

solidarnost je naša snaga

Visit to refugees / migrants, Pljevlja, Montenegro

April 2019

A group of activists of Women in Black visited Pljevlja in Montenegro from 21.04. until 24.04.2019. On that occasion, we were staying in Bona Fide's "Safe House". This space has been used since February 2018 as a place where refugees / migrants can stay, get the necessary help, food, clothing, footwear, and above all understanding and solidarity from activists of Bona Fide.

Since our last visit in February 2019, the number of refugees / migrants has increased significantly. On the monthly level, about 1000 people pass through this part of the "Balkan Route". These are only persons met by activists of Bona Fide, the real number is higher.

Montenegrin police treatment of refugees / migrants is still correct, no cases of harassment and violence against them have been recorded. Problems for refugees / migrants start after entering Bosnia and Herzegovina. Previously, risky part was through the territory of Republic of Srpska, where refugees / migrants were subjected to brutal torture, looting and illegal deportations in Montenegro by the Border Police of BH and the Republika Srpska Police. Now even after entering the territory of the Federation, the risk does not cease. Federation police blackmails refugees / migrants, those who have to pay bribes are allowed to go, those who do not have are deported back to Montenegro.



The treatment of refugees / migrants is relatively satisfactory in Pljevlja. A large number of refugees / migrants who do not have other opportunities, can sleep in some of the local hostels and hotels, and the expenses are covered by the Municipality of Pljevlja and in some cases by an international humanitarian organizations. This is very important, especially in the cases of persons who are illegally deported from Bosnia and Herzegovina, because they are exhausted after several days of walking and torture by the police in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Currently, the opening of a permanent center in which refugees / migrants will be able to stay in Pljevlja is under consideration. Originally proposed location is out of town and not appropriate, local activists suggested that this center should be in abandoned military facilities in the city center, but the Army refused the proposal.

Refugees / migrants coming to Pljevlja are mainly from Syria, Iraq, Morocco, Algeria, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, and to a lesser extent from Sub-Saharan Africa. A large number of families, women and children are noted.

Despite the terror carried out by the police services in Bosnia and Herzegovina, refugees / migrants still manage to reach Sarajevo and continue to westwards. What adds to the existing fear is information that the arrival of Frontex at the border between Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina is expected soon, especially rumors that most members of Frontex will be consisted by members of the infamous security forces of Hungary.



Mirko Medenica, April 2019