

Community Groups and Urban Planning in Prizren

INCLUSIVE CITY 2014

December 2014, Prizren

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This publication was drafted within the Project “Inclusive City – Participatory planning for sustainable urban development in Prizren”, funded by Olof Palme International Center, which is supported by the Government of Sweden



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I. Introduction

This is the second year of the publication of “Inclusive City”, which contains the reports drafted by seven experts, whose task was to structure their findings over a long research cycle and to present them as guiding documents for the local government of Prizren as a contribution to the urban planning efforts. As in the first year of this publication, the authors of seven reports have used specific data stemming from the research carried out with seven community groups in Prizren (elderly, women, people with disabilities, youth, poor neighborhoods /informal settlements, environment and culture). All reports were drafted in line with a standard structure, namely: executive summary, introduction, current situation, findings and recommendations.

Also during 2014, EC Ma Ndryshe continued with its regular meetings with community groups aimed at discussing their needs and concerns. Focus groups were facilitated by persons with adequate knowledge on relevant community groups, and the discussions were streamlined towards the identification of needs and solutions to address concerns raised. At the same time, in 2014 a sample survey was carried out identifying the urban planning concerns of Prizren citizens. This was the third survey following the two previous ones implemented in 2013. All findings were validated in public debates (one for each community group) with the participation of a large number of stakeholders. All findings from this research cycle were sent to experts who have compiled the final reports and shaped them as guiding documents for the local government.

From a theoretical concept at the beginning, “Inclusive City” was transformed to basic working principle and general vision of EC Ma Ndryshe. The vision of an inclusive city is translated into physical environment and participatory planning. Inclusive planning enables people belonging to different society and economic groups to participate in project drafting and evaluation. Inclusive planning is a paradigm of urban planning that aims to involve all communities in urban planning strategic and managerial processes. The initial approach to inclusive urban planning is to convince community members to play an important role in drafting inception strategies and urban planning projects for their city.

We, in EC Ma Ndryshe continue to work in enhancement of ownership and responsibility by community groups towards their living environment. In order to achieve this, the organization is committed to redefine relations between the citizen and the state. We believe that essential change that needs to be achieved involves the transformation of a citizen from a passive receiver of public services into a participatory citizen in defining and regulating its living environment, as well as into a main contributor for the maintenance and development of that environment. Through the methodology of “Inclusive City”, EC Ma Ndryshe provides a concrete model of redefinition of this relation, which at the same time is a possibility to promote democratic practice of local government in the field of urban planning. During 2013 and 2014, together with community groups, we have provided clear evidence that the model of “Inclusive City” is possible and, above all, is needed if we want to have better and more democratic cities.

This is the second year that by inclusion of the entire annual research and community work into one final document, EC Ma Ndryshe tries to provide public policy alternatives and to convey the message to the local government and citizens alike to think of the city as a space of joint responsibility that needs to be built on the principles of democracy and development.

We believe that the city (Prizren) can be done. For this we now have good evidence.

II. Project Methodology

“Inclusive City – participatory planning for sustainable urban development of Prizren” is a three-year project implemented by EC Ma Ndryshe that is aimed to articulate the community group needs and translate them into viable urban plans for the municipality of Prizren. Project is supported by Olof Palme International Center, and its implementation began on January 2013. Target community groups for this Project are the following: women, youth, people with disabilities, residents of poor neighborhoods, culture community, and environment community. In each community group, during one project year focus groups and public debates are organized, while the advocacy and cooperation with Prizren Municipality and Directorate of Urban Planning is ongoing on a parallel track with the purpose of ensuring inclusion of citizen’s requests into the urban planning of the city.

Urban planning in Kosovo is a technical effort lead by experts, which is chiefly based on existing data and its relation to the environment (context) for which it is being drafted is patchy. This practice mainly produces plans that are outside of the local government’s implementing capacity, and moreover, it does not reflect the reality in the field leaving the citizens without ownership. Citizen’s participation is limited to several days, mainly few days prior to the final approval of plans.

There is an imminent need to include the interests and aspirations of citizens in urban planning, specifically of those deprived from adequate infrastructure and public services. Wide citizen participation is critical for the urban plans to be relevant and implementable. Inclusive urban planning helps the local democracy process, encouraging the citizen’s inclusion in all levels of the process. This new approach to urban planning (New Urban Planning) challenges the existing model in Kosovo (socialist urban planning of cities) that provides very limited space for citizens.

