

# Call for supporting refugees in Serbia

The recent EU summit only makes official what is already put into practice: All borders on the so called 'Balkan route' are closed. Consequently, refugees of all nationalities are stuck all along the Balkan route.

**Belgrade is an important transit point** for people traveling across this route. Many people arrive here from Macedonia and Bulgaria and try to organize their further travels through Hungary or Croatia. People also report lots of illegal pushbacks from Hungary, Croatia and Slovenia so that many come back to Belgrade. Often the only chance to continue their way is the dangerous and expensive travel with smugglers. Closing the borders makes the mafia business bigger than ever.

**In Belgrade the effects of the border politics are directly visible:** Several hundred people are stuck here and new groups arrive every day. Most of them are left even without the possibility to get shelter. Without documents they cannot go to a hostel and no free accommodation is provided.

Refugees who don't register as asylum seekers in Serbia don't have the possibility to sleep in any hostel or to seek shelter in a camp and are threatened by pushbacks to Macedonia or Bulgaria. But almost nobody is allowed to apply: People trying to register as asylum seekers have to wait all day in front of the police station and are usually not attended. Because of that a lot of people have to sleep in public parks or in the streets around the train station. There is not only a lack of shelter but also of food and information. As a start we are setting up a **kitchen to provide people with warm food every day** since many don't have any money to buy food.

Providing food and tea and coffee creates a **space for exchange and information** in the parks around the train station. While the only information people get from official side is how to apply for asylum, we consider it crucial to also provide independent information such as daily political changes or where to buy simcards or bus tickets. One independent group regularly supporting refugees directly in Belgrade is No Border Serbia who need support with their work.

It is also important to **report about the situation in Serbia** to a broader international public. The situation in the border camps and in the streets of Belgrade is not reported on by the mainstream media. What is happening here is a direct effect of the international militarization of the borders which is enforced not only by the states along the "Balkan route" but mainly by central European countries. It is essential to raise awareness about those interrelations and connect the struggles of independent groups fighting against border regimes all over Europe.

If you want to support people on the move in Belgrade, you can contact activists who are there at the moment by calling +381 612510835 or sending an email to [refugeesupportserbia@riseup.net](mailto:refugeesupportserbia@riseup.net). There is a flat where you can sleep. If you come, consider donations (money is most important since we can buy all ingredients in local shops, but used (smart) phones would be great!). For working together with the local structures it would be best to stay for a longer time, at least one week. Also any special skills like languages (Arabic, Farsi), cooking experience or medical knowledge are really useful.

Fight Fortress Europe!

no border activists // march 2016