

"A POLICE OFFICER POINTED A GUN AT THEM, ASKING THEM TO GET OUT"

Date and time: August 23, 2017 00:00

Location: Dobova, Slovenia

Coordinates: 45.8970349 , 15.660114300000032

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Serbia

Demographics: 2 person(s), age: 20 , from: Morocco, Libya

Minors involved? No

Violence used: threatening with guns, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: Slovenian and Croatian police worked together.

Taken to a police station?: unknown

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

On August 23rd. 2017, in Dobova, Slovenia, two people were found in a truck by the police. A police officer pointed a gun at them, asking them to get out. One of their phones was taken, the other one broken. But they didn't have any SIM cards inside. Their money was taken as well. When they asked for the asylum, the police answered no. The Slovenian police brought them to the Croatian police, in the border area, where the officers asked them to fill out a paper with name and age. The Croatian police brought them directly back to Sid, in a van with 5 people.

04/09/2017

"THE POLICE TOOK HIS CLOTHES, THREW IT IN THE MUD, STAMPED ON IT AND GAVE IT BACK FILLED WITH MUD"

Date and time: September 4, 2017 00:00

Location: Durdanci, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.298195888381734 , 18.51470947265625

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Serbia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 25 , from: Libya

Minors involved? Unknown

Violence used: threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 3 Croatian police officers armed with guns

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

A 25 year old person from Libya was deported from Croatia back to Serbia on September 4th. 2017. He was caught 68km. from the Serbian/Croatian border, in Croatia, together with 2 other people, by 3 Croatian police officers. In the moment when they were caught, the policemen pointed their guns at them. The police took his clothes, threw it in the mud, stamped on it and gave it back filled with mud. The police officers also took their shoes, and took his painkiller-pills for headache. Furthermore, the police ordered the 3 people to sit on the ground, one police officer sat between two of them, took their heads under his arms and posed for photos. The 3 refugees were driven back to Serbia in 2 police cars and 1 police van, by 5 police officers.

28/09/2017

"THE POLICE OFFICER TOLD HIM TO GO BACK TO SERBIA, LOADED HIS GUN, AND SAID THAT IF HE CATCHES THE MAN IN CROATIA AGAIN HE WOULD KILL HIM"

Date and time: September 28, 2017 23:00

Location: Near Sid, Serbia

Coordinates: 45.172667 , 19.18946

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Serbia

Demographics: 1 person(s), age: 22 , from: Iraq

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), threatening with guns, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 2 made violence (one smaller about 35 years, one bigger about 50 years old), 4-5 watched, all male

Taken to a police station?: yes

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: Rigardu

ORIGINAL REPORT

A 22 year old man from Iraq crossed the Croatian border by walking, and was caught by two police officers in uniforms near Sid, Serbia, on September 28th. at about 9pm. The police transported him in a police car to a police station (he couldn't see where they were driving). His baggage, phone and money was confiscated, the police registered his name and nationality, and took a picture of him.

He was handcuffed in a cell, where he was held for a while, before the police came to the door of the cell. The man asked when he would be set free, the police answered "fuck you don't speak shut up". Two police officers came into the cell and started beating him. The man fell to the floor and the police continued to beat him. After about 15 minutes the police stopped, left the man in the cell and went out. In total he was in the station for about 2 hours. After the incident one police officer in uniform transported him in a police car back to the border near Sid Serbia. The police officer told him to go back to Serbia, loaded his gun, and said that if he catches the man in Croatia again he would kill him. The police officer watched the man until he was far away on the train rails, on the Serbian side

"THEY CONFISCATED HIS MONEY AND PHONE, TOOK HIS JACKET, BLANKET AND BACKPACK AND SET IT ALL ON FIRE "

Date and time: October 19, 2017 01:00

Location: Apševci, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.060242 , 19.087319

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Serbia

Demographics: 4 person(s), age: unknown , from: Afghanistan

Minors involved? Unknown

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), threatening with guns, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 5 male police without uniforms with small civil

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: Rigardu

ORIGINAL REPORT

4 men walked from Sid, Serbia, across the Serbian-Croatian border to the Croatian side, and were caught by 5 male police officers, without uniforms in a small civilian car, on Thursday October 19th. around 1am, and at about 10km. from the border. The police shouted "stop", and two of them raised their guns, another of the police officers shot once, hitting near his feet. The interviewee stopped and kneeled down, while 3 other people ran away.

The interviewee said "I'm a refugee, don't shoot me, I'm from Afghanistan", and showed them an Afghan certificate from his phone in the pocket of his jacket. The police showed their Croatian police license cards. The 2 police officers with guns kept their weapons raised and pointed towards him. The 3 other police officers searched his body and his belongings. They confiscated his money (200 euros) and phone, they took his jacket, blanket and backpack and set it all on fire with a lighter and broke his shoes with a knife. Afterwards they started to beat him. 2 police officers beat him and while another waited, then they shifted and the third officer beat him. The 2 officers with their guns raised, stayed in this position throughout the attack.

The police hit with palms, fists and sticks (long thin black with handrest), on the left side of his body and on his right cheek. On the next day he got bruises and pain in his left arm, bottom and thigh, and his left little finger, wrist and right cheek were hurt and swollen. He didn't fight back, but tried to protect himself, and repeated his earlier words. The police put a tree branch in his mouth and to fix it they rolled his jumper around his head. They shouted "don't speak, go back to Serbia". After a while the man fled in bare feet and walked across the border to Sid, Serbia.

"THE POLICE OFFICERS SHOUTED AT THEM TO STOP AND STARTED TO FIRE THEIR GUNS"

Date and time: November 4, 2017 00:00

Location: Vinkovci train station, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.30022599999999 , 18.802734999999984

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Serbia

Demographics: 6 person(s), age: unknown , from: Afghanistan

Minors involved? Unknown

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, gunshots

Police involved: more than 6 police officers

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

6 people from Afghanistan arrived in Croatia, during the night, near Vinkovci. When they arrived at the train station in Vinkovci, a dog started to bark, and some people came out of their homes, so the 6 men ran into the forest to hide. They came back later walking towards the train station in order to cross it. The police was in the corner of the station.

The interviewee was already injured on his left leg, and couldn't run away from the police. The police officers shouted at them to stop and started to shoot their guns. The 6 people laid down on the ground. Subsequently the 6 people were beaten by the police. They kicked them in their backs, and they were told "why are you here ? why are you coming here?". The interviewee asked for asylum, and asked the police to let him ask for asylum in Croatia, with his friends. The police told him to go back to Serbia, saying "we don't need you people to come here for the asylum".

The interviewee asked once again for help, claiming he wanted protection from a European country. 6 more police officers arrived at the train station, and the 6 men were brought back to the Serbian border. The border police warned them "if you come back here we will beat you".

"THE POLICE KICKED THE MEN AND BEAT THEM WITH HANDS AND TRUNCHEONS"

Date and time: November 10, 2017 04:00

Location: Vinkovci, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.218176 , 18.78494

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Serbia

Demographics: 12 person(s), age: 15-25 , from: Afghanistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 5 Croatian policemen, all male in black uniforms

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Rigardu

ORIGINAL REPORT

12 men from Afghanistan (15 – 25 years old), walked across the Serbian-Croatian border from Šid, Serbia, and for about 60-70km. into Croatian territory, towards Zagreb. They were caught by 2 police officers on a bridge, on November 10th., 2017 at about 4-5am. The police pointed at the men with flashlights and shoot a few times into the air. The police asked the men for their personal details and destination, and they insisted on wanting to know who the leader of the group was. One of the men showed his identity card from the Obrenovac camp. The men didn't express their intention to seek asylum, because the police seemed very angry and behaved so aggressively that the men were afraid of being beaten.

The police searched their bodies and belongings and asked for their phones, which they threw into the river (4 phones). Afterwards they called for 3 more police officers, and they all forced the men to walk a bit further away (about 2 minutes walk), to a spot where they violently assaulted them. The men were ordered to kneel down and to tell them who their leader was. The police kicked the men and beat them with hands and truncheons to all parts of their body. If the men raised their hands the police would hit them in the back of the head. All the men were beaten in this manner.

Afterwards 2 police officers transported the men in a big police van, to the deportation place on the Serbian-Croatian border, called stone-place (2 big stones) near 70 road and Batrovci Serbia, where some Croatian border police officers were waiting for them. The police ordered the men to go to Serbia, and the men ran back to Serbia.

12/01/2018

"THE OFFICERS ALSO SHOWED THEIR GUNS, THREATENING THEM THAT IF THEY WOULD EVER COME BACK, THEY WOULD BE KILLED"

Date and time: January 12, 2018 03:00

Location: close to Dubrovnik, Croatia

Coordinates: 42.65066059999999 , 18.094423799999996

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 6 person(s), age: unknown , from: Palestine

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, threatening with guns

Police involved: 4 Croatian police officers

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The interviewee was attacked by 4 police officers. The 4 officers beat him, kicking, punching and using truncheons on his back, arms and legs. As a consequence of this attack his left foot was broken. The officers also beat the other people in his group, including 2 minors. They took their water and poured it out. The officers also showed their guns, threatening them that if they would ever come back, they would be killed. The violence lasted about 30 minutes.

Then they were deported at the Bosnian border, on the way to Trebinje, and left in a nearby forest. During the violence and the deportation they were continuously insulted by the officers.

05/05/2018

"THEY SHOWED HIM A GUN AND TOLD HIM NOT TO COME BACK AGAIN OR THEY WOULD KILL HIM"

Date and time: May 5, 2018 03:00

Location: Sid-Tovarnik border, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.147575 , 19.164551

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Serbia

Demographics: 1 person(s), age: unknown , from: Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 3 police officers

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

An Algerian man was walking near Tovarnik, when 3 police officers caught him. They asked about his nationality, he said Syrian but the police officers did not write it down. He was pushed back to the Sid-Tovarnik border. They asked him what he had in his backpack and he took everything out. He asked for asylum, but the police officers denied it. Afterwards the police officers checked his pockets and took his money (400 Kunas and 120€) and destroyed it. When the man asked why they did it, they kicked and beat him (for 15 minutes approximately) in his head, legs and back, while he was laying on the ground. They showed him a gun and told him not to come back again or they would kill him. He picked up his backpack and ran away.

"ONE OF THE BORDER-PATROL OFFICERS SHOT AT HIM THREE TIMES"

Date and time: June 16, 2018 23:00

Location: Near Donja Brusovača, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.216495992263994 , 15.72998442587891

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 24 person(s), age: 20-30 , from: Pakistan, Libya

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), gunshots, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 2 Croatian army border officers (wearing army uniforms and equipped with sniper guns), 2 Croatian border police officers with a van

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The interviewee, and his two friends started walking from Velika Kladusa towards Zagreb through the hills and forests. When they were walking around 10km. from the Croatian border, they were detected by the Croatian army-border patrols equipped with sniper guns. He and his friends started running and the soldiers shouted at them to stop. When he was at a distance of around 300 meters away, one of the border-patrol officers shot at him three times. The interviewee explained that he could feel the bullets flying close to his head, so him and the other men stopped.

Afterwards, they were deported back to Bosnia by two police officers in a van, along with other 21 Pakistani men. The interviewee asked the police officers to claim asylum in Croatia, but he received a negative response from an officer, saying that there was no asylum in Croatia for him. The police officers took his phone and money. Later on, the other Pakistani men told him that they were also robbed by the police officers. When the police stopped at the Croatian-Bosnian border, all men were told to walk back to Bosnia. The interviewee asked the police officers if they could return their phones, but he got a negative response and was beaten.

"When I asked the police to give us back our mobiles and money, he just said: 'Go, go, go!' and punched us by a metal stick and kept shouting 'Go, go, go!', and kept punching us to go."

05/07/2018

"THE POLICE STOLE 100 € FROM THE TWO MEN, THEIR TWO MOBILE PHONES AND THEIR PASSPORTS"

Date and time: July 5, 2018 00:00

Location: Forest near Karlovac, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.47842983823902 , 15.601197674228501

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

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

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), gunshots, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 5 Croatian police men

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

On July 5th. 2018, two men (23 and 25) from Morocco and Algeria walked from Velika Kladusa towards Slovenia. They were in a forest close to Karlovac where they were detected by five uniformed Croatian police officers in a car. When the police caught them, they did not ask the men any questions but immediately started pushing them and beating them with sticks. One of the men was beaten on his face, shoulders and chest, the other one received strokes on his back. The police did not take the men to a police station and did not take their finger prints, they were only pushed back to the Bosnian border in the police car.

During the drive, one of the men expressed his wish to apply for asylum in Croatia, but the police rejected him: "No asylum for you in Croatia". During the push back in the police car, the police stole 100 € from the two men, their two mobile phones and their passports. When they arrived at the border, the men were taken out of the car and the police started shooting their guns in the air and shouted at the men to go back to Bosnia. Both men walked back to Velika Kladusa with scratches, wounds and one bruised clavicular.

"ALL WOMEN WERE CHECKED EVEN UNDER THEIR UNDERWEAR. THEY ALSO CHECKED MY HAIR. THEY CHECKED EVERYTHING"

Date and time: July 21, 2018 10:00

Location: mountain place around 25 km from Velika Kladusa, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.161097388431266 , 15.729578532670644

Push-back from:

Push-back to:

Demographics: person(s), age: , from:

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used:

Police involved: 5 Croatian police men, tall and in police uniforms, the one who was the most brutal had blue eyes and blond hair

Taken to a police station?:

Treatment at police station or other place of detention:

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

F.'s family and other men from their camp left early morning Velika Kladusa and walked through the Bosnian border to Croatia. The family hoped to reach the European land and apply for asylum, explaining to the EU authorities that they cannot live in Iran due to the oppressive and violent Government. When the whole group walked through Croatia, around 25 km from the Bosnian border, they were detected by 5 police Croatian police men. The family tried to speak to the police and ask for asylum, but the only respond they got back was: "Shut up!". The police started searching through the pockets of all people for their phones and money that they stole and destroyed their old phones. After that, the police stripped all men naked and frisked their bodies. When they were done with the men, the police told all women to get naked and touched their all body parts, including the breast and genitals:

"They checked all our body, everything, took our clothes. Outside, all men could see us, our underwear. They just told the men to put their faces to the other side. All women were checked even under their underwear. They also checked my hair. They checked everything" (F.).

One woman tried to resist to the body frisk and pushed a police officer away from her, but the police officer started beating her that the woman fell on the floor. Following the body check, the police transported all people in a big van to another place, which they could not identify because the van had dark windows. The car was driving so fast, that Fatima's older daughter started vomiting. Fatima asked the police to stop and give them water because her daughter was not feeling well, but they got no response. After 30 minutes, they reached a mountain place and were told to get off the car. Then, the police stood into a circle and told all single men (5) to come to stand in the middle of that circle, and started attacking them with metal batons:

"The refugees were in the middle of the circle. The police like a circle, and they were beating them with batons. 5 police men

on 5 single. Every police man was beating one single men and kept beating them. One man was crying and other was vomiting, they wanted to go back to Bosnia, but the police kept beating them. After when they finished, we walked a bit to the Bosnian land and the police again kept beating them, again 5 policemen were beating 5 men.” (F.)

When the police stopped beating the men, they took the men into a car and deported them to close to Bihac, including F.’s son. The families were transported to the deportation to a different place. The van was driving again very fast and people were falling from one side of the van to the other. After one hour, the driver stopped in a mountain place for their deportation:

“When we opened the car, they [police] said to us to come out. We saw just tall mountains, very steep, surrounded by trees and thorny plants [showing scratches around her legs and feet]. The police said to us to come here, and my bigger daughter was vomiting in the car, she was sick, and my husband was holding her and coming with her out of the car. I was walking out of the car in front of my husband. I could hear that the police started beating him with batons, but I did not see it as I was with my back towards him, walking in front. My small daughter was walking as the last one and she saw her father being beaten. When my daughter saw her father being beaten, she said to the police: “Please, stop beating my father and beat me instead of him.” And the police started beating my daughter [pointing at her daughter’s swollen eye and crying]. In this mountain way, the police said to me: “Go straight go back!”. But I told him, “Where back? Where? I don’t know where.” as there was just a steep hill full of threes and thorny plants. The police took a gun and put it into my head and shouted: “Go, go, go!”. and I was so scared, I thought he was going to kill me [crying]” (F.).

The whole family walked for one hour in a forest, trying to find the way back to Velika Kladusa. When they reach a road, they tried to wave on the passing cars to stop them, but none stopped. After a while, F.’s daughter jumped into the road in front of the car to make the driver to stop and helped them. The driver took them the whole way to Velika Kladusa and offered them food and water, which F.refused. After, 20 km, the family reached Velika Kladusa.

The first aid medics from the No Name Kitchen team, who treated the whole family, observed these manifestations: second grade contusions on the left eye of the fifteen years old girl caused by a physic aggression without object. On the left side, the medics found an injury cause by first grade contusions because of a non sharp object, causing a hematoma all along the left side. Furthermore, 21 years old man had stretches and wounds on his back cause by the attack of a metal baton.

"THE MEN WERE FORCED TO HAND OVER THEIR SYRIAN PASSPORTS AND ID'S TO THE BORDER POLICE WHO TEARED THEM INTO PIECES AND BURNED THEM"

Date and time: July 27, 2018 15:00

Location: Close to Johovica, Slovenia

Coordinates: 45.0922077 , 15.791496199999983

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 7 person(s), age: 17-28 , from: Syria

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, threatening with guns, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: Four Croatian border police officers with two cars. All wearing black suits and masks.

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

A group of men walked from Velika Kladuša (Bosnia and Herzegovina) for three days and nights until they reached Slovenia. In Slovenia, in a forest close to the village called Johovica, they were caught by the Slovenian police. The police did not take the men to a police station and did not enable any of them to apply for asylum in Slovenia, although they clearly stated that they were from Syria and wanted asylum in Slovenia. The men were directly deported to Croatia, where they were handed over to the Croatian police who drove them to the Bosnian border for their deportation back to Bosnia.

When the men were being driven by Croatian police to the Bosnian border, there was a lack of oxygen in the van and the men had problems breathing inside the back of the van. They asked the police to open a window, but the police responded to them: "Fuck you, no oxygen!". The van was driving fast and some of the men were feeling sick.

"When they were deporting us with the car, they were driving really fast and people were vomiting. I asked please help, but nothing. The car was driving about 1,5 hours driving from Johovica to Velika Kladuša".

When they reached the Bosnian border, the police told the men to get out of the car, searched their bodies and stole their money. The police took 300 euros from one person and 200 euros from another person, afterwards the police broke their phones. The men were forced to hand over their Syrian passports and IDs to the border police who teared them into pieces and burned them.

"No problem that they take my mobile and money as I can buy again, but passport I cannot buy again. Maybe I will want to go back to Syria, but I don't have passport or ID, and I don't have any proof that I am really from Syria"

After the police stole and destroyed the men's possessions, they shouted at the men: "Go back to Bosnia!", and started physically attacking them with metal batons, kicking them, and punching them, including the minor. One officer pushed one of the men to the ground, stepped on his back, and was kicking him into his shoulders and back. They told the police that one of the guys had a heart problem and asked them to not to beat him, but the police only responded: "Fuck you! Shut up!" and attacked him, hitting into his chest, targeting his heart.

Finally, the border police again shouted at the men to go back to Bosnia and started shooting multiple rounds of gunshots near them and under their legs. The men started running across the border and when they did not hear the sound of guns anymore, they walked back to Velika Kladuša.

One person sought medical treatment in the hospital in Velika Kladuša, but was refused by a doctor: "Sorry, but we cannot do anything for you." The following day, they were treated by the MSF team. After the examination of the patient, the MSF medical staff found a left fractured clavicle, which is the part of the shoulder that connects arm with ribcage, caused by the beating (see photo of medical report). Other men had bruised arms, face, and back, and one had a swollen injury on his left hand caused by the attack with a metal baton.

"THEY HIT ME BY A METAL BATON TO MY MOUTH AND I LOST MY TOOTH. THEY ALSO HIT ME INTO MY KNEE THAT GOT TWISTED"

Date and time: August 4, 2018 04:00

Location: Close to Glinica, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.218529 , 15.939089

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 27-30 , from: Morocco

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), electric shock, threatening with guns, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: Four Croatian police officers, wearing masks and black suit, driving a big white van

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

4 men from Morocco walked together from Velika Kladuša to Croatia. The whole group was caught by 4 Croatian police officers in the Croatian inner land close to Glinica. One of the men managed to escape, the others were physically attacked with metal sticks and electric-schock sticks by the Croatian police:

They hit me by a metal baton to my mouth and I lost my tooth. They also hit me into my knee that got twisted.

When the police stopped beating the men, they took them directly to the Bosnian border for their deportation. Once they arrived near the border, they made the men undress, searching for their money and mobile phones. They stole 500€ from the interviewee. Afterwards, the police told the men to walk back to Bosnia and started shooting in the air with their guns. The men walked 40 km until they reached the makeshift camp in Velika Kladuša.

"THE BACK DOOR OF THE VAN WAS OPENED, BUT THEY WERE BROUGHT OUT INDIVIDUALLY SO THAT THE FOUR OFFICERS WAITING AT THE BORDER COULD BEAT THEM WITH THE BLACK ISSUE BATONS."

Date and time: August 21, 2018 11:00

Location: 30km north west of Sturlic, Croatia.

Coordinates: 45.01169106525231 , 15.734471701072493

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 4 person(s), age: unknown , from: Afghanistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: 4 Croatian police officers in black "commando" uniform

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: Balkan Info Van

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of people on the move concerned in this case, travelled in a group of four on foot, heading NW through the Croatian forests near the border crossing at Sturlic. After 10 days of walking, the group were using a single track gravel road that was flanked by trees on both sides.

At approximately 11am they heard a car approaching and where met by a police patrol vehicle. Two officers dressed in black commando uniform jumped out, one pointing his handgun at them. The police shouted at them to stop, which they complied with.

The four men were searched, at which point their power banks and money were taken. The three that had mobilephones watched as the officers broke the screens, damaging them irreparably. A van was brought to transport them back to the border to Bosnia. The four people were loaded into the back of the vehicle. It had no windows or ventilation and they describe the sickening journey they had as the driver continuously swerved across the road to make them sick.

After approximately an hour's drive, they were brought to a rural border location unknown to them. The back door of the van was opened, but they were brought out individually so that the four officers waiting at the border could beat them with the black batons. The 4 officers, dressed in black commando uniforms, attacked all attacked each person, one by one.

The blows brought out bruising on the hands of the victim, but all received severe impact injuries to the head, legs and torso.

After being beaten, the group were told to walk back into Bosnia. They headed back east on foot, only to find that they had been pushed back near to Bihac (approximately 30km from the city). Even though they had been pushed back at midday, they took another twelve hours to reach shelter in V. Kladusa, forced to walk on foot because they had no money or means of transport.

The police involved in this incident were dressed in commando uniforms. The two arresting officers (though no paperwork, or processing took place) were armed with handguns. At the border, they and two colleagues from the same unit used standard issue police batons to inflict violence on the four victims.

The incident occurred over byram, meaning the primary health services were disrupted and the victims were unable to access treatment for several days, at which point there was not much that could be done for the severe bruising suffered.

"THEY TOOK MY LEG ORTHOSIS AND CRASHED IT WITH THEIR BOOTS, THIS WAS THE SECOND TIME CROATIAN POLICE BROKE MY LEG ORTHOSIS"

Date and time: August 22, 2018 00:00

Location: Around 45 km from Velika Kladuša, Croatia.

Coordinates: 45.364938705896385 , 15.491367217856919

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 16, 22 , 24 , from: Iraq

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: 3 Croatian border policemen in black suits (one of them described as stout), one Croatian policeman in a blue shirt

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The interviewee left with his younger brother and a friend from Velika Kladuša and walked to Croatia, where he wanted to apply for asylum. They were walking in the forest for five days and ran out of food and water. The interviewee reported that during the five days they spent in the forest, he only ate on one day and drank one bottle of water. He also has a physical disability of his left lower limb, and am using a leg orthosis, which made his walk even more difficult, especially in a forest terrain.

After five days, the men were walking inside of Croatia, approximately 45 km away from the Bosnian border, and were caught by 2 Croatian police officers whom the interviewee referred to as "commando" because they were wearing black clothes. The interviewee explained that the "commando officers" pointed guns at them and started shouting at the men to lay on the ground. Afterwards, the commando called three other police officers dressed in black and one officer in a blue shirt (all Croatian) who were supposed to deport the men back to Bosnia.

The interviewee clearly stated that he wanted to apply for asylum in Croatia, but the police did not react to his request. None of the men were taken to a police station or allowed to access to the asylum procedures. Instead, all of them were directly driven by a van to the Croatian-Bosnian border to be deported back to Bosnia. The van in which the men were transported did not have any windows or ventilation, and the men had significant problems breathing inside van. The police were also driving very fast throughout the trip, which took over an hour, and the men got sick:

The van was closed. Sometimes it was a little bit of air and sometimes there was no air. They [the police] put there a little bit of cold air just enough so that we would not die and after they stopped

When the car stopped at the Bosnian border, close to the official border check-point in Velika Kladuša, the men were told by the police to get out of the car. The interviewee explained that the police first broke their phones and stole their money, taking his 350 euros. Afterwards, these 4 police officers started physically attacking them while pushing them back to the Bosnian land:

They told us to go. But I told them that I did not know where to go. I did not know where was the way back to Bosnia. And I saw our broken phones and though "Oh God", and after the police started beating me. They were beating me with their hands, pushing me, and telling me: "Go, go, go!"... I told the police not to beat my brother because he was 16 years old. But they did not understand and were beating him too. They started hitting my little brother who is 16 years old, without asking anything. And after, they opened the cables of their sticks and hit my little brother. They kept saying to me: "Picko matre, fuck, fuck you, picko matre!". They also took my leg orthosis and after they crashed it with their boots. This was the second time they [Croatian police] broke my leg orthosis.

The interviewee further explained that the police was also physically attacking his friend with a plastic baton that had metal inside. When the police attacked his friend, hitting him with the baton on his leg, his friend sustained a significant flesh wound. After the violent incident and push-back to Bosnia, the men walked together to the makeshift camp in Velika Kladuša. The interviewee's friend left to Sarajevo the following day.

broken leg orthosis caused by the physical attack by the police, crashing it with their boots

"THE VICTIM WAS ASSAULTED HEAVILY TO THE KNEE WHICH IS NOW ALMOST IMMOBILISED"

Date and time: August 25, 2018 02:00

Location: Between Maljevac and Velika Kladuša, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.19149450174305 , 15.777405897461222

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 17 , from: Afghanistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), pushing people to the ground, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, electric shock, threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: Croatian police in black commando uniforms, armed with military style rifles

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: Balkan Info Van

ORIGINAL REPORT

The interviewee was part of a group of 25 people, Afghans and Pakistanis, who were walking for three days in the Croatian countryside. The incident involved the interviewee and two other young males who were caught, just south of the border of Croatia-Slovenia. The larger group were spotted attempting to cross the stretch of river, protected by a border fence.

The police spotted the interviewee and his companions by the river and began to shout at them. The group were scared and fled into the nearby woodland (back into the Croatian interior). It was dark and hard to see anything in the forest. The group became dispersed and consequently the interviewee and two other young males were caught.

They saw a police officer in the trees pointing a gun at them, which the victim described as a military style rifle. The officer was dressed in black commando uniform and shouted at them to "stop". They complied with the order and froze, waiting for the police to arrive to their position. There were two officers present during this encounter, the first being joined by a border officer dressed in blue who handcuffed the three men and pushed them out of the woods.

By the road they found more cars, presumably used by the officers who were in pursuit of the other 22 men who fled from the scene. There were four smaller jeep-type vehicles and one large van. The interviewee and his companions were put into the back of the van, with no windows or ventilation.

It was dark inside, and they couldn't breathe properly. He described how the driver veered from side to side, even though the road was straight, just to induce car sickness and nausea. The van delivered the victim and the other two young men to a border area they knew to be on the outskirts of Maljevac. He identified 6/7 male police officers waiting for them (one in the distinctive blue of the border police). The victim describes how it was hard to tell because they were brought from

the van one-by-one. The police, dressed in black commando uniform, beat them individually with electronically charged batons.

The victim was assaulted heavily to the knee which is now almost immobilised. He was also struck across the back of the head and pushed to the floor. The beating lasted for approximately 20 minutes, during which the police forced them to empty their pockets and stole all three of the men's phones, power bank's and even their energy drinks.

The three addressed the police in English, but the officers only replied telling them to "shut up", and referred to them as "pičku materi". Throughout the attack, they were handcuffed and incapacitated.

The officers did not take their names, fingerprints, or give them any documents to sign. But as a final indignity, the policeman made the three men clean rubbish from the back of the van. They shouted at them and pushed them towards the rear of the van and forced them to collect the accumulated garbage that had been sat in the back of the vehicle, including food packaging, empty water bottles and random trash. The three men asked for something to eat and some water, but the officers denied them refreshment and continued to force them to clean, even though their hands were bound.

Eventually they were released, but only to allow the officers to chase them towards Bosnian territory. This occurred 2 kilometres from the main official border crossing by road in to V. Kladusa.

The officers who caught the three men in the Croatian/Slovenian border area were dressed in black commando uniforms. They were armed with military style rifles, and drove jeeps (along with one van for transporting the victims). At the border the perpetrators were equipped with electronic batons which they used to beat the victims. One border police officer was also witness to the incident.

The right knee of the interviewee was bruised and suffered ligament damage from the impact of the blows. He attended the MSF clinic in V. Kladusa in order to have it bandaged. The interviewee remained in considerable pain, even with the pain relief offered to him by the doctors.

"EACH PERSON WAS EXPOSED TO BATON STRIKES AND KICKS FROM TEN OFFICERS"

Date and time: August 27, 2018 02:00

Location: 5km south of Sturlic, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.0299375 , 15.758812499999976

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 35 person(s), age: 16-37 , from: Pakistan, Nepal

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, threatening with guns, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 2 police officers dressed in blue uniforms, 1 police car, later 10 croatian police officers in black commando uniforms, 2 police vans

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: Balkan Info Van

ORIGINAL REPORT

On August 27th. 2018, a group of 31 men and four minors, were walking into the Croatian interior from the border near Sturlic. After three days of walking the 31 adult males and four minors were following the dense woodland on the side of freeway no 1. It was approximately 02:00 am and the road was very dark, so the group were unaware that they have been observed, until two shouting police officers approached them. The officers were dressed in blue uniforms and pointed guns and torchlights at the group.

The 35 members of the group were ordered to approach the roadside where they found an unmarked police car. There the police shouted at them to sit down. They then waited approximately for an hour, guarded by the two officers, until two combi vans arrived.

In the vehicles were ten Croatian police officers dressed in black commando uniforms. They came out and after discussing with the two initial officers, the police began to systematically search the men and remove their belongings.

Once this had been carried out, the victims were loaded into the two combis and were driven south down freeway no. 1. The journey took approximately two hours. At this time the men and children were sick from the lack of ventilation and the cramped conditions in the back of the combi.

The journey ended as they were delivered to an unknown border location. The two vans stopped and the victims were held inside until officers opened the back doors. At the rural site, unknown to the group, the 10 police officers dressed in black were waiting. The sun was coming up and the interviewees estimated it to be around 05:30 am.

The police officers beckoned them out one-by-one and proceeded to beat them heavily with regular batons. At one time,

each person was exposed to baton strikes and kicks from ten officers. The group sustained injuries to their torso and head, as well as across their forearms as they tried to protect themselves.

The interviewee was also manhandled by the officers and shot at from close range with a pistol loaded with rubber bullets. The victim was shot in the side of the head, causing abrasion and swelling to his right ear and temple. He further suffered severe bruising to his left midriff, caused by impact from the police batons which created contusions on his upper torso.

As each man was beaten individually, the attack lasted 30 minutes. After this they were shouted at by the officers to walk back to Bosnia. None of their possessions were returned, apart from their broken phones. The group crossed the border and walked for an hour back to Sturlic where locals helped them with a bus fare back to Velika Kladusa.

Because of the group size it is difficult to account for all the injuries sustained during this attack, however it can be said that most suffered temporary bruising and impact injuries from the assault with police batons.

The interviewee received medical treatment for his gunshot wound. The rubber bullet fired at the side of his head caused severe bruising, and impaired the victims hearing. He was administered restorative medicative cream for this and the bruising to his intercostal muscles (left ribcage). The doctors recommended him to rest for 15 days and lie only on his back. At the time of the interview the victim still could not sleep because of the pain, neither could he lie on his side. See medical report pictured below.

"THE POLICE OFFICERS WERE ACTING AGGRESSIVELY, AND POINTED GUNS AGAINST THE FATHER OF THE FAMILY."

Date and time: August 30, 2018 23:00

Location: Near Velika Kladuša, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.21749534471175 , 15.72892478613278

Push-back from: Bosnia

Push-back to: Croatia

Demographics: 13 person(s), age: unknown , from: unknown

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: threatening with guns, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: Four Croatian police officers, wearing blue shirts and black vests, in unmarked police car.

Taken to a police station?: yes

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

On August 30th. 2018, a family of three and ten men walked from Velika Kladuša (Bosnia and Herzegovina), crossed the border to Croatia, and walked further into the Croatian inner land where they were supposed to be picked up by a taxi. After two days of walking in Croatia, at around 11 pm, the whole group was detected by four Croatian police officers wearing blue shirts and black vests, who were sitting in a civil car (unmarked police car). When the police approached the group, the mother of the family explains that she started crying and begging the police to let them go, but the police did not listen.

All interviewees explains that the police officers were acting aggressively towards them, pointed guns against them, and attacked the father of the family while his wife and two year old daughter were standing next to him. Afterwards the police conducted body searches and robbed them of their belongings:

When they [police] saw us, they put out their guns and pointed them against Aziz. I don't know why. After the police attacked Aziz, pushing him. ... They searched us maybe ten times. They took off our clothes, the searched through our bags, took mobile, power bank, sim cards, everything. They stole our phones, 12 phones in total, power banks, and headphones .

The police did not take off my clothes for some reason, they respected that I was a woman. But they [police] searched me as well, touching me and stole my two power banks. From some people they [police] took 500 euros from other 200 euros maybe 15, different for different persons .

The mother of the family further explained that her daughter was cold, thirsty, and hungry, so she asked the police for water and food. But the police did not care that they had a baby with them and refused to provide water and food. Afterwards, the police told the family to walk from the forest back to Bosnia, while they wanted to take all single men to a police station. The father of the family asked the police if they could transport him, his wife and his small daughter

back to the Bosnian border because it was dark, night and the family did not know how to walk back without a phone and GPS navigation. But the police rejected his request and left the family in the forest, where the family stayed overnight and in the early morning, they walked back to the makeshift camp in Velika Kladuša (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

All single men were taken by a van to the police station. The interviewee, from the group of men, did not know the location of the police station because the car had dark windows, so he could not follow the direction of their journey. The interviewee states that the journey to the station took over an hour. The men arrived at the police station at around midnight. According to Sajid, the police kept questioning the men for three hours, repeating the same questions with the aim to identify a smuggler within the group:

We stayed the whole night in the police station. Maybe until 3 am, they kept asking us: "Who are you? Why are you coming here? All the time, again and again. Just asked, answer, asked, answer. They were trying to find the leader, the smuggler.

The single men were all deported by a police van to Starlik the following day early in the morning, from there they walked back to Velika Kladuša.

At the end of the interview, the mother of the family explained that they decided to hire a smuggler as there was no legal and safe transit to Europe for the family. The interviewee further explained that without a smuggler's car transport, it would take them two weeks of walking in the forest with their baby. Such a walk would be difficult and risky for the whole family. For this reason, they became reliant on the smuggling networks, who have financially exploited them multiple times.

Walking in the forrest with baby is very difficult. It is very cold in the night. We do not have enough food. In the forrest, we eat mainly biscuits and drink the water from a river. For this reason, my daughter's stomach is very bad, and she kept vomiting the last time in the forrest. We cannot just walk the whole way so that is why we must hire a smuggler. But the last two times he did not show up and we were stuck in the forrest for days. It is always the same – we clean ourselves, have a rest, border crossing, and back, we clean ourselves, have a rest, border crossing and back, and again and again. I am very tired of this .

The father of the family was asked if he had any physical injuries caused by the police attack, he responded:

I am [physically] good but mentally not good. My mind is not good. I am very stressed. I did not sleep the whole night.

"[...] THE OFFICER AIMED A CANISTER OF PEPPER SPRAY INTO THE BACK OF THE VAN, CAUSING THE INDIVIDUALS TO CHOKE AND CRY"

Date and time: September 12, 2018 22:50

Location: near to Zagreb, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.7939494614755 , 15.980545608984357

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 10 person(s), age: 19-51 , from: Pakistan

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pepper spray, threatening with guns, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, lack of oxygen in van's backspace

Police involved: Croatian officers, one officer was dressed in a blue uniform, one estate vehicle and two police vans. Shortly after 10 officers, all dressed in blue Croatian uniforms.

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Rigardu

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of ten, including one elderly male, had been traveling by foot for several days through the Croatian interior. At some woodland s near the southern suburbs of Zagreb , the y were detected by the authorities . A flashlight pointed at them through the trees. Moments later , a man began to shout at them to stop. This was followed by two loud gunshots as a handgun wa s fired just over their heads. The group sat down and waited for the officer s to reach their position . One officer was dressed in a blue uniform and continued to point the gun at them , asking :

"What are you doing here?"

The way he asked this made some individuals scared that he might shoot at them again. The respondent described how they treat them *"like animals"* and that the ten of them repeated telling the officers:

"We don't want to hurt anybody."

The officer ignored them and ten more officers arrived on the scene within 20 minutes. They came with one estate vehicle and two police vans. They were all dressed in blue Croatian uniforms and searched the individuals and took their phones, money and power banks. The group was not taken to the station but loaded into the back of the van. It was dark and the officer pushed him towards the back doors of the van, shouting:

"Get in!"

The individual replied:

“Sir the back doors are locked, I can’t get in. What are you doing with me?”

In response, the officer pushed the individual stronger against the back doors and kicked him strongly in the ankle. After this the doors were opened and all ten of them had to take a seat in the back. The journey took around two hours, but after already 30 minutes the ten of them were feeling sick from the lack of space and oxygen. One man knocked on the grill that connects the drivers cabin. The respondent tried to get their attention of the officers to get some fresh air for the other individuals who were vomiting. After a few minutes, the van stopped, drawing up onto a slope at the side of the road. Then, the individuals heard the passenger door being opened and after the back doors were opened although they didn’t arrive at the border yet. Instead of making them get off the van, the officer aimed a canister of pepper spray into the back of the van, causing the individuals to choke and cry. The skin of the individual sitting next to the door was burnt from the intensity of the assault. The doors were slammed again, and they continued driving towards the Bosnian border.

When they stopped again, they found themselves at a rural spot near the Glina river. The ten officers in blue and another four officers in black uniforms made a circle around the back of the van. When the doors were opened, each individual was summoned out one by one. On the ground in the middle of the circle the officers threw a plastic bag full of broken phones. As the individuals got off the back of the van, the officers asked them individually to find their own phone amongst the others in the bag.

As soon as they bent to look into the bag, the circle was closed around them and the officers beat them on the heads with black batons. They were also kicked as they tried to find their balance. Even those who didn’t attempt to bend down to find their phone were beaten badly. When asked if the group had tried to claim asylum the respondent described what would happen if you made any questions about asylum:

“He (Croatian officer) starts to box you... If anyone talks, they start to beat.”

After 15 minutes, the group of ten was told by the officers to go, and they pushed them towards the river and across it to Bosnian territory.

"LAY DOWN OR I SHOOT!"

Date and time: September 18, 2018 01:00

Location: Stara Cerkev, Slovenia

Coordinates: 45.712329970805875 , 14.906216060098814

Push-back from: Slovenia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 26 person(s), age: 17-60 , from: Pakistan, Iran, India

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, threatening with guns, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings

Police involved: 3 Slovenian officers with a van. Croatian officers dressed in sky blue border uniforms

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, fingerprints taken, personal information taken, papers signed, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Rigardu

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group was caught on September 16, 2018, by the authorities in Slovenia, around 10 km far from the Croatian border.

The 13 individuals, including to minors and one elderly person, were walking through the forest . After several days of traveling , they were crossing a stretch of gravel parking and a Slovenian officer approached them . As it was dark, on the evening of September 16 , 2018, the group could n't see the officer very well. The respondent could anyway hear him shouting and aggressively in E nglish :

"Lay down or I shoot!"

The group complied and waited on the ground as the officer circled them, continuing to aim his pistol at them. Then, the officer called for backup and after some minutes a van arrived with two more officers. When the group was searched, all their belongings were taken away. Then, they had to enter the police van and were driven to a nearby police station. There, the Slovenian officers forced them to sign deportation documents which were all written in Slovenian. The individuals didn't have access to a translator and when they asked for asylum in Slovenia the officers simply ignored them.

Two minors were present, but the police coerced them into sign as adults. The individuals also gave their fingerprints and personal details. Around 6,5 hours later, they were brought with a van to the Croatian border. The Slovenian officers drove them until a concourse area of a large road crossing, between Slovenia and Croatia. There, the Croatian officers were already waiting for the men. As they arrived, they had to stay at makeshift cells made out of containers. They asked again for asylum in Croatia, but the Croatian officer simply ignored the request as well. They were dressed in sky blue border uniforms and processed the individuals by taking their

names and ages. Again when the two minors stated that they were 17, they were forced to sign papers for adults while the officers called them “ *motherfuckers* “.

