



Diavata (QRT), 25 January 2022



Sayran Turukenesab, 38,

Sarya Turukenesab, 15,

Sanandach, Iranian Kurdistan

I lived in Sanandach for most of my life.

We left in 2018, me and my daughter. I had no job then. My husband and I had split up, so we both lived with my mother. When we left, she – my mother – came with us.

We left because there were many problems. The situation was not good. My husband-

Sarya My father.

Sayran wouldn't let us live like normal people, and we knew wherever we went, in Iran or even in Turkey, he would be able to follow us and to hurt us.

We went first to Turkey, because in Iran if you want to get to Europe, you have to go through Turkey first, and then we came here from Turkey. We had to leave Turkey, because my husband would have found us. But also, it was because when we left, we decided to try to get to Germany, or somewhere else in Europe. We would be safer and we could try to make lives.

We went with a person who said he would bring us out of Iran without a passport. We didn't know many other way, so we came with him.

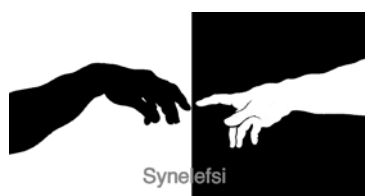
We paid money in Iran, and then we left with him.

We walked for five days. It was cold and raining. Yes, it was very difficult.

Sarya The hardest was, we had to wade through lakes because it was faster and there were people on the road who might catch us.

Sayran We went from Turkey to Athens by bus. The man went on ahead, and said he would find a home for us, so we would have somewhere to live and could apply to be allowed to stay. But we called him many times. He didn't answer and we never saw or heard from him again.

We had no money, nothing, and we had to live. We tried to go to a camp in Athens, so we could apply for asylum, but they said all the camps were full in Athens and no-one





could stay there. So, they said maybe in Thessaloniki. We went to Thessaloniki. We went to the police station in the city, but they told us we had to come to a camp. So, we came here.

The camp was really bad when we arrived. Some people were in containers, and some were in tents. But we didn't even have a tent. And the camp was so full, there were no places to sit or sleep. It was awful.

We had no toilet or shower, there were queues for hours

Maurizio (Cara, **QRT**) gave us tents after a few days, and we stayed in the tent for five months. But we found a friend in the camp and he gave us a key, so we could use his container.

The first day we arrived here, 24 June 2018, there was a fight.

Sarya It was very frightening. It was really really big, people were hitting each other, they were throwing stones. All the people said 'I want to go home, to my country, I want to get out of here. Everything was bad.

Sayran We got a container, and we got registered. But it was a little bit too full in the container, because there were two families there, for two years. But you try your hardest to make it work.

But really, the camp was still really bad. Nothing ever happened. For example, the oven broke in the container, and we told people, but no-one came to fix it, so we couldn't cook any food. The fridge was much too small for two families, so food would go rotten.

After those two years, the family living with us got moved to a house, because they were considered to be vulnerable. So, then, it was just us.

But things are still bad in the camp as a whole. We try to see the doctor, but people never answer us. After two years and two months, we finally had our interview. But now, they have got much quicker. We have had a positive decision for asylum, so now we are waiting for ID and passports.

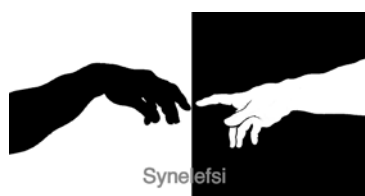
But my partner was given a negative decision. He is from Iran as well. He said he had no problem in Iran. It was a mistake. That was not what he meant. But now he will have to have a second interview and he must explain better.

We asked for a home, but they said we do not have any problems so we cannot have one.

I get migraines, though and no-one gives pain relief. Only Maurizio. My partner here, he has a bad stomach, and is in a lot of pain. But we have been trying for four years to get him an appointment with a doctor and no-one comes back to us. Only Maurizio helps us. If he wasn't here, no-one would.

After we had been in the camp for seven months, they gave us a card for money. Before they had given us food, but it was terrible, really really bad. We had to eat it because we had no choice, it was all there was.

Before the wall, there were spaces where people could sit outside, meet friends, and see what was around them, where they lived. But then they built the wall, and it feels like we are in a jail. It is like we are in a jail.





No-one comes in, and anyone who tries – even us – has to give all their details. But we live here. We should not have to pass a test every time.

They talk about security and of course it is good to be secure, and there were a lot of single men. Now, there are fewer.

But this is a camp. It is a bad place. The wall has not made it better. Really, it has not made the camp worse. But it has made it worse to live in, because it feels like a jail. We did not commit a crime, so we should not feel like we are in a jail.



Sarya I go to school here. It's really bad. I don't like it. I do like school, but this school is bad. The Greek people are not good with us. They are unkind. They do not teach us anything. That's what school is for, to learn. And we want to learn, but the teacher does not interact with us, ask us things, they only interact with the Greek children. We are expected just to sit and watch. I do feel like I am not learning very much. I try.

I do know Greek, I worked to learn and I have been here nearly four years, but the things I need to learn, the teacher is not trying to teach us.

Sayran For the future, we will go to Germany, because they will be better to us. It will be better for the children, they will help my daughter learn.

For four months here they have given us nothing, no food, no money, nothing. School is bad. I want what's good for my daughter. Germany will be better. My daughter can study and go to school. That is what is important to me, that she can be happy and succeed.

Sarya In Germany, I hope I will make my languages better, improve my English. I want to learn more things, and I do try, but here it's impossible.