The Project will aim to meet the following specific objectives: [a] to develop inclusive methodology and approach to urban planning, [b] to find the missing link between citizens and urban planners, [c] to develop the sense of ownership amongst the citizens on their living environment, [d] to translate citizen interests and needs into implementable urban plans, [e] to encourage active participation of vulnerable and marginalized groups of society, [f] to promote integrated approach to urban planning (social, economic, environmental and cultural).

For each implementation year, the Project methodology envisages the implementation of focus groups with seven community groups, public advocacy actions/performances (community initiatives), public surveys with Prizren citizens on urban planning matters, public debates and specific reports for each community group. The reports are handed over to Prizren Municipality in the last part of the year that is followed with advocacy phase aimed at inclusion of citizen’s concerns and needs into municipal urban plans.

III. “Inclusive City” Concept

According to Ali Madanipour, the city is “provided and managed by public authorities”, and “is used and shared by all community members”. It is “a joint institutional and material world, an intermediate space that facilitates co-presence and regulates interpersonal relations”.¹ As a space that is equally shared by all community members and as a democracy product, the city also determines rules of conduct and respect for the other.

The sustainability and inclusiveness concepts are two qualitative concepts that are commonly used in planning and development discourse. UN Habitat Program determines the inclusive city as a city that promotes the development in a fair and just manner. The inclusive city is “a place where everybody, irrespective of their economic potential, race, sex, ethnicity or religion, may fully participate in all societal, economic and political opportunities provided by the city”. According to this Program, justice is one of the three sustainability pillars; in fact the most important one that is critical for the creation of a sustainable and common urban planning future. (UN-Habitat, 2001)

The inclusive city vision is translated into physical environment through inclusive project designing and planning. Inclusive project designing enables people from different society and economic groups to take part in project drafting and assessment. The participatory planning is a paradigm of urban planning that aims to include the entire community in strategic and management processes of urban planning. The initial approach employed with inclusive project designing is to convince the community members to play an important role in early strategy drafting and project planning for their city. Through the inclusion of the entire community, real problems, their source and potential solutions are put on table and discussed in various workshops. Projects and ideas resulting from such work with the community are usually related to the context; arise from the community needs, culture and their environment. Thanks to wide participation, the community will gain strong ownership and commitment to the project.

In “Inclusive City” Manual, Goltsman and Iacofano explain the inclusive planning of the city as a solution “based on sensitive economic, social, environmental and cultural policies allowing everyone to improve economically alongside with the improvement of their living environment”. They emphasize that cities need planning that recognizes the right of inclusion of everyone in development processes: “through participation, people can shape their environment in order to meet their needs”. The most vulnerable groups usually are rarely involved in planning processes as they lack the skills, knowledge and information. This in turn brings the danger of lack of inclusion of their needs into the urban planning resulting with deterioration of their living environment. In order to address this problem, the above authors suggest the inclusive project designing process based on three categories: functionality (project designing involving all types of individuals), contextual sensitivity (harmony with surrounding environment) and justice impact with the purpose of “decreasing the social and human impact towards the most affected members of society”.²

¹Madanipour, Ali, (2003) *Public and Private Spaces of the City*, Routledge.

²Goltsman, S, Iacofano, D, (2007), *The Inclusive City: Innovative Solutions for Buildings, Neighborhoods, and Urban Spaces*, MIG Communications).

IV. Elderly and Urban Planning in Prizren

Physical Infrastructure and Public Services

Author, Fisnik Minci

Executive Summary

Urban planning is a dynamic process aimed at improvement of human wellbeing by creating better, healthier, more equal, more effective and attractive settlements for the present and future generations. Such planning enables the decision-makers, businesses, civil society but also the citizen groups to play an important role in the establishment of communities that improve the life of people. Therefore, good urban planning helps communities imagine their future by striking the right balance between the new developments and basic services, environmental protection and the change that brings novelties³.

Moreover, the urban planning for all age groups is a principle that cannot be violated. However, urban planners very often have not tackled with required importance certain age groups. In this sense, the elderly need special consideration during policy drafting as they have more specific requests compared to other age groups.