They were locked in a cell all together for around ten hours. The group passed the night without food and water and at some point were forced to pay the officers to buy them food. They had to drink water from the toilet in the cell. After the confinement the 14 men were loaded into one Croatian van were and driven for 4,5 hours. They got all sick from the drive, due to the heat inside the backspace, the lack of oxygen and the cramped space.

Once the van stopped, the group was released at a rural border spot next to a river. It was past midnight on September 18 as the capture and push back had altogether taken three days. The individuals were frightened, tired and sick. The doors of the van were opened, and they faced four officers waiting for them at the border, wearing blue Croatian uniforms and black balaclavas.

“You could just see their eyes.”

The officers beckoned them out one by one and started to beat them. Two more officers joined from the side of the car. During the beating one officer fired his gun into the air just above the individual’s heads. Once the individuals were laying on the ground, the six officers circled them and beat them heavily with their batons. One Iranian man was summoned from the van at the start of the violence. The officers gave him a plastic bag full of broken phones and as soon as he held out his hands to take it, they began to strike him heavily and shouted at him. The minors were also beaten alongside the adults and one of the 17-year-old boys lost his shoe during the assault. None of their belongings, beside the broken phones were returned. The respondent had his medical certificates, personal documents and family contacts stolen. He had a very high level of spoken English and was therefore able to request for the items back. When the officers heard him, they refused to return his belongings, but he described how they stopped hitting him because:

“If they know someone can speak English, they don’t beat that person because they [Croatian officers] can pass the information [about border violence].”

"HE HIT HIM SO STRONG, THAT HE FELL ON THE GROUND"

Date and time: September 29, 2018 01:00

Location: forest close to Ogulin, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.323436, 15.264074

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 7 person(s), age: 20-26, from: Iraq, Morocco

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), insulting, threatening with guns, gunshots, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 8 Croatian officers in black clothes

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of eight left Velika Kladuša (BIH), crossed the border to Croatia and continued walking north through the country. The third night, when they were walking through a Croatian forest, around midnight, they could hear a flying drone above their heads. Soon after, they could see the authorities running behind them and shouting at them to stop. When the officers caught them, they pointed flashlights into their faces and shouted at them in Croatian, so none of the eight understood what was going on.

One officer then grabbed the respondent on his shoulder and started hitting him with a baton, first on his back and after on his head and face. He hit him so strong, that he fell on the ground (see photo). The four officers were also beating the other individuals with batons on their heads and backs. The respondent's friend tried to speak to the officer and ask for asylum, but every time anyone tried to say something, the officers gave him a hit with a baton, so the men stopped speaking. Then, the officers shouted at them to enter their cars and transported them directly to the Bosnian border, around 20 km away from the official border check-point in Velika Kladuša (BIH).

As the van's backspace was windowless, the group of eight couldn't tell where the exact location of the push-back was. When they arrived at the Bosnian border, the officers told them to get off the car. Then, they frisked their bodies, searching for their phones and money. They took all their seven phones and their money, €2000 in total.

In the end, the officers started shouting at the seven individuals to run back to Bosnia.

The group of seven then walked back to Velika Kladuša (BIH) despite the fact that the respondent was injured from the attack and the wounds on his head and face were bleeding. The next day, No Name Kitchen's nurse treated his injured face and head.

"[...] I WAS VERY SCARED. THE TOLD US: 'IF ANYONE RUNS FROM HERE, WE WILL SHOOT HIM.'"

Date and time: October 3, 2018 11:00

Location: Kestenovac, Croatia, a forest in the inner Croatian land

Coordinates: 45.21967740779098 , 15.647671664525774

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 34 person(s), age: 21, 16, 17, others under 40 years old , from: Afghanistan, Bangladesh

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, insulting, threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: Croatian officers, caught and robbed by 6 officers (in civil clothes and with civil car, using handguns), physically attacked and deported by 6 officers (two drivers, two in blue uniforms and two in black clothes and with masks, with a white police van, using batons and kicking)

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of 34 walked from Velika Kladusa (BIH) to Croatia. They didn't have GPS, but were led by two young boys, whom the respondent referred to as "leaders" and whom the group had paid for showing them the way to Italy. They intended to apply for asylum in Italy.

On the second day of walking, on October 3, 2018, around 11 am, the group was caught by six men in a civil car, claiming to be Croatian officers. Some individuals tried to escape and to hide themselves between the bushes, but the officers pulled out their guns and started shouting that everyone had to come out of the bushes because they would otherwise shoot them. Since everybody got scared, they all came out of their hiding places. The officers were acting aggressively towards the group and pointing their guns against the men, threatening them.

"I was really scared as when the police caught us, they pointed their guns against me, and told me not to move. I was very scared. The told us: 'If anyone runs from here, we will shoot him.' . "

Afterwards, the officers told everyone to sit down in a line, and they had to hand out all their belongings. They took the respondent's bag with his phone inside and €165.

"All of us had to sit down in the line, and the policemen told us to put our bags in front of us. After, they told us to put all our stuff out of our bags, one by one. All the people had to give everything they had to the police: mobile phones, money, wallets. They [the police officers] took everything we had. They also checked our bodies, and if they did not find anything, they told us to go inside the car. And, they took all of our bags, mobiles, power banks."

Following check-up, this group of officers in civil clothes called another six officers, two drivers, two in blue uniforms and two in black clothes, who arrived at the place with a white police van. Then, this new officer group transported them to the Bosnian border. On the way, they stopped the car two times to pick up more people on the move. After 1,5 hours, they arrived at the border at an abandoned road at around 3 pm. The respondent asked whether he could apply for asylum in Croatia, but didn't get any response.

At the border, the officers pushed back all people on the move, one by one, to Bosnia and physically attacked them:

"The police told one of the men to come out of the car, and they closed the door. We could hear how they were hitting him so much. And after, they said the next one to come out, all of us one by one. There was one wall by the road, and there was standing two policemen with sticks in front of it, and after there was another wall, where there was other two policemen standing in front of it, also with sticks. So, two policemen were hitting us before that wall and when we crossed this wall, another two policemen, who had masks, were again hitting us. We could see only their eyes. They hit all people, and after when we were walking down, they were kicking us. And when we were walking away from Bosnia, they ran and hit us from the back to make us go faster."

The individuals walked down the hill where they were pushed back by the officers, and there they found the first individual of their group who had been attacked. He had some of their bags, as the officers gave them to him after the attack, but when they opened them, they were either empty or contained broken phones, cut cable chargers and empty wallets:

"I had a little bit of money before, but now I don't have any. They also broke our phone chargers, took my phone and my official registration paper in Bosnia. After [the incident], we walked back and stopped a driver whom we paid five euros each for taking us back here [Velika Kladusa]."

The respondent's friend had a fractured hand due to the baton strikes and his arm in plaster. A 36-year-old individual had a fractured toe and got pain in a leg muscle, so that he walked with support of a walking stick (see photos and MSF medical document). Others of the group had scratches around their body and pain caused by the violent attack. .

07/10/2018

"[...] THERE IS NO ASYLUM HERE. YOU AREN'T A CATHOLIC, YOU'RE A MUSLIM. GO BACK TO YOUR COUNTRY"

Date and time: October 7, 2018 00:00

Location: near Sušak, Sovenien

Coordinates: 45.4879586 , 14.327254000000039

Push-back from: Slovenia

Push-back to: Croatia, Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: unknown , from: Morocco

Minors involved? Unknown

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, lack of oxygen in van's backspace, breathing problems

Police involved: Two Slovenian officers, one woman and one man, wearing police uniforms

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, papers signed

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of three was walking from Velika Kladuša (BIH) to Croatia, and further to Slovenia, where they wanted to apply for asylum in Ljubjana. The fifth day, when they were walking in a forest between the villages Susak (SVN) and Rupa (SVN), Slovenian officers, one woman and one man, wearing police uniforms detected them. They treated the three people on the move like criminals, giving them orders like:

" Sit! Stand! Move!"

The three individuals told the officers that they wanted to apply for asylum in Slovenia, but the police responded:

" You are a Muslim. Living in a good Country. There is no asylum here. You aren't a Catholic, you're a Muslim. Go back to your country. What are you doing here? You are not regular, this is the big problem here."

Then, all of them were transported with a car to the police station in Lisac – Susak (SVN), where they were detained for one day. At the polices station, they were provided a translator, an older man from Palestine, who refused to help them to access the asylum procedure:

" He [the translator] was just sitting there and did not speak. Just sit. Just asked us for our names and country and where from we crossed the border and what time. I asked him for asylum. He told me just "Silence". When I asked them to translate that I need asylum , and he told me: "No asylum here. No talk about this. No asylum in Slovenia, Go back to Bosnia."

The following day, before they were transported to Croatia, they got a paper to sing, which they didn't understand because it was written Slovenian. They were told by the officers to sign the paper anyway. Later they found out,

that the paper was declaring that they had to pay a fee €200 each for irregularly entering Slovenia:

“ They gave me all these papers, but not in English, Arabic or French. I did not understand. I asked the police man: Can I ask you, can you get me this paper in Arabic? He told me: ‘ You can’t. Just sign. ‘.”

The three of them were then transported to a police station close to the Croatian border, where they were detained for two days in a small room, similar to a cell, which was already crowded with other people on the move. They got only one food during the whole time of their detention.

After two days, they were handed over to the Croatian authorities, who transported them together with other seven men to the Bosnian border. They were driven only for a few hours to some location, where they were detained inside the car for ten hours.

All of them had problems to breath inside of the car because there was no ventilation, resulting in lack of oxygen. Around 2 am, the car started to move again, and they were driven to an unmarked forest location at the Bosnian border next to a river, around 10 km away from Velika Kladuša (BIH).

When they arrived at the border, they were told to get off the car and found some officers in black uniforms and balaclavas and equipped with batons and guns waiting for them. These officers first broke their phones and stole their money:

“ They were policemen with masks. They told us: ‘ Five persons come out. Who can speak English? ‘ My friend and me can speak English. I told him that I need my phone and my money. He gave me a plastic bag and said that this was my phone. I opened the plastic bag and found mine and the others’ phones broken. And no money. One man has lost 1300 Euro.“

Then, they attacked all of them with batons and kicks, while shouting at them to go back to Bosnia, and started shooting around with their guns:

“ They had masks. I don’t understand. They had guns and ta ta ta ta ta, for maybe just telling me to move. But where I could move? There was just a forest. They shot around me maybe twenty times. Maybe for making me move. But where I move? I did not see anything.”

“ They ware acting like animals. They his you, no respect. In the night, not able to see anything. But I am not a criminal, not a terrorist, just an immigrant. They twisted my finger.”

Afterwards, all of them slept outside and later walked back to the camp in Velika Kladuša. The individual who was robbed by the authorities was crying because he had no more money left.

"THERE WAS A BIG HILL, AND THEY PUSHED MY FRIEND FROM THAT HILL, SO HE WAS ROLLING DOWN FROM THAT HILL"

Date and time: October 8, 2018 00:00

Location: close to the village Lapovac in a forest, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.2262370833347 , 15.568851476690725

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 10 person(s), age: 18-35 , from: Palestine, Syria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), gunshots, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: 4 officers, wearing masks and black clothes

Taken to a police station?: unknown

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of ten young men walked from Velika Kladuša (BIH) to Croatia, from where they wanted to continue via Slovenia to Italy to seek asylum. The fourth day of their journey, around midnight, they were walking in a forest close to the village Lapovac (HRV). At that spot, they were caught by the Croatian authorities who were shouting at them to stop and started shooting in the air with guns:

"The police officers were shooting to the air when they saw us and were shouting: 'Sit down, sit down, sit down, sit down!', bum, bum [shooting]. They took our mobiles into the pockets: 'Give me your mobile!'. And power banks, they destroyed our power banks."

The officers frisked their bodies and questioned them about their nationalities, names, and afterwards checked their identification cards and passports. The officers took the Syrian passport of his friend and threw it away, so that he now doesn't have an ID anymore. Beside taking their phones and destroying their power banks, the officers also took around €300 from them, which they had in their pockets. They were further asking them for the names of their parents. After the short verbal investigation, all ten individuals were directly deported to the Bosnian border with a van.

The 30-minute drive was very fast and all of them were falling from one side to another in the backspace. At the border, the officers told the group to get off the van and physically attacked them while pushing them towards Bosnia:

"By the border, four police men were beating one person. And the police was shouting: 'Go Bosna!'. They took us one by one. They closed the door of a car, and after this beating one. After, they opened the door, they took another person and started to beat him up. There was a big hill, and they pushed my friend from that hill, so he

was rolling down from that hill... They kept shouting: 'Go, go, go Bosna!'. They hit one with a baton on his head [photo]. I have now problems with my head."

At the end of the interview, the respondent explained that he was trying to reach Europe to find a place where he can claim asylum, live in peace and study, which was impossible in his homeland Palestine:

"All of us have big problems in life. In Syria is war. In Palestine, my two brothers were shot in Gaza by the Israeli army. I have one brother, twins, who also got shot a bullet into his knee, but he survived."

The respondent a bump on his forehead and bruises on his knee caused by the attack with a baton (photo). His friend had scratches on his right part of the face (from his forehead till his chin) caused by the officers pushing him, which made him fall down a steep slope into some bushes. Others had bruises and pain in their back and legs as a result of the kicks, punches and batons from the authorities.

"I WAS SCARED WHEN I WAS GOING BACK. THEY KEPT KICKING ME WITH LEGS AND PUSHED ME INTO THE JUNGLE"

Date and time: October 9, 2018 19:00

Location: Brezovac, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.04443803152618 , 15.629788879700868

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 4 person(s), age: 30-40 , from: Iran, Tunisia

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 3 Croatian officers, one of them female, one police van

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of four men walked from Bihac (BIH) to Croatia where they wanted to find a safe place where they could apply for asylum and find work. In their home country Iran this had not been possible due to the totalitarian government. After a few days of walking, the authorities detected them and started shooting around them with their guns.

"I can hear six bullets when the police shoot."

All three of them stopped immediately and were scared of the officers who began verbally and physically attacking them. They questioned them about their intentions in Croatia, but when they tried to explain their situation, they didn't let them say anything and attacked them at every occasion:

"When I saw the police, they asked us what we were doing here. I said that I wanted safe country, save my life. And he did not listen to me, only kick. He did not let me to speak, they were very bad, beating us by baton, kicking my friend, many kicks, many kicks, only kicking us, no speaking to us. One person was very, very, very bad and he kept calling us mother fuckers. He was very rude. "

Then, one officer asked them where they were from and afterwards told them to enter the police van. The lights of the windowless backspace were turned off, so the four of them were sitting in total darkness not knowing where they were going of what would happen next. The car was driving very fast and stopped once to pick up one other Tunisian male. After 1,5 hours, the driver stopped in a remote area close to the official border check point in Maljevac (HRV), close to Velika Kladuša (BIH). The officer, a woman, opened the door of the car and started shouting at the individuals to get off.

“One police officer was very bad, it was she, woman who kept shouting: ‘ Go, go, go! ‘ . It was very cold, and I did not have warm clothes. They were shouting at us: ‘ Go, only go! ‘ . It was in a forest, it was foggy, very cold, it was very bad.”

After they got off the van, the officers searched through their bags and stole everything they had inside, including their money, taking from the respondent around €60. Further they took all three phones and destroyed them by smashing them with their boots. Afterwards they started again to attack them with batons, kicks while shouting at them to go back to Bosnia.

“I was scared when I was going back. They kept kicking me with legs and pushed me into the jungle [forest]. I fell and scratched my face and my body. My friend was attacked by a baton. My friend’s legs hurt, and he has a headache. This one [showing me a bruise on his belly] is from a kick and push .”

After the push-back, all four of them walked back to the makeshift camp in Velika Kladuša.

"HE USED SEVERE FORCE, HITTING THEM IN THE FACE, ON THE TORSO, ARMS AND LEGS"

Date and time: October 15, 2018 12:30

Location: Near Pašin Potok, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.170309 , 15.766164

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 15 person(s), age: unknown , from: Iran

Minors involved? Unknown

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), insulting, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: The initial captors were two Croatian officers dressed in blue who participated in the theft of belongings and loaded the men into the cramped conditions of the estate car. The other set of perpetrators were 6-7 officers, all dressed in blue uniforms who enacted the violent pushback. They were all male, apart from one woman. The primary offending officer using a gun to threaten the group wore a face mask to disguise his identity

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Balkan Info Van

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of 15 had been walking through the forested hills of Croatian for four days, when they were apprehended by the Croatian authorities.

The authorities detected them near the roadside of the road M1, approximately 30 km north of the town of Slunj (HRV). They had been walking through a forest when they were observed at a short distance by two Croatian officers dressed in blue uniforms. They were ordered to stop and sit down. The group complied and waited while the officers checked their belongings and frisked them. The officers told them that they would be treated fairly if they co-operated now. When they took their phones, they told them:

"If you give your cell phone now you will get it back at border."

Afterwards, they were led by the two officers to the road where a police car was parked. Shortly after, a van arrived, and they were immediately loaded into its backspace. The van was cramped and, they drove in this condition for over an hour.

When the van stopped, they found themselves in a semi-rural, hilly farmland area with some small houses in the distance. Six or seven more officers were waiting for them there, all dressed in blue, one of them was female. One of the male ones stood closest to the back of the van, wearing a balaclava and carrying a large gun at a shoulder harness.

“He had big, big gun. Look like Kalashnikov.”

As the 15 individuals began to exit the van, the officer fired three rounds with his gun into the air, just over their heads.

He then withdrew a black baton from the holster on his waist and began to attack every individual during exiting the vehicle. He used severe force, hitting them in the face, on the torso, arms and legs. One individual was struck heavily across the eye socket and nose, causing bruising and bleeding. The other officers stood back and laughed as the main perpetrator with the balaclava attacked them.

“The police sit more back and laugh.”

Afterwards, one of the other officers approached the group and gave them back some of their now destroyed phones.

“If you (people on the move) be good, we police be good with you, but they lie to us, they hit us and stole our phones.”

The group fled back to Bosnia to escape further violence, because once again the officer with the baton began to threaten, and even chased them. It was just after midday when they walked for an hour until they arrived back at the camp in Velika Kladuša (BIH).

One of the group sought medical treatment from the MSF field clinic for severe contusions and internal bleeding, a blood blister, below the right eye socket (see document and medication). The other individuals also suffered superficial injuries on arms and legs.

"THEY WERE SYSTEMATICALLY HIT WITH PLASTIC BATONS ALTHOUGH THEY HAD SURRENDERED AND WERE NOT ARGUING. SOME OF THE REFUGEES WERE APOLOGIZING TO THE POLICE BUT THE BEATING CONTINUED."

Date and time: October 15, 2018 19:00

Location: Rudopolje, Croatia

Coordinates: 44.8605714081067 , 15.486766116683611

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 16 person(s), age: 22 - 45, two children under the age of 10 , from: unknown

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), pushing people to the ground, gunshots, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 20 border officers, 5 police vans, 2 police dogs

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: BASIS

ORIGINAL REPORT

The authorities stopped the group of 16, including two minors, by firing gunshots in the air. The officers then caught them and the one family with younger children who was present, was forced to enter a police van. All the others were ordered to sit down and to put their hands in the air. Then, they were systematically hit with plastic batons although they had surrendered and were not arguing with the authorities. Some of them even apologized to the officers, but the beating continued. They were further forced to hand over all their bags and the officers took their power banks and batteries out and ordered them to also hand over their phones and money, around €100 -200 each. When someone hesitated, the officers threatened them to beat them even more. Accordingly, they if someone didn't hand over his phone, they immediately searched him again and beat him once they found his phone.

They were then pushed into the vans and taken to different places at the Bosnian border.

The van transporting the respondent stopped at an open area and the people on the move were told to exit the van one by one. Six officers were waiting outside the van. As the respondent bent over to pick up his bag, he was hit on head and back with a plastic baton. The same happened to everyone leaving the van.

Afterwards they proceeded to push each individual down a steep hillside towards a river.

18/10/2018

"THE POLICE WANTED TO TAKE IT [MONEY], BUT ONE PERSON [POLICE OFFICER] WAS VERY GOOD AND GAVE ME THE MONEY BACK"

Date and time: October 18, 2018 16:00

Location: Pašín Potok, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.18681740992225 , 15.780770027551625

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 9 person(s), age: 30-40 , from: Iran, Morocco

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, reckless driving, lack of oxygen in the van's windowless backspace

Police involved: 6 officers, aged around 40, driving one big van and two normal-sized cars

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The respondent and his two friends traveled by foot from Velika Kladuša (BIH) to Croatia. After they crossed the border to Croatia, they walked for 30 km in about six hours. At some point, while they crossed a forest, they were detected by six Croatian officers in dark blue uniforms.

"We were in the jungle and could hear police coming. They shoot three, four times. When they caught me, they broke my phone and three power banks ."

When the officers arrived, they broke the respondent's phone and the three power banks of the group. They then asked the three of them about their nationality but didn't ask any further questions. The respondent tried to explain to the officers that he wanted to stay in Croatia and seek asylum, but they refused his request without any formal investigation of his case and access to the asylum procedure:

"I said to them [police] that I wanted to stay [in Croatia]. They said: "No, no, no. It does have space for you, go back. I don't have camp here, here it is full, it is full", this is what police said to me."

Then all of them were taken with a police van straight to the Bosnian border which took around one hour. In the van, they met six other male people on the move who had been caught previously. The journey to the border was difficult for them because the van did not have any windows and was a lacking oxygen:

"The oxygen was not good, the person from Morocco was not feeling really well. The car was driving very fast ."

The van stopped in a remote area close to the official border check point in Maljevac (HRV), next to a steep hill

and a small river. When they arrived, the police officers took all personal belongings, except the bags themselves, from them and destroyed them. While some officers were taking their belongings, one officer refused to participate and decided to return them their money that his colleagues wanted to steal:

“At the border, they stole two telephones. I had 1500 Euros. The police wanted to take it, but one person [police officer] was very good and gave me the money back .”

Afterwards, they had to get off the van one by one. Outside, some officers were waiting for them and once they individually exited the car, they all started physically attacking them with batons, shouting at them to go back to Bosnia.

“Three times or four times, they hit me by baton, into my head and they also hit my friend. Five or six times beat me under my back and legs. They could not beat me in the upper part of back because I had my bag on. And after, they pushed me into the river. After, I run away, actually it was hard night, hard night .”

This incident was just another episode of violence in the respondent's life. He had already attempted to seek asylum in the EU four times and every time was ending with a similar violent push-back from the Croatian authorities back to Bosnia. He also was financially exploited by human smugglers and previously had decided to pay €2300 for a human smuggler to be transported from Bosnia to Italy, but was caught by the police in Slovenia, from where he was deported to Croatia, followed by a violent push-back to Bosnia. Finally, he lost the contact of his smuggler and had spent his money in vain.

"THEY TOOK THEIR GUN AND PLACED IT TO MY HEAD. THEY WERE ASKING ME: 'WHERE ARE YOUR FRIENDS?'"

Date and time: October 23, 2018 05:00

Location: Near Maljevac, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.2010151 , 15.785225800000034

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 10 person(s), age: 16-30 , from: Pakistan, Palestine, Syria, Iraq

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, lack of oxygen in the van's windowless backspace

Police involved: First threatened with guns by three Croatian officers in blue uniforms. The attack at the border between Croatia and Bosnia was executed by two Croatian officers wearing black clothes and masks

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?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The respondent walked alone from Velika Kladuša (BIH) to Croatia. He intended to continue to Slovenia and then to Italy, where he wanted to seek asylum. While he was walking in Croatia, close to the Slovenian border, he got detected by three Croatian officers. They stopped him, started frisking his body and threatening him with guns:

" They had guns. They took their gun and placed it to my head. They were asking me: "Where are your friends?", while they were putting the gun into my head and telling me to sit down. They asked me: "You need cigarette?" and took my cigarettes and threw them away."

Afterwards, he was transported to a police station in Rijeka (HRV). He went through a short investigation procedure there, being questioned about his nationality and his intentions of crossing from Croatia to Slovenia. At the end, they took a photo of him and made him fill out a document with his identifying features such as name, country of origin, and age. The respondent mentioned that the Croatian officers at the police station treated him with respect at the police station and provided him with food and water.

After several hours he was transported from to Bosnia together with other people on the move, all male. On the way, the van stopped once, picking up more people on the move. One of the individuals was 16-years-old. The journey was difficult for the group of now 10 as they lacked oxygen inside the van's backspace:

" It was a closed car where there was no air, just a little bit air. So, we had a problem to breath."

When they arrived at the border Bosnian border, the officers order them to get off the van in groups of four. Then,

they stole their money, phones and power banks while searching their bodies. When they found a good phone, they put it into their pockets, while damaging the old phones with batons. Then, the ten of them were physically attacked by two officers wearing black uniforms and balaclavas, waiting outside of the van.

“ They were beating us at the border close to Velika Kladuša ... They took us four by four out of the car and were beating us ... They finished with 2 people, me and my friend were the last. We were running after. They were shouting at us to move and run. I tried to ask them to give me back my money and phone, but they said to me no question and kept beating me ... There was a hill and they pushed me from that hill. One guy was 16 years old, he told them that. Another man was 22 years old, but both got beaten by the police. They did not care if you were young, or child, or old, no problem, they [Croatian police] beat everyone.”

The respondent then walked back with the other nine to the makeshift camp in Velika Kladuša (BIH). He had pain in his back, legs, hands and a headache. One of his friends, who was 16-years-old, had pain all over his body.

"HE FELL [...], HE WAS CRYING VERY MUCH. HE WAS CRYING VERY MUCH BUT THEY DID NOT LET HIM GO"

Date and time: October 24, 2018 04:00

Location: Near Maljevac, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.2010151 , 15.785225800000034

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 17-23 , from: Pakistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), gunshots, destruction of personal belongings

Police involved: Six men and two women, four of them wearing black uniforms and masks. The officers had one white van, in which the men were deported to the Bosnian border

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The respondent and his two friends, including one 17-year-old minor, traveled by foot from Velika Kladuša (BIH) to Croatia. They were on their way to Slovenia, where they wanted to apply for asylum. The second day at around 4 am, they were crossing the road A1, and were detected by a police helicopter. Following that, eight officers, six men and two women, arrived at the road in two cars, one small white police Skoda and one white van. Four of them were waiting inside of the car while the other four, wearing black uniforms and balaclavas, were talked to the three of them.

They only asked the three of them whether they had knives but did not ask them any other questions about their names, nationality, age, or why they were walking through the Croatian territory. After that, the officers frisked their bodies. They didn't find any money but took their phones and crashed them with batons in front of them. Then, all three were directly transported with the van to the Bosnian border, where they were attacked with batons and pushed back to Bosnia:

"When we came to the border, he [police officer] entered the van and beat three people inside of the van, and after also outside. And when we crossed [the border], there was even more punishment, three other people beating us. [...] They [police] had torches, and they were pointing into my eyes. They were on both sides and I was in the middle and I could not see from which side they were beating me. [...] My friend fell and injured his leg. He fell when four people were beating him, he was crying very much. He was crying very much but they did not let him go. [...] One who is 17 got seven or eight [hits with the] sticks, but he was running fast and he fell, and more people were beating him. He was saying that he was 17, but they did not leave him".

While the three of them were running away from the spot of their push back, the officers were shooting with a gun around them, shouting:

“ Go, go, go to Bosnia!”

After the attack, the three friends walked back to Velika Kladuša (BIH), where they temporarily stay under a plastic sheet tent in the makeshift camp. On the way back, a local Bosnian school bus driver stopped and offered them a free ride.

“ We were walking from the border five hours and after we saw a student van. The driver asked us to come inside of the van but no money. No problem, you sit. And the Bosnian driver took us. Bosnian people are very good, very helpful”.

"THERE WAS NO OXYGEN AND CAR WAS DRIVING FAST AND I WAS VOMITING"

Date and time: November 5, 2018 00:00

Location: Petrova Gora, Croatia, in a forest West of the town

Coordinates: 45.30166648136561 , 15.774703317475087

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 10 person(s), age: 21-56 , from: Iran, Morocco, Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving, no ventilation inside the van's windowless backspace

Police involved: Croatian officers, in black clothes, wearing black ski masks

Taken to a police station?: no

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The respondent traveled together with nine other men by foot from Velika Kladusa (BIH) to Croatia. They were walking through a Croatian forest, west of the town of Petrova Gora, at around midnight on November 5, 2018, when they were detected by five Croatian officers. They were dressed in black clothes , wore balaclavas. When they saw the group of ten, they started shouting at them to stop and shot their guns. The respondent didn't see if they were pointing at them or in the air when shooting.

"I don't see if they shoot air or us. I just scare."

The officers then called for backup and shortly after two vans arrived . As the respondent speaks basic English , he understood the officers asking him for his name and nationality. The officers then body searched all the group and found all their phones , as well as their money and power banks . They never returned any of these and destroyed the phones. The respondent articulated his wish to access the asylum procedure in Croatia:

" I need asylum in Croatia . "

He had hoped that he could access legal assistance in Croatia. But when he tried to speak out, the officers only told him to be silent.

They were then transported in one van for around one hour to the Bosnian border without being

taken to a police station or given access to legal assistance and asylum procedures.

” There was no oxygen and car was driving fast and I was vomiting .”

After arriving at the border around 1.30 am, about 15 km from Velika Kladusa (BIH), they were tired and feeling sick from the fast drive with lack of oxygen. One officer opened the door of the van and told the ten of them to exit one by one. Outside, they could see officers in black clothes and balaclavas waiting for them. Each of them, was then physically attacked by those while running back to Bosnia.

“A t the border, they were shouting at us: ‘Go, go, go, go!’ and beating us with batons. Open car and one by one, pa pa pa pa with baton. I fell and broke my leg.”

The respondent’s friends then helped him to walk back 15 km with his broken leg to Velika Kladuša (BIH). Also the respondent’s friend got injuries from the physical attack, having pain in his shoulder and legs.

"IN MY LIFE, I HAVE NEVER HEARD A VOICE SO MAD, THEY SCREAMED LIKE THIS"

Date and time: November 7, 2018 10:30

Location: 500 meters from the border, between the villages of Buhača (HRV) and Zagrad (BIH)

Coordinates: 45.18640928760524 , 15.779101010185173

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 16 person(s), age: 17, others unknown , from: Pakistan, Algeria

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), gunshots

Police involved: several Croatian officers with three cars, some of them using violence

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

On the evening of November 6, 2018, the respondent traveled along with a group of four from Velika Kladusa (BIH) towards the Croatian border with the intention to cross the country towards Slovenia and then continue to Italy. Along the way, they met another group of people on the move who were also intending to cross, so they followed that group for a while. At a certain point the groups split up, one headed to the left and the other to the right. At around 5 . 30 pm the following night, the respondent's group arrived at an area around 500 meters away from the Bosnian-Croatian border, between the villages of Buhača (HRV) and Zagrad (BIH), and hid itself in a forest on an elevated spot , offering a view of the border. There, they settled down to rest for around four hours. The respondent then saw a police car driving back and forth several times on the Croatian road at the border . Scared, the group remained sitting in silence for another hour . It was then 10 . 30 am on the following morning, November 7, as they still waited for the car to leave. However, soon another police car joined it. The group watched a female Croatian officer exiting the vehicle. Eventually, the latter of the cars left and came back a little later and the four of them could watch some people on the move exiting the back and being beaten by the officers present.

" They open the car, go out one by one. Just one and close the door, they beat him so much, after, leave him. And second, out, one by one, and close the door, not the whole group, one by one. Twelve people in the car. There is a third car that comes, four people from Algeria is inside. Same thing, one and close the car, beat, beat, beat, beat, so hard. And leave him."

They witnessed the officers beating those men primarily on their heads and on mouths . Afterwards, some officers began to shoot into the air to scare the people on the move and make them run away. The cries of the men being beaten stuck with the respondent.

“In my life, I have never heard a voice so mad, they screamed like this. In my life.”

After watching these beatings, the respondent's group waited for the authorities to leave before calling the injured men out to join them. Thereafter, they cleaned the men's wounds with water and provided the group with food:

“W e give them water, we give them food, someone w as bleeding a lot. W e gave him some medicine.”

From there, they all walked back to the relative safety of Velika Kladuša (BIH). The respondent later describes the terror he felt witnessing this incident, which he reflected on his own status as a person on the move pursuing asylum in Europe:

“I [felt] very scared. Too many police, and disappoint, and morale down, and we can't cross the border... It's too many police... and it's beating so much and make too many people bleeding. It's not simple beat. It's like some people had destroyed heads.”

Regardless, he reiterated his determination to keep trying:

“It is very important, I will try. If I can cross the border, I will do it. If I can't I will come back, and I will do it again – every day and every day.”

"THE OFFICERS ALSO HAD TIED TRIP WIRES BETWEEN THE TREES [...], INVISIBLE AT NIGHT"

Date and time: November 8, 2018 00:00

Location: close to motorway 1, about 25 km from Bosnian border into Croatian territory

Coordinates: 45.265451376361234 , 15.565504939782386

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 70 person(s), age: 15-45, seven minors , from: Afghanistan, Pakistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, insulting, gunshots, theft of personal belongings, transporting people in vans with no ventilation/ lack of oxygen

Police involved: Croatian officers, caught by several "special forces" officers" in light green military uniforms (with handguns), robbed, deported and beaten by 15 - 20 officers fully in black joined later with 6-7 more similarly dressed officers (using batons)

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: photos taken

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Balkan Info Van

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of around 70 males crossed the border from Bosnian territory to Croatia in the night of November 7 , 2018. They walked for an entire night and rested the following day in the woods. As night fell , they began to walk again.

"Then we were close to motorway 1, we walk around 25 km inside Croatia."

Around midnight, when the 70 individuals were walking in the dark along a pathway, they heard some shouts from nearby. Shortly thereafter, four officers dressed in light green military – style uniforms approached them. They carried handguns on their belts and one withdrew his weapon and shot three times into the air above the heads of the group.

The 70 of them were ordered to wait on the path, guarded by the four officers holding their guns. Soon after, 15 – 20 Croatian officers dressed fully in black arrived via the road nearby. These officers ordered the group to sit down.

"They take our cell phones, money, power banks, cigarettes, everything."

Moreover, the officers never returned the confiscated belongings to them. The individuals were then searched.

Then photos were taken, though not from every individual but just from the whole group of 70 together. The photos were taken with a phone and one of the officers even took a selfie with his face on it and the 70 people on the move behind him. The individuals were not questioned and when asked if anybody requested asylum in Croatia, the respondent described:

“When someone wanted to speak, they said “eh, sit down!”... Everyone was scared of what will happen next [if they speak].”

Afterwards, they had to enter three to four vans which had arrived to the scene as they were being searched. Around 25 people had to enter the backspace of each vehicle which became very cramped and the individuals were lacking oxygen.

They drove for around 30 minutes before arriving to a small road between trees and bushes. Off the road was some gravel with large concrete cubes on it. They were approximately 20 km southwest of Velika Kladusa (BIH), on the border area leading to Sturlic (BIH).

There, the doors of the vans were opened and the individuals had to get off in groups of five. They were pushed towards the direction of Bosnia, kicked and punched by the officers. Then, when they were laying between the concrete cubes, they were ambushed by around six officers. They were dressed in black Croatian uniforms carrying batons. They hit, punched and kicked them even more. The respondent describes how a 17-year-old boy was hit across the mouth with a baton, injuring his face.

“They even hit the boys and on the mouth.”

Meanwhile, a man aged 45 protested, asking the officers not to hit him because of his heart disease. Nevertheless, the officers continued to beat him, leaving contusions to his torso.

The officers also had tied trip wires between the trees that were measuring one foot above the ground, and invisible at night. As the individuals fled towards Bosnia they were tripped and fell, landing on an assortment of sharp bushes, brambles and sticks that the officers had put on the ground. The respondent described how the officers chased the group laughing and shouting:

“Go, go!”

The 70 of them finally managed to escape and made their way back to the improvised camp in Velika Kladuša (BIH).

"I DON'T WANT TO MAKE MY FAMILY EMOTIONAL"

Date and time: November 8, 2018 09:00

Location: 15 km north of Velika Kladusa, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.212457011084624 , 15.822223797030574

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 65 person(s), age: 20-25 , from: Afghanistan, Pakistan

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), insulting, gunshots

Police involved: Croatian officers, caught by either five or six special forces officers with a light green, jeep-like "army car" which was followed by another six officers with similar car, later more officers, at the border black-masked officers, one of them really big

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: photos taken, videos take

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

On November 8, 2018 , the group of 65 left at around 1 am from an area outside of Velika Kladusa and walked towards the Croatian border . When they reached the border after four hours, around 5 am , they slept in a forest . Later, they walked again for about one hour until they came upon a road around 15 km north of Velika Kladusa, on the Croatian side of the border. T he group rested on the side of the road for just one or two minutes before a light green, jeep-like " *army car*" with either five or six officers drove towards th em. This car was soon followed by another, similar car with another six officers.

Most of the group tried to escape by running into the nearby forest. The officers shouted:

" Stop, stop!"

One of them fired a gun three times – two shots in the air and one in the ground, towards the general direction of the group. Most of the group stopped running.

" All people they catch."

The officers then called for backup. While they were waiting for it to arrive, they took photos and videos of the individuals. Afterwards, they were loaded into cars, and brought back to the border. The cars were very crowded, with approximately 25 persons crammed inside.

At the border, th ey had to get off the van five by five . The officers lock ed the door after every five and b eat the m.

“They beat very badly .”

The respondent describes that upon exiting the car they faced four officers in a line:

” Every 3 meters or five meters there was a police officer.”

During this exchange, one of the officers screamed at him:

“ I am a Croatian police officer, I am crazy!”

Asked, if the individuals asked for asylum in Croatia, the respondents remark:

” No we didn’t ask because every time before they did not give us.”

The respondent described how they could only see the noses, eyes and lips of the black-masked officers. One of them was described as quite big. When the respondent’s friend had to get off the van, he tried to avoid the punches when the officers approached him and begged them:

“ Please, okay, okay, don’t beat me .”

Despite this, three officers beat him on the back of his head and on the sides of his body, hitting him so strong, that he fell on the ground.

After the beatings finished, several of the officers shot guns in the air twice, shouting:

“ Motherfuckers!”

The respondent remarks that the officers were very angry.

It was late the following evening when the group was left at the border close to Velika Kladusa. On the road back , a Croatian woman talked to the m . The individuals asked if she could bring them back to Kladusa . After one hour she came back and some individuals went with her , but she demanded a payment of 5 EUR per person for the ride.

When asked if he talked to his parents about what had happened to him, the respondent replied:

” No [I won’t tell them about what happened in Croatia] because if I told them that they beat us they would be very emotional. I don’t want to make my family emotional. Because I am emotional, no problem, but why make my father [and] my mother [emotional] ?”

"THEY ONLY SHOUTED AT US: 'WE ARE POLICE, WE ARE POLICE!' AND AFTER STARTED SHOOTING AROUND US"

Date and time: November 14, 2018 23:00

Location: Svinica Krstinjska, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.20093637774997 , 15.801081375013382

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 8 person(s), age: 19-30 , from: Morocco

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), gunshots

Police involved: 12 Croatian officers, wearing black uniform

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of six men and one woman traveled by foot from Velika Kladuša (BIH) to Croatia, from where they wanted to continue to Italy in order to seek asylum. On their third day of walking along an unmarked forest pathway next to a big river, they got detected by 12 Croatian officers in black uniforms. When the officers saw them , they did n't ask any question s , and just started shooting around with their guns:

"They only shouted at us: ' We are police, we are police! ' and after started shooting around us ."

When the officers caught them, they attacked all men with batons. Afterwards the seven of them were directly transported to the Bosnian border. When they arrived at the border, five officers were standing inside the car and others were waiting for them outside. The officers told them to get off the van and to sit on the ground in one row. Then, the officers started attacking all men with batons again. A young woman, who was also being pushed-back together with the men, was not physically attacked, but was made to sit next to them and had to silently watch the attack.

The respondent tried to speak out and to negotiate with the officers in order to possibly ask to access the asylum procedure in Croatia, but was silenced by hits of batons:

"I did not have the chance to say anything ... pffff ... if you speak, they beat you. They took our all money, phones, everything we had ."

When the officers attacked the group, they shouted at them to go back to Bosnia.

The group of seven then walked back to the makeshift camp in Velika Kladuša. The whole push-back took about two hours.

"WE TRIED TO RUN AWAY, BUT WE WERE WEAK AND THE POLICE THEY WERE FOUR IN GOOD CONDITION"

Date and time: November 23, 2018 16:00

Location: nearby Čehići, Bosnia

Coordinates: 44.978549392995504 , 15.784888959277396

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 12 person(s), age: some 17, others unknown , from: Algeria

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), gunshots

Police involved: Initial capture: 4 officers in green uniforms; police station: 2-3 officers in dark blue uniforms; pushback: 8 officers in dark blue uniforms

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: personal information taken, papers signed, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of 11 left Bihać , crossed the border to Croatia and continued walking for nine days.

"We arrived nearby the Slovenian border, before to get to the border, it began to freeze, we could not keep walking in the jungle, we will fall, it is cold, there is wind."

Due to the weather conditions, they decided to continue on the road but after five kilometers, four officers wearing green uniforms arrived.

"We tried to run away, but we were weak and the police they were four in good condition. They fired and then caught us."

"They caught me, they forced me to my knees, then they called the police van. We have walked one kilometer , on foot. Then we arrived at a police van. They caught ten persons before, more or less [...]. There is some Algerians, some Egyptians."

At the van, there were two or three more officers, wearing dark blue uniforms. They transported the group together with other people on the move who were already inside the van to a police station.

