

08/11/2018

## "WHEN THE RESPONDENT ASKED FOR HIS PASSPORT BACK, THE OFFICERS TEARED UP HIS DOCUMENT [...]"

**Date and time:** November 8, 2018 02:30

**Location:** Vukova Gorica, Croatia

**Coordinates:** 45.45400136324231 , 15.335662464475718

**Push-back from:** Croatia

**Push-back to:** Bosnia

**Demographics:** 20 person(s), age: unknown , from: Syria

**Minors involved?** Yes

**Violence used:** beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pepper spray, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, destruction of passport

**Police involved:** Police officers in plain clothes, some masked, some in uniforms, number unknown, different ranks (probationer with college, senior police officer, Instructor in headquarters of intervention Police, Commander of intervention Police)

**Taken to a police station?:** yes

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

**Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?:** Yes

**Reported by:** Balkan Info Van

### ORIGINAL REPORT

The respondent left Velika Kladuša together with a family , consisting of father, mother and their two children aged) three and five, and another man aged 36 on October 27 , 2018. After crossing the Croatian border, they walked 10 days through the country before arriving at the border river Kolpa near Vukova Gorica (HRV) . The 36-years old man swam across the river at night to enter Slovenia. The river 's current was fast, so he had difficulties to reach the river bank. At one point, the group lost sight of their friend, so they stayed on the Croatian side of the river for two more days , searching for him and screaming his name .

At some point, a Slovenian officer noticed them from the other side of the river. Soon five officers in plain clothes arrived in a police van. The group was driven to a police station about an hour away. At the station the officers took a photo of the respondent holding a panel with his name, surname and date of birth. His phone, power bank and passport were seized. The respondent asked about the friend who fell into the river, but did n't receive an answer. He also tried to access the asylum procedure:

*"I need asylum in Zagreb . "*

The officer replied :

*"Asylum in Croatia is just in television".*

The respondent further recognized the rank of two officers , one wore the rank of a “probationer with college”, another was a “senior police officer”.

He was later told to enter a van which was already crowded with around 20 other people on the move and the backspace was therefore lacking oxygen. The family entered a different van with two other families. After two hours of driving , the Croatian officers pushed them back in Buhača (HRV) at a small path next to some houses near a forest. Masked officers told them to get off the van one by one and then beat them with batons. When the respondent asked for his passport back, the officers tore up his document, threw it away, beat him with a silver baton and kicked his back. Another individual was beaten and attacked with pepper spray. Also this time , the respondent noticed the ranks of the violent officers – among them was a “Instructor in headquarters of intervention Police” and “Commander of intervention Police”.