



Non-governmental Organization Emancipimi Civil Ma Ndryshe
EC MA NDRYSHE

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PRESS RELEASE

Historic Centre of Prishtina counts its last days

In the framework of the project for monitoring transparency of the municipal government, EC Ma Ndryshe, over the past weeks has tracked the application of legal requirements for consultations with the public during the budget preparation process.

Within the “Online Transparency” project, EC Ma Ndryshe today has released its research paper on the historic centre, which aims to raise awareness of a broader community on the extent of its degradation, to highlight harmful activities and for raising concern for its future. By scanning recent developments in this area, its historical significance, architectural heritage values that intersect within its undefined boundaries, by pointing out erroneous treatments of the historic centre in general and specific monuments in particular in the past two decades, the report tends to shed light to reality and critical situation in which this part of the city of Prishtina is found today, as well as it reiterates the call for intervention and its protection.

The report “Historic Centre of Prishtina counting its last days” is based on the review of previous publications on “Historic Centre” of Prishtina, *in situ* examination of the situation, interviews with officials from relevant institutions, professionals on heritage protection and other experts, as well as brings comparative analyses with similar situations in the region.

At the nucleus of Prishtina, situation turns out to be alarming. In times, former Historic Zone was labelled either as Historic Centre or as the Old Town. However, regardless the novelties in designations, the approach toward its treatment resulted to be no different at all, let alone appropriate. This report brings to the fore historical records of city’s nucleus, the way it was legally treated in relation to urban planning, and its inconstant boundaries as well the status it currently enjoys. Among others, some of the issues identified in this report, which have led to the deterioration of the “historic centre” of Prishtina, are listed as follows:

- Lack of institutional interaction (MCYS–MESP–M)
- Lack of the boundaries of the zone
- Temporary protection status of cultural heritage buildings
- Unceasing constructional activities within the zone
- Impunity of the violators and destructors of cultural heritage buildings, etc.

Howsoever current situation appears hopeless in the Historic Centre, EC Ma Ndryshe believes in a last chance for emergency response thus providing the following recommendations:

- To temporarily suspend all construction activities in the “Historic Centre” of Prishtina,
- To enforce punitive measures for damaging and destructive activities by the relevant bodies,
- To bridge the gap of communication and to increase cooperation between the institutions responsible for protection of this zone,

- To assume shared responsibility by institutions, whose activities are directly related to the protection, planning and management of “Historic Centre” of Prishtina,
- To scan and assess the existing situation of this zone,
- To engage both local and foreign experts for valorisation of buildings and sites in this zone,
- To list into the permanent protection of the buildings and ensembles that are listed currently under temporary protection,
- To define the boundaries and provide legal status of protected zone to “Historic Centre” of Prishtina,
- To proceed with the drafting of the conservation plan and then with the management plan of this zone,
- Civil society to get more active for denouncing degradation and key persons/operators behind it,
- To implement an integrated approach in the treatment of irregularities, urban planning and protection of the zone in general, for the benefit of an overall economic development in the future, and so on.

EC Ma Ndryshe’s project for overseeing transparency of the Municipality of Prishtina shall continue with publicizing monitoring findings through regular press releases and the project’s website, where the findings will be posted directly by the monitors. All monitoring findings, including regular press releases and other information in relation to the local government of Prishtina will be regularly published on the project’s website: www.online-transparency.org.

Thank you,

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