"We exited the van to go to another van. To take my name and everything, there was two vans. After the police took us one by one, we went down the van, they ask us what our name is and took a picture. It was on a small parking. After I saw a building, it is the police station. It isn't far, just beside. When you go, on your left side there is a building, it is a bit on an upper part, and the police station is down."

They didn't enter the station but switched vehicles there and did the administrative process on the parking lot. The officers asked the 11 individuals for their identity and made them sign papers in a language none of them could understand. They didn't take fingerprints.

"By the way, I never give my real name. I'm afraid because I already try to leave Bosnia several times. I'm afraid, they will say ' we already beat this guy and he came back ' . Sometimes I say that I am from Algeria, sometimes Tunisia, sometimes Syria and my name, it is never a real one."

The respondent expressed his wish to claim asylum in Croatia:

"Normally each person should have the right to claim asylum. For example, when I go to Croatia, I have the right to claim asylum. Them, they can't give me the kit, normally it should be like this, but they will even not give you the right to claim it. At night , they will bring you back. I asked for asylum, but they laughed at me. They told me ' who told you that you can get asylum here, there is no asylum ' and they made fun at us."

When the respondent was in the van, they looked at him, laughed and said:

"This is your bus!"

They separated the group by two and made them sit in different vans. They had to wait for hours inside the van which was medium size, maybe a Toyota or Nissan. The 15 people on the move stayed in it until approximately midnight, without any food or water.

"We were 15 persons in the van, we can not even sleep, because the van is a small one."

"The van was closed, [I could see] just a bit, there was a small window behind the driver, with a curtain, you can see a bit. After, we hit the van, because we heard people just aside the van, police officers. We hit the van, we will ask them to give us food and drink. But, no answer."

Finally, they were brought to the Bosnian border. While they were stopped there, one officer carrying papers opened the door, looked at them and closed it again. Outside of the van there were approximately six officers wearing dark blue uniforms and two officers a bit further away. A female officer was the first standing outside of the van. When the respondent exited the van, he dropped something onto the ground and the woman demanded him to take it back, but he got afraid to be beaten and left without it. After this, about five officers beat them with batons.

Altogether, there were four vehicles at the border. Two vans transporting the people on the move and two cars, one of them a pick-up truck.

When the group entered Bosnia again, they arrived on a road, where they could see a mosque up a hill on the left side. Then they saw a sign for Velika Kladusa to the right and Bihać to the left. Walking further they passed a gas station and a checkpoint, though they were not sure if it was for a highway or a border checkpoint.

"IF I WOULD HAVE DOCUMENTS, WHY WOULD I TAKE THIS RISKY WAY?"

Date and time: November 25, 2018 00:00

Location: Basara, Croatia, Croatian/Bosnian border, Basara/ Rakovica, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.032348 , 15.761138

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 11 person(s), age: 21-26 , from: Pakistan

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, insulting, gunshots, lifting up and throwing to the ground

Taken to a police station?: yes

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: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of 11 Pakistanis walked 11 days , mainly on snow covered ground, from Bihać (BIH) towards Rijeka (HRV). By Walking through the forests during the days and on the road during the night , they covered a distance between 30 and 35 km per day. On their way, they saw many wild animals. Near Rijeka (HRV) , 10 km before the Italian border near Trieste (ITA) , and 3 km before the Slovenian border, six Croatian officers in camouflage uniform caught them during the day. Four of the 11 started to run away, but three officers immediately chased them and caught all.

" When I see police in blue uniforms I run, but when I see army police, I don't run . "

The officers carried big weapons with lasers and were screaming:

" Stop running, why are you running?!"

One of them shot a bullet in the air.

In general, the officers treated them well compared to other Croatian officers in blue uniforms. Because the group of 11 hadn't eaten anything for three days , they were starving, and the officers gave them fish and whiskey. One of them somehow tried to connect with the respondent whilst waiting for the Croatian officers and showed him a photo of an Indian friend who is a cook.

" He thought I am Indian, you white people think we look all the same, but I know the difference between Pakistan and Indian people."

Afterwards the group of 11 was brought to the police station in Rijeka (HRV) . At the police station they were asked for their documents and the respondent answered:

“ If I would have documents, why would I take this risky way?”

At this time there were about 100 people on the move detained at the police station. They took photos from each of the 11 individuals and asked them about their name and country of birth, names of their parents and why they came to Croatia. No fingerprints were taken, no translation to their mother language was provided , and they received no medical treatment . All of them signed a paper with their personal information, which was never handed out to them. They were told that they will be brought to Zagreb and will be able to apply for asylum there, which turned out as a lie.

After just one hour at the station, t he group of 11 and nine other people on the move were brought in a prisoner van to a spot at the Croatian – Bosnian border near Velika Kladuša. When the van ‘s doors were opened, they faced two rows of officers standing next to the back door .

Six officers wearing balaclavas and batons were then targeting the 20 individuals violently, except one minor. One after another had to get off the van and was punched and kicked from each side . This technique is called the Tunnel-Trick.

The respondent had to experience how two officers took his arms and legs, lifted him up and threw him on the ground. He said that he was lucky and didn't fall so hard on the ground, but his shoulder was still hurting after one month.

The other respondent was separated by two of the officers, had to knee on the ground and was beaten with fists, batons and kicks . He was injured on his head and bleeding (see photo).

Coordinates of capture: **45.558001, 14.075889**

"[THE POLICE OFFICERS] TAKE OFF SHOES AND BEAT ON THE FOOT"

Date and time: November 29, 2018 21:00

Location: Along road D42, Croatia, close a large wood market

Coordinates: 45.22579365221426 , 15.260150574247746

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 17 person(s), age: unknown , from: Pakistan

Minors involved? Unknown

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, gunshots

Police involved: 13 Croatian officers

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of 17 left Bihac (BIH) by foot and crossed the border to Croatia on the evening of November 24, 2018. They walked for five days through Croatia. On the evening of their fifth day, at around 9 pm, while they were walking on the D42 road, a Croatian man observed the group passing by his house and supposedly called the police. After the 17 of them had continued walking for another hour on the road, they reached an intersection which was a short way after a large wood market. When they approached the intersection, the group discovered that there were four Croatian officers waiting for them. They were dressed in black uniforms and had black balaclavas. One of them had bright blue eyes. The officers told the group to stop, at which point four of the 17 attempted to escape. In response, one of the officers fired his handgun three times into the air. The officers got upset from the three escaping individuals, approached the remaining 13 and began to shine bright flash lights into their eyes. One of the officers told them:

„Don't enter Croatia!"

They then started beating all individuals, the respondent was hit several times with kicks and punches. Afterwards, their coats were searched for money and their bags for mobile phones. The officers took a total amount of €485 from different individuals. In addition, they took 11 phones and eight power banks.

They waited for some time at their initial point of capture before two small police vans arrived which they were told to enter. Eight individuals entered one van, and the five others another. The backspaces were windowless and the ventilation was very bad.

"In the car, we can not breath, almost. There was no air."

When all the 13 were inside the vans, the four officers called for back-up and soon after nine more officers arrived and started searching for the missing individuals. They were kept in these vans waiting during the individuals who ran away were located and brought back one after another. From their point of initial capture by the Croatian authorities at the

intersection the group was driven for four hours back to the Bosnian border. When they arrived, they saw many officers waiting there.

„One police officer beat on the leg, one police officer beat on the hand, one police officer beat on the foot, one police officer beat on the head.“

In addition to this, the officers intentionally destroyed their personal belongings

„[There were] eleven sleeping bags cut with a knife by the police officers.“

One officer was taking out an around 25 cm long knife and cut their sleeping bags open.

„You press [a] button and [the blade] comes out.“

They arrived back at the border around 12 pm close to a stream in a rural area where they could only see two houses around them. They watched how the officers would check their radio devices every two minutes and looked around with night vision glasses to ensure that there was no one observing their push-back. When they got off the van, they were forcefully handled by a group of nine officers. They would take one of them out of the van, two officers grabbed him on each hand and two other hold his legs, with the individual pinned onto the ground. Then, two additional officers hit him on the hands and legs with batons.

„Two policemen beat on the hand.“

After this, the individuals had their shoes taken off by an officers and were subsequently hit on the soles of their feet with batons.

„[The police officers] take off shoes and beat on the foot.“

While they were doing this to one individual, one of the officers told the man:

„Don't cross Croatia!“

The four of them who endured this treatment were the four individuals who initially ran away when the officers approached the group at the road intersection. The respondents inferred that the officers were intending this treatment as punishment for running away. One of the respondents who received this treatment had his feet bandaged by a medical provider in Velika Kladuša after returning from the border. The 13 others were hit with batons in their faces, chests, and legs however they did not receive the same individualized treatment as the four others. The group of 17 then gathered on the Bosnian side of the border before walking approximately ten kilometers back to the Miral camp outside of Velika Kladuša which took them about an hour.

"[...] THE OFFICERS TOOK MORE THAN €1000 AND NINE PHONES AND FOUR POWER BANKS FROM THE GROUP OF 11"

Date and time: November 30, 2018 10:00

Location: Rupa, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.47701565714017 , 14.279416119140592

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 15 person(s), age: 17-40 , from: Algeria

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, gunshots, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: The three officers apprehending the group wore blue sky shirts and dark blue trouser and arrived in a white van with a blue stripe on both sides and with windows in the back. At the border, the four officers present were wearing dark blue uniforms.

Taken to a police station?: yes

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of eleven left Bihać (B I H) by foot with the intention of moving towards Trieste (ITA) . They took all their belongings , tents, backpacks, and dried food with them . During their journey, it was snowing and temperatures dropped to around -5 °C at night. After seven days of walking, they saw a dead bear in a Croatian forest. At the end of their tenth day of walking, the group slept in an abandoned house. Later in the night, a group of four Algerian people on the move also entered the same house to sleep . The day after the two groups continued their journey together.

On November 30 , 2018, the 15 of them left the house at approximately 5 am. At around 9 am, a car with hunters drove down the road and stopped about 20 meters away from the group, a person looked into their rear mirror and drove away. The group kept walking. About an hour later, a police van came, fired a gun into the air four times, and stopped the group. Four of the 15 ran away and the officers fired again in the air, however they did n't manage to catch them. The 11 remaining people were frisked by the officers , who were angry because of the escaped individuals. The officers had arrived with a large, white van with a blue stripe on both sides and a window in the back. The y were wearing sky blue shirts and dark blue trouser s .

The spot of apprehen s ion was approximately five kilomete r s away from the Slovenian border and 40 km away from Trieste (ITA) .

At around 2 pm, they were brought to a police station. Before entering the van, the respondent asked for their

phones back, however the officer present instead handed them over to the driver of the van. The respondent remembered seeing a road sign saying "Rupa" on the way to the police station. There, the group was first brought into two cells, and then one by one were brought to a room with a yellow door and a blue number on it. The individual of the group who spoke the best English stayed with the officers to translate. Each of them was photographed, carrying a panel with a number on it. The respondent had number 2, the English speaking individual number 1. The respondent expressed his wish to claim asylum in Croatia, to which an officer answered:

"No asylum, camp is full, go back to Bosnia . "

The individual who translated filled out a paper with each individual's information – name, surname, date of birth, country of birth, place of birth, name of mother, name of father and if they passed through Serbia or Montenegro, and then each interviewed person had to sign it. They were frisked again, and their money was taken as well as their phones and power banks. According to the respondent, he asked for food but was refused. Thus, he then asked them to take his money to buy food, but they still didn't want to.

They stayed approximately three hours at the police station before leaving at 4 pm. After being driven for approximately 2,5 hours, they reached the border. However, it was difficult to know the exact time since they were sitting in the back of a police van without any phone or watch with them. While they were inside, the driver broke often and suddenly, and drove down a bumpy road which made people fall over one another in the back. Moreover, the air conditioning was on. One of the van's doors had a caging. When the van arrived near the border, they stopped quickly at a police station. There they were made to sign three A4 papers and left again after 20 minutes. The papers were written in a language that none of the 11 could understand, probably Croatian.

Then they continued until reaching the border. When they got off the van, four officers were there, swinging their batons in the air and shouting:

" Go, go, go!"

They were all dressed in dark blue uniforms. The respondent asked for his phone back during while they were returning their bags, but as an answer just got beaten with baton. In total, the officers took more than €1000 and nine phones and four power banks from the group of 11.

After reaching the Bosnian side of the border, they walked back 16 km to Bihać (BIH) which took around four hours.

"WHEN YOU RUN, SOMEONE HIDES AFTER THE TREES [AND HITS YOU IN] THE FACE IN THE TEETH IN THE KNEES"

Date and time: December 1, 2018 08:00

Location: Zdihovo, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.42274362662195 , 15.221098060070403

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 7 person(s), age: unknown , from: Syria, Iraq

Minors involved? Unknown

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, insulting, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: Five officers

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

On the night of November 28, 2018, the respondent left together with a group of six of his friends by foot from Velika Kladuša. They crossed the border to Croatia with the intention of walking to Slovenia and then continuing to Italy. All of them were Kurdish, some from Syria, some from Iraq. Although the weather conditions were quite bad from the start, the group walked for three days.

"We left at night, the first night we are sleeping in an empty building and [then] walking three days, three days raining and snowing. The river was like freezing. Very bad weather. Two from my group [looked like they] were going to die from cold because we were wet."

At 3 am on the third day the seven of them entered an empty building in a forest next to a road to shelter from the cold. Some cars saw them entering and the respondent supposes, that those might have been the ones informing the authorities. Shortly after the group entered, several officers approached the building and shot three times into the air. The seven of them remained silent.

"We are silent when police is coming, when they were shooting. They say 'Go! Go! Go!' we didn't do anything."

The officers didn't enter the building and eventually ended up leaving. Still, it seemed that they were aware, or suspicious, of the presence of people in the house. Despite the respondent's insistence to leave, the group decided to stay for the night.

"We must change this place, the police know where we are."

Ultimately, however, the group stayed in the house because they were so cold and so wet that they saw no other option. Two officers returned to the house around 8 am.

“The police return in the morning, when the light comes, they saw footprints and broke the door down. Two police at first show up, they broke the door. Later they brought a police van which had one officer and two police in the van. They took everything, mobiles, power bank.”

They broke down the door to their house, made contact with the group, and then called for backup which arrived in the form of a van and three more officers. The respondent recognized one officer who had caught him twice before, but this officer didn't recognize him. Their phones, money, and power banks were taken and never returned. Afterwards, they had to enter the van.

The head officer spoke first with the respondent, then with the others, asking:

“Who speaks English?”

So the respondent replied with yes. The officer then announced that he was a Croatian police officer and that the seven of them were arrested because they had crossed the border illegally. As a result, they had to enter the van to go to a police station where they would be brought to a prison.

“I told him no problem we just need warmth.”

The seven of them were still freezing, but contrary to what the officer had told them, they didn't take them to a police station.

“We go to border directly.”

After the group entered the van, they were driven directly to a secluded section of the Bosnian-Croatian border, at approximately 1 pm. After they arrived, the seven of them were taken out of the van in pairs, just the last three had to get off together.

“Then just two by two they take us out of the van and close the door. Loudly.”

The respondent was part of the last three and immediately after he left the van, he was being beaten with batons and witnessed one of his phones being destroyed by an officer. However, he had managed to hide another phone in his dirty sleeping bag. One of the group members had €150 stolen from him, however the respondent himself was able to keep his money hidden in his underwear. While around eight officers were present during the push-back, only four or five of them committed violence against the group. All the latter wore black balaclavas.

“The masks were special for commandos, like when I worked for Americans in Iraq”.

The three officers who drove them to the border didn't actively participate in the violent push-back.

“They just [stood] by laughing at us.”

“When we get out of the van, one stood here with a baton and said ‘Don't come another time motherfucker’ and raised a baton behind his head with two hands and brought it down with full force.”

What made it even more difficult for the seven of them to escape to the Bosnian side of the border was the snow covered, slippery ground. The respondent also lost his shoes in the snow.

“With all of the snowing, you cannot run fast.”

While running back he discovered more officers hiding behind trees, chasing the people on the move in the direction of the border.

“When you run, someone hides after the trees [and hits you in] the face in the teeth in the knees.”

One of his friends from Iraq, had his nose broken at this point.

“When you are running, someone hides [and] after three meters and then starts hitting you. When you are down in the earth, someone kicks you.”

The last officer the respondent encountered before entering Bosnian, unlike the others, was unmasked.

“He was very big and muscular like Dwayne ‘the Rock’ Johnson.”

He was around 180 cm tall, 35-years-old, had green eyes, white skin, and was clean-shaven except for a mustache.

“He hits you just on the head, just on the face.”

The respondent described having an interaction with this officer centered around his frustration and confusion with his violent treatment:

“I told him, ‘Why? We are all human’ and he hit me. My friends who were already in the forest watched me as I did this. I told him, ‘I am not scared of you, I am just a refugee, I won’t kill anything I won’t steal anything’. He told me, ‘You get out, motherfucker’. He was scared of me, he was scared of us.”

The respondent had attempted to cross Croatia several times before but explained that this was his first time experiencing violence of such magnitude at the border:

“It was the first time they hit me like that, but I’ve seen so many people with broken teeth, broken eyes.”

"EVENTUALLY, THEY HELD THE RESPONDENT BY HIS SHOULDER AND PUSHED HIM INTO THE SEWER"

Date and time: December 5, 2018 21:00

Location: Matulji, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.364569289430555 , 14.32813152296751

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 8 person(s), age: 16,17,24, others unknown , from: Algeria

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, threatening with guns, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: Apprehended by seven officers (six male and one female), two most violent officers between 45 and 48 years old, one of them with black balaclava, the other with grey hair. The woman had long blond hair which carried a bit longer than her shoulder; 15 officers at the border

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of eight found a house in the forest near Matulji (HRV), after having walked for ten days. They wanted to spend the night there, but at approximately 9.30 pm, seven officers entered the house and asked:

"Where do you come from? Where are you going."

And immediately began to hit the individuals. After this, they took their money:

"Give me phone, money, all, all, everything, whatever what."

In total, €450 were stolen and nine phones were either stolen or broken. Concerning the respondent, they took €150 from him and two phones.

There were two male officers who were more violent than the others. They were about 45 and 48 years old, one of them was wearing a black balaclava, the other had grey hair. They broke the group's phones while the other officers monitored the people on the move and continued asking questions. There was also one female officer with shoulder-length, blond hair.

One of the officers was pointing his gun towards the group of eight, in order to make them stand still. Then he ordered the eight to kneel down on their knees and to put their hands behind their heads. They were asked how long they stayed at this house and the respondent answered:

"Six hours."

One by one, they told the eight of them to stand up. They were then forced to undress completely. The officers then inspected them using a flashlight. Afterwards they were allowed to dress again, but had to stand in the same position for approximately three hours before being able to leave the room. To make them enter a white van, the officers grabbed them by their coats. The respondent supposed that the van was a Mercedes, but wasn't sure. The van's backspace was windowless and the air conditioning was turned on cold during the drive.

After a three-hour drive, they arrived at the Bosnian-Croatian border, close to Velika Kladuša (BIH). They stopped next to a forest and a sewer, somewhere behind the official border official check point of Velika Kladuša.

“Near the place where was the protest a few months ago.”

There were two vans at this location: one on the edge of the road leading to the check point, and one on the field where the group were transported into.

There, 15 officers were waiting for them, standing just outside of the van. Some wore black balaclavas, some didn't. When they parked the van, the eight of them were thrown out of the van one by one. The officers kicked them and beat them with batons. Both groups of officers, with and without balaclavas, beat the eight of them, however the covered ones beat more and stronger. They also insulted them:

“Picko matre!”

“Fuck you!”

“Go, go Bosnia!”

Eventually, they held the respondent by his shoulder and pushed him into the sewer. Throughout, the officers were laughing, making fun of the eight of them.

When the respondent went out of the sewer, he ran away, took off his clothes, and kept running in underwear until the city center of Velika Kladuša. He arrived there around 3 am with injuries on both feet and one knee.

The eight of them didn't express their wish for claiming asylum.

"ACCORDINGLY, HIS HAND WAS THEN STRUCK BY THE BATON, CAUSING SERIOUS INJURIES ON HIS FINGER"

Date and time: December 6, 2018 20:00

Location: Snos, Croatia, close to Snos

Coordinates: 45.17264354549455 , 15.648449924235251

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 26 person(s), age: unknown , from: Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh

Minors involved? Unknown

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), gunshots

Police involved: initial capture: 2 male officers in black uniforms and with guns in their holsters, 12-13 male officers. At police station: 3 officers. At the border: 12-13 officers with black ski masks covering their faces

Taken to a police station?: yes

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of 26 left Bihac (B I H) and crossed the border to Croatia on December 4 , 2018 . They walked for two days and in the evening of the second day, at around 8 pm, they left the forest and crossed a road. There, a police car with two male officers in black uniforms , carrying guns in their holsters , stopped them. The officers exited the car, fired two bullets in the air and shouted:

"Stop! Stop! Don't run !"

All 26 individuals stopped . It appeared as if the police had been waiting for them, because shortly after being stopped initially, a group of three more police cars arrived at the location.

"At first it was just one police car but then in one minute came three more police cars . "

In total, there were twelve to thirteen male officers arriving in these three additional cars. At some point during their interaction with this group of officers, one of the individuals was asked if he had a phone and lied in response, saying no. When the officers then found the phone in his bags, they hit him on his hands and legs with batons. His injuries were quite painful and upon his return to Velika Kladuša (BIH), he sought treatment at the local hospital and was x-rayed. The results though ultimately determined that he didn't have any broken bones.

After ten minutes, a police van arrived which the group of 26 had to enter after all their bags were checked:

"They check all of our bags and everything and then they put us into the van"

During this entire process, none of the individuals asked the authorities for asylum because they had been caught by Croatian authorities before and had been told a number of times that they were not allowed to apply for

asylum.

The group was then driven for around twenty minutes until they arrived at a secluded section of the Bosnian-Croatian border outside of Velika Kladuša between 8.30 and 9.30 pm. At this point, the door of the van was opened and individuals had to get off altogether at the same time.

Immediately after exiting the van, the 26 individuals were confronted by three officers with batons who hit him on their legs, hands and heads.

“Three police beat me for one minute. They didn’t say anything to me.”

They then forced them towards the border. The respondent also encountered officers hiding behind trees, who also hit him with batons to make him continue moving towards Bosnia.

“Then I moved closer to the border and there were six police officers hidden there”

In total, there were approximately twelve or thirteen officers present at the border. They wore black balaclavas, however the respondent recognized some of them as being the same individuals from the initial point of capture. Some stood off to the side and behind the van during the push-back. It was difficult for the respondent to say exactly how many officers were there:

“It was so dark and they beat us so much”

At one point during his push-back, the respondent was hit on the head with a baton and put his right hand up to protect himself. Accordingly, his hand was then struck by the baton, causing serious injuries on his finger. He later sought treatment from MSF and got provided with a splint for his finger.

After the push-back, the group of 26 crossed the border to Bosnia and walked for one hour back to the Miral camp outside of Velika Kladuša.

The respondent had earlier tried to cross the Croatian border twice, but as he had never been attacked by the Croatian officers, he was now shocked:

“I did not understand that they would be violent towards us, it was the first time I was beaten up.”

"IF YOU DON'T STOP, I WILL SHOOT YOU"

Date and time: December 18, 2018 14:00

Location: Crni Lazi, Croatia, close to the Slovenian border in the municipality of Crni Lazi in Primorje-Gorski Kotar County

Coordinates: 45.52234378711899 , 14.484490245996085

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 7 person(s), age: one 71 years old, others unknown , from: Syria, Egypt

Minors involved? Unknown

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), pushing people to the ground, insulting, gunshots, walking barefoot through the snow, officers are taking selfies

Police involved: initial capture: 12 men in green uniforms with "NATO" insignia on it (maybe German), carrying automatic rifles; two officers in the van; pushback: around 9 officers wearing black ski masks and headlamps on their foreheads

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: papers signed, denial of access to toilets, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of seven left Bihac by foot and continued walking for seven days through Croatia. They then approached the Slovenian border, as they had walked in average 18 hours per day and hence covered a long distance. At this point, they had begun to run out of food .

In the afternoon of the seventh day, around 2 pm, the group was around two kilometers away from the Slovenian-Croatian border, close to the municipality of Crni Lazi. At that point, they were stopped by the authorities.

"They look like army soldiers."

There were twelve officers dressed in green uniforms with the "NATO" insignia on it. The respondent believed that they were German , claiming that he heard them speaking in German. Initially, the officers attempted to stop the group and shouted:

"Stop! We will not do anything to you!"

They carried automatic rifles which they used to shoot in the air after the seven of them did not immediately stop. Several individuals attempted to flee at this point, as they were scared of the gunshots and only thinking of running away. But as the respondent started to run, the officers fired close to him instead of in the air, shouting:

"If you don't stop, I will shoot you"

He stopped. As a punishment, he was then forced to take off his shoes and had to walk barefoot for 15 minutes through the snow, a distance of about one kilometer, back to the spot where the group then had to wait for a van to pick them up. There, he received his shoes back. He was in an immense amount of pain and discomfort due to what had happened and told the officers leading him back to the van:

“Just shoot me . “

Four of the group were caught initially, three of them managed to run away.

Initially there was one army car and later four more cars arrived. Several officers were taking selfies with the individuals and making fun of them.

“They act as if they are so happy and proud because they catch us.”

The van arrived with two more officers, an older and a younger one. The older officer was a “respectful man” while the younger one was described as “too much racist”, being angry at the group and spitting on the ground close to them.

The group of now four was then brought to a police station where one of the group-members told the officers present that they were hungry and wanted to eat. They were not given food and instead kept in the van outside of the police station for six hours:

“They police didn’t even allow [us] to take our own food from the bags.”

At that point, there were 15 people on the move inside the van. The additional individuals in the van were Algerians who had also been caught during the same day and brought to the van at the police station shortly after the respondent’s group arrived.

The van’s ventilation was not turned on during this period, making it difficult to breathe. The respondent described banging on the side of the van for a long time to ask for more air:

“I try and try, but nobody answered.”

They were also not allowed to use the bathroom during this time. When the respondent told the police that he wanted to apply for asylum, he was pushed-back into the van and told:

“There is no asylum here in Croatia.”

There were many officers at the police station from which the respondent was fairly sure that it was located in Rijeka, because the drive from their initial point of capture to the station was only fifteen minutes.

No fingerprints were taken, but they had to sign a paper written in Croatian. Hence, they didn’t know what they signed and the respondent was too scared to ask for translation.

“If [I] asked them a question, they would beat [me]”

At around 8 pm, the group of 15 was driven back to a secluded area of the border, south of Velika Kladuša. When the van was parked, the individuals had to get off one by one and were pushed-back across the border. At the border, there arrived two vans with people on the move to be pushed back. The respondent was the first one

of the second group to be pushed-back. After exiting the van, one of the officers grabbed him from the back on his neck, forced his head down and pushed him to the ground. Once he fell on the ground, he was beaten by the officers present with batons until he managed to get up again. He described being insulted during this process, specifically he remembered the officers speaking negatively about Islam. There was one 74-years-old man from Egypt who the officers at the border also beat up with batons just as they did with everyone else in the group.

The officers all wore black balaclavas and had headlamps on their foreheads which shone into the eyes of the people on the move and prevented them from being able to see or orientate themselves.

When he was already at the Bosnian side of the border, the respondent asked the officers where his mobile phone was. The officers started to run after him with their batons, so he ran away himself.

"WHEN THE POLICE SEE THE BLOOD, HE STOPPED TO BEAT ME"

Date and time: December 28, 2018 03:30

Location: Maljevac, Croatia, 8km from Velika Kladuša

Coordinates: 45.200273321575175 , 15.787044650814323

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 23 , from: Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), gunshots

Police involved: Initially: 4 Croatian officers, Push-Back: 3 officers in dark blue uniforms

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of 11 initially left on December 27, 2018, at around 11 pm from Velika Kladuša (B I H) . They crossed the Croatian border and were walking a few meters inside the country when they met a police patrol who asked them gently to go back to Bosnia.

A few hours later, three of this group left again from Bosnia. They were walking around 7 km through the forest, which took them around 1,5 hours, when they were approached by the authorities:

"They light on their car in a curve on a forest way. We've looked. [the police said] ' Stop! Stop! Police! Police! ' And fired twice."

"Me I stopped, I try to run a bit, but then I stopped"

There were three officers outside and a fourth one sitting in the car. When the people on the move began to run, the officer in the car turned on the vehicle and began to drive after them. Then one of the other officers fired his gun in the air and they all stopped.

They were frisked in the forest and asked where they came from. The entire group had a power bank with them and only one phone with a broken screen from a previous game, which wasn't taken. Despite being frisked, the officers did not find their money. A medium-sized police van arrived 10 minutes after. The three of them had to enter it and were brought back through the forest. When they arrived at the border:

"My friend gets out first, he gets off. Then my second friend and me, last. There are three policemen. I think that the boss is a bit fat, not muscular. He has no hair, it is him who beat me. The other they beat my friends. When I want to go away fast, fast, I hit a small rock and the chef he made fun of me. I looked back and he beats my arms. I protect my head with my arms but I have pain in my arm. When the police see the blood, he stopped to beat me. I stand up and I ran away. Alhamdulillah this is not so bad (showing the wound on his head bleeding out

of his bandage)”

After being pushed back, the three friends walked back for around 30 minutes to Velika Kladuša. In the morning the respondent went to see a doctor of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and was told that he did not need stitches but needed to be checked again three days after to control for any infection.

"THE TWO OFFICERS THEN QUICKLY PUT ON THEIR BALACLAVAS BEFORE TOSSING A SMOKE BOMB INSIDE THE VAN"

Date and time: January 5, 2019 20:00

Location: Rijeka, Croatia, north of Rijeka

Coordinates: 45.4110972 , 14.3997373

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 10 person(s), age: 20-30 , from: Morocco

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, pepper spray, water immersion, gunshots, forcing to undress, theft of personal belongings, exposure to smoke bomb and tear gas

Police involved: 2 Croatian policemen at place of apprehension, later 3 more uniformed policemen, later 12 tall muscular policemen some of whom wore a black uniform and ski masks. 1 red 4x4 jeep, 2 white vans.

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: [Re:]ports Sarajevo

ORIGINAL REPORT

On December 28, 2018, a group of 10 men from Morocco, aged between 20 and 30, left Bihac (B I H) by foot around 9 pm. They had been walking for seven days, before they got apprehended by the Croatian authorities a few kilometers outside the town of Rijeka on January 5, 2019. At around 8 pm, the group was detected in the middle of the mountains by three officers in a red jeep 4 x 4. When the group of 10 saw them, one of the officers shot five times into the air with his gun shouting :

" Stop! Stop! Stop! "

The officers then made them kneel down in the snow, and the one holding the gun called reinforcement. 15 minutes later, two officers arrived with a big white van. They made the group enter the van one by one and started the engine. After a 30-minutes drive, around 9 pm, the van stopped in a big closed parking lot full of police cars.

When the back doors of the van were opened, the ten of them faced 12 tall muscular officers waiting for them. The respondent and his group got off the van one by one and each time one person got off, one of the officers beat him with his bare hands on the neck. Then, the same officer took the same person to face a wall of the parking area, hands on the wall. After this, they spoke in Croatian and made the ten of them remove their jackets. They were standing in the snow with t-shirts, trousers and shoes. The officers then hit the people facing the wall on the inner side of their legs to make them spread the legs. Subsequently, one officer took the phones, money and belongings from each and put everything in a black bag.

While facing the wall, some of the people on the move asked for their jackets back, since it was freezing. The

officers firmly said :

“ No . ”

Then, three of the ten asked for asylum, but the answer was just:

“ *No asylum!* ”

After this episode, the officers made the group enter another van of the same kind as the first one. Two officers of the same group in black uniforms and balaclavas entered the van and started the engine. At the same time, they turned on the air conditioning, making the temperature drop even more.

The van drove around 45 minutes before arriving at the Croatian-Bosnian border, around 7 km far from the Bosnian border city of Velika Kladusa. The van stopped a few meters away from a river.

When the two officers opened the rear door, the respondent realized that another car with the remaining 10 officers inside had been following them. The two officers then quickly put on their balaclavas before tossing a smoke bomb inside the van, which exploded and stunned the people inside. Immediately after, the officers used teargas against the ten individuals who were still inside the van. The ten of them then managed to rush out of the van and were repeatedly beaten up with batons by all officers on the spot.

Afterwards, around 11 pm and in the middle of the snow covered forest, the respondent and the other nine were kicked into the river, while the officers yelled at them:

“ *Go Bosnia!* ”

Fuck you!”

They did not receive back their phones or money, nor their jackets and sweaters.

"THE FACE, THEY BEAT ME ON MY FACE, EVERYWHERE ON MY FACE"

Date and time: January 8, 2019 03:00

Location: Bihac, Bosnia, close to Bihac, just after the border crossing

Coordinates: 44.83040454336067 , 15.764308816745597

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 7 person(s), age: one 28, others unknown , from: Algeria

Minors involved? Unknown

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 10 Croatian police officers in black uniforms and masks

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of seven left from Bihac (B I H) early in the morning on January 8 , 2019. At around 3 am, they arrived at the Croatian border. A few meters after crossing it , when walking on a hill along a small path , they were ambushed by several officers in a curve of the path .

"It was all night, all black."

" They have night visions binoculars."

Three officers suddenly stood in front of the group, two persons on each side and another three stepped behind them. In total, the group of seven got surrounded by ten officers wearing black uniforms and balaclavas.

" After they turned on their flashlights and fired once in the air."

All the individuals then had to kneel down and were forced to hand out their bags and phones. Then, the ten officers began to beat them up:

"The starter is the kicks and then they beat with sticks and closed-fist."

"Even after we took out our bag, we put our hand behind of our neck. Normally they can not beat us [when we are] in this position."

While they were beaten with batons and fists, the respondent tried to protect himself with his hand.

"The face, they beat me on my face, everywhere on my face.

"After they beat us [completely], my phone and 110 euros they stole. As usual."

"When they break phones, they give them back directly, but at this time they put them in their pockets."

In total, the officers stole at least €1100, five phones and four power banks. Then, the group of seven was asked where they come from, and they responded that they were from some other Arab countries.

After the attack, the seven individuals managed to run away. They returned to Bihać walking, and continued by bus to Velika Kladusa (BIH). The next night, the respondent tried to sleep, but he was in such pain, that it was impossible. Thus, at approximately 2,30 am, he went to the hospital in Velika Kladusa. The first doctor he saw refused to provide any health care. However, the second one approached him and offered to take a look at his injury, but secretly. This doctor thought that one of the thumb bones was broken and made a bandage to the respondent. He did not suggest the victim to come back later in the morning for x-ray to confirm the diagnostic. He provided him three painkillers for the rest of the night and the next day.

" HE PUT HIS SHOE ON HIS FACE, GOT ON HIS KNEES AND PLACED HIS GUN ON THE RESPONDENT'S RIGHT TEMPLE"

Date and time: January 21, 2019 01:00

Location: Glina, Croatia, Croatian interior close to Glina

Coordinates: 45.33860786500812 , 16.09124400336009

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 15, unknown , from: Iraq

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: Two officers at the "police camp" in dark blue uniforms, four officers who arrived in vehicles

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of three left from Bosnia on the night of January 20, 2019, at 6 pm and crossed the border Croatia with the intention of continuing to Glina (HRV) to take a bus:

"We were walking in the forest before we reached the bus station."

The snow was high in the forest and as they walked it reached up to their shins. After walking several hours, the respondent, a 15-year-old minor, described seeing a police patrol:

"I saw a police patrol, they were searching the area and [we] turned around from the police and went down into the forest."

When the police left, the group went back to continue walking on the road they had been on previously. But shortly after, the group came upon what was described as "police camp" at approximately 1 am. In the middle of the forest, the authorities were camping in tents, waiting for people on the move to pass by:

"They had their own tents, waiting for whoever comes around"

The respondent had been walking at the head of the group, and he described that perhaps he was walking too fast at this point which put some distance in between him and the other individuals. When they passed through the tents, the officers heard their footsteps. Two officers exited their tents and with their guns drawn they told the group to stop.

When the officers told them not to move, they froze. The respondent laid down in the snow, one officer approached him and kicked him in the face. He put his shoe on his face, got on his knees and placed his gun on the respondent's right temple. This officer was described as being big, around 32 years old, around 180 cm tall, his head shaved on the sides

with short hair on the top and wearing a dark blue uniform.

The 15-year-old respondent described, that it was the first time anyone had ever pointed a gun at his head and that he was terrified:

“He didn’t even ask about [my age], from the first time he came, he beat.”

Then, the officers checked his phone and saw that the respondent had GPS data pulled up. After this, they searched his belongings. The three of them didn’t ask for asylum as they didn’t get the chance to do so.

“ They never gave us the chance to ask for [asylum]... the officers started to beat [me] and kick with their shoes.”

The same patrol that the group had successfully evaded before, arrived to the scene in a van with three officers. Shortly thereafter, another van arrived with one officer.

The people on the move had to enter the second van, which then took them back in a 30-minute drive to the Bosnian-Croatian border at approximately 2.30 am. When they arrived back to the border, there was one car and two officers waiting for them. They also wore dark blue uniforms and had their faces unmasked.

The three of them had to get off the van one by one. The respondent was the first. He was told by one of the officers to come closer. The officer then broke his phone, returned it back to him, and told him that Velika Kladusa was twenty kilometers away.

The three of them then attempted to walk back to the camp but since their phones had been broken, and they didn’t have access to GPS, they got lost and didn’t find their way back until 7 am the next day.

"TO ME, THEY PUT A GUN ON ME, THEN WE WENT OUT, HE ASKED ME TO KNEE ON THE SNOW [...]"

Date and time: January 22, 2019 08:30

Location: Glina, Croatia, Croatian interior on the way from Velika Kladuša to Zagreb

Coordinates: 45.31921341749772 , 16.104840361836295

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 4 person(s), age: 28 , from: Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: threatening with guns

Police involved: 3 policemen in dark blue Croatian uniform, 3 more officers in the van and at the police station

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, fingerprints taken, photos taken, personal information taken, papers signed, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of four left Velika Kladuša (BIH), on January 22, 2019. After they crossed the border to Croatia, they walked towards Zagreb. They walked the full night until they found an abandoned house to rest in and stayed there in different rooms. In the morning, a group of three officers entered the house after knocking strongly on the door. They wore dark blue uniforms with the emblem of the Croatian flag on their arms and carried handguns.

"To me, they put a gun on me, then we went out, he asked me to knee on the snow, but I didn't, I just put my hand in the air, and waited like this."

According to the interviewee, they began to shout at them and put on disposable gloves before frisking them outside. The respondent and the other three gave the officers their phones.

"Then they asked us some questions, "Where do you want to go?" We answered that we want to go to Zagreb. Then they asked us how we wanted to go to Zagreb, we said 'on foot'."

After they finished the interrogation, the group of four had to walk hundreds of meters until they reached a white police van driven by a man and accompanied by a woman, wearing the same uniform as the officers who apprehended them.

While they were walking, the first group of officers became less aggressive and talked with the individuals. They made light fun about the potential of violence, with one of them showing the balaclava he had in his pocket. The mood was more relaxed, however the respondent still didn't know what would happen to them.

When they arrived at the van, the driver aggressively pushed them into the backspace, and they were driven to a police station. At the station, they were brought to a big room which looked similar to a conference room, with a board on the

wall, tables and chairs. One officers was in the room to monitor the four of them.

One by one, they were brought to another room and asked to fill a form with their name, surname, father's name, mother's name, country and region of origin. After this, the officer took a photo of them and a plate with their name and surname written on it.

After that, the respondent was brought to a room to clean his hands in order to give his fingerprints. He wanted to know the reason for giving his fingerprints, but couldn't understand the woman he asked, trying to explain it to him.

"I understood, 'fingerprint is asylum' and she spoke about orders. 'You have to give your fingerprints.' I told her 'If I give my fingerprints, I ask asylum, you don't send me back to Bosnia'. [She said] 'It is order, it is international fingerprints'."

He then gave his fingerprints, first his thumbs and then all other fingers. To finalize the process, the police asked him to sign a paper written in Arabic. He began to read it, but they took it away from him before he could finish, and asked him to sign it.

Then he returned to the conference room and attempted to sleep on one of the tables. They were allowed to use the bathroom, but were denied food.

"We asked for food, they don't want to [give us]. No cigarettes either, however I suggested to give [them] money to go and buy it for us. But in the end, one policeman found three cigarettes and gave it to us."

In the afternoon, they were driven towards the Bosnian border in a police van. On the way, they stopped and saw the three officers who apprehended them again. In the van, they were together with around ten other people from the move, supposedly Afghans or Pakistanis, who hadn't been at the police station previously.

When they arrived at the Bosnian border, somewhere between Bihac and Velika Kladusa, they all exited the van. One of the officers handed out bag a bag to the respondent with their phones and power banks and did the same with the second group of people. The phones were reset.

After the police van drove away, they walked towards Bosnia for around seven kilometers before they found a market where they bought food. On the way, they met a local person who brought them back to Velika Kladusa.

"IT WAS SO COLD, LIKE A FREEZER INSIDE"

Date and time: February 13, 2019 03:00

Location: Drežnica, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.16097555521035 , 15.081011479882818

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 22-30 , from: Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, threatening with baton

Police involved: Capture: 4 Croatian police officers in black uniforms, Pushback: 4 officers in black uniforms and black ski-masks

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

On February 13, 2019, around 3 am, the group of three was caught by the Croatian authorities in the area of Drežnic (HRV). There were two police cars, one with two male officers, the second one with one male and one female officer, all in black uniforms. The officers made the three men lie down, facing the ground. One of the officers put his feet on the neck of one of them to keep him down. The officers then called another car which the group of three had to enter. This car drove them directly to the border of Bosnia near the city of Šturlić, which took around one hour. It was mostly dark inside the car, only sometimes they had some light.

