



**REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**  
**PROTECTOR OF CITIZENS**  
281-92/16  
Belgrade



Заштитник грађана  
Zaštitnik građana

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## **NATIONAL PREVENTIVE MECHANISM**

MONITORING OF THE TREATMENT OF REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

# **Report on the Visit to Informal Venues in Belgrade Where Refugees and Migrants Have Been Rallying**

Belgrade, November 2016

## MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT THE VISIT

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| VISITED VENUES       | Park in front of the Belgrade University College of Economy, Miksalište and the abandoned warehouse near the Belgrade Main Bus Station  |
| PURPOSE OF THE VISIT | Monitoring of the treatment of refugees and migrants  |
| VISIT CONDUCTED BY   | Protector of Citizens   |
| DATE OF VISIT        | 12 November 2016  |
| VISIT TEAM           | <p><b>Team Leader:</b><br/>Miloš Janković,<br/><i>Deputy Protector of Citizens</i></p> <p><b>Team Members:</b><br/>Jelena Unijat,<br/><i>NPM Secretary</i><br/>Maja Jović,<br/><i>Head of the Department for the Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty and Oversight of the Exercise of Police Powers</i></p> |

## I SITUATION REPORT

### 1. Park in Front of the Belgrade University College of Economy

The NPM Team saw around 150 migrants, mostly younger men, between 20 and 30 years of age, during its visit to the park in front of the Belgrade University College of Economy. There was a tanker truck with drinking water in the vicinity. Most of them were talking on their cell phones and buying food at the nearby kiosks. Several migrants found shelter in the garage. Two uniformed police officers were patrolling the immediate vicinity.



### 2. Miksalište

Around 100 refugees and migrants, mostly young men, as well as several families with children, were in Miksalište. English Language workshops were under way at the time of the visit. Refugees and migrants are allowed to charge their cell phones at Miksalište. The NPM Team interviewed a representative of the Novi Sad Humanitarian Centre, who said that police officers were advising the migrants to go to one of the reception or asylum centres and transferring those who refused to the Preševo Reception Centre. She said that those who refused to be accommodated in this Reception Centre were returned to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) but soon re-entered Serbia with the help of smugglers. She also said that the police did not want to register the migrants on the day of the NPM Team's visit (Saturday), although there was a family with children among them.



### **3. Abandoned Warehouse near the Belgrade Main Bus Station**

The NPM Team and another representative of the Novi Sad Humanitarian Centre visited the abandoned warehouse in the vicinity of the Belgrade Main Bus Station. The NPM Team was told that around 600 people stayed in the warehouse on average; around 100 migrants/refugees were at the venue at the time of the visit. The windows on this leaky old building are broken. There is no electricity or running water in the building. The floor is made of cement and the building is very cold. The refugees and migrants build fires to warm themselves, and screen off the areas around the fires with cardboard to contain the heat. They also prepare their food on the fires.



The air is stale and malodorous and there is a lot of garbage strewn on the floor. Most of the refugees and migrants the NPM Team saw were young adult males. Some of them were lying on cardboard and blankets.





The Novi Sad Humanitarian Centre representative said that around a hundred of migrants had been bussed to Preševo several days earlier, while the others refused to go although there was room on the buses. Some were advised to go on to the Reception Centre in Adaševci. The representative said that refugees and migrants, who refused to go to one of the reception centres, were taken to Serbia's border with FYROM.





## II INTERVIEWS WITH REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS AT INFORMAL VENUES

The NPM Team interviewed several nationals of Afghanistan and Pakistan during its visit. They said they had come to Belgrade 15 or 20 days ago, that they did not want to register or go to a reception or asylum centre, because they feared deportation from the Republic of Serbia. They said they usually spent their days in the park or Miksalište and the nights in the abandoned warehouse. Some said they had already been returned to FYROM or Bulgaria, but that they re-entered Serbia. They said they needed food and warmer clothes.