



**Non-governmental Organization “Emancipimi Civil – EC
MA NDRYSHE”**

17 August 2012, Prizren

PRESS RELEASE

Over 18.000 Euros for official travels

EC Ma Ndryshe has continued to monitor the work of the municipal executive of Prizren Municipality during the month of August as well. In this period, the focus of monitoring was on the Mayor's conclusions. A largely worrying aspect of the conclusions rendered by the Mayor is the manner of the expenditure of public money for the official travels of Prizren Municipality officials. During the seven months of 2012 only, over 18.000 EUR were spent from the municipal budget on the official travels. Attached to this press release, you will find a list of official travel expenses from January 1st 2012 until today.

In his meeting with the municipal directors on 24 April 2012, the Mayor approved the conclusion allowing the official travel and the payment of per diem allowances for Mr. Ramadan Muja (Mayor), Nijazi Kryeziu (chairman of the Municipal Assembly), Orhan Lopar (deputy chairman of the Municipal Assembly), Minir Krasniqi (director of Administration), Hasan Hasani (director of Public Services), Afrim Gashi and Sadik Gashi (civil servants of the Municipality) in order to participate at the 5th International Dance Festival for Children, held from 19 to 23 April 2012 in Beykoz of the Republic of Turkey. Based on the rates of per diem allowances for the travels overseas, these officials have spent over 2,000 EUR and for travel tickets the amount of 916 EUR. In this case, the amount of 3,000 EUR was spent from municipal budget for seven municipal officials to participate in a dance festival for children.

Hereby, EC Ma Ndryshe considers that the expenditure of public money in the manner explained above is inexcusable and immoral act. The going of local government's key people at this dance festival of children in Turkey, is the best evidence for numerous travels of municipal officials abroad, a part of which is related neither to the interests of the citizens of Prizren, nor to those of local government. In another case, the Mayor, on April 18th 2012, has approved the decision allowing a four-day tour/visit for the civil service staff of Prizren Municipality in the Republic of Albania for marking the International Labour Day (May 1st). The realization of this tour cost the municipal budget 5,624 EUR.

EC Ma Ndryshe calls upon the Mayor of Prizren for being attentive when spending public money from the categories of wages and salaries and the goods and services. The Mayor has legal and moral obligation to manage with responsibility the money of Prizren taxpayers. The travels of municipal officials, which just the first seven months of 2012 reached the amount of over 18,000 EUR, are paid from public money, respectively from the taxes of the citizens of Prizren. Therefore, when bringing decisions on the expenditures for official travels, the Mayor should consider standards of good governance and proper management with public money. At the same

time, the Mayor must take into account that he governs a budget of the municipality with fairly low level of economic development and an alarming index of poverty (and extreme poverty), unemployment, and social cases.

The project of EC Ma Ndryshe for monitoring the transparency of the executive branch shall continue on publicizing monitoring findings through regular press releases and, from the next month, through project's website, where these findings will be posted directly from the monitors. By now, all the monitoring findings, including regular press releases and other information relative to local government of Prizren, are published on regular basis on the website of the project: www.online-transparency.org.

Thank you for your cooperation,

Hajrulla Çeku, Executive Director
NGO EC Ma Ndryshe
Ismet J. Kumanova Str, No. 3, Prizren
Zeki Shulemaja Str, No. 2, Prishtina
www.ecmandryshe.org & info@ecmandryshe.org
+381 38 522 199 & +386 49 116 448

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