"It was so cold, like a freezer inside."

During the drive the officers were shouting at the people on the move to not come back.

When the van door was opened at the border area next to a river, there were four officers waiting outside, dressed in completely black uniforms and balaclavas. All three of them got off the van and were forced to run towards the river. One officer followed them with a baton, attempting to beat them. The other officers shot their handguns in the air. They shouted at them to go back to Bosnia and forced them into the river. The water of the river was waist high.

During their interactions, the officers confiscated two of the group's phones. One of them was broken and returned, the other one was stolen.

Reflecting on this experience, one of the respondents compared the idea of Europe to a mother, framing himself and his friends as her reluctant child:

"We are like an adoptive child trying to please his mother."

"[THEY] RECEIVED A SMALL AMOUNT OF BREAD TO EAT, BUT HAD TO DRINK OUT OF THE CELL'S TOILET"

Date and time: February 14, 2019 02:00

Location: Budinjak, Croatia, area of Budinjak, about 10 km far from the Slovenian border

Coordinates: 45.78184599374266 , 15.476623660266114

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 22-27 , from: Morocco, Western Sahara

Minors involved? No

Violence used: gunshots

Police involved: Initial capture: 3 Croatian officers with handguns, 1 police car; pushback: 20 Croatian officers in black uniforms, covered with face masks, 1 large police van

Taken to a police station?: yes

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of three left Velika Kladusa (B I H) on February 6 , 2019, and crossed the border to Croatia at Bosanska Bojna. From there they walked through Croatia towards Slovenia for eight days. On February 14, at around 1 am, the group was apprehended by several Croatian officers. The three individuals attempted to run away but the officers shot with their handguns towards them, so the group stopped out of fear of being shot. There were three officers, two in a police car and one outside of it. The officers walked towards them , told them to wait and called another car.

As soon as this other car arrived, the group of three was taken to a police station in Jastrebarsko (HRV). There, they got searched, their phones were taken away and the officers asked if they had any money on them. The group responded that they didn't.

"If the police had found my money, they would have taken it – I know. I hide it."

The three individuals expressed their intention to claim asylum but the officers denied this request. Instead, they had to sign a paper which asked in Arabic, English and Croatian for their name, surname, name of parents, country of origin, where they were and where they wanted to go. The group members didn't receive a copy of these papers. After, they had to hold a paper with their personal information in front of them while photos were taken. They got detained for seven hours in a cell and received a small amount of bread to eat, but had to drink out of the cell's toilet.

Afterwards, they had to enter a large van where already a group of about 20 Syrian people on the move were

waiting. They were driven to the Bosnian-Croatian border close to Poljana (BIH) and told to leave the van. Prior to that, the officers returned their phones.

Around 20 officers, all dressed in black and covered with balaclavas stood on one side of the vehicle. One very tall officer walked with the whole group of around 23 people to the border, using a flashlight, and told them to go.

After crossing the border, the initial group of three walked around 13 km back to Velika Kladusa.

"THEY CAME AND SEARCHED THE RIVER, BUT NOBODY FOUND HIM."

Date and time: February 22, 2019 10:00

Location: Zunici, Slovenia, Slovenian-Croatian border at the Kolpa river

Coordinates: 45.481691590850794 , 15.360398977246064

Push-back from: Slovenia

Push-back to: Croatia

Demographics: 10 person(s), age: 19-24 , from: Morocco, Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: threatening with guns

Police involved: 7 Slovenian officers, 2 of them dressed in standard police uniforms, 5 of them dressed in military-style uniforms

Taken to a police station?: unknown

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of ten left from Bihać (B I H) on February 14 , 2019. The seven Algerian men and three Moroccan women crossed the border to Croatia and reached the Slovenian border after seven days of walking. At around 4 pm on the February 20, the ten of them decided to enter Slovenia by passing the border river Kolpa. The current of the river was very strong so it was challenging for them to cross it . They decided that the men would cross first, so the three women were watching them crossing from the Croatian side . When the last one went in, he soon lost his fight against the river's strong current and got carried away by the water.

Shocked by this, the six men told the women not to enter the water, as it would have been too dangerous for them, and to stay in Croatia. Then, they started to search for their friend, but couldn't find him.

"I feel so lost and alone."

In an attempt to signal for help, the group decided to make a large fire, hoping it would attract the police. They started the fire at around 5 pm, but no one came.

After this shocking event and the following desperate search, the exhausted group fell asleep next to the fire. At around 4 am on February 21, they were woken up by a group of Slovenian officers. Two were dressed in standard police uniforms and five officers were dressed in military-style uniforms, all carried guns.

First the officers dressed in standard uniforms searched the group of six. They told the police officers what happened and the Slovenian officers called out for help.

“They came and searched the river, but nobody found him.”

Afterwards, the six of them were taken to a police station.

The group spend one day at the station during which they were questioned by a Palestinian translator about their migration route and where their ultimate destination was. The translator did not answer any of their questions regarding asylum. Their fingerprints of their index fingers were taken as well as photos, and they also had to sign papers.

On the next morning, February 22, around 10 am, the Slovenian officers drove the six of them in a van back to the Croatian border. There, they were handed over to the Croatian authorities and had to switch into another van. In this van, there were already other people on the move, in total they were now 13 people. The van drove about one hour until they reached the Bosnian border. The entire group was told to exit the van together and to walk back to Bosnia. Five Croatian officers and one driver were present, when the group entered Bosnia again.

Then, the group of 13 walked back to Velika Kladuša (BIH) and arrived there at the same day.

"NO, NO WAY, WE ASK FOR ASYLUM, THEY WILL BEAT US TOO MUCH LIKE DOGS."

Date and time: February 25, 2019 07:00

Location: Rosopajnik, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.5073361386604 , 15.347659783054155

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 7 person(s), age: 19-27 , from: Afghanistan

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 5 officers in navy blue uniform

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of seven crossed the border to Croatia at a spot near Velika Kladusa . They walked for three days through Croatia. On February 25, they were five kilometers away from the Slovenian border, in the town of Rosopajnik (HR V) . At around 2 am, the group took a rest in a forest and decided to sleep for a while. At 7 am , they suddenly woke up from the sound of shots, fired in the air by five Croatian officers . The officers started to kick them with their boots , which left visible marks on the respondent's hands and face. The officers shouted at the group in a language they did n' t understand , probably Croatian.

When asked if they had requested asylum, the respondent answered.

"No, no way, we ask for asylum, they will beat us too much like dogs".

When asked if they tried to talk to the officers in English, the respondent explained that he pretended not to know English . He was scared, the officers would otherwise think that he was a smuggler and beat him up even more.

"[They] will beat you too much."

He showed a photo of his broken finger from the last time he attempted to translate when he encountered the authorities.

The seven of them had to wait at the spot around one hour until a large vehicle arrived. They had to enter it and were driven for approximately one hour to the Bosnian border. When they arrived, five officers were already waiting for them, lining themselves up on both sides of the van's doors. One of the officers, who

was driving the van was quite big and all wore dark navy blue uniforms and had their faces and heads uncovered.

As the seven individuals got off the vehicle, they were beaten with batons. The respondent jumped out in the middle of the seven of them and could therefore avoid being beaten. He managed to ran fast over the border and escapee the officers.

The phones, money and cigarettes were initially taken from the group. At the border, then their phones were returned in a bag. First, they were glad to see that none of them got destroyed, however they soon discovered that the SIM cards and charging inputs were damaged and useless. The respondent said, already ten phones got destroyed within the eight months he was going on game repeatedly.

Rosopajnik (Hr) – Approximate location of the spot where the group was caught by Croatian authorities

The approximate area in Gejkovac (Hr) where the group was pushed-back by Croatian officers

"WHY DO YOU BURN MY CLOTHES? - THE OFFICER RESPONDED: IT'S MY JOB!"

Date and time: February 27, 2019 00:00

Location: Modrus, Croatia, on a standard road in rural countryside

Coordinates: 45.1 , 15.200000100000011

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 13 person(s), age: over 18 , from: Morocco, Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, threatening with guns, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: Croatian police officers, caught by 6 local officers (dark blue uniforms with the Croatian "RH" emblem on the arm, young men between 25-30 years old, tall and strong, with a van), at the police station 30 local officers (some in the same dark blue, some more light blue uniforms), deported by some local police officers (with a van), at the border about 12-15 officers (in black, with black masks)

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: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of ten crossed the border from Bosnia to Croatia somewhere near Isačić (B I H) in late February and continued walking in Croatia.

"We walked a lot in forests, sometimes through small villages, sometimes even we crossed high mountains."

After six days of walking, the group's phones had run out of battery. They were somewhere in rural countryside of Croatia without having GPS. Therefore, the group decided to continue on a standard road instead of walking off-road as before. After five or six kilometers, around midnight between February 26 and 27, a police car stopped them. One of the officers told the group:

" Stop! Stop! I will shoot if someone try to run!"

Six of the group stopped, and four ran away, but the officers didn't shoot in their direction. There were six officers, all wearing dark blue uniforms with the Croatian "RH" emblem on the sleeves.

"For sure they all were 120 kilogram, the Croatian police always looks like action movie stars. They were all like 25 till 30 years old and so strong and tall. "

One of the officers told the remaining six people on the move, that they would bring them to Zagreb. The men were then searched one-by-one and their mobile phones and power banks were taken. The officers also took the group's three tents and backpacks, piled them up and set them on fire.

So the respondent asked the officer:

"Why do you burn my clothes?"

The officer responded:

"It's my job!"

The respondent then told the officer:

"You can burn my tent, but why you burn my personal clothes?"

Again, the officer responded:

"This is my job!"

Afterwards, they were driven with a van for around 30 minutes. The air conditioning for the backspace was switched on the coldest level and the six individuals were freezing.

"We asked them several times to switch off the air condition. They didn't react, they were listening music. They didn't care."

They arrived at a large police station in a small village . The building was two stories high and inside were about 30 officers at work. Some were wearing the same dark blue uniform, lighter blue uniforms. The group was locked in a small cell, around 12 m² , without toilet, water or heating. Before they were locked in, the officers searched them again and took their money and cigarettes. The respondent had 200 Euros and 190 HRK in his pockets.

Then, the six individuals were taken one-by-one to an office and questioned. Photos, fingerprints and personal information, i.e. name, nationality, date of birth, father's and mother's name were taken. They also had to sign the paper with their personal information, but also one paragraph written in Croatian which the respondent didn't wasn't able to understand, but didn't receive any translation.

After some hours, seven Pakistani people on the move were brought to the same cell. In total the group of six spent around 12 hours in this cell. Eventually, around 12.30 pm on February 27, an officer opened the cell, saying:

"Come! Come! To the car!"

All 13 people on the move got their phones and money back and had to enter a van.

As the van started driving, the police officers again switched on the air conditioning on the coldest setting. And again the people on the move asked the officers to turn it off, but received no reaction to this request.

After about two hours of driving, around 2.30 pm, they arrived to a remote spot in the forest, next to a river near the border to BiH outside Velika Kladusa. All 13 individuals were asked to get off the car. Afterwards, the van left and the group of 13 recognized around 15 officers waiting for them in the dark, wearing black balaclavas.

"Their clothes black and I think they have heart also black."

The officers formed a circle around the people on the move. First they took their money and phones, putting the good quality phones in their pockets and destroying the less valuable ones with their batons.

"Then they told us: 'Take off clothes. All!'"

They were forced to take off everything except their underwear. Although there was snow on the ground, they had to take off their shoes.

They were still encircled when the officers began to beat them and to strike their naked bodies with batons. The respondent got hit mainly on the back, one other individual's arm was broken and he had three big wounds on his head.

"When they beat us they say ugly words in Croatian. Because this happened to me more than twenty time already I know the words. They say 'Fuck your Mother' and 'Son of a Bitch'."

If someone tried to flee the circle, he was caught and beaten even more. The respondent didn't remember how long the violence took, but eventually they let them run away. Some individuals were able to take one piece of clothes with them, the respondent for instance was able to grab a pair of pants, however none of them had shoes.

So the group of six started walking back almost naked and barefoot six to seven kilometers back to Velika Kladuša, partly through the snow.

When they arrived, they went to see a local doctor. The doctor gave them medicine for a cold but did not want to hear their story or listen to what has happened.

"Is the European Union sleeping?"

"THE WAY THE POLICE ACTED REALLY LEFT ME WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL SCARS"

Date and time: March 11, 2019 05:05

Location: Kočevje, Slovenia

Coordinates: 45.6459645 , 14.852826

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 5 person(s), age: 32-57 , from: Morocco

Minors involved? No

Violence used: threatening with guns

Police involved: Around 10 Slovenian police officers, 1 police van

Taken to a police station?: yes

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

The Group of five men started in Bihać (B I H) on March 4 , 2 019 , and after they crossed the Croatian border, they continued walking for eight days through Croatia towards the Slovenian border. O n March 11 , they arrived at an old bridge at the Kupa border river at an old bridge . After they crossed t he bridge , a group of three male and one female Slovenian officer was waiting at the other side in Slavski Laz next to a steel door and a fence. The officers asked them how many people they were and if there were more coming. Then the officers entered their police car , a Dacia Duster , and made phone calls . After 10 m inutes , they opened the steel gate and the people on the move stepped inside. The officers searched their bodies and asked them if they carried knives or weapons with them or anything else that could harm them.

Afterwards, around 5 am , they brought them with a van to the Kočevje police station. There they asked for a sylum and the officers replied:

"Y es, yes okay."

Then they put them into a room with two toilets, video cameras on the ceiling and a wall with an interrogation glass, where you can only look through form one side. They brought them food and took the ir phones . The group of five had to spen d the night in the room, probably because they couldn't push them back earlier due to a lot of snow outside.

The next day, two people with white suits, blue gloves and masks interrogated them. They asked them why they were there , where they were from and more similar questions. They only took the fingerprint of the index finger of the right hand, told them to look in the camera without asking questions and took photos of everyone. Then a n

officer in uniform , carrying weapons on his belt gave them about eight documents in Slovenian, which they had to sign without translation. They also took the ir mone y and brought them back to the interrogation room. There, one individual requested one more time for an asylum procedure and one officer replied only that it takes time.

One Iraqi minor was brought to the station and interrogated with the help of one of the five individuals. He arrived together with a social worker with red hair from an organization which takes care of minors. There was also a female officer woman (R. TROPIĆ) sitting at a desk. When one individual asked for asylum again, she just said, that it is going to happen later. She also lied to the social worker, and told her that after one night they would be sent to a camp where they would be able to apply for asylum. Also, one person asked to call his family or a lawyer, but she refused and told him, that he could call them later in the camp.

Afterwards, they brought them papers declaring a penalty fine of about €500 for illegally crossing the border. All of them signed it, because the thought it is important to have at least this one paper. Again the police officer lied to the social worker and the asylum-seekers and assured that they would be brought to the camp.

In the next morning at 10 am on March 12, after about 30 hours, the officers brought them to the van and said:

“Don’t worry, everything is going to be fine.”

When they got off the van again thou, they realized that they had been brought to the border checkpoint Petrina, where the Croatian authorities already waited for them. One individual asked a female Croatian officer, why they were at this location and that they want asylum. She was shocked by the question and asked the Slovenian officers why they brought the group to the border, but never explained it to the asylum-seekers.

“ You could tell on their faces, that they were doing something illegal.”

The Slovenian officers handed over some documents to the Croatian authorities , as well as the phones and the money. After that, the Croatian officers took some new papers out of the car , wrote the names of the five of them down and took photos , while they were told to hold the papers in front of their chest s . They also filled in a form for every individual with the questions:

“ Where are you from? How long did you walk? How many people? Where did you start?”

Then , they forced them to sign the papers, but never handed them any of those documents o ut. In the end the five individuals had to enter the van again and were driven three hours to the border crossing of Glinica. One individual had terrible open wounds on the feet from walking. In Slovenia, a doctor just put some bandages on them and told him not to walk that much. But at 3 am , they were forced to walk 15 km back t o Velika Kladuša .

“ In Slovenia I thought I finally made it, that I get a sylum and it is a secure place. I was really shocked, when you mention the name of the police station in Kočevje I am still shaking inside. Because the way the police acted really, really left me with psychological scars. Even the police officers in the white suit and the blue gloves, when they were talking to me, asked me why I choose Slovenia. I was heading there because I believed in Slovenian democracy and the very advanced legal system with human rights protection. So I wanted to establish my life with my family here in Slovenia. But I was shocked how police can zigzag the law, how they bullshit people to sign paper without translation and lie to your face, it is really shocking. How can you say no, if someone with weapons on his waist comes to you and tells you to sign this paper? I was disappointed by such lies and deception from the police. Why did they keep some documents from us?”

The respondent received three of all the documents he signed, which could be archived:

1. Document: Order of detention

It says, this person, who was detained, got an explanation in English (not the mother language) about:

- the reasons why he was detained
- that he is not obliged to give any information
- that he has the right to medical treatment
- that he has the right to have a legal representative, that he can choose by himself
- that the person understood what was communicated to him.

The individual has crossed the state border between Slovenia and Croatia in an illegal way (without permission) by passing over a hanging bridge in Slavski Laz and has in doing so avoided mandatory border control at the external border. It is because of this reason that the individual must be extradited (=pushed back) to foreign (Croatian) authorities.

2. Document:

The police has the right, to take away his identity documents (like passport, drivers license, ID-card etc.) to find out his identity. But in this case he didn't have any of these, so they couldn't do it.

3. Document:

A fine for crossing the border illegally of €500. But because he was four hours in detention, he was given a compensation of €10 per hour so the fine was reduced to €460.

These documents make the practice of the Slovenian police clear:

- There was no translation despite mentioned in the documents
- They did not tell them about their rights, not even in English
- They wrote that it was explained to the person in English, which is NOT the mother language and therefore not sufficient

→ Anyway in this specific case , the content of the signed papers wasn't expressed at all.

- They lied to the asylum-seekers and social worker about the asylum request
- They did not let them call any legal representative or family members
- They gave them compensation for four hours (to reduce the fine) but actually detained them for about 30 hours
- They kept some documents from them
- They forced them to sign documents which they weren't able to understand

- They justified the push-back with the illegal border crossing of the person
- They cooperated with the Croatian police concerning the push-back

Coordinates of Locations:

Old bridge over Kupa-River (Slovenian/Croatian border, near Slavski Laz): 45.4785, 14.9101

Kočevje police station: 45.6459645, 14.8528260

Petrina: 45.4640, 14.8528

Glinica: 45.2026040, 15.9407112

"WE WERE LIKE ZOMBIES. I DID NOT FEEL ANYTHING ELSE BUT VOMIT AND HEADACHE."

Date and time: March 11, 2019 09:00

Location: Zilje, Slovenia, near Zilje

Coordinates: 45.4597271 , 15.2956027

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 13 person(s), age: 7-14, 50, unknown , from: Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, threatening with guns, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: Around 10 officers in different locations. Slovenian Police: Dark blue uniforms with guns, batons, handcuffs and sprays on their belts. Hexagonal or pentagonal emblem with the Slovenian flag and the letters "Policija" on the sleeves. Croatian officers: Dark blue uniforms. Several vans in different locations

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, 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 initially 24 people on the move started their journey on March 3, 2019, in Velika Kladuša (BIH). Near Miljkovici (BIH) at the approximate coordinates 45.2027349, 15.8023509, they crossed the Croatian border.

The group walked mostly in the nights and slept in the forests. After several nights of walking, the group ran out of food. The only thing left was some bread, walnuts and raisins. Their approximate coordinates at that point were 45.4240133,15.6283776. Therefore, 11 persons decided to leave the group and to voluntarily go to the Croatian authorities who then took them back to Bosnia. The rest of the group, 13 persons, among them five minors aged between seven and 14 and three women, continued their journey towards Slovenia and tried to speed up as much as possible.

After a total of eight nights and two days of walking, they reached the border between Croatia and Slovenia on March 11. They entered Slovenia around 9 am near Zilje (SVN) at the approximate coordinates 45.4597271,15.2956027. They crossed the Kolpa river by foot, with the water reaching their upper thighs. The father of the reporting family had to cross the river twice because his wife, who had her menstruation and was generally weakened after the long walking, was not strong enough to carry any of their luggage through the river. There was heavy rainfall and they were all wet and cold.

After another hour and around two more kilometers of walking in Slovenia, they were apprehended by two Slovenian officers driving in a Renault Megane police car. One officer was male and young. The other one was a woman. She

seemed very angry, pointed with her gun at the group of 13 and shouted at them. She then put her gun directly at the temple of an Afghani man.

The two officers made a call and shortly after, two vans arrived, each carrying two to three officers. The officers were wearing dark blue uniforms and carried guns, batons, handcuffs and sprays on their belts. On their sleeves, there was a hexagonal or pentagonal emblem with the Slovenian flag and the letters "Policija".

Two officers took the son, aged 14, of the reporting family away from the group without telling the parents where they were taking him.

"We were so very worried."

During the interview it was still noticeable how much this experience had unsettled them. The father told the officer:

"I want to go with my son!"

But they denied that, took him harshly by his arm and pushed him into one of the vans. All men were told to enter the same van, while the women and children had to get into the other van. The backspace of the vans were windowless and very dark. There was just a small plastic window of around seven centimeters height, through which they could see into the driver's cabin. On the ceiling of the backspace, there were two ventilators. It was very cold in there.

"The air inside the van was very bad."

He pointed out that he had never before had to vomit in a car, but during the 30 minutes transfer which followed he had to throw up twice. All other in the same van had to vomit as well. In the floor there was kind of a hole where the vomit would spill in. The father managed to put his nose between the wings of the backdoor and was able to breath a bit fresh air which gave him some relief. He believes that the officers filled some kind of gas into the backspace to make them vomit. He did not recognize a particular smell or a color of the air in the van. The men knocked on the van's walls and shouted to stop the car and let them out. The policemen, however, just shouted back:

"Šuti! Šuti!" [Engl.: Shut up]

In the women's car, several people also vomited, but the mother of the reporting family couldn't specify whether most or all of the persons were vomiting because she was so much absorbed by worrying about her son. After some 30 minutes of driving, the vans reached a police station near Veliki Nerajec (SLN), at the coordinates 45.5096867, 15.1864282. Once outside of the vans, the sickness faded soon.

Meanwhile, the officer who had taken the son, asked him to show them where and how the group had crossed the border. By using the proper road instead of the way through the forest which the group had taken, they reached the river within some 30 minutes. The officer asked the teenager:

"Would you like to stay in Slovenia?"

When the boy replied yes, he asked him why.

"Because Slovenia is in the Schengen area and the economic and the work situation is better than in Bosnia."

The officer answered with ok. The teenager asked him:

"What can we do so that we can stay in Slovenia?"

The officer just replied:

“ You can’t stay in Slovenia .”

The teenager asked him several times why they could not stay, but each time the officer just answered:

“ I don’t know .”

Then, they took the teenager to a police car, a Volvo, and he was driven to the same police station as the rest of the group where he was finally reunited with his parents.

In the police station, the people on the move was given fast food. Then, one by one was asked a series of questions, i.e. where they come from. The father of the reporting family told the officer that he wanted to stay in Slovenia. They asked him:

“ How do you want to live here?”

He replied:

“I will work.”

After that, they just said:

“ No, you just go back!”

After a while, the officers took all their bags, put them into a plastic bag and searched everyone, including the children. They also took away their money and phones.

“ They took everything except the clothes we were wearing. They took even our shoes and gave us slippers instead. ”

All belongings that contained metal, such as their razors, nail clippers, scissors, needles and earrings, were thrown in a bin.

The father of the reporting family then had to sign three or four papers, all written in Slovenian. There was a translator present, however he did not explain what was written on the papers. The father didn't know why the translator didn't give any explanations. He also didn't get a copy of the papers he had signed.

After around three hours at the first police station near Veliki Nerajec, the group of 13 was told to enter two vans again. Inside the van, they again had to vomit.

They now drove for around 20 minutes, until they reached another police station, where each family had to share one room with a toilet inside. The room was warm, they were given food, blankets and sheets. They stayed there for one night.

In the morning, two cars brought them to a Croatian border crossing on a highway where no river was visible. The Slovenian officers returned their bags and handed the group over to the Croatian authorities who were wearing dark blue uniforms. They told the whole group of 13 persons to enter one van together and to take their luggage with them. During the following transfer, they had to vomit again.

After approximately one hour driving, the van stopped at a Croatian police station at an unknown location. The two employees inside were wearing civil clothes and told the people on the move to write down their names on a paper and to hold it in front of their chest. The officers then took photos of them. This was done one by one, also with the children.

After this short stop, they continued their trip in the van. Again there was vomiting. The father of the reporting family described this transfer as follows:

“ I just wished that nobody would speak to me, my head was hurting so badly and I was feeling so sick. I was feeling as if I would be dying. ”

His son reported that there were no seats with seat belts in the van, just a board at the wall where they could sit. Some children and also his mother fell down on the van's floor.

“ We were like zombies. I did not feel anything else but vomit and headache. ”

After some 1,5 hours driving, the van stopped again, this time at the border between Croatia and Bosnia, east of Velika Kladusa. It was in the mountains, nearby some villages, and there was just a small road for agricultural vehicles. The respondent located the push-back to have taken place around the coordinates 45.218623, 16.011921, near Veliki Obljaj (HRV). Once they arrived there, their phones and money was returned, but not the metallic items which the Slovenian officers had put into the bin. The Croatian officers said:

“Hajde! Ideš, marš!”

On their way to Velika Kladusa, they noticed dozens of broken phones on the roadside. After an estimated 25 kilometers of walking, the enfeebled mother of the reporting family fell down. It was already dark, but they were able to reach a restaurant and asked for help. The people inside called the Bosnian authorities, who then took them to a hospital and acted friendly. After some two hours in the hospital, the mother was given a serum and the family went to the Miral camp in Velika Kladuša. From there, the IOM brought them by car to the camp in Bihac, where they arrived around 3 am on March 13.

In the end of the interview, the mother of the reporting family stressed that she will never forget this experience:

“ Our deportation from Slovenia is one of the worst experiences I have ever had. This journey is a very difficult memory for me. ”

The father nodded and added:

“ And nonetheless, we will have to try again. We do not have another choice. Where else should we stay? ”

"DOES THE POLICE HAVE THE RIGHT TO BEAT ME UP?"

Date and time: March 13, 2019 00:00

Location: Vrata, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.32279146317393 , 14.729168591481653

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 4 person(s), age: 28,30,21,21 , from: Morocco, Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, gunshots

Police involved: It were four Croatian officers with two cars, both white and of the size of a VW Polo, all wearing dark blue uniforms with the emblem of the Croatian flag on the upper arm, one of them had a binocular hanging around his neck.

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: [Re:]ports Sarajevo

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of four men left Bihac (BIH) on March 8, 2019, around 5 pm. After four to five hours, they crossed the border and entered Croatia. The group continued walking for four days through rural areas, forests, hills, mountains. They even saw a bear with a cub. The group was equipped with a tent and sleeping bags. On the fourth day, they had to cross a main street to enter another forest. It was in the region before Vrata (HRV), where the authorities awaited them. It were four officers with two cars, both white and of the size of a VW Polo, all wearing dark blue uniforms with the emblem of the Croatian flag on the upper arm, one of them had a binocular hanging around his neck. The respondent supposed, that they might have been tracked with night vision binoculars as it seemed as if the officers already expected the people on the move stepping out of the forest at exactly this spot.

„ Maybe this street is generally under surveillance . ”

It was around midnight when they got caught.

„ The police men screamed ‘ Stop! Stop! ‘ and shot two times in the air.“

The group of four stopped and were ordered to wait. The only thing the officers asked, was how many they were in total. After around ten minutes, a big white van arrived. Before they had to enter the van, they were frisked but nothing was taken from them. The driver's space and the backspace of the van was separated by a little window which was also the only window for the backspace. The driver and one other officer were sitting in the front of the van. When they started driving, they also switched on the air conditioning on a very cold level. It cooled down the van during the whole three-hour drive. The group repeatedly knocked on the window to ask the officers to turn off the air condition, but they didn't react.

„ Stop klima [air condition]! Stop klima! We shouted many, many times , but they did not switch it off.“

Around 4 am, the Croatian police van arrived approximately 300 meters away from the first houses of the city of Velika Kladuša (BIH), where some more officers were waiting for them. When the door of the van was opened, they shouted:

„ Hayde, hayde one by one come out!“

The respondent was the first one to get off the van. Like an escort, officers were standing to both sides. Three of them punched the interviewee quite hard on the left side and his back and beat him with batons. When he tried to escape the attack, the fourth officer ran after him and punched him with his fist in the face, so one glass of his glasses broke. His friends got off the van after him. All of them tried to run as fast as they could, but couldn't escape the beating. The last member of the group got badly punched on the back (see photo). The whole time the officers were shouting:

„ Go Bosnia! Hayde! Hayde!“

According to the respondent, the officers insulted them using Croatian expletives, laughing extremely loud at them and trying to harass them. He also recalled their appearance. One was around 45 years old, the second a heavy set man and the others were around 30 years old, tall and strong.

After some meters of running, the group reached a very small river, crossed it and walked to the IOM Camp Miral outside Velika Kladuša.

In the end the respondent asked the person conducting the interview:

“Does the police have the right to beat me up?”

He explained, that this violence by Croatian officers happens so frequently, that it somehow became normal.

"THEY TREATED US LIKE ANIMALS, THEY WERE BEATING US, AND WE WERE LAYING ON THE GROUND."

Date and time: March 18, 2019 00:00

Location: Maljvac, Croatia, near Maljvac

Coordinates: 45.19729580140959 , 15.789128335762257

Push-back from: Slovenia

Push-back to: Croatia, Bosnia

Demographics: 10 person(s), age: 20-34 , from: Morocco, Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, insulting, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 6 Slovenian officers, 3 Croatian border officers

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, fingerprints taken, photos taken, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

On March 9, 2019, a group of ten men left Velika Kladusa (BIH) and walked to Croatia, close to Maljevac. From there they continued walking day and night towards Slovenia. After nine days, the group crossed the border to Slovenia.

In the morning on March 18, the group crossed the Kupa's river and reached Metlika, exhausted, wet and hungry. At some point a local recognized them, took his phone and called someone. A few minutes later, the group was picked up on the road by six Slovenian officers.

The officers drove the group with a van to the police station of Metlika. Their personal belongings and bags were taken from them. The whole group asked for asylum but the officer answered:

"You won't stay here!"

Then they were put in a cell for one hour, before their fingerprints and photos were taken.

Afterwards the group received their personal items back and six officers drove them in a van to the Croatian border where they got handed over to Croatian border officers. The officers asked again for their personal belongings. All phones, IOM Cards and all the money was confiscated and the group had to enter another van. By then all of them haven't had eaten anything for one day and were in the van without knowing where they were going. They asked again for asylum but the police officer pretended not to understand.

After a few hours of driving, at nightfall, the van stopped.

“It was dark, and they asked us to go out from the van two by two.”

Each time, when two people got off, the doors were closed behind them. The others inside the van could hear the voices and screams of their friends being beaten several times by the officers. This procedure remained the same, two were taken out of the van and three officers were waiting outside to beat them up with batons. The individuals couldn't see the officer's faces as they were wearing masks.

“They treated us like animals, they were beating us, and we were laying on the ground.”

One of the respondents described that while he was laying on the ground, one of the officers took a knife and slit his jacket and trousers (see photo).

Afterwards, one officer gave them a plastic bag with their broken phones inside. He kept around € 100, all cigarettes and the IOM Cards.

They were close to the border, so one officer ordered them to run towards Bosnia, while another one shot in the air with a gun, shouting:

“Never come back here!”

The individuals found themselves 30 km from Velika Kladusa and walked back for hours through the dark without the GPS or lights.

“We came back exhausted, without money to buy food, without phones to call our families..., we are not animals, we just want to live a real life!”

The interview was conducted in cooperation with *Thé et Café pour les réfugiés* .

"THE INDIVIDUAL HEARD THE OFFICER FIRING ABOUT 10 WARNING SHOTS AS THEY FLED"

Date and time: March 21, 2019 06:00

Location: Donji Vaganac, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Coordinates: 44.912025019223854 , 15.726393175062185

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 6 person(s), age: 17-25 , from: Morocco, Algeria

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, gunshots

Police involved: Three male Croatian police officers wearing dark blue uniforms. Each officer had a pistol and a baton. One Croatian police jeep.

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: [Re:]ports Sarajevo

ORIGINAL REPORT

At around 6 am on March 21, 2019, the group of six men were walking along a dirt road, big enough for vehicles passing. After they crossed the border, visible through a large sign saying "Welcome to Croatia", they continued on the road. After around 20 minutes, they saw one Croatian police officer. He was wearing a dark blue uniform without cap and carried a pistol and a baton. One of the individuals instantly raised his hands, saying:

"No problem, I go Bosnia."

When they noticed the police officer making a call on his radio device, they ran away to the direction they came from. The individual heard the officer firing about 10 warning shots as they fled. They ran for 10 minutes and managed to cross the border to the Bosnian side, when a white jeep with the Croatian police insignia followed them across the border. The car stopped and a different officer than the first one got off the car, yelling:

"Stop! Stop!"

The three police men brought the group back to the Croatian side of the border. At this point the interviewee remembers one police man beating them while one sat in the car and another police man observed the situation. They hit them for about five minutes in their arms and legs. The police screamed:

"Go back to Bosnia."

So the six of them ran away again to the Bosnian side. This time, the Croatian police didn't follow them. The group walked for 12 km to a town they remembered as Rujnica and slept in the forest near the town until nightfall.

"WHEN THE 19-YEAR-OLD MOROCCAN TRIED TO CROSS IT, HE WAS CARRIED AWAY BY THE RIVER."

Date and time: March 23, 2019 09:00

Location: Fara, Slovenia, near Fara

Coordinates: 45.4769948 , 14.882301299999995

Push-back from: Slovenia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 7 person(s), age: 19-28 , from: Morocco, Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: threatening with guns

Police involved: 9 Slovenian officers and at least seven Croatian officers. Only one of the officers was wearing a uniform, the others were dressed in civilian clothes.

Taken to a police station?: yes

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of seven, two Algerians and five Moroccans, all male, went on game from Velika Kladusa (BIH). After walking through Croatia for 10 days, they arrived close to the Slovenian border. On March 11, 2019, around 5 pm, they entered Slovenia. Near the border there is a river that they had to cross.

When the 19-year-old Moroccan tried to cross it, he was carried away by the river. He couldn't get out anymore and drowned in front of his friend's eyes without them being able to help him.

Shocked by the incident, they nevertheless decided to continue walking. When they were walking on a road, a citizen spotted them. Shortly after, around 9.00 pm, two Slovenian officers, a man and a woman, both in green uniforms and carrying big guns, stopped them. The officers pointed with their guns at them and told them to get down on their knees. Then, they made a call and soon after, two other officers in blue uniforms arrived.

The officers asked them with how many people they were traveling.

"We said we are six people."

But the officers didn't believe that they were only a group of six. So the people on the move told them of the tragic death of their friend. However, the officers didn't want to listen to this and refused to go to the spot where their friend had died. During the argument another officer arrived who told the group to show him where they entered the Slovenian border. They had to enter a police van and were driven to the point where they entered Slovenia. Here one of them had to get off the van.

“The police take a photo of him in the border.”

Afterwards he had to enter the van once more and the group were driven to the police station in Kočevje (SVN).

Inside the police station they had to stay in a big room with two toilets and were handed out blankets. There was one male officer working on a computer and one female officer dealing with papers. In addition, two officers were responsible to observing the people on the move.

They requested asylum, but one officer answered:

“Why don't you make asylum in Bosnia?”

One by one they brought them out of the big room to take a portrait photo, fingerprints and information on how they moved from Bosnia to Slovenia. During the interviews with the police there was no official translator present. Instead, one of the individuals who spoke English was told to translate for the others. After the interviews which took place from 10 pm till 2 am, the individuals were given five papers that said that they had to pay a penalty fee of €500 for illegally crossing the border. They were forced to sign the papers, which were all written in Slovenian. Afterwards the papers were taken back from the police. Then, they spent the rest of the night in the police station.

“They gave us food and also water.”

Around 8 to 9 am, the officers told them to enter a car one by one. They were brought to the official Croatian border. Here they were handed over to the Croatian authorities, who also took photos with their names on it.

They had to switch to another Croatian police van. Only one of the officers present was wearing a uniform, the others were dressed in civilian clothes. Then they were brought to another police station in Croatia, where they had to wait inside the van. After around 40 minutes, another group of people on the move, six individuals from Pakistan, entered the van.

Then, they left to yet the third Croatian police station, where they had to wait inside the van for about 15 minutes. Finally, they were brought to the Bosnian border and deported into the Bosnian woods. Seven male officers were present, all wearing blue uniforms and carrying weapons. One by one they were allowed to get off the van. The officers gave them a bag with all the phones and power banks that were previously taken from them by the Slovenian police. Then the police told them to go by Bosnia:

“Hurry up!”

"WE WERE SO SCARED, WE CANNOT REMEMBER."

Date and time: March 30, 2019 00:00

Location: Glibodol, Croatia, near Glibodol

Coordinates: 45.0061529126493 , 15.353819407046444

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 6 person(s), age: 25-38 , from: Morocco, Tunisia

Minors involved? No

Violence used: insulting, threatening with guns, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings

Police involved: 'a lot'

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

On Monday, March 25, 2019, the group of six, three Tunisians and three Moroccans, left Velika Kladusa (BIH) to cross the border to Croatia. Due to heavy rain, they had to wait two days near the border and continued walking afterwards for four days through the forest.

On March 30, around 9.30 am, the group was stopped in the forest near Glibodol (HRV) by a man and a woman in hunting clothes. The woman had a firearm which looked like a sniper or hunting gun and the man hold a smaller firearm that looked like a 9 mm gun. The six of them wanted to run away, but the man shot two times in the air with his gun, so they decided to stop.

"They scared us and we stopped."

The two people took the phones and power banks from the people on the move, broke them and threw them on the ground. They further took the food the six were carrying with them, and burned their sleeping bags and backpacks. Afterwards, they ordered them to start walking, following the road, telling them:

"Go back and don't get back here."

They entered a car and followed the group of six, while pointing one of their firearms towards them. The woman took a photo of the group walking on the road. They drove behind the group for around seven kilometers and then turned around.

The people on the move decided to search for a police officer because they didn't have the resources anymore to keep on traveling. The two people who had stopped them neither identify themselves as authorities nor did they hand them over to any authorities. After walking for a bit, the group saw a police car standing still on the road. They approached it and found two Croatian officers inside, wearing green uniforms with the word 'police' written

on their shoulders. The officers asked them if they had any phones, power banks or money with them, so they explained what had happened to them. The officer asked if they could remember the license plate of the car the man and woman were driving.

"We were so scared, we cannot remember."

The officers called another van to pick up the group of six.

This van first brought them to the police station in Blata (HRV). Afterwards, some other officers brought them with a different car around 20 km to another police station near Bihac, where already other people on the move were waiting. They were brought altogether to a big garage-like building, where they had to stay between 2.5 and three hours. Now the group of six was with about 20 Pakistani people on the move. The police brought another 18 people from Afghanistan. The police asked the Afghans to open a phone with its code, but nobody wanted to do so as all locations where saved in that phone. So the police brought the Afghans out of the garage and then the rest of them could hear them screaming. Afterwards, the Afghans returned, beaten up by the officers.

During the night, all people on the move were then brought together to the border and dropped near Lohovo. They then went back to Bosnia.

"THEY SMELL OUT OF THEIR MOUTHS FROM ALCOHOL."

Date and time: April 10, 2019 01:00

Location: Lohovo, Croatia, Croatian/Bosnian border next to Lohovo

Coordinates: 44.72772 , 15.91557

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 23, 24, 27 , from: Morocco

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, insulting, gunshots, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 6 male Croatian officers, 1 female Croatian officer, all with guns on their belt and batons on their belts or in their hands. Later 4 drunken Croatian police officers with batons and guns in their hands

Taken to a police station?: no

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: no translator present, denial of access to toilets, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of three left Izačić on April 9, 2019. When they spotted a truck with a Slovenian license plate, they crawled under it and clinged to the underside of it. After some hours, they arrived in Zagreb in a big logistic center. When the truck stopped, the three persons ran away, but one of them fell down and four security guards ran towards them, grabbing the one who stumbled. While fixating the individual on the ground, they called the authorities. The two friends of him saw what happened and decided to return to him. 10 minutes later, six male and one female Croatian officer arrived and took the three of them to a van. They drove for one hour inside the city of Zagreb, and then brought them directly to the Bosnian border. They didn't get any documents to sign, nor did the police take any fingerprints or offer medical treatment or food and water. There was no translator present at any time. In general the police officers didn't really communicate with them beside laughing at them and insulting them, so the people on the move didn't really have a chance to express their need for asylum.

When they got off the van at the Bosnian border near Lohovo, one officer took photos with his smartphone of each of their faces and asked them about their country of birth. Then the officers searched their bodies and took everything from them, their phones, money, power banks and cables. Afterwards, four drunken officers without face cover started beating them hard with batons and kicked them while laughing.

"They smell out of their mouths from alcohol."

The three individuals tried to cover their heads with their hands and arms, scared the officers would kill them.

"The most important is to protect your head, because when they hit you on the temple, it can be lethal."

One of the individuals who tried to protect himself with his hand from the batons, got a bad injury on the wrist (see photo). It felt like almost broken. One officer also had his badge on the chest turned inside out, so that it wasn't visible anymore. After some time the officers laughed and one of them took out his gun, shot twice in the air and yelled:

“ Go, march! Run!”