A city that creates a friendly environment for the elderly is an inclusive city. By taking into account the variety of needs for the elderly, other age groups, such as children, youth, families, workers, entrepreneurs, etc, also benefit. A friendly city for the elderly may be built only in coordination with them. They should be an active part in defining the priorities and projects⁴.

A settlement is good only when it serves to all citizens during their lifespan⁵. Good urban planning with inclusiveness and clear vision may help in living up to this goal.

Considering the developments in this sector in Prizren, EC Ma Ndryshe worked in promoting the public consultation so that through civic participation regulatory urban plans of the city could be updated and new sustainable urban planning dynamics be introduced, that will in turn balance the interests of the business community, but also preserve the architectural tradition and cultural heritage. In ensuring the inclusiveness throughout the consultation process, this organization also included the elderly.

During meetings, debates and surveys, elderly brought to the attention numerous complaints, requests, suggestions and recommendations for urban and spatial planning.

Key findings:

³Definition of the American Planning Association, posted on: <https://www.planning.org/aboutplanning/whatisplanning.htm>, accessed in November 2014.

⁴"CRITERIA FOR THE ELDERLY PEOPLE CITY? SIMPLIFY THE COMPLEXITY TO ACT IN CONCRETE TERMS", document by Marcello Martinoni, Alma Sartoris, posted on: http://www2.arc.usi.ch/ris_ist_icup_pub_urbaging_02.pdf, accessed in November 2014.

⁵"IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF ELDERLY AND DISABLED PEOPLE IN HUMAN SETTLEMENTS", source book, first volume, UN Habitat, Nairobi, 1993, posted on: <http://ww2.unhabitat.org/programmes/housingpolicy/documents/HS-284.pdf>, accessed in November 2014.

- Since during this year the health vis-a-vie the urban planning was on the focus, amongst the main concerns raised by the elderly was the quality of medical services they receive. In addition, they state that there is no special treatment for them in this respect. Moreover, they point out that supply with medication in public pharmacies is very poor. Elderly also need easier transport arrangements to the health facilities.

-This community group requires the construction of an elderly home, cultural center for the elderly and teacher museum.

-Elderly are convinced that urban plans in Prizren are not being adhered to. It was requested from the Municipal authorities that facilities contradicting the urban planning criteria and Prizren environment be not legalized, so that the city image could be preserved. Implementation of construction laws and regulations, according to this category of society, is indispensable. In order for this to be achieved, the Inspectorate needs to be involved and impose sanctions for the offenders. Otherwise, the measures against inspectors should be taken.

-Traffic safety continued to be one of the key concerns for the elderly. In respect of the public transportation the reform of routes and taxi price lists was required.

-Four key concerns of this group of population came to be the following: 1) blockade of sidewalks with vehicles 69.7%, 2) meeting point for pensioners/recreational space 51.5%, 3) illegal constructions 42.4% and 4) lack of green areas 33.3%.

-After the survey with various organizations and representatives of the elderly, the following chief concerns were mentioned: 1) lack of meeting points for pensioners 97.1%, 2) lack of maintenance for sidewalks in winter 47.1% and 3) illegal constructions 47.1%.

Key recommendations:

-Municipality of Prizren should provide for appropriate living conditions for citizens of all age groups, and the needs of the elderly need to be taken into account during urban planning exercises;

-Municipal authorities should promote public consultations in all their policies, taking care for the involved parties to include the elderly community;

-To apply practices enabling the primary health care for the elderly to be effective in the promotion of health, prevention of diseases and management of chronic illnesses. The medical services for the elderly should be urgently improved.

-Local government of Prizren should take steps towards establishment of a committee or advisory body composed of prominent citizens in the community, amongst whom a considerable number of elderly would be included, who would review and provide advice on certain public policies affecting different categories of population;

-Responsible local authorities should draft and approve a resolution that would promote active support and involvement towards a city with friendly policies for the elderly;

-Municipality of Prizren should update and include in the institutional agenda projects for the construction of the asylum, cultural center and the Teacher Museum.

Introduction

Population ageing is one of the greatest achievements of humanity. It is also one of the challenges putting strain to economic and social demands in all countries. The percentage of people older than 60 is increasing throughout the world, and this trend will continue with an intensified pace compared to

other age groups due to decrease of birth rate and extended longevity. Number of elderly older than 60 in the world is foreseen to go from 600 million in 2000 to 2 billion in 2050.⁶

Elderly people very often are described as citizens reaching the retirement age, and this age varies from country to country. Many people on low income, but also business people work beyond the retirement age. Nevertheless, International Action Plan on Ageing, approved by the World Assembly of Ageing applies the word “elderly” for persons aged more than 60⁷.

