continued walking towards the Slovenia n border . As their phone s ran out of battery, they didn't have GPS anymore and it was hard to find a good way. On the way, a police car passed them twice, but each time they managed to hide and weren't seen by the authorities . Then a car stopped, with a woman and a man sitting inside.

“ The woman knew directly what was happening and saw my injured foot.”

The couple offered them to take them with their car over the border for €100. The two didn't have this much money and gave them the €50 they had with them. Nevertheless, the couple took them into their car. Right away, just 200 to 300 meters across the border, a police car showed up and stopped the car.

” Moi comme je vu la police. J'étais brisé. ”

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

At the police station were about 10 officers, including the officers who stopped them at the border. One officer spoke English. The respondent and his friend got a plane piece of paper, where they had to write down their names, the names of their fathers, their nationality and from which country they entered Croatia. Neither fingerprints nor photos were taken. During the detention the officers gave them some food and water. The respondent 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 officers drove the two of them to a hospital , where respondent g ot a wheelchair and a radiograp hy of his foot was taken . While waiting , the individual asked the officers again for the asylum process. Now their answer was :

“ This is not on our level.”

The doctor came back and talked only to the officers. The respondent didn't get any explanation about the results of the medical examination . One officers then told him :

“ You have nothing, why are you acting like this?!”

Afterwards they were taken to a different police station.

“ I had tears in my eyes – I wanted asylum!”

At this police station the two of them had to fill out an official form, written in English and Croatian. Although they didn't understand what exactly was written in the form, they signed it. After 20 minutes, the officers came back with another paper, which they had to hold while photos were taken of them. The respondent asked, if this all was for asylum, but they answered:

“ We will take you back to Bosnia. We can do nothing for you.”

Three officers, different from the ones in the morning, drove them by a van to the border of Bosnia, around the area of Velika Kladuša. Those three officers were wearing dark blue – black uniforms and no hat other than the earlier ones with the official Croatian police uniform. The officers gave the two of them a bottle of water for the ride. Around 6 pm the following evening, they started in Čakovec (HR V) and about three hours later, around at 9 pm, they arrived at the border. The respondent mentions that during the way, he saw how the officers stopped at a small shop to buy some beer for themselves. At the border, the officers opened the door of the van. The respondent saw another police car standing there with four to five officers. The two individuals had to get off the van and were ordered to walk towards the border for around 500 meters.

On the Bosnian side, they continued walking to Velika Kladuša (BIH). They walked to the official camp of Miral, but were sent away, so they spent the following night in the doorway of a mosque in Velika Kladuša. The next day, March 4, they made their way back to Sarajevo.