They were able to stand up and run away to the Bosnian side of the border. After, they had to walk about 14 km to Bihać in the middle of the night through the forest, injured on arms, legs and knees.

"WHY ARE [YOU] HERE? WE DON'T LIKE YOU, WE DON'T WANT YOU, GO AWAY FROM HERE."

Date and time: April 13, 2019 12:00

Location: Rijeka

Coordinates: 45.443605435420714 , 15.10231226801136

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 13 person(s), age: 4, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15, 25-45 , from: Afghanistan, Pakistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, insulting, threatening with guns, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: Special croatian police officers

Taken to a police station?: yes

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group left from Bihać and crossed into Croatia on foot during the early morning hours of April 1st. They walked for very long hours throughout the days, starting walking at around 6:00 am stopping to sleep at around midnight. After 10 of transit, the group arrived to the Rijeka area and moved north from there.

After a total of 14 days of journey, at around midday on April 13th, the group was around one away from the Croatian/Slovenian border by walking when they were apprehended by two Croatian authorities, wearing green uniforms similar to those worn by the Ministry of the Interior's *Specijalna Policija*. Soon-after, the officers called backup and eight other officers later arrived to the location.

The group of officers was composed of two females and eight males. It was snowing at the time and the police officers gave gloves to all the group-members. They placed the children first inside of one the van while the women and men had to walk for 2 km to the other van. The group was then taken to a police station in Rijeka at around 7:00 pm.

In the station, the officers searched the group and asked directly for money.

'I started saying we don't have any money and they say you have money give me money.'

One of the male group-members had 1000 EUR hidden in his pants which the officers found after searching him. The respondent described the officers as saying 'You told me that you have no money how you have money?' and then giving this group-member 4 or 5 snaps with a baton and kicking him. The respondent recalled that this group-member was sick after this incident and spent one week in a hospital in BiH after returning. The officers in the station were then

described as forcing the male group-members to undress before searching them again. If they refused, one of the officers would beat them with his baton until they obeyed. Once finished with the men, the officers were described as then searching the children and later the female group-members, also forcing them to undress to their underwear. Money, phones and power-banks were taken from everyone.

The group stayed in this police station overnight, during which they were only given food in the morning. The respondent recalled that this food was not very good and was not enough considering that at this point they had not eaten for more than two days. He recalled that they let the children eat most of the food.

In the station, the group had their pictures and names registered the next morning. After this, two officers appeared with the group-member's sleeping bags and began to rip them with a knife, throwing them into a garbage bag in front of the group.

'We said please no because we have children we need those things for sleeping in the refugee camp.'

Around 12:00 pm, three policemen took the group to two different vans.

'He used a lot of bad words and said [why are her? we don't like you, we don't want you, go away from here.] They pushed us, they didn't care if it were men, women or children they were just pushing everyone and saying [go, go away, we don't want you here] and they put us inside of the van and said [stay here and shut up otherwise we will beat you]'.

The vans took the migrants to another police station where they were forced to sign a paper and after which they drove for two or three hours before arriving at a location on the Bosnian-Croatian around 20 km away from the city of Velika Kladuša (BiH). The group was left at the border at around 4:00 pm after which time they walked to the city, reaching it at around 1:00 am. They went to Miral camp and asked to stay there for the night, but the IOM representative at the entrance at the time replied that the camp was full and that it was not possible to take them and only gave them blankets. In the morning, after sleeping in the street in front of the camp, the families called the Bira camp in Bihać where they were registered and van came to pick them up and take them there.

"PLEASE, PLEASE, THE BABY IS SICK, LOOK AT HER! SHE NEEDS TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL"

Date and time: April 15, 2019 00:00

Location: Tuzi, Montenegro

Coordinates: 42.3615146 , 19.3383147

Push-back from: Montenegro

Push-back to: Albania

Demographics: 5 person(s), age: 5 - 35 years old , from: Afghanistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: no violence used, threatening with guns, pushing them on the shoulder in order to move

Police involved: 3 „strong, tall“ officers in dark blue uniforms, 3 different officers with the same dark blue uniforms and one big dark-brown dog, one white „prison“ van, without windows. The back was separated from the driver's area through a metal – wall, with one small opening to the driver's seat.

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, no translator present

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of four men and one minor crossed the Albanian-Montenegrin border not far from the Hani i Hoti border crossing (Albania), heading towards Tuzi, (MNE) with the goal of reaching the camp in Spuz (MNE). In the evening of the April 15th, after 10 hours of travel, they passed the Tuzi (MNE) train station and continued to walk towards Podgorica.

At this point, the group was approached by three police officers. The officers wore dark blue uniforms. The respondent described the officers as shouting in Montenegrin before pointing their guns at the group. The officers pointed with their hands to the ground, and the group understood to lay down.

“They screamed ‘Stop, Stop!’ at us and showed us to sleep on the ground. The baby started screaming, we told her: It’s okay, it’s okay.”

“The police looked strong, scary. When you see them, you feel fear.”

The officers ordered the group to walk back to the Tuzi train station and escorted them on foot for around 10 minutes until they reached the station. The officers walked behind them.

On the way, the group told the officers that the child in their group needed to go to a hospital. The 5-year-old was exhausted from the long walk and had to be carried, as she was not able to walk anymore. The officers replied: “We bring you to police station, to office, we take your fingerprints and then we bring you to camp. There is doctor.”

“This made us happy. We told them we were very hungry and thirsty and so tired from the long walk.”

At the police station, which is located inside the Tuzi train station, the group was told to sit on chairs in a corner and wait. In this police station, there were many officers present. One officer gave the group a small bottle of water. When the bottle was empty, they wanted to give it back to the officers in order to put it in the trash, but the officers told them to keep the bottle. "This irritated us. Why should we keep it? We will go to camp, there we will not need it."

After around ten minutes of waiting, an officer approached the group telling them to follow him outside. A white van was parked outside of the station. The officer told the group: "Get inside the car!". Three different officers than those who had originally approached the group, but with the same blue uniforms sat in front of the van. There was also a "big dark-brown" dog in the front the car with the officers.

The front-seats were divided from the back of the car with a metal divider. There was a small window in the divider. In the back there were no seats and the group sat on the floor. There were no windows in the back.

The group was loaded in the van and driven approximately 20 minutes to the Albanian border.

"It was really so strange, this was a car with which the police brings people to prison. I asked my friend to check our GPS location. We were shocked when we saw that the car drove towards Albania. I told to the police: 'Please, please, the baby is sick, look at her! She needs to go to the hospital, she will die!' One officer said: 'Okay, wait one minute.'"

The van stopped in an area without houses at the Albanian border. It was described by the group as "a village without houses, near a forest". When the van stopped, the officers and the dog went out of the car. The dog was held on a leash.

One officer opened the side door and told the group to get out. The group got out, but they did not take their bags. An officer shouted: "Take your bags!" and grabbed one member of the group roughly by the shoulder. The group took their bags and sat down, as they were exhausted and hungry.

The officers grabbed the members of the group by the arms and pulled them up. They shouted: "Go, go! This way Albania!" The officers followed the group for a bit, then left them.

"We didn't know where we are going. The baby was so tired. She was like a dead body. We passed many ways until we found a well-paved road."

The group continued the journey on the Albanian side, in order to try to cross into Montenegro the following night. They walked until 6:00 pm, waited until 9:00 pm and crossed again into Montenegro. They reached Podgorica the next morning around 6:30 am. On their way, they adults took turns in carrying the child, because she was not able to walk anymore.

"The girl was crying, but we lied to her, we told her, 10 minutes, 10 minutes, we will reach soon."

Early in the morning the group arrived in the Camp in Spuz, MNE. They had to wait around five hours in front of the camp. They were not provided food or water during this time.

Once allowed into camp, the group was nearly divided into different rooms, one member of the group said: "We are a family, we don't want to be separated!", and the person responsible replied: "Here we decide, not you!"

"On this journey, we saw a lot of hardship, and then we receive this kind of treatment, it is really not nice. It made us really sad."

"ME AND THE MINORS ARE WITNESSES OF ALL THE VIOLENCE THAT HAPPENED IN THE PAST, AND THIS SCARS WILL STAY INSIDE OURSELVES."

Date and time: April 18, 2019 04:30

Location: Bosnian/Croatian Border at the River "Glina" next to "Crni Potok"

Coordinates: 45.217018 , 15.857698

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 5 person(s), age: 14-19, 24, 32 , from: Syria, Iraq

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: pushing people to the ground, insulting, gunshots, forcing to undress, reckless driving

Police involved: 3 police cars with 7 policemen and one dog

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group consisted of five male individuals: a 32-year-old Palestinian-Syrian male, a 19-year-old male from Iraq, and three Kurdish-Syrian brothers aged 14, 17, and 24 years old. The eldest Kurdish-Syrian brother is mentally disabled.

The group of five left from Velika Kladuša (BiH) and crossed into Croatia before walking for around for three days. On the third day, at around 1:30 am, the group was attempting to sleep in a secluded area in a forest when they were detected by Croatian authorities. The respondents described feeling as if they were in a movie since helicopter hovered above them.

"We aren't criminals, we are just refugees, we have our food and some blankets and want to continue our trip towards a safe place where we can have asylum."

Shortly after, a very bright light was pointed at them and a voice on a loudspeaker rang out in English, saying: *"Raise your hands and don't move."* The group-members raised their hands above their heads for about 5 minutes with the helicopter above them until a group of Croatian police cars arrived to their location. There were three police cars, with seven policemen and one dog in total. One of the officers was described as being called "Marco", and appeared to the respondents as being the leader of the operation. The interviewee described this lead officer as being of average height and being around 40 years old.

The respondent communicated to this officer the ages and nationalities of all of the group-members, voicing that they wanted to seek asylum. He also explained to officer the previous injury which the 13-year-old minor had experience during a previous transit attempt which had required surgery (a result of smoke intoxication). The respondent explained to the officer that there was no adequate medical treatment for this injury as a refugee in Bosnia and that this was why they need to continue. The lead officer told the respondent "No" and that they should leave and not come back again.

“When we said to the police that we need asylum, we just received the answer that they don’t want refugees here anymore.”

Because it was dark and the police officers positioned themselves in front of the lights of their cars, the group-members were not able to notice more specific information and details about the operating officers. Every group-member was made to undress and was searched for weapons, drugs, phones and money.

The respondent begged one of the officers to allow the 13-year-old minor to put his clothes back on as he was worried about the effect that the cold might have on his lung injury. In response, the officer called them “son of a bitch” and “motherfucker”. The respondent described this officer as trying to undress the 13-year-old with a police baton and pushing him back after he was undressed. This process of searching the belongings of the group-members was conducted very thoroughly and lasted for 2 hours. One of the officers threatened the respondent during the search of his bag with the words: *“We will talk later”*, since the police officer had received a voice message via radio on his shoulder saying *“Hajde, hajde”*.

After this, the police officers hurried and ordered the group to enter a prisoner van. After a 20-minute ride they found themselves in a place in the woods with about 60 other apprehended people-in-transit. At this location, the officers put an additional ten people inside the back of the prisoner van. They were then driven with five other vans to a point in the woods along the Bosnian-Croatian border where a small river (the Glina) marks the border. The distance between the prisoner vans and the small river was about 30 meters. The police officers forced about 60 to 70 people (from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Morocco and Algeria) to jump 1.5 meters down into this small river. When all the refugees were out of the prisoner vans, the police officers ordered them to stand in one big group together. One officer shot a bullet in the air screamed: *“Hajde, Hajde!”* Everybody fell into the river and were wet afterwards. There were many Croatian police officers (so many that the interviewee could not provide a concrete number) which stood on the other side of the river, screaming *“Go back to Bosnia”*. The respondent remarked that one of the police officers wore a helmet with a red light on it.

The original group of five were not beaten, however the 13-year-old was pushed by one officer during the process of the search and all of them were pushed when they had to cross the river at the border.

“We don’t have injuries from this push-back, but I am here now since almost 1 year and 14 times pushed back. So me and the minors are witnesses of all the violence that happened in the past, and this scars will stay inside ourselves.”

During the mass-push-back which the group was part of, the respondent described witnessing the pushing, kicking and beating of other individuals

“They beat them, like someone beats his horse. Where exactly, they don’t care, on the head, in the face, on your bag and your arms, they just want to make you scared.”

The respondent remarked that he believed that the Croatian officers were intentional in the way that they communicated violence onto people-in-transit:

“And also the Croatian police is not stupid, they don’t make you visible injuries anymore, now they treat you all the time in such a humiliating way that mark stays inside of you. They know what they do.”

The push-back location was near to Velika Kladuša and after 2 hours of walking they reached the city. During this push-back no fingerprints were taken, no medical treatment happened, no papers were signed, and no pictures were taken.

Towards the end of the interview, the respondent remarked that in his experience, the violent enforcement of EU borders had forced him and his friends into more dangerous transit behavior:

“If we wouldn’t have to do the games and put ourselves in danger because of the laws of the European governments and the treatment of the Croatian police, we wouldn’t have to face so much suffering. At the game where X almost died, I really believed in humanity and thought that the Croatian police would bring us to a hospital, but I was disappointed.”

"TELL YOUR FRIENDS WE KILL PEOPLE HERE."

Date and time: April 28, 2019 16:00

Location: Tovarnik train station, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.1550923832336 , 19.148788644722686

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Serbia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 29 years old , from: Morocco, Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, insulting, threatening with guns

Police involved: 10-12 Croatian intervention police officers, 1 police van

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

On the 28th of April, "G." a man from Algeria and his two friends (two men from Morocco) attempted to transit Croatia by entering a train in Šid, Serbia where they had been living on the streets for many days.

At around 4:00 pm, as they were crossing the checkpoint of the Croatian border in Tovarnik (HR), police officers dressed in uniforms consistent with those worn by Croatian intervention police saw them. "G." recalled being apprehended by a group of 10 to 12 officers in total – including two who were wearing different, pale blue uniforms.

In this moment, "G." ran to escape from the authorities, as he was "too afraid". One of the policemen then drove a van – a Mercedes Sprinter- that was parked behind the train, until he caught up with him. When the officer reached "G.", he pointed a gun toward his head, and cocked it. "G." then stopped running, after which point three other Intervention police officers joined the one already present, put him on the ground by force, and began to beat him with their batons and their boots on the head, the ribs, the legs and the stomach. "G." recalled that in this moment he was sure they would kill him. After some time, they stopped and ordered him to go back to Serbia.

When he started to walk toward the Serbian border (which was only around ten meters away), one of the officers followed him and struck him again with a large wooden branch, even as "G." was already badly injured and was struggling to walk. Before he crossed the border, the policemen told him:

"Tell your friends we kill people here. Don't come here. Tell your friends we kill people."

"G." recalled that while during his exchange with the officers, his two friends who were caught by the police in the train were brought behind the train station, out of the public eye, and were then beaten violently by the rest of the authorities from the group. The friends were similarly told by the Croatian intervention police officers to spread the message that they would kill people who try to cross the border.

During the many hours to walk before reaching Sid again, G. recalled that he thought he would die. Die from the pain, the injuries, the weakness and the dehydration, since before all this they had to hide for more that 12 hours in a train.

"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.

"'EVERY CHANGE OF CAR THEY BEAT.' THREE DIFFERENT GROUPS PUSHED BACK TOGETHER PART 2"

OLYMPUS DIGITAL CAMERA

Date and time: May 4, 2019 15:00

Location: Vremski Britof

Coordinates: 45.6573806 , 14.028732999999988

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Croatia, Bosnia

Demographics: 2 person(s), age: 21 and 22 , from: Afghanistan

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pouring water over one's head, threatening with guns, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: slovenian police officers, slovenian police cars, croatian police officers, croatian police cars, 1 croatian police van

Taken to a police station?: yes

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The two men started their journey from Šid (SRB) where they hid under a train in order to enter one of its containers during the night. For two whole days they remained in the containers, being taken all the way to Slovenia. In Slovenia, they left the containers and started doing the rest of the travel by foot.

The men walked for around six hours in the forest until the data on their phones ended and, without being able to consult maps any more, they got lost. After a while wandering around they arrived to Vremski Britof. In the village they inquired about their location to several people. The respondent inferred that these individuals later called the police to catch them. Two young Slovenian policemen in blue uniforms arrived around 3:00 pm.

'They came and I spoke asylum, but they no asylum, and they started searching my bag and putting water on my friend and beating him in the face.'

The officers took the men's phones and powerbanks and drove them to a police station. They stayed in the station for around two hours. Their names were registered and their pictures were taken. In this location, the men asked once more for asylum but their request was again ignored.

They were driven for around five hours to another station. The location of the place was completely unknown to the men because they were put in the dark back part of the vehicle. In this second station, the man were told to sign a paper.

'They asked us if we know asylum, then we should write our name sign there. They say that they were asylum papers, but I don't think they were'

The men were kept there for around eight hours, being put in a dark room without any access to water or food.

In the morning, at around 8:30 am, the two men were put in a police car with two officers and driven for around 30 min to the Croatian border. At the border, they were told to get out of the vehicle. Two Croatian police officers with blue uniforms and a badge on their shoulder were waiting for them and requesting once more for their signature on a paper. The two group-members could not understand what was written on the papers, since it was in Croatian. The men were transferred to a Croatian police car and driven for less than an hour to a Croatian police station. Again the respondent had no notion of the location of the place, since it was dark inside the vehicle.

In this last station, the respondent described being forced to sign another document and then later beaten when asking for asylum. *'They beat me in the face with their hands.'* remarked the respondent while showing the bruised and swollen left side of his face and saying he was embarrassed of it. They were kept in a room with three beds until nighttime, at which point the policemen took them to a van where there were already ten other men (the men referred to in two other reports from this month – **1** , **2**) and four police officers with blue uniforms.

In the last vehicle, two of the officers also hit the group (which was now 12 men,) after they asked about their location. The men were left, after a two hours journey, at the Bosnian-Croatian border at around 3:00 am of the 6th of May, near Velika Kladuša. They walked back to the city all together. A number of the men presented severe injuries.

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05/05/2019

"'EVERY CHANGE OF CAR THEY BEAT.' - THREE DIFFERENT GROUPS PUSHED BACK TOGETHER PART 1"

OLYMPUS DIGITAL CAMERA

Date and time: May 5, 2019 15:30

Location: 10km inside Slovenia, near to Sinji Vrh

Coordinates: 45.452846883100605 , 15.202590737916353

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Croatia, Bosnia

Demographics: 9 person(s), age: 25-50 , from: Pakistan

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 4 slovenian military officers, croatian police officers, croatian police vans

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, photos taken, personal information taken, papers signed, no translator present, denial of access to toilets, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group started their journey from the city of Bihać (BiH) on the 29th of April at 7:00 pm. After several hours of walking, they crossed the Bosnian-Croatian border and continued walking through the forest.

After seven days of walking, the men crossed the Slovenian border, and after walked around 10 km further inside the country were stopped by four Slovenian authorities who were described to be wearing uniforms similar to those worn by military officers. It was around 3:30 pm at this point. The officers were described as threatening the group-members with their firearms, telling them to stop, and then searching them. The authorities then made a call on the radio, and drove them to the border where a Croatian police van was already waiting.

Four Croatian policemen, wearing blue uniforms, were described as being physically violent with the group, striking them with batons, while the military officers were still present and watching the scene. After this, the group-members were put in the van and driven for two hours to a police station in Croatia.

In the police station, the group-members' names were registered and their pictures were taken. They were then told to sign a paper, although the contents of this paper was unknown to them since it was in Croatian. The men described again being beaten by the officers, who struck them with batons and fists. Their phones, powerbanks, money, and several other personal items were taken at this point as well.

'One man, he was about 45 years old, he had glasses, the police took his glasses and broke them'

The group was kept in the station for somewhere between six and seven hours without any access to food or water.

In the evening, the group-members were led by either four or five Croatian police officers, who wore blue uniforms, into the dark back part of a vehicle. This vehicle driven for relatively short amount of time before stopping in another station where the officers brought an Iranian man into the vehicle (referred to in a **separate report**). After an hour of more driving, they stopped again and changed into another van where two afghani were already present (referred to in a **separate report**). The group described that they were beaten with the use of batons while being transferred to the other vehicle. Two of the officers also hit the group, of now twelve men, after they asked about their location.

The men were left, after a two hours journey, at the Bosnian-Croatian border at around 3:00 am of the 6th of May, near Velika Kladuša. They walked back to the city all together. Most of the men presented severe injuries.

"THE POLICE FIRED THE GUN THREE TIMES IN THE AIR TO SCARE US"

Date and time: May 6, 2019 00:00

Location: Bosnian/Montenegrin border next to Deleuša

Coordinates: 42.857897 , 18.477357

Push-back from: Bosnia

Push-back to: Montenegro

Demographics: 7 person(s), age: 22-28 years old , from: Syria, Morocco, Algeria, Somalia

Minors involved? No

Violence used: threatening with guns, gunshots

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

A group of seven persons from Algeria, Morocco, Syria and Somalia walked two days crossing the Montenegrin/Bosnian border to reach the town Bileća (BiH), where the police caught them. They had run out of food, so they went to the village to find some.

"If there wouldn't be rain or we would not have been so hungry, the police would not have caught us."

They found an old house and went inside to change their wet clothes. But someone in the town called the police and after 40 minutes and a police car suddenly came towards them. Inside the police car there were three Bosnian police officers in blue and black uniforms, the respondent had the impression that it was the border police. The police came directly towards the group and threatened to hit them to dissuade them from running away. One of the group members tried to run anyway, and subsequently one of the police officers shot his gun three times in the air, which scared everyone. Because they didn't want to get shot so everyone of the group stood still.

"Maybe because there were 2 female person with us, the police didn't hit or insult us."

The police officers forced them to hand over all the money and phones that they had.

"I could see it in their eyes, that they wanted to keep it, but I strongly insisted, that they give it back, and they did."

The police officers asked them where they want to go and when the group said "Bosnia" they just laughed and put all of them in a van and drove them about 30 minutes directly to the border. There the Montenegrin police were already waiting for them and the Bosnian police handed the people over to them. The Montenegrin police asked if they have the papers from Montenegro, which all of them had.

"Here the paper is called "hartija". It allows you to stay 15 days in Montenegro. If you are longer than that here or you don't have a paper at all, border police sends you directly back to Albania."

Afterwards the Montenegrin police officers brought the group to a bus station in Nikšić and told them to leave. “

“Because I said that we have no money, the police bought us the bus tickets. We wanted to go right away again to the Bosnian side of the border but we knew that the Montenegrin and Bosnian police is in contact and that they would catch us.”

"THEY [THE POLICE OFFICERS] ASKED: WHERE ARE YOUR FRIENDS? BUT IT'S THEIR JOB TO CATCH PEOPLE, NOT MY JOB, I DON'T TELL THEM."

Date and time: May 8, 2019 04:00

Location: near Maljevac, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Coordinates: 45.190535 , 15.783799

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 24 person(s), age: 25-35 years old , from: Pakistan, Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, electric shock, threatening with guns, gunshots, theft of personal belongings

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

On May 5, around 5:00AM in the morning, a group of 14 Algerian men left Velika Kladuša (BiH) towards Croatia. They walked for 3 days mostly on forest paths while avoiding big streets, the respondent estimates the distance that the group walked by foot as around 60-70km. It was raining most of the time, the paths were muddy and the group got lost more than once due to the maps on their phone bugging because of the humidity.

On 8 May in the morning, the group walked along a highway to find a way to cross it and ended up crossing it from above at a point where it passed through a tunnel.

Around 4:00AM in the morning on the same day, on their attempt to cross a small street just after the highway (see Fig. 1), the group was stopped by 4 police officers in one car and one van waiting for them. They had parked the cars in a way that formed a lane of approx. 15m and were waiting at the other side of the street. As soon as the group left the forest and entered the small street, they turned on the blue light and

"they shoot too many times in the air, like 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, maybe 8 times in the air."

The group started to run towards the forest at the other side of the street, but the respondent and some of his friends were too exhausted to run quickly enough. The respondent reported that one of the officers was equipped with an electric teaser and used it on one of his friends while the group tried to escape, and when his friend running next to him was stopped, the respondent quit running as well.

"They share what they do: One with the teaser, one shooting in the air, two with batons."

Four more individuals who were too tired to seriously attempt to escape from the police officers – so finally six people of

the original group – were caught, told to go to the floor in basic English and threatened with weapons not to move.

“Anyone they were catching was beaten, but they don’t beat too much at this point, just a little bit to make you scared and not run away. The big beating was later when they took us back.”

The respondent and his friends were casually asked where they were from, where they want to go.

“One of us said: ‘Asyl, asyl!’ but one of the police said: ‘Go Bosnia asyl!’”

They were asked for their phones and their pockets’ content and the officers took at least 80€ from the men, their phones and cigarettes.

“If they ask you to give your mobile and you hide it, they will remember, so you better give it when they ask.”

During the interaction with the six men on the street, the officers made no move to catch the other individuals from the group who continued their journey through the forest for five more days and were finally pushed back to Bosnia from Slovenia.

“They [the police officers] asked: Where are your friends? But it’s their job to catch people, not my job, I don’t tell them.”

After 20-30min, another van without windows arrived which the respondent identified as Mercedes Sprinter and the six people were taken into it.

They spent a whole day in the van, driving on good and less good streets, stopping for several hours from time to time and not being provided food nor water. Around three or four hours before they were brought to the Bosnian/Croatian border, a group of around 10 men from Pakistan joined the group in the back of the van. As there were no more spots on the two rows of the back seats, most of the newly apprehended men had to sit on the floor.

In the morning twilight of the 9 May, the whole group was released at a small street with a slope on both sides on the Croatian side of the border with Bosnia near Velika Kladuša (see Fig. 2).

The men were taken out of the van one by one, pushed down the slope at the side of the street towards the border and beaten with batons, fists and feet by police officers standing on both sides just after the van’s door, shaping a confusing tunnel of strikes, punches and kicks that the individuals had to pass through while stumbling down the slope.

The respondent describes the whole procedure as very quick, less than one minute, he recognized though that there were two police cars parking next to the Mercedes Sprinter. He estimates that the police officers who apprehended the group were not present any more.

“No police is working 24 hours, they sleep, we not.”

However, it was not possible for him to identify the police officer ultimately as they were wearing black masks by then. The group was not given their phones back.

After having gone through it, the respondent waited at the foot of the slope for his friends to pass the “tunnel”, crossed the green border towards Bosnia-Herzegovina together with them and walked back to Velika Kladuša in the sunrise.

Fig. 1: Point in Croatia where the group was apprehended

Fig 2.: Point in Croatia where the group was released

""I TELL HIM, NO I AM MUSLIM AND HE SAID: THIS IS NOT MY PROBLEM""

Date and time: May 13, 2019 05:00

Location: Near Sisak, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.4850767 , 16.373115600000006

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 9 person(s), age: 6 months, 7, 24-35 , from: Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: threatening with guns, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 5 Croatian special police officers

Taken to a police station?: no

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: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group started walking from Velika Kladuša at around midnight on May 10th. After three days of walking in the forest, while crossing a road, the group was stopped by five Croatian authorities at around 5:00 am on the 13th of May. they got caught, while crossing a road. The officers were wearing what the respondent described as uniforms similar to those worn by the Croatian Special Police.

The policemen pointed their guns at the group, ordering them to stop.

"My husband said: Why are you doing like this? We are a family, We have a baby, you can't do it like this"

The respondent described that they requested the authorities to take them to a camp, claiming that their baby had gotten sick during their travels and that one of the women was in fragile health due to a previous surgery she had in Iran. The officers replied positively, agreeing and saying there was no problem. They then searched the group, touching only the men, and removing all phones, money, camping gas, and sleeping bags. In addition, one of the men was told to undress in order to have a full body search.

The respondent described that the policemen then registered their names and took pictures of everyone's face but the baby's. The officers ordered the female respondent to remove her hat for the picture, even after she said she did not want to due to her Muslim beliefs:

"I tell him, no I am muslim and he said: This is not my problem"

She also inquired why they were not taking pictures of her child and asked them to register him also, however the policemen ignored her.

The respondent described that later, the other female of the group asked to be taken to hospital because she was in pain, due to her infected surgery scar. The officers ignored the request and told the group to go inside the police van. They were driven by two policemen for one hour and a half until the Bosnian border, where they ordered the group to leave their vehicle and go back to Bosnia.

The respondent described that they were, at this point, exhausted and had no knowledge of their location. As a result they decided, even though it was day time, to sleep by the street. At around 6:00 pm, a Bosnian couple that lived nearby this location found them. The locals provided them food, milk and let them take a shower at their house. However they are not allowed to do this, having to first explain this to the group and telling them they could not stay there.

Around 8:00 pm, after being given directions on the way back to Velika Kladuša they restarted walking. The respondent then described that a Bosnian man who passed in front of them with his car, told them to stop, and that he could call a friend who would come and give them a ride if they wanted to pay. The families agreed and waited by the road, until this man showed. They ended by paying him 45 euros to be taken back to the city where they arrived around 10:00 pm.

"I THINK THEY USE THIS APPLICATION TO CHANGE THE FACE FROM MAN TO WOMAN, WITH GLASSES, WITH BEARD, WITH HAT, WITH EARS FROM CAT TO MAKE FUN OF US, I THINK, I DON'T KNOW."

Date and time: May 17, 2019 08:00

Location: Metaljika, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Coordinates: 43.55023 , 19.153128

Push-back from: Bosnia

Push-back to: Montenegro

Demographics: 15 person(s), age: one family: 2, 9, 15, 21, 38, 41 years old, other two families: unknown , from: Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, threatening with guns

Taken to a police station?: yes

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

3 families from Kurdistan Iraq left Pljevlja (MNE) on 11th May for their first attempt to cross the border towards Bosnia. The respondent's family consists of his father (41) his mother (38), himself (21) and his siblings (15, 9, 2), the other families consist of parents with 3 and 2 small children whose age the respondent does not remember. They walked through Montenegrin forests and mountains for four days and continued walking on Bosnian soil after one more day after crossing the border. The respondent was seriously sick and at this point no more able to walk without the support of his father who continued walking in the mountainous terrain with his son's arm around his shoulder. They brought up the rear during this last stage before being caught and felt to cause a burden for the whole group.

In the evening of the 16th May, around 7pm, on a small road near an abandoned farmhouse, two blue-white police vans passed them and ten officers, which the respondent remembered to mostly have had black hair and beard, got off in order to stop the group. They asked them if they have papers and where they are going and the person with the best English skills (who was father of one of the other families travelling with the respondent's) explained to the only officer in the group who spoke a little bit of English that they are on their way to Sarajevo (BiH) where they want to ask for asylum. The officer explained that they will bring them to a police station and organize their transfer to Sarajevo without any problem. Reassured and glad to avoid walking through the forests for one more night, all 15 individuals got into the car and drove 5min to a police station.

At this point, the respondent was nearly unconscious due to his health problems and not able to reconstruct the further events in the interview without his father sitting next to him reporting on the incident in Sorani. The group spent approximately one hour in a small room in the police station waiting for their ride to Sarajevo. They were casually asked

for their nationality but no further questions, and they didn't see the officers writing down anything. Also, the group was not given food nor water and some of the officers were filming them with their smartphones without asking for permission while making fun of them.

"I think they use this application to change the face from man to woman, with glasses, with beard, with hat, with ears from cat to make fun of us, I think, I don't know."

After one hour in the police station, they were told that now they would be transferred to Sarajevo (BiH) and got into the same 2 vans by which they arrived. In the van that the respondent was sitting in, the officers asked for all their registration papers from Montenegro, tore them up while driving and brought the three families to the same place near the abandoned farmhouse where they were picked up before.

"They told us 'go to this house, sleep and try again, or go back to Montenegro'."

While the other two families got off the car without any protest to enter the farmhouse, the respondent's father and mother tried to discuss with the officers and wanted to know why they are not brought to Sarajevo (BiH) but to this dirty place instead. At this point, two officers started shouting at the respondent's family in Bosnian language and punching his father and himself in the ribs, also trying to beat his 15-year-old brother but the respondent's mother prevented them from doing so. All this happened in less than one minute.

The officers left and the three families spent the night in the old farmhouse.

"It was a place for animals, very dirty and very bad smell."

In the morning, around 8am on 17th of May, the three families left in order to continue their journey towards Sarajevo. The respondent however, due to his bad health condition, decided to split from the rest of the group together with his father and instead to try getting medical treatment somewhere. The respondent was sitting next to the road and his father tried to stop the police cars that were passing by, but they just continued driving their way. Finally, his father was so desperate and worried about his son that he knelt down in the middle of the street to force the cars to stop. The next police car stopped and by using gestures and hand signs pointing at his son, he asked them to bring them to the next hospital. Some of the officers were the same who detained them the evening before. The officers agreed and drove them approximately 40min always on the same street to a hospital (probably in Goražde or Foča (both BiH) even though it was not possible to confirm their place of treatment as both hospitals refused to provide information about the incident).

They were escorted to the treatment room by the officers who talked to the hospital staff and left approximately 5min after. Without being asked for papers or anything else, the respondent received treatment from two female and one male doctor who gave him an infusion to reactivate his circulation.

After 15min in the hospital, four other police officers arrive which were wearing the same uniform than the ones that just left. They asked one of the doctors to remove the infusion from the respondent's arm and slightly boxed and slapped the respondent in order to make him stand up. They escorted the two men to a police van and brought them to a place in the mountains where they handed them over to another police officer in a blue police car. This man is described as "tall, big, with blue eyes and bald head, with very blue eyes."

He drove the two individuals to a point near Metaljika (BiH), where he indicated them the way back to Montenegro and told them to get on the ground. When they protested against that, he threatened them by pretending to draw his weapon and then left. The respondent and his father walked arm in arm down the street that the officer indicated them being the one to Montenegro. At this point, both of them were very exhausted.

After 30min walking, a truck driver stopped next to them and told them that the street was designed for woodworkers and that, if they want to go to Montenegro, they have to go the direction they came from and then turn left.

They walked back, crossed the border and were picked up by Montenegrin police which brought them to the local hospital in Pljevlja where the respondent finally received treatment (see Fig. 1).

Fig. 1: Medical Report from the hospital in Pljevlja

""IS THIS THE SYSTEM?""**Date and time:** May 26, 2019 13:00**Location:** Near Banija Karlovac**Coordinates:** 45.4765731 , 15.8108195**Push-back from:** Croatia**Push-back to:** Bosnia**Demographics:** 7 person(s), age: 6months, 21, 24, 30-35 , from: Palestine, Syria**Minors involved?** Yes**Violence used:** beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, threatening with guns, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving**Police involved:** 5 Croatian police officers**Taken to a police station?:** no**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:** No Name Kitchen

<https://www.borderviolence.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Push-back-Bea-Part-1..mp4>

The group started the journey from Velika Kladuša on the 24th of May around at around 3:00 pm. They walked for two days in the forest, moving at a slow pace because of the baby, the fragile health condition of one the men (the uncle of the interviewee, who had survived a bomb attack back in Syria), and his wife who was pregnant.

On the 26th of May, at 1:00 pm, in a location around 50 km inside Croatia, five Croatian policemen appeared, threatening them with guns and ordering them to stop. The officers searched each of the group-members and confiscating their phones, powerbanks, money, and the camping gas they carried for preparing the milk and water for the baby.

“Can I ask? Is this the system when the police finds me and catches me, they take my phone, is this the system or just bad police?” enquired the respondent at this point. He then described how he got hit in the head with a baton after asking for asylum.

Three days passed the incident, when the interview was conducted, there was still a palpable bump in his head. “I told them we want to go to camp, my uncle is sick and his wife is pregnant, when I said that, they fight me and they fight my uncle, because my uncle he doesn’t want them to fight me.” recalled the respondent, claiming that because of his uncle reacting just verbally to the officer who was assaulting him, another officer came and kicked the man, the situation ended with both officers pointing guns at their heads and telling them to sit down.

The policemen, after ordered everyone one to form a line and enter in the police van. The group was driven, in what the respondent describes as a reckless way, for an hour and a half until the border.

“This driver was a dangerous driver and everything was dark.”

At the Croatian/Bosnian border the group was told to leave the van one by one. Pictures of all the faces, but the baby, were taken and names asked. The group was then told to start walking back to the Bosnian side.

“I asked the police what about our phones, we had five phones, and my 300 euros, but he said he did not know anything about that he did not see any phones. At this point I had to stop talking because the gun is back pointed at my head.”

The man described that his uncle’s wife was the only one able to talk with the officers without being threaten and so she asked for one phone, which was the only one they returned. All the other personal items, including the camping gas for the baby were never given back. The group then walked back for between four and five hours back to Velika Kladuša, where they arrived around 7:00 pm.

<https://www.borderviolence.eu/wp-content/uploads/Push-backvid2.mp4>

Video 2

"THE THREE MEN WERE STILL JUST IN THEIR BOXERS WHILE BEING INTERVIEWED BY THE FEMALE OFFICER."

Date and time: May 28, 2019 04:00

Location: Smarje-Sap, Slovenia

Coordinates: 45.9739374387156 , 14.618260966304433

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Croatia, Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 27, 29, 30 years old , from: Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, gunshots, forcing to undress

Police involved: 2 Croatian officers shooting in the air near Zvecaj; 2 Slovenian policemen at place of apprehension; 1 Slovenian policeman and translator in Novo Mesto police station; 4 Croatian policemen taking the group over at Vinica border crossing (1 of whom was the "chief", with two stars sewed on his shoulder); 6 police officers (4 male and 2 female) in Karlovac police station; 8 or 9 Croatian policemen, all wearing ski masks, at the site of the pushback to Bosnia. - 2 police cars in Slovenia, 4 police cars and 1 van in Croatia.

Taken to a police station?: yes

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The respondent started his journey from Sturlic (BiH) with initially five other people approximately on 18 May 2019. The group was composed of two Syrians, one Iraqi and three Algerians.

After four days of walking inside Croatia, the group reached a bridge over the Mreznica river, near Zvecaj (HR, coordinates 45.394045, 15.435721), around 11 P.M. On the other side of the bridge, at the left of the group, two policemen were hiding. They shot twice in the air and managed to arrest the two Syrians and the Iraqi member of the group, while the respondent and his two Algerian friends ran back into the forest located south the bridge, aside of the road. The policemen didn't run after them, and after having some sleep in the forest, they were able to cross the bridge without problems in the next morning and to pursue their journey.

On their tenth day of walking, i.e. 28 May, at 4 A.M., the group of now three men had reached Smarje-Sap (SLN, coordinates 45.9734212, 14.6185612). They were walking on the main road in the town center which runs parallel to the highway, when a Slovenian police car approached them and stopped them. Two Slovenian police officers in uniform asked them about their names, age and country of origin and then made them enter the car. They took them to Novo Mesto police station (coordinates

45.81729, 15.1548447).

In Novo Mesto police station, the respondent was interviewed. He sat in an office with one policeman and the translator. His fingerprints and photos were taken, and he was asked personal details such as his name, age, country of origin and the names of his mother and father and also about the road they had taken to reach Slovenia.

The respondent asked for asylum, but the translator directly refused that request, without translating it to the policeman. The translator told the respondent “you Algerians and Moroccans you don’t have the right for asylum in Slovenia, go ask asylum in France, Belgium, Germany“.

The respondent was made sign a paper in Slovenian language, the content of which he wasn’t able to understand. In this moment he perceived the policeman as being very aggressive, and he had the impression that if he didn’t sign he would have been beaten. Nevertheless his impression about the general Slovenian police behavior, especially compared to his experience in Croatia, was relatively positive:

“Police Slovenia ok, police Croatia mushkila kabira [big problem]“.

The respondent was largely impressed by the behavior of the translator, too. This person was described as being a middle aged Palestinian man, very aggressive towards the respondent.

“Wallah he’s crazy. Police OK, but he’s crazy.“

The respondent and his group were kept in Novo Mesto police station for the whole day, and he said he was given food and water. In the late afternoon of 28 May, he and his friends were taken to the border crossing in Vinica (45.4570672, 15.248562). The drive took about one hour.

At the border they were handed over to four Croatian policemen, one of whom the respondent described to have been the chief. The respondent saw two stars sewed on his shoulder. The Croatian officers handcuffed the group and took them in three separate police cars, with three policemen in each car, to Karlovac police station (45.4910003,15.5456485).

In the police station, they were put in a cell of about 2×3 meters, without toilet or beds. They were forced to undress, left with only their boxers on, and the door was closed behind them.

After an unspecified period of time, six police officers (four men and two women) entered the room. One of the women spoke fluent Arabic and interviewed the members of the group one by one. The three men were still just in their boxers while being interviewed by the female officer. They were asked for their personal data: name, age, country of origin, parents’ names, and then they were photographed and finally given back their clothes and personal belongings.

After this, they were put in a van and driven to the Croatian-Bosnian border. There were two police officers in the van. The group members disposed of appropriate seats in the back part. The van was followed by another police car, which the respondent remembered to be a Ford, with another two policemen inside.

The drive took around one hour until they reached the Bosnian border at the approximate coordinates 45.2237198,15.9661581. It was the 29 May around 5 A.M.

They were forced to get out of the van one by one. When it was the respondent’s turn to step out of the van, he saw a group of eight or nine policemen surrounding him, with ski masks on, pointing flashlights at his face. One of the policemen approached the respondent and searched him for his belongings, then he was forced to undress and beaten with batons all over his body. He estimated the beating to have lasted five minutes.

After the beating the respondent asked for his clothes and belongings, and this caused another violent reaction by the policemen. At this point the respondent had to throw up, and after this one policeman kicked him into the stomach and said “Go to Bosnia!”.