Retirement age in Kosovo is 65 years. Demographic data resulting from the recent 2011 census in Kosovo, classifies the elderly as people aged above 65. According to this census, out of 177.781 inhabitants of Prizren, 11.404 are elderly, with 6.499 living in urban areas and 4.905 in rural ones⁸. This means that 6.41 per cent of Prizren inhabitants have reached the retirement age.

This community group, due to their age-related needs requires special consideration when it comes to policy drafting, because the elderly need to have proper income; dignified employment opportunities, should they decide to continue being active; and appropriate access to health and social services, including long term health care.

Even the urban planning for all age groups is a principle that cannot be breached; however planners often have not paid required attention to certain age groups. If the elderly would not be different from other age groups, there would be no need for them to be treated as a special group in the context of sustainable residential planning.⁹

Therefore, the ageing of population and urbanization marked the peak of a successful human development over the last century. However, numerous challenges remain to be tackled in the present century.

In order to be sustainable, cities should offer structures and services that enable citizen wellbeing and productivity. Elderly need to have friendly living environment, where they can fulfill their physical and social needs associated with ageing¹⁰. In fact, this necessity is also known as one of the three main

⁶ “Strengthening Older People’s Rights: Towards a UN Convention”, publication drafted by nine different organizations, and posted on: <http://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/documents/Coalition%20to%20Strengthen%20the%20Rights%20of%20Older%20People.pdf>, accessed in November 2014.

⁷ “IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF ELDERLY AND DISABLED PEOPLE IN HUMAN SETTLEMENTS”, Source Book, Volume One, UN Habitat, Nairobi, 1993, posted on: <http://ww2.unhabitat.org/programmes/housingpolicy/documents/HS-284.pdf>, accessed in November 2014.

⁸ Households and Apartments Census in Kosovo, 2011, Municipal Demographic Data, KSA, posted on: <http://ask.rks.gov.net/rekos2011/repository/docs/Te%20dhenat%20kryesore%20demografike%20sipas%20komunave.pdf>, accessed in November 2014.

⁹ “Planning and an Aging Population”, Report by the American Planning Association officials, published in 1961, posted on <https://www.planning.org/pas/at60/pdf/report148.pdf>, accessed in November 2014.

¹⁰ “Global Age-friendly Cities”, Guide drafted by the World Health Organization, posted on: http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf, accessed in November 2014.

directions of the Madrid International Action Plan on Aging that was adopted by the United Nations¹¹. Therefore, making the cities more elderly-friendly is not only a need, but also a logical response in promoting the elderly wellbeing and their contribution.¹²

As pointed out in World Health Organization Brasilia Declaration on Aging, “healthy elderly are an asset for their families, community and economy”¹³. In reaching this objective, accessible and qualitative health services for the elderly are needed in line with the specifics of this population category. A precondition for this is proper planning that would enable the elderly to receive necessary health services as per their demands, but also a creation of a friendly living environment, with adequate residential and public spaces that would positively impact the support and strengthening for the elderly, as well as their life quality.

A good example in this regard was given by the city of Ottawa (Canada), where in 2009 the drafting of the Plan for Elderly began, and in 2011 this Action Plan (2012-2014) was set as one of strategic priorities for the local government and concrete actions provided in Plan had commenced. The Ottawa Plan for the Elderly came as a product of a long research and an open dialogue with the community. The Plan covered key services under the municipal competency, such as the infrastructure, public buildings and spaces, transportation, recreational activities, health and social welfare and other supporting services, which helped the improvement of the quality of life for the elderly¹⁴.

Current Situation

In comparison with the developed countries, inclusion of elderly persons in the urban planning of Prizren continues to be low, and it even becomes concerning, because if we exclude the civil society initiatives, it comes out that authorities do not think to involve in their agenda this category of people when dealing with the policies in this field. Since the elderly are not included in public debates on Prizren urban planning, numerous challenges they are faced with remain still unresolved.

