



Non-governmental Organization Emancipimi Civil Ma  
Ndryshe EC MA NDRYSHE

## URBANISMWATCH

Urbanism of Prizren under constant watch

11March2015,Prizren, Press Release #18

### PRESS RELEASE

## Task Force for the Historic Center of Kosovo: One year on, no meetings

This week will mark the one year anniversary from the time when the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning reached a decision to establish a Task Force for the Historic Centre of Prizren.

The Task force, established on 13 March 2014 is comprised of representatives of MESP, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Municipality of Prizren and Council for Cultural Heritage, and has a goal of implementing the Law on Special Protected Areas and the Law on Historic Centre of Prizren (MESP), press release, <http://mmph-rks.org/sq/Lajmet/Edhe-nje-Taske-Force-per-Qendren-Historike-te-Prizrenit-857>.

However, during its first year of existence, this Task Force has not convened even once, and thus was unable to reach any decisions or undertake concrete actions in treating cases of damage caused to cultural heritage facilities, illegal constructions and other irregularities. In the meantime, the degradation of the Historic Centre of Prizren continued unhindered by any institutions that are legally obliged to act in such cases. During this time, there were even certain cases recorded where the Municipality of Prizren executed projects where it itself disregarded the procedures foreseen by the provisions of laws on Cultural Heritage and Spatial Planning.

The statistical report of the Basic Prosecution in Prizren on illegal constructions, exceeding permits, damage and destruction of monuments in the Historic Centre in Prizren emphasizes the low number of charges raised. According to the records of the Prosecution, it results that during 2014, 7 cases of criminal charges were raised, 1 case was rejected, while in 2 cases, the investigations were suspended. Meanwhile, the Basic Prosecution of Prizren has made it known that there are no cases being reviewed that are related to damage caused to monuments in the Historic Centre of Prizren.

Bearing in mind the fact that we have entered the third year since the approval of the Law on Historic Centre of Prizren, as well as the second year of the existence of the Task Force for the Historic Centre of Prizren, then we may quite easily come to the conclusion that the responsible institutions approve laws and create mechanisms for urban planning and protection of cultural heritage without giving any thought at all to the implementation and functionality of those laws in enforcing urban order and preservation of important cultural and historical values.

Central level institutions, through the current approach of approving laws and creating new mechanisms, have proven that they are only interested in creating more red-tape and less action in the field. At the same time, they created an alibi for the rampant inaction that has been going on for years on the implementation of the law and preservation of cultural heritage values in the Historical Centre.

ECMaNdryshe calls all institutions that are part of the Task Force to functionalize this mechanism and undertake concrete action as soon as possible, by enabling the efficient preservation of cultural heritage and establish order in the Historical Canter of Prizren.

“EC Ma Ndryshe”in July of 2013 began with the implementation of the project “Urbanism of Prizren under constant watch”, supported financially by the Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS). The project will continue to monitor and publish findings for the sectors of urban and spatial planning, as well as addressing the institutional responsibility.

*Best*

*Regards,*

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Is supported financially by the Kosovo Foundation for Open Society



Fondacioni i Kosovës për Shoqëri të Hapur  
Kosovo Foundation for Open Society  
Kosovska Fondacija za Otvoreno Društvo