The group then walked back over the border and had some sleep in a forest near Glinica (BiH). After they woke up on the same day, they met a Bosnian family that hosted them for lunch and gave them new clothes and shoes. They then walked all the way to Velika Kladusa (BiH), which took them about five hours.

"WE BEGGED FOR ASYLUM IN SLOVENIA, BUT THE POLICE TOLD US THEY WILL TAKE US BACK TO CROATIA"

Date and time: May 29, 2019 08:00

Location: Kortino, Slovenia

Coordinates: 45.85221754721218 , 15.634735822753896

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 20 person(s), age: 15 people between the age of 23-28, 21, 24, 23, 22, 21 , from: Palestine, Syria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: 9 Slovenian police officers, 2 vans; 8-9 Croatian police officers, 3 vans

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, fingerprints taken, personal information taken, papers signed, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

On May 22 at 12:00AM, a group of 20 individuals from Palestine and Syria left Velika Kladuša (BiH) and walked to the Croatian border. They arrived at the border around 2:00AM and after entering Croatia they walked in the forest for 7 days.

They crossed the Croatian/Slovenian border on May 29. After walking approximately ten kilometers into Slovenian territory, a group of five Slovenian police officers (four male, one female) approached them at 8:00AM in the forest between the villages of Koritno and Laze (SLO). The respondent reported that when the police saw the group, one officer aimed a gun at them, but did not shoot. The police ordered all twenty individuals into one van and the group waited in the van for one hour before the police officers began driving.

The police drove the group approximately 30 minutes to a small jail cell and ordered all 20 individuals into the cell. They group stayed in this cell for 24 hours without access to food, water or a toilet. The respondent reported that the Slovenian police took 200 EUR from him and took a total of 1200 EUR from the rest of the group.

There was a translator present at the jail. The respondent could not identify where he was from by his accent. The group members gave their personal information to the translator and the police gave them documents to sign. The police also took the finger prints of the group members during this time.

"Ten [people in the group] begged the Slovenian police to let us stay and apply for asylum, but they told us 'no, you will go back to Croatia'"

On May 30, at around 12:00PM, four different police officers (three men, one woman) ordered the group of 20 individuals into one police van and they drove one hour to the Croatian border.

“It was very crowded and hot in the van with so many people. [The police] drove very fast to the border.”

The group arrived to the Croatian border around 1:00PM. Four to five Croatian police were waiting there with three vans and they ordered the group into the vehicles and drove them approximately one hour to a jail. Before entering the cell, the police collected everyone’s phone. Once again, all 20 people were placed in one cell. There was a tap with water in the cell which they could drink from, but the police denied them access to food or to use the toilet. Other than these requests, the group did not speak to the police officers at all. The police did not give them any documents to sign, nor did they ask the group for their identifying information.

On May 31, after 24 hours in the cell, the police released them from the jail and ordered the group into a van that was waiting for them in front of the cell. The respondent believes that the four police officers drove them approximately three hours to the Bosnian border. On the border, the police gave the phones back to the group but the screens had been smashed and the charging ports were destroyed.

“When we got to the border, the police said ‘go, go.’ We walked for forty kilometers to the closest village”

From the village, the split into four groups and paid ten Euro each to ride in a taxi to Velika Kladuša (BiH).

"WE ASKED POLICE TO PUT THE BABIES IN THE CAR WHILE WE LIED ON THE WET GROUND, BUT THEY REFUSED"

Date and time: May 30, 2019 03:00

Location: Drežnik Grad, Croatia

Coordinates: 44.9461324 , 15.682583499999964

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 13 person(s), age: 8 month old, 1 year old, 11 people 24-28 years old , from: Iran, Iraq, Turkey

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), gunshots

Police involved: 5 Croatian officers, 2 police vans, one police car

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

A group of thirteen individuals, all Kurdish from Turkey, Iraq and Iran, left Bihać (BiH) around 4:00PM on May 29. They traveled in a car to the border for about 20 minutes and then began walking.

After crossing the border into Croatia, they walked in the forest for eleven hours. They were standing above a two-lane highway at 3:00AM when two male police officers approached the group and fired a gun in the air. After firing the gun, the police shined a flash light at the group members and ordered them to lie on the ground.

"The ground was wet and cold. I asked them to put the babies in the car, but they said 'no.'"

The group lied on the ground for 20 minutes as the police waited for a third officer to arrive. He arrived driving a fifteen seat van and the three police officers began to search the individuals on the ground and confiscate each of their mobile phones, chargers, and power banks. The police took one group member's phone and hit him in the head with it. The same officer hit another man in the face with the heel of his palm as he conducted the search.

The respondent believed that the police spent about three minutes searching each individual making the total time of the search around 30 minutes. The police put all the confiscated electronics in a bag. Once the search was finished, the police ordered the group members into the van. The police drove them for two hours and dropped the group in a forest on the Bosnian/Croatian border at around 6:00AM.

At the border the police seemed to drop the phones in a fire pit, but the respondent believed that

"They only pretended to put the phones in the fire pit. After the police said 'go, go, go,' I went back to look for the phones but they weren't in the pit."

After searching for their confiscated possessions and not finding them, the group walked five minutes to reenter Bosnia and Herzegovina. They found a taxi near the border and returned to Bihać.

"WHEN SOME OF THE DETAINEES ASKED FOR FOOD, THE OFFICERS SOLD THEM 3 SMALL SANDWICHES FOR 60€ AND 3 PACKAGES OF CIGARRETTES FOR 50€."

Date and time: May 31, 2019 01:00

Location: near Sturlic, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Coordinates: 45.064241 , 15.747204

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Croatia, Bosnia

Demographics: 6 person(s), age: 19, 19, 19, 20, 21, unknown , from: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia

Minors involved? Unknown

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, threatening with guns, theft of personal belongings

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, fingerprints taken, photos taken, personal information taken, papers signed, no translator present, denial of access to toilets, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

A group of five individuals from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia left Šturlić at 5AM in the morning of May 20st and headed via Croatia. Soon after their departure, while crossing Korana river, one of their friends injured his arm and decided to return to Sturlic and from there get back to Miral camp in Velika Kladuša (BiH), so the five individuals continued their journey without him. They walked for 9 days through forests, avoiding bigger streets only using small forest trails. While passing by Rijeka (HR), the group tried to avoid the touristic areas in the forest because

"when there is tourists, then there is police!"

The respondent reported that after Rijeka, the group came across units of Croatian police officers three or four times, mostly while crossing bigger streets,

"but no problem, they say stop, I don't stop, I run run run!"

They crossed towards Slovenia near the official border crossing point Pasjak (HR) and were apprehended on a small road near Povžane (SLO) on May 29 around 9AM by 5 Slovenian police officers, around 10km before the Italian-Slovene border. Three of the respondent's friends managed to escape, he and one other friend were apprehended. Two of the officers are described as "Slovenian military", with green-brown uniform, masks and "big guns, no small police gun, bigger", 3 others as "Slovenian normal police" with dark blue uniforms and no masks, they arrived in 2 blue-white police vans. After being caught, the respondent and his friend were held on the forest ground for 30min with the "military officers" in their back pointing their weapons on them while the "normal police officers" were standing in front of them talkin on a walkie-talkie coordinating another van to come. While waiting for the car to arrive, the men were casually

asked their nationality and their age and were body searched by the regular officers, but as the respondent had hidden his money very diligently in his clothes, they didn't find anything. They were also asked for their phones, however the respondent's friend does not possess a phone and the respondent himself had thrown his phone away just before the officers managed to catch him.

"If they don't have my phone, they don't see my pins on the map, so I can try next time. When they tried to catch me, I threw it far far away in the forest."

After around 30min, another blue-white van without windows arrived and the men were driven to the police station in Podgrad (SLO), 10 minutes drive from their point of apprehension.

At the police station, the respondent was stripped to his t-shirts and taken the 200€ he kept in his boxer shorts.

"I said: This is my money, they said: give me this!, I said: why?, they shout: give me this!"

The respondent's friend was stripped as well, but the officers did not find any money in his clothes as he did not have anything.

The two men were detained in a small room without furniture together with eight or nine individuals from Pakistan. At around 1PM on the same day (May 29th), the man was interrogated separately from his friend by 2 police officers and one 50-year-old translator whose accent the respondent described as Syrian. The respondent was taken his finger prints, asked his personal data and his intended destination, and even though his plan was to reach Italy, he said that he wanted to go to Ljubljana (SLO) and ask for asylum there. However, he assumed that the translator did not translate this intention to ask for asylum properly to the officers. Also, the respondent had to sign a number of documents that he was not explained the content of by the translator.

"He said: Just sign!"

The whole interrogation took approximately 30min. The respondent was brought back to the detention cell where he spent the rest of the day and the night on the floor.

"I know at 4 o'clock, 5 o'clock, 6 o'clock, I check the time and I know that my 3 other friends arrived in Italy long ago. I sit in the cell and think about what they do now in Italy while I sit here on the floor."

The only food they were given all the time was plates of spaghetti at around 10PM in the evening, whenever one of the detainees knocked against the door, they were either ignored or answered with much delay.

At 10AM the next morning (May 30st), all detainees were put in one van and driven 30min on a normal street to the border crossing point Starod (SLO) where they were handed over to Croatian police officers who put all of them (around 20 individuals) into a prisoner van.

They were driven for 10min to a police station in Croatia where they again were stripped and put into a detention cell. When some of the detainees asked for food, the officers sold them 3 small sandwiches for 60€ and 3 packages of cigarettes for 50€. Again, all detainees were interrogated one by one, this time however without any translator present. The respondent was asked his personal data, was taken pictures from and had to sign documents in Croatian without being explained about the content. The whole group stayed in the detention cell until 6PM in the evening of the same day and were then put into a windowless van with more individuals and three Croatian police officers with black uniforms sitting in the front. The van was so overly crowded that it appeared to the respondent to be squeezed together with 55 people in there. The respondent reported to be locked in the van for six hours while the van was driving non-

stop with a break of a couple of hours.

The whole group arrived at the point near Sturlic (see map) around 1 o'clock in the morning of May 31st. There were two more police cars with five more police officers wearing nightvision glasses, masks and the same black uniforms as the three who were sitting in the front of the prisoner van.

"They open the door and say: Go, go, go!"

The police officers were standing on both sides of the door forming sort of a tunnel towards the Bosnian inner land that the individuals had to pass while being kicked and beaten with black batons from both sides. The individuals crowded out of the van all at the same time and tried to get their belongings that were piled up a few meters further. All phones have been destroyed. After the whole procedure, the respondent and his friend walked towards Šturlić.

The respondent and his friend took a taxi with other people of Turkish nationality that have been pushed together with him and drove back to Velika Kladuša where he went to Miral camp.

"ONE OF THE FIRST THING THEY WERE DOING: TAKE SELFIES WITH US!"

Date and time: May 31, 2019 01:30

Location: near Poljana, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Coordinates: 45.210365 , 15.92611

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 14 person(s), age: 24, 33, 29, 29, 35, 37, 38, 34, 7, 10, 40, 45, 19, 34 , from: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

One Algerian family from Oran consisting of a mother (40), a father (45) and two daughters (7, 10), together with five Kabyle single men (24, 29, 33, 35, 37), a woman and a man from Morocco (29, 34) and three single men from Tunisia (19, 36, 38) departed from Velika Kladuša (BiH) at 6:00PM on May 26. They crossed Glina River and walked for four rainy days and nights through the forest in the Croatian inner land. While crossing a street near Pokupsko (HR), they were seen by a local family who, the respondent assumed, called the authorities. One hour later, the police arrived in the forest near Pokupsko (see Fig. 1).

Fig. 1: Place of Apprehension

Around midnight on May 30, eleven police officers encircled the group. They were wearing night vision goggles, masks, dark blue uniforms and massive boots. They shot in the air and shouted "Stop, Stop!" as they blinded the individuals with flashlights. The officers were shouting at the group in the Croatian language and told them to hand over their luggage. They also took pictures of them with their smartphones.

"One of the first thing they were doing: take selfies with us!"

The police men waited for more officers to arrive, however they seemed to not be bored while waiting for the other officers to arrive. Instead, they tried to pass the time by cheerfully socializing with each other. They were laughing and chatting and the respondents witnessed some of the officers getting more and more drunk while sipping on their hip flasks. The police casually asked the respondents for their nationality and their planned destination. When the respondents replied that they want to go to Zagreb (HR) in order to ask for asylum, the officers answered:

"Shut up, shut up!" and "five minutes Velika Kladusa, five minutes!"

After 30 minutes, more officers wearing the same uniforms arrived which made a total of 25-30 officers on the ground.

The police escorted the group members to a nearby street where five police cars were waiting for them: two vans, one prisoner transporter (all type Mercedes Sprinter) and two smaller police cars. All fourteen individuals were taken into the windowless prisoner transporter. Inside the van there were two benches facing each other and the fan inside made a monotonous noise during the one hour drive. The respondents felt that the drivers were deliberately driving recklessly and some of the individuals had to vomit during the drive.

Arriving at a point on the Bosnian side of the border near Poljana (see map), the individuals were taken out of the van two by two (see Fig. 2) by six or seven of the same police officers as before, who stood on both sides of the van's side door.

Fig. 2: Sketch of the procedure at the border by one of the respondents

“They made a line of policemen at the right, one at the left, two by two of us in the middle running towards the luggage. They stopped us, body-searched us, took our money, our phones. The good phones they keep, the bad phones they destroy in front of us. [...] Afterwards punches, kicks and beatings coming from both sides.”

Fig. 3: Swollen knee from beating with batons

Fig. 4: Bruise from beating with batons

Just after getting out of the van, they were body searched and their cell phones were taken, as well as around 600€ altogether. The officers kept in total nine or ten power banks and five cellphones for themselves and destroyed seven more with the black batons that they also used to beat the respondents.

Fig. 5: Destroyed phones

The women were body-searched by male officers as well and beaten like the others, only the children were spared the whole procedure.

Fig. 6: Bruise on woman's leg from beating with batons

The respondents' had the impression that the taller individuals were, in general, exposed to harsher treatment and stronger beatings than the smaller people. They believed the same was true for those individuals who protested against the treatment. One man from Tunisia not only beaten with the baton, but also punched and kicked on the legs, arms and his torso, as well as being beaten on his head several times. The individuals that already passed through the entire procedure waited down the slope for their friends and family members to arrive. It took around 20-25 minutes for all individuals of the group to endure this procedure. As the push back was located close to a river and they had to move forward away from the border and the officers, the individuals had to cross the Glina River just after the pushback.

They walked back to Velika Kladusa with soaked clothes, some of them limping.

"THEY TOLD ME: COME HERE, AND I COME HERE, I DON'T RUN, BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE ANY PROBLEMS WITH ANY COUNTRY, WITH ANY POLICE, WITH ANYBODY. NEXT TIME I WILL RUN."

Date and time: June 6, 2019 04:30

Location: near Zagrad, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Coordinates: 45.18473886581339 , 15.777296637912741

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 8 person(s), age: 3, 5, 5, 16, 28, 30, 32, 37 , from: Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), insulting, water immersion, threatening with guns, gunshots, theft of personal belongings

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

A family consisting of a mother (28), a father (30), male twins (both 5) and a girl (3) accompanied by three single men (37, 32, 16), all from Iraqi Kurdistan left Velika Kladuša on May 3 at 4:00AM and crossed towards Croatia near Maljevac (HR). After three days of walking through the Croatian forests, the group was running out of food and water and the children were especially very hungry and thirsty, so the group decided to leave the forest and try to ring the doorbell of a local person to ask for food.

"I ring at the door and say: Please, please, can you help me, I need food for a baby!"

The inhabitants didn't open the door even though they were probably at home as the lights were switched on when they came and were turned off when they rang.

On June 6 around 3:30AM the group was apprehended by Croatian police officers at a small street after crossing the highway D1 near Veljun (HR, see Fig. 1)

Fig. 1: Point of apprehension

"They told me: Come here, and I come here, I don't run, because I don't have any problems with any country, with any police, with anybody. Next time I will run."

The two officers waiting for them in a van on the other side of the highway were wearing "local police uniform" and were described as "old" and "very nice and respectful". They offered the children some biscuits, asked for their nationality, body searched the male individuals, took one phone from them and called for another unit that arrived after around fifteen minutes.

Two younger (at a guess aged 35-37) officers with dark blue uniforms arrived with a van that the respondents describe

as a “van for bad terrorists, not for family” meaning a windowless prisoner transporter. This second police unit asked them where they were planning to go, and when they said that they intended to go to Zagreb (HR) to stay there, the officers just said “No, go back!”

They drove for fifteen minutes to a place that the respondent assumed from previous transit attempts to be a police station – even though he can not be sure as the door of the van remained closed all the time – and they waited there for twenty minutes in the van.

They continued to drive to a small street on the Croatian side near the border (see map), where at 4:30AM the police let all the individuals out of the van at the same time. Around ten police officers in three smaller police cars were present by then, plus the two officers driving the prisoner van. Nine of them were male, one was female, one of them was wearing night vision goggles. They were wearing no masks and were equipped with black batons, guns and torches.

They blinded the individuals with the torches, asked all people but the woman and the children for their shoes and started shouting “Go, go!”, shooting in the air and pushing them down the slope towards the border with their black batons. (See Fig. 2)

Fig. 2: Bruise from beatings with batons

The respondents claimed that the female officer was giving the orders but not doing anything by herself. The group started running down the hill, one of the men was very slow as he was carrying two of the children. One of the officers loaded his gun, put it at the man’s temple pretending to shoot him with his children in his arms and then, instead of shouting, he beat him on the head with the stock of the gun and pushed him down the hill. The man stumbled and fell down, one of the boys injured his hand while falling. (See Fig. 3)

Fig. 3: Injured hand of one of the boys

The children were very frightened of the shooting and cried. Two officers chased the group to the river shouting “Fuck you, fuck you!” and waited until they crossed the small river (see map).

The group walked back to Velika Kladuša and was hosted for the night by a local family living next to the border.

“What happens to you? I don’t have any gun, I don’t have any knife, I don’t have anything. Why? I don’t have problem with your country, I just want to go.”

""WHEN THE POLICE CATCH, THEY STRIPPED AND TAKE OUT OUR CLOTHES, ONLY KEEP UNDERWEAR, THEN [THE TWO POLICEMEN TRIED TO] BROKE MY PHONE [...] BROKEN MY PHONE, TAKE MONEY, 150€, TAKE BAG, EVERYTHING, POLICE HIT ME AND MY FRIENDS""

Date and time: June 13, 2019 00:00

Location: pushed back 20 kilometers away from Velika Kladusa

Coordinates: 45.22544676292148 , 15.968884890684649

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 22,24 , from: Iraq

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: 2 Regular Croatian policemen , 1 driver with the same uniform, 7 to 8 intervention police officers

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, photos taken, personal information taken, papers signed, no translator present, denial of access to toilets, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of three friend left from Bihac by walk aiming to cross the Bosnian/ Croatian border. They took a taxi to go further and continue by walk to cross a river, they keep walking in a mountain amongst "too much animals and insects". At approximately 9.00 am the group heard firing three times nearby them, two policemen arrested them by beating them with batons to be sure they are not going further. The officers called "their friend, and coming a van". These two policemen were wearing a "pale blue shirt with short sleeves with a dark blue trouser, as well as the driver coming afterward. One gun on one side of the belt, baton other side with gas spray bottle"

While waiting for the driver and the van,

"When the police catch, they stripped and take out our clothes, only keep underwear, then [the two policemen tried to] broke my phone"

"broken my phone, take money, 150€, take bag, everything, police hit me and my friends"

According to the second interviewee, one of the policemen stole his phone

"Samsung 9, new, very good. They look location and take in pocket, but iPhone 5, not good, just broken"

When the second police team arrived, they almost crashed the van on one of the interviewees, he ran away at the last

minutes to avoid it.

“The driver say ‘I am crazy’ [talking about himself] , only one driver in this van, open the van and drive from left to right”

The two interviewees think that the police station was approximately 15 minutes away from the place where they got caught. The interviewees are thinking about Kutina police station but with doubt, because they never got the information of the location they were taking to.

They were detained the whole day in a room near the police station “no light, no window, all night, a lot of insects in the room and concrete floor, we sleep on the floor, not give me eat, just water”

At one point one of the interviewees needed to go to the restroom, he mimed that that became an emergency, the police shouted at him “you stay here!”.

One by one they were taken out of this room to go and answer questions concerning their name, surname, date of birth, father name. After the interrogation, the officers took a picture of their face. The officers took their registration document from Bosnia and did not give them back. According to the interviewees, they had to sign a paper written in English saying that they got their belongings back, including their phone, but only the broken phone was given back.

At approximately 9.00 pm, a policeman opened the door and make them go into a van. The respondent says that it was very hot inside the van.

“Sometimes slow, sometimes fast, sometimes break fast, I feel daisy, I want to throw up”

The van stopped after approximately three hours driving at the border. Twenty kilometres away from Velika Kladuša.

The door of the van opened, and the two interviewees mimed the scene, the first one did not even have time to stand, a policeman took him from the neck of his t-shirt and pushed him out of the van accompanied by a kick on his bottom, making him falling. Then he tried to run away but they count about seven to eight policemen beating them while running with their baton. The policemen had headtorch blinding the interviewee while he was aggressed by the officers. They were saying “go, go, go”. One by one they got the same treatment.

Then the group of three friends walked back to Velika Kladuša. They had no money anymore to get any food, fortunately, the broken phone is still usable.

"WE WANT ASYLUM IN CROATIA, WE ARE REFUGEES! THE POLICE ONLY LAUGHED THEN THEY SLAPPED ME IN THE FACE"

Date and time: June 20, 2019 03:00

Location: Željava, Croatia

Coordinates: 44.85946948792225 , 15.733665723998001

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 9 person(s), age: 6, 7, 23, 24, 24, 25, 21, 34, 34 , from: Afghanistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, threatening with guns, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: 2 Croatian police dressed in black with masks over their faces, 7-8 Croatian police dressed in dark blue uniforms; one police van, one police car

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

An Afghan family which included nine people, including two children, left from Bihać (BiH) on June 20 at 9:30PM. The previous night before the transit attempt, all but three men from the family were staying in a safe house near Bihać. The three men were told by the house's security that they could not stay there so they slept in a squat nearby. On June 20, the entire family met outside the safe house and began walking to the border.

They climbed a mountain to cross the border in the rain. They found a small road that the respondent believed nobody used. One member in the group could not walk well in the forest because he was overweight and so they walked fifteen to sixteen kilometers on this small road. Suddenly, the group members saw a car coming so they hid in the grass and once the car passed they continued on their way.

Five minutes later there was a dog barking so they hid themselves between the trees which had sharp thorns sticking out of them. They stayed there for five minutes and then they saw police lights. This was around 2:00 or 3:00AM. The respondent described that the officers shouted "come out" and they fired about three rounds of ammunition into the air, around 30 shots in total. There were nine to ten police officers present and two wore black ski masks over their faces. The other seven or eight dressed in dark blue clothes without anything on their faces.

The respondent believed that the police used night vision goggles and had seen them in the forest. Three people escaped and ran through the trees but the respondent stayed with the rest of the family. The three who escaped couldn't find a way through the woods and the police eventually caught them and the respondent reported that the police hit them. The police had dogs that they brought close to the group. The two young girls were scared and started crying, but the police didn't care and they just started laughing. The respondent told the police, "please stop the girls are scared." The police replied "fuck off."

“Any time we tried to talk to the police they gave us one punch and one kick in the back in the head.”

The police told the group members to take out their phones. The whole group except one man gave the police their phones. That man put his phone in his daughter’s jacket, believing that the police would not search a small girl. The police asked where is your phone, he said “I don’t have phone.” However, the police checked his daughter’s jacket and they found the phone. They started beating the man in front of his daughter. And then the male officers searched all the bodies of the women. The women and girls were crying but the police laughed. The police took all the group’s phone chargers, money (2,700 Euro), and searched their bags. The police gave the bags and sleeping bags back to the group members and told them to stay in the line where they were sitting on the ground.

One police asked the respondent “are you the leader,” I said “no, no, no.”

The police asked where do you want to go, the respondent told them:

“We want to stay here. We want asylum in Croatia. We are refugees.”

When he said this, the respondent reported that the police laughed and slapped him in the face. They said “here is not your house.” They told the group members to stay in the line and first the police let the children and women inside the van, and then they told the men to enter one by one. As the men entered the van, the police kicked them in their backsides and hit them in the head with their batons.

It was dark inside the van and the police blasted the air conditioning at a very cold temperature. The police drove them around one and half hours to the border.

“We couldn’t hear anything because the sound of the cooler was so loud. It was freezing cold.”

The police drove fast, swerved a lot and braked suddenly so that the group members fell onto each other. At 6:00AM the car stopped and the police told the family to come out. There were three police officers present. The respondent explained that they started a fire. “We thought now we can go.” But they told us “throw your bag in the fire.”

The respondent was particularly upset about this because in their bags they had enough food for fifteen days, as well as new shoes and sleeping bags.

“We didn’t throw our bags in the fire but they started beating us, so we threw it in [the fire.] They didn’t care, they just said ‘throw it.’ They even wanted our jackets so we had to throw our jackets in too.”

The respondent asked the police about their phones and money and the police responded that “there are no phones.” One of the women in the group asked for her tablet back. She explained to the police that it was for her daughter to play games, but the police didn’t care.

The police pointed out a windy path in the forest and told the group members to ‘go.’ On their way back through the forest, they saw bloody clothes, and what the respondent believed to be police gloves on the ground. They walked sixteen kilometers back to Bihać. A Bosnian person bought tickets for all of them to return to Sarajevo.

Since the time that this push back occurred, one of the girls in the group has wet the bed every night.

"AND ALL OF THESE BORDERS, NOBODY TREATED US [LIKE THIS]"

Date and time: June 22, 2019 17:00

Location: Staro Selo Topusko, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.21219548101352 , 15.929048902736781

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 13 person(s), age: 35, 15, 28, 13, 5, 7, 35, 20, and four other people 25-30 years old , from: Syria, Iraq

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), insulting, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, fingerprints taken, photos taken, personal information taken, no translator present, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring, No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

"We go from Velika Kladuša, about 13 persons [other than myself], we have 3 women, and 3 girls – children – and the other parts of the group young [men]. We go from Velika Kladuša on a Friday [June, 14th]"

Over the course of seven days, the group walked across the interior of Croatia through forests, over mountains, and through rivers. On the third day there was "crazy rain" and "lighting that arrived to the ground." All of their possessions were soaking wet with water. After four days in the forests they had finished all of their food. They found an abandoned mountain house and found water inside to drink. At some point during their journey, the husband and wife in the group took their two youngest children (ages 5 and 7 years old) and turned themselves into the police. Their other two children (ages 13 and 15 years old) stayed with the rest of the group.

On the 21st of June, the next Friday, the group arrived at the Kolpa river at border of Slovenia. The group attempted to cross into Slovenia across an old, wooden bridge which was half broken and strewn with broken tiles.

Area near Čedanj (HR) where the group described being apprehended by Croatian authorities [45.478636, 14.910166]

When they initially approached the bridge, they saw that there were Slovenian police officer stationed near the bridge on the other side and decided to wait for them to leave. After waiting for several hours and watching the Slovenian authorities leave the area, the group prepared to cross. One man from the group went down to check the road on the Croatian side of the border and at this point two Croatian police officer who were sitting under the bridge saw the group member checking the road.

They told the group members to come out of the forest, but the group did not want to. The police carried two firearms – one big and one small – which they fired into the air when the group resisted their orders to come down from the forest.

“When we come here Croatia police have two men. [They say to us] “Stop! Stop! Sit down! Sit down!”

One of the officers wore a dark blue t-shirt and pants. He was described as having blue eyes and short blond hair, and being around 30 years old. The other officer wore a dark grey uniform and was described as also being around 30 years old, but carrying more weight. Neither had had hats on.

The officers searched the group, took their mobiles, power banks, a woman had a knife which they confiscated.

“They were maybe polite with us”

Still, the respondents described being uncomfortable with the way they were treated by these officers.

“They ask me, are you hungry? And I say “so much, I have not eaten for many days” and they start laughing

The police told the group members to sit on the ground and to take out their phones and money and put them on the ground. The group waited one hour sitting on the ground before three more police officers arrived driving a large white van without windows. They were dressed in the same way as the police officer in the dark blue uniform. The respondents described seeing all of their items which had previously been confiscated being put in a bag and taken to the front of the car.

“And our mobile phones and power bank in bag, in one bag”

The group was then loaded into the van which they described as cramped, completely dark, and poorly ventilated. They were then transported to a police station, which took around 30 minutes to arrive to.

“It’s night in the car and no air”

“We get in the car, the big car, and go to the police center, the station.”

When they arrived at the station, the respondents described being put into a very small cell together.

“We enter the station and they put us in a room. A prison, it was a prison.”

“Not clean”

“13 persons in one room maybe 2 meters and 3 meters”

“We enter and close the door, we are 13 persons come to this prison. It had toilet and water. After about 5 minutes, we have woman have a problem. We need a doctor, no doctor. Wait wait wait. We have a children who is hungry. Wait wait wait”

After some time in the cell, the group-members were brought out again and processed by the officers at the station who took down their information and wrote it into a document.

“After that they take our document. As a report. Name, surname, your father, your mother, age.”

One of the respondents who spoke English well was told to translate for the other group-members at this point.

“I was translator between the police and my friends. I write the information in their documents”

One of the respondents asked the officer if these documents could potentially be harmful to him and his friends and was told no. It was just for documentation, he was told. The respondent was under the impression at the time that this information would be sent to the UNHCR. After finishing the information, the group-members then had their pictures taken with this information.

“After we take this document, it is finished, they take picture with name and date”

At around this point, the fifteen and thirteen year olds in the group were taken by the police to a closed camp in Zagreb where their parents and younger siblings were put after they left the group and turned themselves into the police two days earlier.

The rest of the group was then taken back to their cell and told “Go to sleep” at around 8:00 am. Five hours later, at around 1:00 pm, the group could hear that another group from either Iraq or Iran was placed in the cell next to them.

“We hear in the next room, children was crying, many children.”

Finally, at about 2:00 pm, the group was approached by a police officer who took them three at a time back to the van which had initially transported them to the police station. They were able to take their personal bags with them in the back of the windowless van however the plastic bags in which their phones and power banks were being held was

taken into the front of the van. The vehicle then drove for two hours to an unidentified location before stopping and taking on another passenger in the front.

“After two hours the car stops. We hear the police laughing, laughing, laughing...and another man gets [in the car], we don’t see this man.”

The respondents inferred that the individual who entered the car at this point was the police officer who would later beat them particularly severely at the border. Finally, after another hour of driving, they arrived at the Bosnian-Croatian border

“After one hour we arrive to the border of Croatia and Bosnia. In the border there is a wall, maybe 1 meter high...The police come to the car. You and you and you, come here...”

The approximate location of the push-back, between Staro Selo Topusko (HR) and Glinica (BiH) [45.21208, 15.92929]

While still locked inside of the van, the group could hear the police officers outside breaking their phones with rocks, chuckling amongst themselves.

“We heard them laughing when they broke our phones”

Mobile phones broken during the push-back

They discovered later that their phones had been broken by some sort of hammer and chisel [picture below]. When the door finally was finally opened, the group-members briefly saw a man dressed entirely in black, clad with a black balaclava mask, talking with the three other officers present at the push-back site.

“When they open the door, I see him with police talking”

“[He wore a] black mask. Same D’aesh”

“This D’aesh man [was dressed in] all black, he doesn’t show any of his body, just his eyes”

The three other officers were dressed in dark blue uniforms, with one older officer being identified as a potential leader. The respondents described initially seeing this masked man motioning to the other officers to wait as he headed down a pathway into Bosnia. Because she was ill, the police escorted the woman who was sick out of the van and told her to wait for the rest of the group a one hundred meters away from where the van was parked.

After the officer with the balaclava mask headed off down the path, the men then described being taken out of the van three at a time and being told to pick up their bags before being told, forcefully and suddenly, “Hajde, go!” by the authorities next to the van, who threatened them with their batons.

“Go! Go! Go! Go! Go!”

“The first police [hit] you, but not fast, and we run ‘Go! Go! Go!’

As each group of three ran away from the officers stationed next to the van, they encountered the masked officer who was hidden perhaps ten meters away, down the path on the Bosnian side of the border. As the group members were ran down this path, away from the previous officers, the masked officer was described as jumping out from a hiding place between two trees. The officer was described by several group-members as holding a club-like weapon well over a meter in length with two hands, which he swung forcefully at each passing group, attempting to hit them. The respondents described the blows from this weapon as having a large amount of force behind them. They remarked at how different it was from a typical police baton.

Diagram of the push-back location and procedure, as drawn by one of the respondents

“[After] 5 meters or 10 meters, this man between the trees come here. He have a tall stick, and kick you, kick you”

“The sticks that police have are maybe a half meter, [this was] not like police. Very tall...maybe silicone or wood, maybe about two meters”

“Have stick, not like police. Very tall.”

Bruised arm of one group-member sustained during the push-back

The majority of the group was able to evade the officer, receiving only glancing blows, however one member of the group, a 50-year-old father, slipped and fell onto the ground after being hit by this officer’s club. He described feeling this club strike his body eight times, as the officer swung the weapon at him with two hands.

“Boom! Boom! Boom...I see him, [it was like he] needed to kill me. Angry, angry angry, angry angry.”

“When we run fast, he maybe [hit] you one or two [times]. We run fast. My friend ‘T.’ fall down in this area, and he [hit] one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, times.”

“Huge man, big man”

The bruised back-side of the older group-member after the incident

The older group-member described being hit twice on his back, on his left and right arm, his backside, and on his head by this long club. Originating from Syria, he likened this officer’s uniform and tactics to those used by the Islamic State back in his home community.

“What you think D’aesh make in Syria, he make like this here”

“And the police [next to the vehicle] see all of this”

After escaping from the masked officer, each pair of three ran around a bend in the road further into Bosnia and waited for the rest of their group to pass this gauntlets. Finally, when all of the group had passed through this procedure, the man in the balaclava mask returned to the other police officers at which point one of the officers took out his pistol and fired it into the air three times.

The group then walked down a mostly straight road which eventually passed by a supermarket. After approximately 20 km of walking, they finally reached Velika Kladusa. The men had crossed many borders in the last months since leaving their homes in Idlib and escribed disbelief at the level of violence that they had encountered in Croatia:

“And all of these borders, nobody treated us [like this]”

“It’s not just with our group, it’s all groups”

"TAKE YOUR MOBILE AND GO, OR I'LL KILL YOU."

Date and time: June 23, 2019 17:00

Location: Lužani-Malino, Croatia.

Coordinates: 45.170505 , 17.716822699999966

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Serbia

Demographics: 1 person(s), age: 26-29 years old , from: Afghanistan

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 2 Croatian intervention police, 5 Croatian police officers, 3 police vehicles

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring, No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

A single man from Afghanistan, who appeared to be in his late twenties, crossed the border from Serbia into Croatia near Tovarnik (HR) on the evening of July 22. He walked along the train tracks the entire night, as well as most of the next day, taking only occasional breaks to rest and eat.

He was captured by police at 5:00PM on June 23. At this point, he had recently passed a sign indicating he had walked 125 kilometres along the train tracks in Croatia, as well as on a bridge, which would have placed him near Lužani-Malino. He described the two officers who captured him as wearing dark blue uniforms, and subsequently picked out the country's intervention police when shown a variety of Croatian police officers in uniform.

The respondent reported that the two officers who found him immediately started kicking him and hitting him with their fists. He estimated that the attack from the police officers lasted ten minutes. Once the attack subsided, the police took 200 Euros in cash that the man had on him and they broke his mobile phone. When the man asked the officers for the memory card in his phone because it contained sentimental pictures of his mother, sister and friends, the respondent reported that the police held a gun to his temple and told him to take his broken phone or he would be killed.

Shortly after three vehicles with five officers came and deported him back to Serbia, the officers did not ask him any questions or seek to determine the cause of the deportation but put him in the car and drove him to the Croatian-Serbian train line border.

At the border, the man was placed against a two-meter high fence and was beaten by the officers deporting him. Since the attacks by the police officers, the man now suffers from pain throughout his whole body when he walks and breathes. He has sustained injuries across his body but significantly on the right side of his chest, head and hands. Once forced across the border he arrived at the train station at 9:00PM, where he spent the night.

""AND YOU DON'T SEE THE OBSTACLE HERE AND YOU FALL DOWN AND THE OTHER STARTS BEATING YOU.""

Date and time: June 25, 2019 01:00

Location: 40 km within the interior of Croatia passed Velika Kladusa

Coordinates: 45.178187032819835 , 15.370221775669279

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 6 person(s), age: 18 - 35 years old , from: Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of six people left from Velika Kladuša (BiH) on June 22nd and walked in the interior of Croatia for two days. In the early morning hours of June 25th, at around 1:00 am, they left the cover of the forest in order to cross a road which ran through this largely uninhabited, forested region. Although they were just trying to cross the road to get to the other side, the group found that it was full of thorny plants. This being the case, they decided to continue down the road for a while, and eventually came across a small bridge which was positioned over a river. The group was approximately 10 meters away from the bridge at which point several police officers arrived in a civilian car. The first car carried "normal" officers, wearing blue uniforms.

These officers called for backup and shortly after another car arrived to the scene. There were six officers between these two cars in total. The second car carried two officers in black uniforms which the respondent described as "combat" uniforms. There were no other cars passing the group during their apprehension near the bridge on the roadside. It was on a street in the middle of the forest. An Arabic translator present during the testimony collection relayed his recollection of the event:

"First thing they put the lights on him, and then pushed him back and he fell backwards and they beat him with a baton and with their knees. He got his nose broken."

The respondent described that during the course of their apprehension, him and his friends experienced a high level of violence from the police officers. The respondent in particular described being pushed over by a police officer, falling back and then being straddled by a police officer and who hit him several times with a baton before taking the butt of his gun and swinging it at his nose. After this single blow to the nose, the respondent described the officer turning him on the other side and, again with the butt of the gun, hitting him four times in the [back] of the head until he fainted. The respondent then described regaining consciousness a short time later, during which time he was still being struck by a police officer.

When asked why he thought that he had received this treatment, the respondent voiced his opinion that:

“That’s how police treat illegal immigrants, it is quite normal to be that brutal.”

While he was being treated like this, the respondent described that his friends received somewhat different treatment from the officers. The respondent inferred that perhaps since he was the only group-member with a telephone in his possession at their time of apprehension, he was selected as the target of this violence. His mobile phone were taken at this point and later broken. The other group members were beaten, but not like the respondent.

The group was later put in a police van together and were brought back to the border between Croatia and Bosnia. It took them approximately an hour and a half to drive from the site of apprehension to this location. There was a river at the push-back site which ran between Bosnia and Croatia. There were four officers in total present at this site who wore dark blue uniforms. The respondent recalled there being some sort of barriers which were described as trees cut sideways.

“There was kinds of obstacles there”

“Like a tree, like a normal tree, put it on the side”

The respondent’s broken phone

Nearby the area where the group was brought back, the respondent described there being a large boulder where the police officers put his broken telephone on the rock and they asked him to pick it up. The officers had already taken several things from the phone, such as the memory and SIM cards. The respondent was the first man to be taken out of the van. They were taken out one at a time.

“Once you pick up the telephone, the first police officer starts beating you. And you run. And you don’t see the obstacle here and you fall down and the other starts beating you.”

“They made it on purpose to make people fall.”

“You fall here and the two men start beating you up”

The respondent then described getting himself up before stumbling down to a nearby river which marked the border of Bosnia and Croatia. At this moment, the officers seemed to lose interest in him. The respondent inferred that he then heard an officer saying to another officer to “Pick the other one” after which they went back to the van and took one of his friends. The respondent described then hearing the screams of his friend being struck by the police officers.

“The brutality has the purpose to make you weak”

“Even though I was covered in blood, they still beat me”

Additionally, the respondent described seeing his friend’s backpacks, food, and extra clothing burned by the police officers.

“At first you just see your things [in a pile] on the side, and then you go [into Bosnia] and if you turn back you see the fire.”

The place where they returned the group is well known because it is always the same place. He described it as being around 15 km away from Velika Kladuša.

The respondent’s nose after seeking medical assistance in Velika Kladuša , following the incident of violence during the group’s initial apprehension

The back of the respondent's head after seeking medical treatment in Velika Kladusa, following injury during the group's initial apprehension in Croatia

"THEY ARRIVED IN TWO VEHICLES WITH FOUR POLICEMEN. ONE WAS A WHITE NISSAN PICKUP WHILE THE OTHER ONE WAS A JEEP"

Date and time: July 3, 2019 11:00

Location: Komotini, Greece

Coordinates: 41.151944 , 25.432861

Push-back from: Greece

Push-back to: Turkey

Demographics: 4 person(s), age: Respondent was aged 45, Algerian man 34 and two Moroccans 26 and 37 , from: Morocco, Algeria

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), threatening with guns, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 4 Greek Policemen (masked and in military uniform) with one van, 2 police cars + an undefined number of Turkish police upon readmission

Taken to a police station?: yes

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Mobile Info Team

ORIGINAL REPORT

On the 28th of June 2019, the respondent aged 47 from Algeria left Edirne, Turkey at 21:00 by foot to enter Greece, with three other people, one from Algeria while two others from Morocco. The transit group managed to cross the fence at around 22:30. While scaling the fence, the respondent felt that there were some chemicals on the fence which caused the group members body to become itchy. After entering Greek territory, the transit group walked for almost 40 minutes in the direction of Greek-Bulgarian border.