It is worth of mentioning that spatial planning authorities prior to finalizing all spatial planning documents need to invite citizens through public notice and carry out consultations and public debates with them. At the same time, they need to ensure the participation of public while drafting and implementation of spatial planning documents¹⁵.

MESP Administrative Instruction No. 54/2005 on Implementing the Law on Spatial Planning in relation to public review procedure for spatial and urban plans states that "by promoting good governance,

¹¹ “Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing”, Madrid, 8–12 April 2002, United Nations, posted on http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/CONF.197/9, accessed in November 2014.

¹² “Global Age-friendly Cities”, Guide drafted by the World Health Organization, posted on: http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf, accessed in November 2014.

¹³ “Brasilia Declaration on Ageing”. World Health Organization, 1997, posted on: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/documents/regional_review/Declaracion_Brasilia.pdf, accessed in November 2014.

¹⁴ “OLDER ADULT PLAN 2012-2014”, Ottawa Action Plan, posted on: <https://ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/migrated/files/cap290801.pdf>, accessed in November 2014.

¹⁵ Law on Spatial Planning, Article 20, posted on: <http://www.assembly-kosova.org/common/docs/ligjet/Ligji%20per%20planifikimin%20hapesinor.pdf>, accessed in November 2014.

Ministry and municipalities shall take into account specific needs of people with disabilities, elderly, women, minorities and youth¹⁶ and that they will encourage the transparent public participation.

The municipalities on the other hand are obligated to inform their citizens for all important plans or programs of public interest, as provided for in the Municipality Statute¹⁷. In addition, the Municipal Assembly with its committees and commissions, prior to the approval of municipal regulations need to organize public consultations providing the public with sufficient information for potential proposals¹⁸.

During this year, Municipality of Prizren held several debates where it failed to take proper measures in meeting legal requirements of public consultations vis-à-vis the elderly. Municipality invited all citizens to participate through a public announcement; however it did not made any attempts to ensure participation and dialogue with the public, and let alone with special community groups, such as the one of the elderly.

The elderly gathered under the umbrella of the Municipal Organization of Pensioners and Working Invalids, as well as the Association of Education Veterans expressed their readiness to participate in public discussions hosted by authorities be it in municipal premises or elsewhere so that they could address their proposals and concerns with the purpose of overcoming the urban planning difficulties they face on daily basis.

Over the two-year period, “EC Ma Ndryshe” attached importance to the inclusion of elderly in urban planning, and alongside the focus groups, debates, surveys and research also invited the elderly through sms messages and personal invitations in all public debates organized by the Municipality of Prizren dealing with various public policies, starting from the budget through to regulatory plans.

Findings

Within the Project “INCLUSIVE CITY – Participatory planning for Sustainable Urban Development of Prizren” EC Ma Ndryshe in 2014 organized two focus groups and one public debate with the community of elderly, and also involved them in the survey that served as a basis for the analysis on citizen’s concerns related Prizren’s urban planning issues. The findings that came as a result of these activities have revealed the challenges and problems faced by the elderly when it comes to urban and spatial planning, as well as their requests.

The special focus during the review of urban planning challenges of Prizren in consultation with the elderly during this year was put on the health sector. Elderly stated that they received support from local authorities and Turkish KFOR for systematic and routine check-ups. Nevertheless, there were some differing opinions, because it was also stated that routine check-ups are not sufficient for the elderly since they are faced with significant health problems. The elderly requested from the authorities to find sustainable solution to their concerns. In general, they agreed that primary health care is provided in their vicinity, and that Municipality met most of its obligations, with the exemption of few locations.

¹⁶MESP Administrative Instruction 54/2005, Section 3, paragraph 4, posted on: http://mmph-rks.org/repository/docs/JA_54_2005.pdf, accessed in November 2014.

¹⁷Law on Local Self-Government, Article 68, posted on: http://www.assembly-kosova.org/common/docs/ligjet/2008_03-L040_al.pdf, accessed in November 2014.

¹⁸Statute of Prizren Municipality, Section 91, posted on: http://kk.rks-gov.net/prizren/getattachment/Home/satuti_komunes_tetor_2008_04_12.pdf.aspx, accessed in November 2014.

However, they have raised concerns on the quality of services they receive because, in their opinion, elderly do not enjoy special treatment and they are put in the same category with younger patients. They also emphasized that the medication supply in public pharmacies is very poor, and very often they need to buy them from their own pockets. They also requested better transportation to and from health facilities.

