

# solidarnost je naša snaga

## Solidary visit to war refugees

### REPORT FOR PARK VISIT

October 27<sup>th</sup> 2016

#### **Morning Visit**

*Economics University Park*

The number of people in this park has increased slightly since the previous visit. More people are sitting along the benches, and groups of refugees are moving through the park. The weather is relatively warm and sunny, so the refugees in the park were able to comfortably sit outside. Everyone seems to have access to the appropriate clothing needed for this weather; no one was without a coat, which is a good sign that there is, to some extent, access to clothing.

#### *Miksaliste*

In light of the recent closure of Info Park kiosk, where two hot meals were served consistently on a daily basis, the *Miksaliste* centre close to the Economics University Park now seems to be taking over for serving hot meals. In passing the *Miksaliste*, we noticed there were over one hundred people waiting in line, and people all around the building, sitting outside and eating a hot bowl of rice. It is not confirmed whether or not this centre will be serving two meals a day, or even whether they will be serving food for the next 5 days until the new Info Park location is opened, but this was one thing that we noticed on today's rounds.

#### **Evening Visit**

*Economics University Park*

We visited the park with our friends from the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) who visited the WiB space as well as a Syrian refugee activist and a No Borders activist. We purchased approximately 15 KG of apples in two crates and brought them to the park. The apples disappeared within a few minutes, showing that people are likely very hungry now that the consistent Info Park kiosk meals are not available for 5 more days. There were two new families in the park with 8 children between the two of them. From what we could gather, one of the families is from Afghanistan, the other, we were unable to confirm due to language barriers. There were a lot of people in the park in the evening, just after dark, and we were able to engage in conversations with many refugees and undocumented persons. One person shared that they need shoes, reminding us of how easy it is to take the things we have for granted.

#### *Abandoned Storage Building (Behind Bus Station)*

Since it would be inappropriate to enter with guests into people's living spaces without being invited, and because it would be insensitive to take a "tour" of this building, since it is the space that people call home for the time being. We walked around the perimeter of the abandoned buildings and saw from the outside that evening fires were lit to keep people warm, and that people were coming in and out of the buildings, preparing for the night.

Overall, we believe that it is important for guests who visit us to take a moment and walk through the parks with us, so that they can learn about the conditions refugees in Serbia live in. We hope that the guests that we take are able to bring information back to their respective communities to raise awareness for what the situation is like for people crossing borders and who are stuck in Serbia on their way into the EU. These visits are important acts of solidarity.

Written by: Sofija Vrbaški