Afterwards, the group took some rest in a nearby forest and then continued their journey. They kept on walking for five nights while resting during the day time. On the 3rd of July 2019, at around 11:00 in the morning, in a forest near a road, the group was caught by the officers in green uniform whom the respondent termed as "police".

"They arrived in two vehicles with four policemen. One was a White Nissan Pickup while the other one was a jeep".

Police searched the bodies of the transit group and subsequently handcuffed them. Afterwards, they were transferred in the White Nissan Pickup's trunk and were transported to a building with two very dirty rooms having an attached small toilet which respondent termed as "a jail in a police station". The room in which the transit group was put in had six people including children and women from Iraq, Syria and Somalia. Meanwhile the respondent states that another room had approximately 40 people and most of them from Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The group was detained for almost five hours and at around 19:00, four officials having a military uniform with their faces masked came whom respondent termed as “Greek Military” personals. The military personnel, along with some Greek policemen, put all the detainees of both rooms in a police van.

After 1.5 hours of driving the police van reached a place which respondent termed as a “camp” where more people were loaded into the van. According to the respondent they were not allowed to get down from the vehicle while more people were forcibly put into the vehicle.

At this stage the respondent termed the behavior of the authorities as inhuman, because they were beating people to get inside the vehicle despite the fact there was not enough room available. Once all the people were inside, the vehicle started moving, now also escorted by two police vehicles. One from the front while the other one from the back.

At around 21:00, the group reached a place near a river where they were asked to get down. Here they saw two wooden motor boats which were used to shift the people to the other side of the river. With 10 people boarded on each boat accompanied by two military personnel, the transit groups were dropped at different spots on the Turkish side of the river. Thus, all the people were pushed back to the Turkish side from Greek territory. Once they were all in Turkey, the military personnel fired in the air to alert the Turkish authorities. Soon Turkish authorities, which the respondent termed as Turkish military, arrived at the scene and arrested all the people. However, some managed to flee. The respondent and his friend were among the ones arrested.

According to the respondent they were taken to a police station in Edirne where their personal data was taken along with photographs. Afterwards, they were moved by the Turkish authorities to Istanbul where they were released.

"THEY DON'T GIVE ME SLEEPING BAG, PHONE, POWERBANK, ALL THE SLEEPING BAG ON FIRE IN A LITTLE PLACE"

Date and time: July 5, 2019 04:00

Location: 14 kilometers away from Bihać

Coordinates: 44.8596674 , 15.732346600000028

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 25 person(s), age: 16-35 , from: Afghanistan, Pakistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: threatening with guns, Set on fire their belongings

Police involved: 10 to 12 Croatian intervention police, unknown number of croatian special police, 2 police vans, 1 smaller police van

Taken to a police station?: yes

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

A group of 25 people – aged 16 to 35 and from Afghanistan and Pakistan – is walking towards the Slovenian border in Croatia. This group was walking in the forest at about 1am when they heard two gunshots and were asked to stop walking by the police. According to the interviewee, a Afghan men in his 20th, three young policemen were already in the forest, waiting for groups coming. They were wearing grey-blue shirts and dark trousers. This is the same uniform that the other officers, which they meet later, is wearing.

When the group hears the fire in the air, they stop.

"All the group had to sit down and stand up one by one."

They then empty their pockets and the officers sieze and put all their phones, powerbanks and money in a bag. Then they are frisked by the officers, who also searched their backpacks.

Approximately 25 minutes later, two other officers arrive in a dark blue french-brand van. The first police team gives these new officers the bag of belongings.

The group of 25 people enter into the back of the van and are driven to a police station. There, they are put into a windowless room where approximately 35 other people are already kept waiting. They wait approximately 30 minutes at the police station and are not interviewed. They are not allowed access to any toilets.

"[At the] police station, no see anyone and again go back to Bosnia."

“No give asylum for underage, deport Bosnia.”

Three minors are in this group of 25 people. The interviewee states that they observe no difference between how the police treat the minors and how they treat the adults.

The two groups are then put into two dark-blue vans. The interviewee states that the two drivers who pick up the group up in the forest are the same drivers who now drive them to the border.

At the border, there are three vehicles present: the two vehicles transporting the two groups and another police car that is already there.

They arrive at approximately 4.00 am. One officer opens the door to the back of the van and the group has to exit the van one-by-one and walk in a line. There are eight to ten policemen present.

“They don’t give me sleeping bag, phone, powerbank. All the sleeping bag on fire in a little place.”

According to the interviewee, they did not get their belongings back. Instead, the police officers amass all the sleeping bags and set them on fire. The group leaves the location without being beaten by the officers and then walks back to Bihać, which takes them three hours

""MY CHILD IS CRY 'PAPA! PISTOL!""

Date and time: July 11, 2019 00:00

Location: Glina, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.34023774728486 , 16.088041557009774

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 6 person(s), age: 5 - 35 years old , from: Algeria

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), insulting, threatening with guns, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

With the intention of travelling to Zagreb in order to ask for asylum, the group of six crossed into Croatia on the evening of July 10th from an area of the border near Velika Kladuša (BiH). From there, the group walked around 30 km in the interior of Croatia, nearing the town of Glina (HR)

When nearing the town, the group described being stopped by three police officers in black ski masks, who approached the group as they travelled in a forested stretch of land near a road. The officers led the group out onto the road where they made them wait for some time. Some time after this, the respondent described a considerably large amount of police officers and vehicles, given the size of their transit group, arriving to the scene. The respondent described seeing over 20 police officers in total arrive to the location, in seven different vehicles – three vans and four sedan-sized police vehicles. There was no reason apparent to the respondent for this disproportionate response.

After their apprehension, the group was split into two, due to the mother in the group experiencing a medical complication related to her pregnancy. At this point, the mother and her husband were brought in an ambulance to a medical clinic approximately 20 minutes nearby whereas the two children in the group, along with the two male group-members were taken to the nearby police station in Glina (HR).

The police station in Glina (HR) where the group described being detained before their pushback to BiH

After spending approximately one hour at the medical clinic, the mother and her husband were also split apart, with the husband being brought to nearby police in Glina, thus rejoining with his children and the rest of the group, while the mother was brought to a larger hospital for more than an hour away.

The husband in the group described his wife as rejoining the rest of the group approximately two hours later, after spending some time in this larger hospital. She was given several medication tablets during her interaction with the doctors at the hospital, however these were confiscated by the police officers at who transported her back to the police station.

At one point in the police station the father in the group, frustrated at the manner in which the officers were interacting with his family and their repeated requests for asylum, shouted to one of the officers “Don’t touch my family!” In response to this, the respondent described that one of the officers took a rectangular taser, which he held in one hand, and jabbed it into the rear end of the father, administering to him an electric shock.

The father described becoming so desperate during their stay in the police station to secure an asylum procedure for his family that at one point he even collapsed down onto his hands and knees to beg the officers at the station to allow his family to access the procedures. They responded, repeatedly, “No.”

The group spent the rest of the night and the next morning at the police station. Late in the afternoon of July 11th, the group was told moved into a van at the police station and driven back to the Bosnian-Croatian border. This journey took approximately one hour.

Once they arrived back to the border, the respondent described that there were four police officers waiting for them on arrival. They wore uniforms consisting of navy blue t-shirts and long black pants. They had a small, sedan-sized police vehicle at the scene which was described as a Volkswagon. Several of the group’s powerbanks and mobile phones were broken by the police officers at this point. In total 130 Bosnian marks were taken from the group, along with 270 EUR, and six packets of cigarettes.

After breaking their phones, the officers ushered them quickly over to a nearby border stone and forced them to go over it, back into Bosnian territory. During this time, the officers were described as using direct and harsh language towards the group:

“ Go! Go! Go!”

“This is my country!”

As they arrived to the border stone, the children in the group found it difficult to go over it themselves and took extra time to climb over with the assistance of their parents. The respondent described that in response to this delay in the procedure, the officers became angry.

Finally, the father described that before they were pushed back that he, along with the other two men in the group, were made to take off their pants and t-shirts, leaving them in only their underwear. These clothes were taken and thrown onto the pile of belongings which would later be burnt by the Croatian police. Specifically, they sited their backpacks, sleeping bags, and clothes thrown onto a fire and being burnt. Only the adult group-members belongings were burnt at this point. The children in the group were able to keep their bags and belongings. The respondent described specifically that the officers put their belongings in a pile, poured gasoline on it, and lit it on fire.

The respondent, the father of the children in the group, voiced anger and frustration at the manner in which the Croatian police officers addressed his children during the push-back. Specifically, he cited a moment in which the officers at the location began to use the guns to usher and point in the direction in which the group should continue. While conducting this behavior, the officers waved their handguns passed the heads of the children, leading them to begin crying.

“ My child is cry ‘Papa! Pistol!’”

The group was pushed back near the village of Glinica, approximately 22 km away from Velika Kladusa. The family

travelled to the IOM-run Miral Camp, which they were turned away from.

"WHEN THE POLICE SHOT THEIR GUN I WAS SO SCARED"

Date and time: July 16, 2019 13:00

Location: Vinkovački Banovci, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.1858125 , 19.047312499999975

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Serbia

Demographics: 5 person(s), age: 21,25,28,31,40 , from: Iraq, Mongolia

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), pepper spray, gunshots, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 2 Croatian Police

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring, No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

On July 15th, a 21-year-old Iraqi Kurd crossed into Croatia through the Serbian border at 11 pm. During the crossing into Croatia, the responded and his two friends aged 28 and 31 walked for half a day stopping in the city of Vinkovački Banovci to board a train and continue their journey.

Whilst waiting at the Vinkovački Banovci train station the group of three young men met two Mongolians (25 and 40 years old) who were also undertaking a similar journey. Both groups of men waited for several hours for the train to come but because it was a public holiday, no train had arrived. After waiting, one of the Mongolian man caught the attention of a passing local and asked when the next train would come. Shortly after the interaction between the group and the passing local, the police arrived and detained all 5 men. The responded believes that the local must have phoned the police on recognising that they were refugees and migrants. He also alleges that in Croatia the police will reward locals with the equivalent of €20 if they inform the police about any passing migrants and refugees.

Once the two police officers arrived, the Mongolian man attempted to flee the train station prompting the police to shoot their gun up into the air. The police detained all 5 people and searched their belongings. The police then proceeded to attack all five members of the group. The Serbian police hit the men with batons and then pepper-sprayed them in the face. It was estimated that the attack lasted for 20 minutes. The responded said he was left with lasting pain in his eyes after the pepper spray.

Once the attack stopped the police drove the group of 5 men to the Croatian border. They were driven in one police van and one police car. Once at the border the police took their shoes from them and told them to walk across the border.

"THEY FIRED THE GUN TO THE LEFT AND RIGHT OF OUR BODIES"

Date and time: July 17, 2019 12:00

Location: Prijeboj, Croatia

Coordinates: 44.84371659999999 , 15.676182899999958

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 10 person(s), age: 6, 29, 29, 25, 39, 24, 23, 25, 30, 30 , from: Pakistan, Syria, Palestine

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: 12 Croatia police, 2 dressed in light blue uniforms, 10 dressed in black; 1 police car, 2 police vans

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, denial of access to toilets, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

On July 16, a group of ten individuals began their transit attempt from Vučjak camp near the city of Bihać (BiH). The group included a six year old child. They walked about six or seven hours from camp to the border and entered Croatia around 7:00AM on July 17.

After crossing the border, they walked for two hours, which they believed was approximately four kilometers inside of Croatia. They were near the village of Prijeboj (HR) when two police officers saw them and ordered them to sit down. The officers were dressed in light blue uniforms and drove a police car. The officers fired a gun at the group six times.

"They fired at us! Not in the air, but to the left and right of our bodies. The small boy was afraid and and crying."

After five minutes, five or six more male officers came and the respondent reported that they were dressed in all black. The officers dressed in light blue ordered the group members to give them their backpacks and they looked through everything inside. They also confiscated their mobile phones and power banks and ordered them inside the police van and drove them for 30 minutes to a police station.

"We got out of the van at a police station but we did not go inside. They put us inside a garage next to the station."

The police put everyone inside of the garage and put their bags outside of the room. There were put in a room with a group of people from Algeria and Morocco. The garage was a windowless room without a toilet. When the group asked to use the toilet, the police refused. They also asked for food and water but the police refused to give them any of this as well.

"I don't know how long we were in the garage, maybe one or two hours. After they caught us I lost track of time."

Four police officers dressed in black and ordered the group members out and into the van. They drove one hour to the border. The van was very hot and the driver was swerving.

“There was an oxygen problem in the van; there was no oxygen. Some people started vomiting.”

Around 9:00PM, they arrived at the Bosnian border. There were more police officers dressed in black, but the respondent couldn't remember how many. The police ordered the group members out of the van and the police started a fire and put all of their bags in the fire. Then the police gave back four telephones, instead of the ten that were confiscated. Because of this, an argument started between the group about who should get the telephones.

The police ordered one person to go ahead of the rest of the group. He walked to the border and waited ten minutes. Then the police shouted “go, never come back” and the rest of the group walked to the border.

The group walked from the border to Bihać and then to Vučjak camp. It twelve hours to arrive at the camp from the border.

""I LOOKED [AND SAW] A CAMERA. I HAVE BEEN THROUGH THIS 16 TIMES AND I HAVE NEVER SEEN A CAMERA.""

Date and time: July 24, 2019 22:00

Location: near Velika Gata, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Coordinates: 44.94138723597196 , 15.731916225014515

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 11 person(s), age: 18 - 30 years old , from: Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, gunshots, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of 11 left from Šturlić (BiH) on July 21st and continued into Croatia with the intention of crossing into Slovenia. On their fourth day of walking through the Croatian interior, perhaps 16 km away from Rijeka, the group was walking during the daytime along a small path in a forested area.

*“There is too many police, they see me when I cross the trail to jungle. They wait [for us] there]...they leave their car their and they are walking and they listen. Because when you are walking through the woods there is too much wood on the floor *crack, crack, crack*. When you are walking in the jungle and you are walking across the trail, they cannot know where is your direction. And when they are walking, two police, two police, and two police. And when they hear.*

The respondent described Croatian police officers attempting to track his group as adopting a complex strategy in order to narrow down and identify his group’s location. He described his understanding of this strategy as a team of police officers breaking off into a number of groups of two, spreading themselves throughout a heavily trafficked section of forest. Then, as the respondent described it, the officers wait and stay silent in order to listen to the sounds of transit groups moving through the forest, naturally making noises as they step onto fallen branches and leaves. When one pair of officers hears the noises of a transit group walking through the woods, they then communicate with the others to triangulate the direction and the location of these noises.

“This is the new tactic of the police...because before, when you are in the jungle [they] cannot catch you. When you come to Štrulic, there is too much woods, he knows that we are not walking on the trail. Before we were walking on the trail, but we choose the path.”

The respondent described him and his group realizing that they were being tracked by the police and attempting to evade them. It was his impression that the police had anticipated this and purposefully positioned themselves at a bottleneck area of the terrain which would for the transit group in a certain direction.

“The police lead you to [a certain direction]”

“When I cross the path, I look behind and there is too many bushes with thorns, and I run. There is no flat ground, you cannot walk through. It is too much tall.”

“He knows me, when he sees me, he knows that I will return here or here, and when I return, he catch me.”

Two police officers apprehended the respondent and his friends on a small path. Upon approaching, the officers took out their firearms and told the respondent and his friends to “Stop, stop!” and fired their guns into the air three times. All group-members were then caught.

“We are catch on the street, two by two”

“The [police officers] knows, they wait, they wait for all persons to cross, because he knows”

At this point, the respondent again remarked on the evolving strategies of Croatian authorities in the region of Šturlić.

“Every day, they learn, every day there is immigrant and they learn about how we are going. If we go through the jungle or the path or not, where is the turn..The police knows and they set up...his cars or patrols here. In the jungle, two by two by two by two.”

After the apprehension of the group, one of the police officers put his foot on the chest of one of the group-members who he had forced to lay on the ground. Soon after this, another three police officers arrived at the scene. These officers all wore light blue t-shirts and long pants.

“ First coming two, then coming three”

The officers were described as demanding the group’s phones and belongings:

“The first words [they asked us] was ‘Where is the phones?’”

“Give me you phone, give me your phone, give me your phone, and all person is give. One person does not give.”

“The phone is important, who take the person, who is the leader...but we people Algeria, we don’t have a leader, all is the same”

“The second thing is check bags”

“And they began one by one to check the bags. And they begin to check and throw out the things in the bags. There is one friend, he threw out his shoe and left him with one shoes. And all, and find power bank and took the cable and cigarettes and headphones. And these things, all put in one pile.”

The respondent described the officers making two piles of all of the groups belongings, one for valuable items such as power banks, phones, cables, cigarettes, and headphones, while the other was for the group’s food. The respondent described a number of electronic devices such as phones and powerbanks being stolen at this time by one officer.

“They take phone, and put in a plastic bag [along with] lighter, and cigarettes, power banks, all in the plast [bags]. And all of the food in different bags. And he stole my phone and one powerbank. He stole all of the powerbanks and stole one phone. It was a nice phone.”

“I understand Bosnian language, it’s the same language [as Croatia] and when he was looking at the powerbanks and when he picked up one he said ‘Oh! It’s new! It’s a good one. I take this one! This good for me. I take one’...and he took

three packets of Camel cigarettes”

“Before his two other friends came, he stole maybe three powerbanks.”

During the process of searching their bags, the officers told the entire group to remain one place with their hands raised. They went through the group, telling each individual to walk over to a certain officer, who would check them and escort them to a nearby van which had arrived to transport them back to the border. During these actions, the respondent described seeing one officer repeatedly engage in actions of violence against the group-members.

“And here, they beat, one friend they beat...one person he beat, just one.”

“One police beat, five person”

“My friend he [was checked by the officer] here, when [the officer] finish, he begin for another person, and he check this friend, and he is coming to the car, and when he is coming to the car he beat this person. I don't know. He was normal, he check him and was talking with him and then he tells him to sit and he kick him. And then he is checking another person, he checks [their] face, my friend, and he punched [him in the stomach]. And one person here, he beat him. He says 'You come here' and he is slowly walking, and this person he kicks in the back. Tell him 'quickly!'. And he checks another person and tells him...I don't remember.

The respondent described another member of his group experiencing violence from one of the apprehending officers at the scene for failing to keep his arms raised in the air over a long period of time.

“He tell him before, because when you put this bag here, you can behind something. He said to all people 'Put your hands in the air' and this man does not because he is tired, you know, and he puts his hands down and the [police officer] is coming and they kick him on the sides [by kicking him]. You know they have [metal] in their boots.”

The respondent expressed relief at being able to evade direct violence from this officer, attributing his luck to his young appearance.

“They don't beat me, I don't know, I look younger.”

After this ordeal, when the group had been led to the van, the group was then driven directly back to the Bosnian-Croatian border, a journey which took approximately two hours. During this time, the car drove very fast in a disordered manner, leading the respondent to get sick while in the van. When the group arrived back to the border, they were taken out of the van as a group. The respondent described seeing one officer, hidden in the darkness, holding a camera which emitted a red light.

“And the new thing I looked [and saw] a camera. I have been through this 16 times and I have never seen a camera. I look and I see just the night and all I see is the red light.”

The officer with the camera and two other police officers were waiting for the group when they arrived at the border. In addition, two officers transported the group back to the border in the van. The entire group left the van at the same time, followed by the cameraman, and they continued down a path that led to a river with tepid and dirty water. This path, which was described as very small, eventually led them into Bosnia near Velika Gata (BiH), at which point they wandered for some time before finding their way back to Šturlić.

"THE POLICE BEAT ME WITH GUN ON MY HEAD BECAUSE I RUN TWICE"

Date and time: July 26, 2019 16:00

Location: 13km from Velika Kladuša , near Crni Potok, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.2260786 , 15.9017159

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 85 person(s), age: 23, 16-40 , from: Pakistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 2 Croatian police vans, 3 Croatian police cars, 9 regular Croatian police officers

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, fingerprints taken, photos taken, personal information taken, no translator present, denial of access to toilets, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

A group of 85 Pakistani men and minors – aged 16 to 40 – travelled together through the forest in Croatia in the lead up to this incident. The respondent – a 23 year old man from Pakistan – shared that early in the morning of July 26th the large group began to split into smaller sections in order not to be detected. However, during this process one of the smaller groups observed a police car which also spotted the group. Then, two more police cars arrived on the scene.

The respondent began running in the forest. One police man spotted him in the “jungle” (wooded terrain) from about five to ten meters away, then runs back to the police car. The police then follow in a police car down a small road which the respondent was running across.

The respondent ran with many people from his group and while they ran, someone accidentally knocked the respondent’s glasses off. Without his glasses, he was not able to see so the respondent returned to find his glasses. When he found his glasses, a police officer caught him and put a gun to his neck to threaten him. The police officer pushed him to the ground then kicked him twice in the shoulders. The police officer was male, wearing “jeans” and a black shirt. The respondent describes him as a “civil police officer.”

This police officer then told him to return to the road. The respondent followed the officer’s directions but then when he reached the road, the respondent attempted to run once again into the forest. He came upon a house where two people gave him food, water and 100 Kuna (Croatian currency). The respondent stayed in the house for 10 minutes, but the people told him to run because they said the police are everywhere in this area. The respondent then stopped a family in a car and asked to use their GPS to find the direction to Slovenia and the family offered to drive him to the Slovenian border. However, while talking to this family, the police apprehend him in a car. The police put him in a police van, which promptly arrived after the first car. In this van, there were ten people from the respondents original group. The

apprehension occurred at approximately 07:00. The Croatian police, however, told him to get out of the van because they recognized him from his glasses as the person who ran from the police twice. They asked him why he ran two times and then they ordered him to sit on the side of the road, where one police officer beat him with a baton on his hands, kicked him on his back and shoulders, and hit him on the head with the butt of a gun. The officer then took the respondents shoes and put them in a plastic bag and put the respondent back in a van.

The police drove 15 minutes to a police station, where they arrive at approximately 08:00. At the police station, the police gave the respondent a sheet of paper in Urdu that asked him to fill out his name, his family's name and his nationality. They took his fingerprints and a photo, but they do not make him sign anything. He was then put in a windowless room with 11 other people and one camera. They were in this room for about three hours and originally, they were denied food, water and access to a toilet but gradually, the police gave them small amounts of water and hard, stale bread and biscuits.

The respondent asked for asylum but the police told him "no". Two minors also asked for asylum in the police station. They told the police they were minors and do not want to go back to Bosnia. The police respond by saying "no, you go back to Bosnia." The group were not beaten inside the police station.

The respondent was then put in a van with eight other people. There was also another van full of 10 people that were caught. The police kept them in the van for 20 minutes without turning on the engine and the van is very hot and had no fan. Then, the police drove the van for about three hours until they reach the border with Bosnia, approximately 13km from Velika Kladuša.

The transit group were pushed back at around 16:00. The police opened the van doors and told one person to come out. When this person came out, they took his phone and smashed it, then hand it back to him. Then, they hit him once with a baton but the respondent states this was not a very forceful blow. The police officers took all the powerbanks from the group. Then everyone else exited the van, but the last to exit were not beaten. These group members were just told to go across the border into Bosnia, which they did. They then walked all the way to Velika Kladuša and when they were not able to find a taxi or bus, they walk all the way back to Bihać.

"BOSNIA PEOPLE ARE GOOD, BUT BOSNIA POLICE ARE BIG PROBLEM"

Date and time: July 28, 2019 02:00

Location: Gornji Šepak, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Coordinates: 44.5538697 , 19.162012600000025

Push-back from: Bosnia

Push-back to: Serbia

Demographics: 20 person(s), age: 16-35 years old , from: Afghanistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 4 Bosnian police officers; 2 police vans

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

On July 28, a group of 20 people from Afghanistan, including two individuals under the age of 18 years old, departed from Loznica (SRB) and began their transit attempt to enter Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The group took a boat across the Drina River around midnight on July 28 and then walked for two hours inside the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Around 2:00AM, near the village of Gornji Šepak (BiH), they were spotted by two male police officers wearing dark blue uniforms. The police pointed a gun at the group members and shouted "stop." Everyone in the group followed the order.

The police then demanded that everyone hand over their mobile phones and the respondent reported that the police then smashed the phones on the ground to break them.

The group members waited with these two officers for five minutes and then a second police van with two more male officers arrived at the scene.

The police ordered the 20 individuals inside of the van and the police drove the group around 20 minutes back to the Serbian border. The police brought the group to the Šepak bridge border crossing and shouted "go."

The group members crossed the bridge and slept in the forest in Serbia for one night. The following night they attempted to enter Bosnia and Herzegovina again and they successfully entered the country and reached Sarajevo the following day.

"Bosnia people are good, but Bosnia police are big problem"

"THEY LOOK AT US VERY ANGRILY AND SHOW US THEIR BATONS, LETTING US UNDERSTAND THAT THEY WILL USE THEM ON US LATER."

Date and time: August 7, 2019 22:00

Location: near Maljevac border crossing, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Coordinates: 45.191255 , 15.784444

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 23 person(s), age: 25-32 , from: Pakistan, Iraq, unknown

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Taken to a police station?: yes

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring, No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

On July 31 at 10:00AM, a group of fourteen Pakistani men between 25 and 32 years old crossed the Bosnian-Croatian border near Bihać (BiH), where they had been staying in tents in the forest for the previous couple of days.

They walked through forests and mountains for seven days, experiencing high temperatures during daytime and cool weather at night. They ate one piece of bread everyday and drank rain water, as they ran out of drinking water soon after their departure. Due to the fluctuations in weather conditions, one man caught a cold and had to continue the journey while having fever.

"For seven days, everything was okay, but then the problem started!"

On August 7 at 2:00PM, in the a forest near the route E65 (approximate coordinates see Fig. 1) the group crossed a dirt road when a white van without any insignia passed by.

Fig. 1.: Estimated place of apprehension

When they saw the van, they tried to hide next to the road, but the van stopped and immediately returned towards them, so they started running into the forest as fast as they could. However, two men in plain clothes got out of the van and started to shoot at them, aiming at their legs, which made the men immediately give up and return to the dirt road with their hands up.

Getting closer to the two men, the respondent saw them properly and described them as two very tall and muscular men in their thirties

"with the body of police officers, but wearing no police uniforms or boots, just jeans, t-shirts and slippers."

The men told the respondent and his friends to sit down and take off their shoes in order to make it impossible for them to escape. They spoke English well and explained to the respondent that they were special police and that they would call for more police officers to come.

“They were asking: ‘Why are you going there?’ and I said ‘I am from Kashmir, the situation is not good there. We are walking for seven days, we are close to Slovenia, please, let us go!’, but they only replied ‘It’s our duty, we can not let you.’”

The respondent spent a while talking to the officer about the situation in his home country Kashmir, which they were aware of and interested in. Despite the fact that the two self-proclaimed special police officers were shooting at the men at the beginning, the respondent had an overall positive impression of them, describing them as “*very nice and respectful*”, unlike the other officers that took them over later on.

After two hours waiting in the forest, a windowless police van arrived and four police officers got out. The respondent described them as ‘local police’ wearing light blue button down shirts, dark blue trousers and black boots.

“ They looked at us very angrily and showed us their batons, letting us understand that they will use them on us later.”

The newly arrived officers didn’t talk to the group at all, only with the men who apprehended them. The respondent assumed that they already knew each other. They searched all their bags, their bodies, and took their phones, money and power banks. In total the police took 70-100€ from everyone, six phones and four power banks. The whole procedure took around 40-50 minutes and all fourteen men were put into the windowless police van.

They drove around around two or three hours on bumpy roads, being thrown back and forth in the van. Additionally, the car didn’t have air conditioning and it reached an unbearably hot degree.

Arriving at a small police station that the respondent was not able to identify as he no longer had his phone and was disoriented from the car ride, the four officers, who the respondent described as local police, opened the door for a couple of minutes. One of the officers came to the back and asked for the passwords for a couple of the phones. The respondent assumed this was to get information about the transit group’s route. This officer also put his head in the car and asked the group casually where they were from.

Before leaving, they put nine more men in the van from Iraq and other Arabic speaking countries whose nationality the respondent did not know. He would estimate most of the men to be in the same age as the respondent’s transit group (25-32), with only one of them significantly older (around 50 years old). They left the police station around 5:00PM with in total of 23 apprehended individuals in the back of the van. They drove for what seemed to be three or four hours, according to the respondent. The car ride was very uncomfortable with the additional people in the vehicle because there was not a seat from everyone.

“They give a punishment in the van, they know that all people are not in good condition.”

During the drive, the respondent was talking to a man from Iraq who was heavily injured. Due to the mindset of the respondent after hours of driving, he was not able to identify the place nor the exact time of the pushback, but he estimated it to be at around ten in the evening at a place near the border crossing point Maljevac (HRV, see map, coordinates are estimated).

Two of the police officers who picked the group up from Croatia were standing to the left and right of the van’s door. A couple of meters away from the first two officers, there were two new police officers dressed in black uniforms and were standing in the same line as the first two police. They took the men out of the car two by two.

The officers in blue beat them with batons from both sides and pushed them towards their other colleagues in black, who continued to beat them with sticks and kicked them down a hill towards the Croatian border with Bosnia and Herzegovina. The respondent and some of his friends stumbled and fell down from the kicks of the second officers. From the beating with batons, the respondent received a visible bruise on his leg and an injured elbow (see Fig. 2 and 3).

Fig. 2: Bruise from beatings with batons

Fig. 3: Injured elbow from beatings with batons

After this treatment, the group of Pakistanis and some of the Arabic speaking men gathered downhill on the Bosnian side of the border because they were exhausted and disoriented. When the two Croatian police officers in black saw them, they followed them in order to beat and push them further towards Bosnia while crossing the border themselves. The officers chased them through a field and then returned to their other colleagues.

They were shouting while they were beating the group and also the men were screaming in pain as they were beaten. The respondent assumed that because of this noise, some of the local Bosnians living in the neighboring houses next to the border called the Bosnian police.

On the other side of the crops field, the fourteen Pakistani and four of the Iraqi men sat down to rest a little bit and to decide what to do and where to go now. The respondent didn't know where the five other Arabic speaking men had gone. The group spent around 5 minutes sitting there when a bunch of police officers with torches approached them. At first they tried to run away as they thought it was a new unit of Croatian police following them, *"but the officers said: As-salam alaykum, we are from Bosnian police."*

" They asked: 'Where is Croatian police? They deported you?' And I said: 'Yes, they deported us and beat us very badly. They are at the road over there' ,

Two Bosnian police officers with torches ran through the field and up the hill to the road with a third officer following behind. They spent a while speaking loudly and angrily to each other on the road while the transit group sat together with some of the other Bosnian police officers. After this interaction with Croatian police, the officers came back, called another van and the group was driven 8-10 minutes to the police station where they were given food and a place to sleep. In the morning, they were brought to the hospital to receive treatment for the injuries they received from Croatian police.

"I SHOWED MY VENTOLIN SPRAY TO THEM WHEN THEY APPROACHED ME WITH THEIR BATONS, I SHOWED IT SO THEY SPARE ME. I WAS AFRAID OF HAVING MY HEAD SMASHED."

Date and time: August 18, 2019 22:30

Location: near Sturlic, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Coordinates: 45.031615 , 15.759882

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 10 person(s), age: 21-31 , from: Morocco, Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, threatening with guns, gunshots, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring, No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

On August 14 at night, a group of ten individuals from Algeria and Morocco left from Sturlic for their transit attempt towards Italy. They walked through the woody and mountainous Croatian inner land for four days. As they were drinking rain water and from small streams and were not very well equipped to walk during these hot days and cold nights, one individual caught fever and continued hiking while taking paracetamol.

"We saw lots of animals, we saw the bear in the area where you are not allowed to go [note of the reporter: Military training area 'Eugen Kvaternik' in Croatia, but we had to cross. And we slept there. When health is good we say hamdoulilah, it's life."

The group went through the Croatian military training area "Eugen Kvaternik" (see Fig. 1), aware of the risk of running into Croatian Special Forces who are, according to the respondent, often present for trainings in this area.

Fig. 1: Military area "Eugen Kvaternik" in Croatia

On their fourth day of transit, on August 18 at around 7.00 or 7.30 PM, the group was discovered by three officers whose uniform description matches with Croatian Special Forces, armed with batons and big weapons that the respondent describes as kalashnikovs. (See Fig. 2, estimated coordinates: 45.183399, 15.346270)

Fig. 2: Point of apprehension

"Maybe they saw us on a trail. We were on a trail and while we walked they came, one behind us and two before us, they were three. One says stop, he shoots with a gun in the air."

The respondent reports that three men were trying to run away and the officers took this as an excuse to beat four people from the whole group with batons while apprehending them. They were mainly beaten on their torsos and

extremities, however one individual was also severely beaten on the head which resulted in a bleeding wound.

“They did not hit me because I had taken my ventolin spray saying ‘I am asthmatic’, I showed my ventolin spray to them when they approached me with their batons, I showed it so they spare me. I was afraid of having my head smashed. They hit my friend and another one, and two others.”

It took the three officers five minutes to apprehend the group. They were casually asked their nationality and group size, bodysearched and told that they would hand them over to police. In total, the three officers took six phones, five power banks and 550€ in cash from the whole group which was later given to the second unit. The officers described as Special Forces had a van parked somewhere else and walked around one or two kilometres to get to this point together with the group. The van had camouflage colours and no windows in the back, the whole group was put in the back of it and they drove around one hour to the exit of the military zone – “ a gate like an official entrance where it says ‘forbidden to enter’”

At this gate, around 8:30 PM on August 18, they were handed over to another unit of three police officers in a van. Two of them were wearing light blue uniforms, one of them a black suit.

“They say like that ‘where are you from, how many people are you’, we say we are ten, they search us and they put us in the van.”

“We said ‘Can we make asylum in Zagreb?’ and they just replied ‘OK OK’. We told the military and the police, both of them said ‘OK OK’.”

In this second van, they drove around one hour and thirty minutes while taking several brakes without the door being opened for the group. The respondent describes the back of the van as very hot and the driving purposely reckless in order to create confusion and vertigo amongst the individuals.

At around 10.30 PM on August 18, the van arrived on a little forest trail near Sturlic (BiH) on the Croatian side of the border (See Fig. 3, estimated coordinates: 45.031615, 15.759882)

Fig. 3: Estimated point of pushback

They opened the door of the van, blinded the individuals with torches and let them exit one by one, standing on both sides of the door while beating them with batons. (See Fig. 4)

Fig. 4: Bled in the inside of the eye resulting from beating with batons

There was another police van with windows present and around five more police officers, all wearing the same black suits like the one officer from the team that was already present at the exit of the military area. At this point, all officers were smelling strongly of alcohol.

Next to the van, there was a fire lit and all individuals were forced to burn their luggage.

“You got out from the van and he asks you where is your bag, you say ‘this one’, he tells you ‘take it’ and you find fire and he tells you ‘put it inside’.”

After that, the officer pushed them towards Sturlic from where the group had to walk back to Velika Kladusa around 25 kilometres.

"THEY CLOSE THE DOOR AFTER EACH ONE. SIX, LIKE THIS (SHOWING ON A PAPER WITH HIS FINGER) IN LINE AND BEAT US ONE AFTER THE OTHER. THEY LET ONE GO OUT AND CLOSE THE DOOR [OF THE VAN]."

Date and time: August 21, 2019 00:00

Location: Rijeka, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.3270631 , 14.442176000000018

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 12 person(s), age: 15-30 years old , from: Algeria

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, electric shock, gunshots, forcing to undress, theft of personal belongings, pushing into a river

Police involved: 9 Croatian officers (Green uniforms) and 6 Croatian officers (black uniforms without flags or emblems), 1 Croatian police van without windows in the back

Taken to a police station?: no

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, denial of access to toilets, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The respondent left Sturlić (*BiH*) at approximately 03:00 on 15th August 2019. He traveled along with a group of eleven other people from Algeria, all Kabyle.

The transit group, including four minors, had been walking in the forest for six days when they were apprehended by Croatian officers while passing by agricultural fields („pistes agricoles“) near Rijeka (*HR*). This initial police contact occurred at 6:00 on 21st August 2019. According to the respondent, the area was watched by drones and helicopters; the officers were hidden in the fields and wearing green uniforms. The transit group heard someone shouting:

“Stop!”

Then the officers emerged and ran at the transit group. The respondent tried to run away but he was attacked by an officer using a taser. The weapon was handheld, and used to shock the respondent with a electrical current.

“It was a taser like for the beard [electric razor], wireless“.

Nine officers suddenly surrounded the group from all sides and held them at this point.

The respondent tried to make a video of what was happening with his phone. An officer asked what he was doing and then the respondent stopped. The officer seized the phone and immediately began demanding the passcode in order to look up the GPS route the men were taking via the google maps application. The other officers began to frisk and remove all items from the other men:

“First they asked phones, then knives, bladed weapons, power banks, and then money. They love money. [Then] they undressed us. Completely. To see if we [were hiding] something.”

The respondent said that his group asked to “go to camp”, but the answer they got from the officers was negative. After that, the people from the group were beaten several times by the officer who were using police batons, and then forced to enter into the back of a police van with no windows, for what the respondent felt was fourteen hours. During this time they were not allowed access to a toilet, or offered anything to eat or drink anything. The respondent stressed how they found it difficult to breathe during their containment, due to the high temperature inside.

“They beat us and after they take us in the truck. Very hot. There were fans to breathe but they did not put them on.”

When the van started, they were driven to what the respondent thinks was a police station:

“I know because there were holes in the [side of the van] and I saw... and [we could hear] the keys. [...] We stayed 14 hours. From 07:00 to 22:00. No toilets. Nothing. I asked ‘water’ but no reply.”

Later, at night, the twelve people were taken within the same van to the border between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The respondent recalls the location as near to Velika Kladuša, next to the river.

There, six officers dressed in black and wearing ski masks were waiting for them, aligned on one side.

“When they beat me I try see name, sign... but nothing (in reference to their uniform).”

“They made us go one by one. They had masks, headlamps so we cannot see them. They close the door after each one. Six, like this (showing on a paper with his finger) in line and beat us one after the other. They let one go out and close the door [of the van].”

When taken, one by one, out of the van, the officers first removed the individuals shoes and tossed their bag onto an already lit fire. Then they kicked and beat each transit group member in a separate fashion. The respondent described being beaten with police batons, especially targeted towards his joints (elbows, wrists, knees), and punched in the stomach. When the police had finished with one person, the officers kicked that person into the river and opened the

door of the van for the next person to suffer the same treatment.

“The last one had his shoulder dislocated. The first and the last they beat [them] too much.”

Referring to the vulnerability of the group, the respondent stated:

“We have minors. Disabled. Problem. Not good.”

“I said them ‘we have disabled [person]’. Look (showing the feet of his friend). Several operations. Problem.”

But according to the respondent, the police officers questioned how the man had already made transit into Croatia, and questioned the persons disability. To the last person exiting the van, an officer handed a bag containing their phones.

“a bag – all broken“

Mobile phones broken by the police in this incident.

Close up of shattered screen.

Once everyone had been removed from the van and beaten, respondent described how a police officer began shooting in the air with his gun and pushing the men towards the river marking the border. The men were forced into the water by police. The physical expulsion is alleged to have occurred at approximately 20:00 on 21st September 2019, fourteen hours after they were loaded into the van near Rijeka (HR).

Pushed across the river back into BiH, the group walked back to Velika Kladuša, barefoot, without any clothes left, aside from the wet clothes they were wearing, without any money, and without working phones with which they could seek support from friends and family.

"UP TO THREE HOURS MY EYES WAS BURNING, FIRE...WE CANNOT SEE PROPERLY FOR THREE HOURS."

Date and time: August 27, 2019 00:00

Location: Near Lohovo, Bosnia

Coordinates: 44.7275608 , 15.9184948

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Croatia, Bosnia

Demographics: 11 person(s), age: 14-40 , from: Afghanistan, Pakistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), pushing people to the ground, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, pepper spray, gunshots, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: 2 Slovenian army officers, 3 Slovenian Police officers, unknown number of Croatian regular police officers

Taken to a police station?: yes

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

A group of 13 men and minors, all from Pakistan and Afghanistan, were apprehended at 21:21 on August 25th 2019 in the forest near a small road about two to three kilometers from the Italian border with Slovenia. The respondent, a 28-year-old Pakistani man, shared that prior to spotting the Slovenian police officers, his group thought that they were about to cross into Italy and were feeling happy. However, at this point the group saw three Slovenian police officers wearing light blue shirts with dark blue collars: one woman police officer and two men.

The police officers told the group to stop and one police officer shot a bullet into the air.

"Some guys try to run. And they spray tear spray."

According to the respondent, the police officers used tear gas on the group. Two men managed to run away. Because the respondent was near the front of the group, he was sprayed heavily.

"We cannot not see anything. I cover my eyes with my hands. Too much fire in my eyes. Up to three hours my eyes was burning, fire...We cannot see properly for three hours."

The police officers told the group to sit down. The group sat and asked for water because of the effects of the tear gas.

The female police officer gave the group water. The police then began interrogating them, asking; how many people were in the group? Although the group was originally 13, the group said they are only 11 so that the police would not chase the two who had managed to avoid arrest.

Two Slovenian army members arrived a little later at the spot of apprehension. The respondent did not know if they were working independently or had coordinated their actions with the Slovenian police officers. One army officer had a gun and one did not. The one without a gun spoke Italian and asked if anyone in the group spoke Italian. Since it was dark, the respondent could not clearly make out more information about their uniforms.

The police officers told the respondent:

“You are boss, you lead.’ They use bad words for me.”

They assumed the respondent was a guide and verbally harassed him. A police car arrived later. The police put 11 people in one small car.

“It was car for 6 people and they took us, 11.”

The police drove the group for around 45 minutes until they reached a Slovenian police station.

“Too much hot. One [man] was start crying in car and he knock on window to stop and some time he feel badly, he sick, when he go police station, he fell down. I call police. He don’t eat for some days and was hot in car.”

The police officers called a doctor at the police station who then gave the man an injection. The injection, however, did not appear to help the man and he didnt feel better. At the police station, the police officers took the men’s fingerprints. They told the respondent that he had come too many times to this exact police station and was processed at it many times. The respondent said:

“I say ‘yes, I come many times.’ I say ‘we want asylum, we want stay here.’ They say ‘no asylum here.”

The police kept the group in a container for what the respondent felt was 24 hours. The police gave the men biscuits, water and jam and/or chocolate the first night. The police gave the men sheets of paper in Slovenian. There were no translators present. The men signed these sheets. They were not beaten at this police station but they were pushed and verbally harassed.

The following day, the police gave the group macaroni and chicken to eat. Around 15:00 on the 26th, August 2019, the police officers put the group into a minibus and drove them to the Rupa border crossing (between Slovenia and Croatia). This drive took approximately two to two and a half hours. A little after 17:00, the group arrived at the Rupa border crossing. The Slovenian police gave the group their belongings back. However, when they were transferred to the

Croatian police, the Croatian police took all their belongings once again:

“When they give [us] to Croatian police, they took us everything, our phones. They didn’t even leave our shoes on our feet.”

The sheets of paper the group signed in Slovenia were given to the Croatian police, who then threw them in the garbage. The group stayed at the Rupa border crossing police station for three and a half hours. They were not beaten at the police station. They were not given food or water and were kept in a container. The respondent states that the police officers became very angry after he asked for asylum.

“They were very angry at us. They didn’t speak to us properly. When we ask for water, ‘sir, we want water’, he act like he not listening. When you ask for toilet, he act like he not listening.”

At the police station, the respondent was made to fill out a sheet with his name and personal information. The police officers photographed him with this sheet. They did not take his fingerprints. After taking these pictures, the police took the group to a van. “After picture, go van.” The police officers made the group take off their shoes and stored all of their shoes inside the seats in the police van.

“You will not wear your shoes when you go in van. They put all shoes inside seat.”

They were driven in the van for more than four and a half hours.

“Drive like crazy van. When you punish someone, put them in a box and make like this [respondent mimes like he is violently shaking a box].”

On the 27th August, at approximately midnight, the van arrived near Lohovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the border were two cars of Croatian police officers wearing light blue shirts. The respondent remembers seeing a police officer with a badge that had one single yellow star. The police opened the van and made the men come out one-by-one.

“[Police] hit with one stick [baton], everyone, one-by-one. He hit and say ‘go there.’”

The police officers put the men into one line and created a fire.

“They put everything, bags, clothing, sleeping bag, everything, your phone, your shoes, even your socks, they put everything fire.”

After burning the group's belongings, the police again arranged the men into a line and beat them again, this time with wooden sticks taken from surrounding trees. They told the group to go across the border. The men were still without shoes and the respondent describes that the ground contained many sharp rocks.

"When you go this way, you feel it cut your feet. They say 'go, go, fast.' And they beat everyone, they go crazy, one guy they hit on head and he bleed."

At this point, the respondent described how chaos ensued. The police officers began beating the men "like crazy" while one police officer held a flashlight. Everyone began running and some people in the group fell down in the forest, receiving injuries from their falls. One man fell on his nose and injured it so that it began bleeding.

When the men crossed the border, they began to walk back to Bihać. Some men did not have trousers, only a shirt and underwear. Everyone in the group was without shoes and socks. The police had taken everything.

"Nothing we have."

The respondent states that he did not get "bubbles" (blisters) and wounds in his feet from ten days of walking in the Croatian and Slovenian forest, but from the few hours forced to walk barefoot during the pushback, he had gained these injuries. Summing up his experience, the respondent stated:

"When they push us back, they make like our heart is broke."

“THIS IS NOT A ROOM IN A HOTEL. [...] NOTHING TO EAT, NOTHING TO DRINK, NO TOILETS. WE WERE SEATING HERE AND TOILETS THERE [POINTING A SPACE ON THE GROUND ONE METER AHEAD]. IN SAME ROOM, ON THE FLOOR.”

Date and time: September 9, 2019 22:00

Location: Kobiljac, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.17896984093538 , 16.05076841024777

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Croatia, Bosnia

Demographics: 7 person(s), age: 20-42 , from: Morocco

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, insulting, threatening with guns, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: At least 6 Slovenian officers dressed with blue shirts, 1 police car, 1 police van. At least 14 Croatian officers, of whom at least 10 Croatian officers dressed in black and wearing ski-masks. Other officers at police station and in the cars wearing blue police shirts. 1 car from the Croatian police, 1 police van, 1 motorbike

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, fingerprints taken, photos taken, personal information taken, papers signed, no translator present, denial of access to toilets, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

At approximately midnight on 31st of August 2019, a group of seven people from Morocco left Velika Kladuša to cross the border with Croatia. After eight days walking in the mountainous forest of Croatia, they group finally reach the Slovenian border.

On 8th September, at approximately 23:00, as they walked along a road, two officers, a policeman and a policewoman, arrived in a police car and summoned them, ordering them to stop. The respondent describes how the group were scared, but approached because they wanted to ask for asylum. The transit group obeyed the officers, who promptly made calls to their colleagues on the phone. A police van arrived and took the group to a police station in Metlika (Slovenia), where other police officers took their pictures, their fingerprints, wrote down their names, country of origin/destination and kept them in detention overnight.

A paper written in Slovenian was issued to the group members, but the men did not understand what it said. Another respondent, part of the same group, reacted to this issueing of documents, stating:

“No understand. Police, this, me sign but no understand.”

Without any translator present, the police forced the group to sign a paper (to which none of the men were made aware of the contents).

(Figure 1: Paper issued to the respondent at Metlika station by the Slovenian police.)

Describing the procedure of this identification process, fingerprinting and issuing of removal form, the respondent shared that:

“They talk a bit English but if you understand, okay. If not, they do whatever they want“.

The respondent stated that, the day after (9th September 2019), the Slovenian officers removed the group from the station and drove them to the border with Croatia. A van, with a description matching that of Croatian police vehicles, took the seven people from the border, and drove them into Croatian territory. The respondent described how exasperated he was to be returned by Slovenian officials to Croatia. He stated that he used to live and work in Italy before and, expressing himself in fluent Italian, shared the despair that:

“I thought they would take us to a camp. But no. They took us to the Croatian border. There were two officers to drive [the van] and four in another car. They took us to a police station“.

Referring to the Croatian officials above, the respondent was taken to a police station along with the other group members. Once there, some Croatian officers took their picture, wrote down their names and put them in detention. When asked if they had access to toilets, the respondent answered:

“Toilets? This is not a room in a hotel. No toilets. Nothing to eat, nothing to drink, no toilets. We were seating here and toilets there [pointing a space on the ground one meter ahead]. In same room, on the floor“.

During the evening (of 9th September 2019), having been detained for what the respondent suggests was approximately four-five hours, the transit group were taken en mass to a place at the border between Croatia and Bosnia. The group estimated that they had arrived to this location at 22:00.

The respondent shares how, upon arrival at the border, the police removed them from the vans and lined the people up in order to confiscate all their belongings.

“They make us go out of the van, in line. There are two officers on each side. They are dressed in black with [ski masks] on their face. They take our personal belongings. They take our phones and they break all. After they give us the plastic bag with the broken phones.“

(Figure 2: Mobile phone broken by the Croatian police near the border with BiH.)

After the group had been lined up, the police broke their mobile phones, as pictured above. According to the respondent, making any movement or complaint in the presence of these officers would lead them to beating people.

“If you make a gesture or a step on the side, they beat you.

Once the group had been searched, the officers shouted at them to move towards BiH territory. But concealed in the woodland were more Croatian officers, ready to assault the group.

“They say ‘go go go’ and you have to run. We run straight and there, there are four other [officers] hidden behind a tree and they come out with batons and beat us, all together. One had [come by] motorbike“.

The group were ambushed by four officers concealed behind a tree. Emerging from cover, they attacked the men, beating them with batons.

(Figure 3: Depiction of police van. Four black dots by vehicle representing the officers unloading and four black dots near the tree representing the team that ambushed them men as they followed the course of the vertical arrow pointing out the back of the van.)

Figure 3 depicts the actions that unfolded. The attack resulted in the respondent being beaten to the ground by one of the Croatian officers. He stated:

“I was on the ground and one [officer] beat me very strongly with a baton on my back when I was lying down.“

(Figure 4: Injuries sustained by one of the group members from baton assault by Croatian officials.)

(Figure 5: Further scaring suffered by victim of the police baton attack.)

After being beaten, one of the officers ordered them to walk in the direction of Bosnia. The men began walking in the direction given. It was a sloped route, surrounded by trees. The respondent described how one of the officers who had ambushed them from the tree used a gun to frighten the group.

“We had to go down the mountain, after the tree. One of the four officers behind the tree had a gun. You know a gun that only makes noise, to frighten you. He shot four times. One in the air, up, and three times on us.“

(Figure 6: Injury to lip sustained during baton attack.)

The group didn't know where they had been pushed back as they had no phones (and thus no GPS), and they were also

in a state of shock which heightened their disorientation. They asked for directions in the first village they came to and were told the direction of Velika Kladuša. According to the person who helped them, it was around 30 km away.

Confirmation from several group members suggests the border violence occurred at Kobiljak (HR). One of the respondents within the group remembered clearly the separation of the two roads, one going to Croatia, one to Bosnia, and other details of the surroundings that made him able to show the exact place of the push back on the map. The description corresponds to the location indicated.

"THEY WERE LAUGHING AND THEY BURNED MY CLOTHES"

Bandaging to lower leg of group member attacked by police officers at the site of apprehension.

Date and time: September 18, 2019 01:00

Location: Vela Voda, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.405349 , 14.698418

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 8 person(s), age: 25-34 , from: Morocco, Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), threatening with guns, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 6 Croatian Special Forces officers in green uniforms

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, no translator present, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

On 17th of September 2019 at approximately 7.00 a group of eight men in transit from Algeria and Morocco were stopped in Vela Voda (HR) in a mountainous area in the woods. The respondent pinned the location where the group was stopped on *maps me* , data which has provided the geolocation for this report. The group was stopped by six Croatian Special Forces officers wearing dark green uniforms. An unspecified number of officers were wearing black ski masks. The officers had pistols which they held in the direction of the respondent in order to intimidate the group.

All bags were taken from the group in transit and confiscated by the officers, along with clothing and shoes. Twenty euros were taken from the respondent and put into the pocket of one Croatian Special Forces officer. Six phones confiscated from the group were broken with batons by the officers. The broken remains of the men's phones were then put into a pile with their clothing and shoes, and set on fire.

“They were laughing and they burned my clothes.”

The respondent reports that the authorities were laughing as their personal belongings were being destroyed in the fire. While the items were burning, authorities in black ski masks used batons to hit the respondent and his companions on the legs, causing at least one individual to bleed from his lower leg.

Bandaging to lower leg of group member attacked by police officers at the site of apprehension.

The group was forcibly removed from the wooded area and transported in two white police vans to Rijeka police station. They were detained at the station, during which time they were denied food. There was no translator present at the

station. The respondent expressed intention for asylum, but got no response from the officers present. The officers only wanted to gather if the men had documents, aside from this, they did not speak to the detained transit group.

“They asked for passport and documents. We don’t have. Then they stop talking to us.”

Following this question there were no further conversations with the authorities in the station.

At 20:00, after approximately thirteen hours in detention in the station in Rijeka (HR), the group was told to board two separate police vans. The respondent was placed inside a van along with others. The rear compartment had no windows, and they were locked in for approximately five hours, while the driver maneuvered the vehicle in a very erratic fashion. The respondent reports that the male officer who was driving made fast, sharp turns which made the group inside feel sick. The respondent vomited several times during the course of the journey.

The van drove through the night, stopping early the next day (approximately 01:00, 18th September 2019). The group had been driven to a point in Croatia near to the border with BiH, close to the town of Velika Kladuša. It was dark when the officer opened the van doors and unloaded the group. Here they were ejected from Croatian territory into BiH.

"I SAID JUST LEAVE ME TO DIE HERE, WHATEVER, I DON'T CARE ANY MORE"

Date and time: September 26, 2019 00:00

Location: Nearby Gevgelija train station

Coordinates: 41.14342374685534 , 22.51272508287491

Push-back from: North Macedonia

Push-back to: Greece

Demographics: 2 person(s), age: 21-23 years old , from: Morocco

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), threatening with guns, dog attacks

Police involved: Officers wearing civilian clothes; North Macedonian police officers

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: fingerprints taken, photos taken

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: Philoxenia

ORIGINAL REPORT

The respondents, aged 21 and 23 years old, both from Morocco, began their journey on the 26th September 2019. They boarded a train from Thessaloniki and crossed the Greek-North Macedonian border. In North Macedonia, shortly after passing Gevgelija train station, the respondents were stopped in an abandoned train station where they were apprehended by police.

The respondents described these police officers as wearing civilian clothes, not uniforms. They recounted how some people who had been apprehended on the train attempted to run, but were chased. The officers informed the respondents that nothing would happen to them, and that they would be sent to a camp in Serbia.

"They were wearing shorts and flip flops at the time when they stopped us and one of them was really drunk and they were smoking."

One of the officers threatened to hit the two respondents with a stick, but was dissuaded by the others and sent to chase those who ran away and beat them instead.

The respondents were put in a closed car and were unable to see where they were being taken. Eventually they reached a police station, but both respondents were unsure of the location. They were then fingerprinted, photographed, placed in a car, and taken back to the Greek-North Macedonia border. Before the officers left the group at the border, they hit them with their fists.

The two respondents then made their way back to an abandoned train station where they paused for a rest and some food. Again, a police car approached them, the officers in the car were described by the respondents as wearing dark blue shirts, black trousers, and badges with the Macedonian flag on their shoulders. Shortly after the car arrived the

officers from the vehicle released four dogs on the respondents. At first they attempted to run, but quickly saw this would be impossible.

“At that point we couldn’t run anymore so we stood around each other in order to keep the dogs away from us and they were running around us in circles.”

One of the respondents was dragged away from the group by the dogs after being bitten on the thigh. The other respondent attempted to hit the dog with a stick to distract it from attacking his friend. The dog reacted by then biting the second respondent.

‘As that dog bit me, I felt as though there was a knife going into my thigh and I felt his fangs crushing and entering my flesh... The strangest thing I saw was that the dog owner was just watching the dog bite me as though it was some enjoyable thing to watch’

Puncture wounds from dog bite inflicted by North Macedonian police K9 unit.

The officers, watching this, released another two dogs on the respondents. By this point, the respondent describes begging the owner, saying *“please please get the dog away from me”*. Once the dogs were recalled, one of the officers approached and hit the respondent who had beaten the dog. He hit him three times with his fist, until the respondent was unconscious. The officer repeatedly asked the respondent why he had hit the dog.

The respondents described the scene, saying there was blood everywhere and one of the respondents was crying, believing he had lost his leg. They were put in a van and driven to a point *“in the middle of nowhere”*, where the officers left them on the side of the road, telling them to follow the road until they reached Thessaloniki.

“We were in the middle of nowhere, we were in the dark, we had no idea what to do.”

Eventually another police car passed the respondents. The respondents waved them down but the police simply checked their papers and left, telling them to follow the road to Thessaloniki. At this point, the respondents decided to begin walking.

“My friend was crying all this time as he didn’t know if we would survive this or not. And I said ‘just leave me to die here whatever, I don’t even care at this point’. But he said no and dragged me and made me stand”

Eventually the respondents reached a small village where some local people treated them with alcohol and Betadine, and called an ambulance. In the hospital in Thessaloniki, the respondents were asked for money to treat their wounds. As they had nothing to pay with, the hospital staff simply cleaned the wounds, bandaged them, and told the respondents to leave.

"WE CALL THEM SARDINE CANS, BECAUSE THEY ARE COMPLETELY CLOSED, NO AIR AND THEY STUFF YOU INSIDE SO YOU CAN'T MOVE AT ALL."

Date and time: September 30, 2019 02:00

Location: Near Sadilovac, Croatia

Coordinates: 44.93947995029267 , 15.739374633967032

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 150 person(s), age: Mixed minors and adults (One respondents children were aged 8 and 9) , from: Syria, Iraq

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), pushing people to the ground, gunshots, dog attacks, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: Approx. 13 at site of apprehension. A further 27 (some in ski masks) with ten police vehicles

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

THIS PUSHBACK ACCOUNT IS RECORDED FROM THE TESTIMONY OF TWO SEPERATE FAMILIES, WHO WERE BOTH TRAVELLING IN THE SAME CARAVAN.

Testimony 1, taken on 12th October 2019:

The respondent and his wife joined a group of 150 people who decided to try to cross the Bosnian – Croatian border by foot on 27th October 2019. They were walking for three days until they reached a highway in Croatian territory. Being completely exhausted, on 30th September, the whole group sought shelter in mountain woodland to rest. At approximatelx 02.00 in the morning the respondent was woken up by gunshot sounds.

" It was dark and I heard shooting from a gun, I woke up scared. I saw people running and I heard more shots. I realized police was surrounding us. I heard them approaching shooting and yelling 'sit down'".

Around 12-13 police officers were surrounding the area where the group was sleeping, pointing guns at them. The group were forced to stand up and make a line and start walking down hill, all while police walking beside them pointing guns

at them.

“ The mountain was very steep and full of rocks. It was very difficult to walk, especially for people in the group that had injured legs from walking previous days.”

They were walking downhill for an hour until they reached the valley where ten police vans were parked.

“We call them sardine cans, because they are completely closed, no air and they stuff you inside so you can’t move at all.”

There was more police next to the vans, they were wearing ski masks covering their faces.

“Those are the ones beating, they were beating us with sticks. Before they put us in vans, they search us completely and they take everyone’s phone and smash it. They put the smashed phones in a big bag and took the bag away.”

Once they were put in vans, they were driven for an hour and a half to a remote area on the green border with BiH. There was a huge bonfire there, prepared in advance. The police made them go out from the vans one by one and instructed them to take their bags and throw them in the fire.

“ They said to us to take our luggage and throw it in the fire and then stand on the right side next to it. Everyone was forced to do this.”

When the burning of the belongings was done, the police told them to start walking, they were walking between a mountain and a steep valley. Police was escorting them for ten minutes, then they told them to continue walking by themselves, they just showed them the direction from Croatia into Bosnia. They were walking for six hours until they reached Bihać.

...

Testimony 2: taken on 29th October 2019 with a family of three from Iraq (Father 34, children 8 and 9)

Referring to the same incident, the respondent stated:

“ I was pushed back two times since I arrived (in BiH). First I want to tell you about my first push-back because the police mistreated us so much, it was horrible.”

The respondent, from Iraq, and his two sons left Bihać (BiH) as part of a group of 150 people travelling on foot into

Croatia. They walked three days through the woods and mountains until they arrived to an agreed location.

“ We waited the whole day in the jungle until we fell asleep. In the middle of the night, around 02:00 in the morning I woke up with police voices, gun shots and a flashlight pointing in my face. There was around 40 police coming from all sides surrounding us. They gathered everyone in a group and told us to make a line and start walking downhill.”

It wasn't a long walk down the mountain, at the bottom of which there were seven police vans (“sardines”) with more officers with masks over their faces. Once they arrived to the vans, the police started searching everyone.

“ There was no police women to search the women, just men searching them. They thought they are hiding something beneath their hijab so they started touching and shaking their heads.”

Men were forced to take off their jackets and they took away everyone's phone. Some people chosen at random were beaten with sticks. They were put in the vans and driven for around two hours to somewhere close to the border.

The respondent described a fire pit made by the police:

“2×1 meters with fire already burning. They forced us to throw everything inside the fire. They put the phones in a plastic bag and held it over the fire a little bit, pretending like they will burn them, then they took them away somewhere, keeping them for themselves.”

Again they were put in vans, driving around at high speed and on bumpy roads that made people inside the vans start throwing up

“ We were drinking water from the ground and my son got poisoned from it, he was throwing up a lot. I asked them to take us to the hospital but they refused. They didn't really talk to us, they just pointed fingers.”

The police stopped the vans by a very steep road (“ like slide ”) and pointed the group to start walking in complete darkness without having any possibility to see where they were going. The transit group stumbled down the hill into BiH. They were walking for six hours until reaching a village 30 minutes from Bihać where they took a taxi to return to the camp.

"THEY FIRED TWO GUNS INTO THE AIR AND YELLED "GO! GO TO BOSNIA!""

Date and time: October 1, 2019 00:00

Location: Golo, Slovenia

Coordinates: 45.902398 , 14.531693

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 5 person(s), age: 25, 27, 28, 33, 45 years old , from: Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, threatening with guns, gunshots, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 2 Slovenian police officers, 1 Slovenian police van; unknown number of male Croatian police wearing black uniforms with the Croatian flag emblem, 1 Croatian police van

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, fingerprints taken, photos taken, personal information taken, papers signed, no translator present, denial of access to toilets, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

On 30th September 2019 a group in transit, with five persons from Algeria (aged 25, 27, 28, 33, and 45), were stopped by police near Golo (SLO). The group was stopped after crossing a small road approximately 20 km from Ljubljana (SLO). A Slovenian police van was at the street crossing and spotted the group in transit. Two police officers, who appeared to be municipal police, exited the van with pistols drawn and pointed the pistols at the five transit group members. The respondent stated that the men were ordered at gun point to stop and sit down on the ground.

The police then took the respondent's phone and opened the application "Maps Me" and then the GPS application. The respondent suggested that the officer was looking to see the route which the transit group were traveling by.

The transit group was transported in the van to a police station. During the interview the respondent used an online map to identify the station where he thinks the group was taken to, asserting that he believed they were transported to Ribnica (SLO) police station. At the station all five men had their fingerprints taken. An officer took photos of their faces, then the group was forced to sign a document including their name and family names. The respondent was able to speak French with one officer and he expressed intent for asylum. To this verbal request for asylum he was denied. The officer told them:

"No, go to Bosnia. Too many Algerians. Big problem."

The group was detained overnight (30.9.2019). The next morning, on 1st October, the group was transported from

Slovenia to Croatia in a police van. The respondent believed they may have been taken to Buzet (HR) police station near the Croatian border. This was based on being able to look at Maps Me during transport, where the respondent saw the police van was moving past Postonja (HR), which is located approximately halfway between the apprehension point at Golo (SLO) and the detention in Buzet (HR). The group was detained in this police station for approximately four hours.

At the station the respondent asked at separate times for food, water, and to have a cigarette. To this request the respondent was beaten with a baton by an officer in the station.

“They give us no food, no water, no cigarette. We are treated like animals. I ask, ‘Hello police, water?’ and they shout ‘NO!’ They shout, they keep shouting and then they hit us.”

One officer hit the respondent on his hands, arms, and shoulders with a baton. After the four hours in detention, including the beating by an officer, the group was again transported in a police van. The temperature inside the van was extremely cold according to the respondent.

The van stopped near the HR/BiH border, where an unknown number of Croatian police officers wearing black uniforms with the Croatian flag emblem sewed on were waiting. At this point the officers searched the respondent’s bag and patted down his pockets. All of their money was taken out of bags and removed from their trouser pockets.

The transit group were then forced to undress. Their trousers, shirts, jackets and shoes were laid in a pile and burned by the police officers. Their socks were thrown into the river next to where the van had stopped. The five men were left standing in only their underwear as they watched their personal belongings be destroyed.

Two police officers fired their guns twice into the air and yelled,

“Go! Go to Bosnia! Go to Bihać.”

At this point the transit group were forced across the border back to BiH.

"I FEAR MY LUNGS STOP WORKING"

Bruise on respondent's thigh from a metal nut cracker

Date and time: October 1, 2019 17:00

Location: Brežice, Slovenia and Bregana, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.893702 , 15.603285

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 5 person(s), age: 19-28 years old , from: Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, water immersion, gunshots, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving, tear gas cannister, use of a metal clamp to bruise individuals

Police involved: 5 Slovenian police in blue uniforms, 1 police van; 5 Croatian police officers in black with ski masks, 1 Croatian van

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

A group of five men in transit from Algeria ages 19-28 crossed the border from Croatia to Slovenia on 1st October 2019.

The group in transit was walking across a highway bridge crossing over the river in Brežice, Slovenia when they were stopped by five Slovenian authorities in blue uniforms. One officer fired a pistol up into the air and shouted, "Stop!".

The group was transported in a Slovenian police van across the border into Croatia, to the approximate coordinates 45.842466, 15.694193 in Bregana (HR). Here the group was transferred into a Croatian police van.

When the group was loaded into the van one of the attending Croatian officers fired a canister of tear gas into the van, then a second officer fired another tear gas canister into the van and closed the doors. The doors to the van were locked and the group was stuck inside with no windows to open and no airflow. The respondent reports that his eyes were "burning like fire" and tears were running down his face, mucus dripping from his nose and his whole body broke out in a sweat in reaction to the gas.

"I have asthma, I fear my lungs stop working"

The respondent shared that he was asthmatic and feared his lungs were going to fail. Members of the group were coughing and struggling to breathe after being exposed to severe amounts of tear gas.

The group remained in the van for six hours. The respondent reports that the officer was driving recklessly by making quick, wide turns and making sudden stops.

The men were taken out of the van and five Croatian police wearing all black clothing with the Croatian flag on the upper sleeves and black ski masks were standing around the van's doors. The respondent noted that all five officers were carrying pistols and one officer had a large shotgun which he described as looking like a Kalashnikov.

“They looked like military, not regular police.”

One officer used a metal tool for opening nuts and pushed the metal into the respondent's thigh and proceeded to open the tool, close the tool, and twist the metal clamp around the respondent's skin leaving a deep purple colored bruise.

Bruise on respondent's thigh from a metal nut cracker

The officers beat the respondent and the group using their batons and delivered severe blows to their arms and backs. The police then forced all five members of the group to remove all of their clothing, leaving them in nothing but their underwear. One officer grabbed the respondent and pushed him into the river near the HR/BiH border.

Police took batons out and started to beat their backs again while yelling “Go! Go!” and “Go to the camp” as they forced the men towards the border. The respondent believes they were pushed from Croatian territory into an area near Klokot (BiH).

"THE VIOLENCE HE SAW IN IRAQ IS SIMILAR TO THE VIOLENCE IN CROATIA"

Cuts on the respondent's hands

Date and time: October 9, 2019 06:00

Location: Johi, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.447333 , 15.302784

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 43 person(s), age: 17, 18, 20, 24, 24, 25 , from: Pakistan, Syria, Iraq, Egypt

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, threatening with guns, gunshots, dog attacks, forcing to undress, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: 9 Croatian police in black uniforms and ski masks, 3 Croatian In police in navy blue uniforms (one marked as "GENERAL"), 1 police dog, 7 police vans

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

A caravan of 43 people on the move, including individuals from Syria, Iraq, and Pakistan were walking through Croatia on 9th October 2019. One of the groups consisted of six men from Iraq and Egypt, and included one 17 year old minor. Two families with a total of six small children were also present.

At 06.00 when most of the group was sleeping in a wooded area before the SLO/HR border in Johi (HR), nine Croatian police in black uniforms and ski masks arrived to their sleeping spot and fired several gunshots. They had one police dog which the respondent described as looking like a German shepherd.

The men in the group were ordered to sit on the ground with their hands behind their heads. The police dog which had no muzzle was then released from its chain and the dog bit one of the men on his cheek. The two families were removed from the area by two Croatian police vans. Unaccompanied children were separated and made to sit and watch as the officers used batons to beat the group in transit. The minors who were in their early teens, and generally unaccompanied, were also beaten. Some of the men resisted as the officers hit them. The respondent reported that he believes the men from Pakistan were beaten more than the others.

"For me it's normal. I saw my son, my brother take fire (gunshots) to their heads."

The respondent shared that he had attempted to cross the border seven times since fleeing the destruction of his home in Mosul, Iraq, and the death of most of his family. He shared that he continuously experiences violence at the Croatian

borders and notes the similarities between Iraq and Croatia.

While the group in transit was beaten, three Croatian Intervention police in navy blue uniforms arrived in two more police vans. The respondent remembers at least one of them having "GENERAL" written on the back of his jacket. The nine officers in black uniforms saluted the three officers when they approached the group. One of the commanding officers told the nine officers in black, "*Congratulations,*" and "*very nice job.*" The respondent assumes this praise was in response to catching the large group in transit.

Officers then searched everyone's pockets, suggested to be looking for money and mobile phones. Approximately 400 euros was taken from the group of six in transit with whom the respondent was travelling, and put into the officers' pockets. If a person had a nicer phone, the officer also took it and put it in their pocket. Bags, jackets, and shoes were forcibly removed from the group in transit.

The groups were then divided and transported by seven Croatian police vans. The respondent was in contact with one of the families traveling in the caravan and he reported that the two families with young children were taken to a camp in Croatia. None of the others from the caravan were brought to a police station. The group of six in transit was transported to the border near Šturlić (BiH).

In the police van the respondent vomited because of the officer's reckless driving. The vehicle made wide turns, sudden stops, and had no air circulation. The respondent noted that it "*felt like I was sitting on top of the engine,*" because of the extreme heat in the van. At Šturlić they were unloaded and pushed back in BiH.

"COMMANDOS IN CAMOUFLAGE COLOR STARTED BEATING MEN WITH STICKS, THEY BEAT ME ON MY SHOULDER AND BACK"

Date and time: October 14, 2019 03:00

Location: South east of Komesarac, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.09186791983132 , 15.769071046238082

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 35 person(s), age: 2 - 45 (including minors aged 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8) , from: Palestine, Syria, Iraq

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, threatening with guns, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 10 Croatian officers dressed in blue uniforms with gunns, 2 police cars, 3 vans, 6/7 officers in camouflage uniform

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, no translator present, denial of access to toilets, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

A Syrian family joined a group of 35 people (mostly families from Syria and Palestine and a few single men from Iraq), and attempted to cross the Bosnian-Croatian border. They started walking from Velika Kladuša and walked for a day and a half through the woods and mountains. Once they were inside Croatian territory they decided to take a rest in the woods. The group fell asleep only to be woken up at 03:00 in the morning of 29th October 2019 by rapid gun fire and shouts of, " *Freeze!* ".

They family noticed ten men in blue uniforms of Croatian police surrounding them, firing shots in the air:

" like in a movie, they forced all men to lie down on their stomachs with our hands behind our heads, women no, they were just standing aside ".

Not long after, the police ordered them to make a line and start walking, while police was escorting the line on both sides, pointing their guns at them.

" We walked maybe 30 minutes, we reached a place with a hole already waiting for us, the fire was already burning, ready for our stuff. They took everyone's backpacks, bags and sleeping bags and for single men they took jackets also. Everything was burned. I asked if I can take my baby's food from the bag and they said no, took my backpack and threw it

in the fire.”

They were searched over their clothes and had their phones taken away from them. Some phones were thrown on the ground and stomped-on with police boots while some were just taken away and never returned. Two police cars and three vans arrived, everyone was forced to go inside them and driven for an hour to the police station where they were detained for two hours with no food, water, access to toilet or the presence of a translator.

“ They didn’t even talk to us, we asked them to take our fingerprints, one man in the group spoke good English and he explained to the police what we want (referring to asylum claim). The police was just laughing and didn’t do anything.”

Instead, the transit group were again put in the three police vans which drove for around one hour and a half to the border-area, where they were made to go out of the vans and saw six to seven police in camouflage uniforms waiting for them.

“ Commandos in camouflage color started beating men with sticks, they beat me on my shoulder and back [he shows a picture of the bruises from his phone] and kicking us in our knees or behind our knees, yelling at us to start walking faster. They were walking behind us, beating and yelling for a few hundred meters than they stopped and we were told to continue by ourselves.”

Once returned to BiH, the group walked for four to five hours to reach Velika Kladuša, where they took the bus to Sedra camp, close to Bihac.

"WE ARE NOT TERRORISTS, WE ARE ONLY LOOKING FOR A GOOD LIFE TO TAKE CARE OF OUR FAMILIES"

Three bruises on the chest

Date and time: October 15, 2019 00:00

Location: Buhača, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.191148 , 15.7515638

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 7 person(s), age: 26, 27, 30, 31, 33, 35, 36 , from: Morocco

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, threatening with guns, gunshots, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: 4 Croatian police in navy blue uniforms, 5 Croatian Interventna police in black uniforms with ski masks, 1 Croatian police van

Taken to a police station?: no

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

A group of seven men from Morocco ages 26, 27, 30, 31, 33, 35, 36 were stopped in Buhača (HR) shortly after crossing the border from Velika Kladuša (BiH).

Four Croatian police officers in navy blue uniforms spotted the group and yelled at them to, " *Stop! Stop!*". The officers fired several gunshots towards the respondent's feet. The group was forced to sit on the ground with their hands behind their heads. While on the ground, the officers kicked the men in their legs. The respondent noted, "*their large boots*" which he felt seemed meant to hurt others. Prior to being stopped, the respondent saw a large, green drone in the area.

The group was not taken to a police station but was asked for personal information of their names and family names. The officers gave them each a document to sign which was written in Croatian language. There was no translation.

The respondent expressed intent for asylum and one officer replied by saying, "No asylum. Go to Bosnia." The respondent attempted to tell the officer:

"We are not terrorists, we are nothing. We just want to have a home and to not have so many problems in our mind. I have four diplomas and I can do good work. We are only looking for a good life to take care of our families."

The group was then forced into a white Croatian police van and were transported to a small road off highway R403a (that leads to Cazin (BiH)). The police in blue uniforms who were driving the van told them to “Go” and get out of the van. There were five Croatian police in black uniforms and black ski masks waiting outside of the van which transported the men. The officers beat the men with batons on their backs and on their legs. One man in transit was beaten on his chest.

Swelling on left side of back and small bruises on the spine from being beaten with the baton

“When they were kicking us we yelled ‘Allah, Allah, help.’”

This beating left bruises on their backs and the respondent had pain and swelling on his back which inhibited him from walking upright. The group was forced to undress and the officers took their shoes, bags, and jackets.

The officers told the group to leave and to, “Go to Bosnia camp.”. So the transit group was ejected over the border into BiH. The respondent noted:

“We go to the camp and we see the problems from outside and we all say we should not enter, so we walked back to Velika Kladuša.”

The respondent noted that there were continued problems with the camps on their return, but also that the local BiH police were forcibly removing people from city centers and squats and driving them to locations near camps.

"[WE] UNDERSTOOD THAT WE ARE ALIVE BUT DON'T UNDERSTOOD ANYTHING [ELSE]"

Date and time: October 15, 2019 00:00

Location: North-west Karlovac, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.223318981163644 , 15.905261285687743

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 50 person(s), age: 18-26 , from: Afghanistan, Pakistan

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), pepper spray, water immersion, threatening with guns, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 10 Croatian special police officers, 3 Croatian temeljna police, 1 police van

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: no translator present, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring, No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

A large transit group of 48 young men started their journey in Bihac, Bosnia-Herzegovina on the morning of 10th October 2019. After passing the border to Croatia on foot, they headed north across the undulating terrain of Croatia's interior. Over the course of six days they walked through the forests, sustaining themselves by only small rations of food since they were avoiding cities and other places of attention. On the evening of October 15th they were somewhere in the north western part of the Karlovac county, a 2 hour walk from the Slovenian border.

Not long after dusk a buzzing sound in the sky caught their ears. Steadily approaching, it turned out to be the whirl of a surveillance drone, which had targeted them from afar and hovered over them for a couple of minutes. The group tried to walk away quickly uphill, only to be ambushed by a unit of " *commandos* " when they reached the top. The ten officers, described by the respondents as wearing olive uniforms like that of Special Police, were coated in camouflage patterns. The officers had circled the transit group.

At gunpoint, the group was made to sit down and ordered to hand over weapons of any kind. Supposedly, some members had with them knives which were given into police custody. The police then quickly "identified the smugglers", as the ones that had been leading the group with GPS and apparently being the only ones in possession of smartphones. Without further frisking, the 50 people were led down the hill to a narrow road, where three additional officers dressed in the light blue Polos and navy blue shirts, coherent with descriptions of *Temelnija* police, were awaiting them with a white van.

The big group was then divided to fit into the van that would transport them in two rounds to their destination close to the Bosnian border. This was also described as the moment, in which the men saw their guides (identified as the smuggling agents by police) for the last time, since they had been separated from the others. The four respondents entered the back of the van as part of the first round, together with another 15 persons. It was then when one of the " *commandos* " would spray the inside of the van with a form of gas, that caused feelings of nausea and unconsciousness

among the people inside. The door was then closed shut, leaving them in total darkness.

“So the police officers put a gas on [us] in the van and [we] felt vomiting and tears from the eyes and dizzy feeling”

It followed a drive in the van, that lasted for approximately three hours according to the respondents. In respect to their condition throughout that ride it was stated by all four respondents:

“[we] understood that we are alive but don’t understood anything [else] ... and we were alive but not able to move”

When their transportation came to a halt, the backdoor of the van was opened and the men were ordered outside, finding themselves inside a courtyard from what they believed to be a police station. At the spot the three officers present, being identified as the same squad the group encountered after their apprehension by the “*commandos*”, started to strip search them. According to the respondents they were relieved of everything they had with them apart from the clothes they wore.

This included backpacks, tents, personal belongings and, as stated by three of them the amounts of 60, 80 and 350 Euro. No photos or fingerprints were taken, as the group never entered the building of the police station. They were at no point made to sign any documents. Neither had they explicitly expressed their intention of claiming asylum, telling the authorities they would not want to stay but rather transit Croatia. Following their statements, the officers informed them that even if they were asking for Asylum they would not get it.

“We did not even see a pen.”

Although the situation inside the police station did not last longer than 10 minutes, the group was exhausted from their journey and the gas that they have been exposed to during their transport. Asking the officers for food or water, they were denied.

“we were so badly hungry, but they didn’t give anything to us. [we] asked for water, but they didn’t give it to us.”

After the frisk had ended and their belongings were confiscated, the group was ordered back into the van again. It followed a short ride of around 10 minutes after which the men encountered themselves at the shore of a river, when descending the vehicle. The three officers commanded them to run through the river, being the border to Bosnia. One of the officers would swing for them with a police baton, missing most but still managing to hit a few of the men in their backs. The group, soaking wet after the crossing, made its way into Bosnia direction Velika Kladusa. They would walk for around ten kilometers to find an open space encampment of migrants where they would spend the night.

The following day they received the news that the two men that have been taken into separate custody allegedly were

brutally beaten up by Croatian officers before being pushed back. According to the respondents, they believed the two men had even been fatally wounded during this ordeal, dying later in BiH hospital. However, Border Violence Monitoring Network was not able to confirm the validity of this accusation at the time this report was published.

"THE RESPONDENT ASKED FOR A TOILET AND THE OFFICER GAVE HIM A PLASTIC BAG"

Hand injury sustained in attack by officers, that had afterwards become infected.

Date and time: October 18, 2019 19:00

Location: Damalj, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.421079 , 15.177911

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 4 person(s), age: 25, 28, 30, 31 , from: Morocco

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, threatening with guns, gunshots, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

Police involved: 4 Croatian police in blue uniforms, 1 Croatian police officer with a black ski mask, 2 Croatian police vans

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, no translator present, denial of access to toilets, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

A group of 4 Moroccan men in transit were stopped by police officers near the river in Damalj (HR) on 18th October 2019 at approximately 19.00. The respondent believes a civilian, who saw the group moments prior, called the police and reported the group in transit. Four Croatian authorities in dark blue uniforms, suggested to be possibly border police, and one Croatian officer in a black mask ordered the group to stop. They simultaneously fired several pistol shots towards the group in transit. The four group members all put their hands up above their heads and remained stationary.

The officer wearing the mask ordered each person to empty their pockets and ordered the one man with a small bag to empty his bag. The officer confiscated five mobile phones and a total of 300 euros. The group was forced to undress and was transported to the police station wearing only boxers in one white Croatian police van with no windows.

At the police station the respondent requested food asking, "Anything to eat? We haven't eaten in 2 days. Water?"

The officer ignored this question, and the request for asylum made by the group. Throughout they were denied food and water, and were not processed officially. When the respondent asked to use the toilet, one officer handed him a plastic bag. The officer surveilling them while detained in the cell was drinking alcohol. The respondent believes from the smell that the officer was drinking whiskey. The respondent was commanded to not look at the officer's face. When they lifted

their faces to look up, the officer screamed at them and told them to look down.

After being detained, the group was forced into another Croatian police van with no windows and no air circulation. The driver recklessly made wide turns that caused the respondent to fall off of the bench in the back of the van. The respondent said he could hear the driver laughing. Several persons vomited in the van.

The van stopped on the Croatian side of the border with BiH (near Šturlić) at about midnight. Four officers in ski masks kicked the group in transit as they descended from the vehicle. The respondent stated that one officer had steel-toed boots.

“It felt like his boot was cutting into the leg when he kicked us.”

The officer in the ski mask grabbed one of the men by the ear and pulled him back and forth while making dog noises. Another officer used his baton to hit one of the men in the stomach.

Hand injury sustained in attack by officers, that had afterwards become infected.

During this ordeal, there was an enforced silence by the officers.

“You can’t do anything, just stay quiet.”

The men were ordered to not speak. The driver took the group’s phones and power banks which had been confiscated during apprehension and then broke them as the group watched. Their clothing and shoes were put into a pile and lit on fire, then the group were pushed back into BiH. The transit group of four walked an estimated 30 km from Šturlić to Velika Kladuša with no shoes and no jackets.