When it comes to their health and wellbeing, the elderly requested the authorities to work in raising funds for an asylum, where some of them might find their shelter, and for a cultural center for the elderly that would be used for their socializing. The representatives of the Association of Veteran Teachers, who have remained without an office and support for some time know, suggested the establishment of a museum of teacher (in the house of teacher, Lazër Lumezi), which would also have socializing spaces for the elderly.

The elderly also requested the establishment of a center for health scientific research that would be composed of prominent medical scientists. According to them, this center could help the municipality in drafting of its development plans.

The elderly group discussed on other topics too. During the focus group discussions and debate it was pointed out that Prizren Urban Plans foresee the construction of building with P+5 flooring, but in reality higher constructions are being allowed. According to the elderly, these constructions exceeding the number of floors also do not adhere to proportion 40 per cent construction and 60 per cent green areas, while for parking spaces no one even speaks about. It was requested that DUSP and ID act decisively in not giving the legalization permission to constructions not complying with urban and spatial planning criteria of Prizren, so that the city image could be preserved. Implementation of construction laws and regulations is indispensable, and the Inspectorate should become active in this regard in sanctioning the law offenders. Otherwise, in case of inaction, the elderly think that inspectors themselves should be faced with sanctions.

The first comment tackles buildings without façades that stay like that for years after the finalization of construction, and there were also requests for putting the new façade to collective residential facilities build decades ago.

Concerning the road infrastructure, elderly came up with concerns of various nature. Amongst them, traffic safety was raised as key concern. The street in the vicinity of Cultural Centre was specifically mentioned, where the movement of pedestrians is hampered near the turn opposite this facility. The Faik Emrushli Street, where pedestrians are faced with same problems, was also discussed. Another concerning problem is illegal parking of vehicles, specifically in sidewalks. Blocking of sidewalks with tables from coffee bars was qualified as bad phenomenon that should be tackled by the Municipal Inspectorate. Additional efforts in the improvement of traffic safety for pedestrians were also requested from the Police. Putting of traffic signs and transit connection to avoid trucks and buses from the central streets of the city was also demanded.

The reform of city transportation lines was also demanded, because the circling city routes are not in compliance to the needs of public. Another request was related to official price list control for taxi drivers.

The elderly once again opposed the idea of building the mobile escalators to Prizren Castle as this would damage the historical context of this site, and made a call for the reconstruction of the existing roads leading to the Castle.

They also discussed the possibility of demanding from the authorities to build a bicycle track and fix public lighting. Kindergartens and regular water supply was also mentioned.

The elderly group was also included in the survey research, where out of 250 respondents, 12.9 per cent were older than 65.

In general, the survey data show that four key issues mentioned by Prizren citizens are the following: 1) Obstruction of sidewalks with cars 64.3%, 2) illegal construction 44.6%, 3) lack of sidewalk maintenance in winter 41.8% and 4) ruination of Historical Centre of Prizren 35.3%.

From the survey, it came out that main concerns of the population older than 65 are the following: 1) obstruction of sidewalks with cars 69.7%, 2) meeting point for pensioners/recreational space 51.5%, 3) illegal construction 42.4% and 4) lack of green areas 33.3%. Other identified issues are lack of maintenance of public spaces, high rise buildings in the city, lack of public lighting, access to institutions, state of public parks and lack of transportation connections.

The survey with different organizations and elderly representatives included 34 pensioners, who pointed out the following issues: 1) lack of meeting points for pensioners 97.1%, 2) lack of sidewalk maintenance in winter 47.1% and 3) illegal constructions 47.1%. Other identified issues included the obstruction of sidewalks, high rise buildings in the city, lack of green areas, lack of public lighting, lack of public parks, lack of transportation connections and access to health care facilities.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Municipality of Prizren should provide for appropriate living conditions for all age groups. During urban planning exercise, special attention should be paid for the needs of all age groups and translate them in concrete actions during the implementation of all public projects.

Recommendation 2: Responsible municipal authorities for urban and spatial planning, as well as other directorates, need to promote the public consultations that include strategic thinking, research, analysis and proposals coming from the civil society and businesses, always taking care to involve the elderly as stakeholders.

Recommendation 3: Prizren local government to undertake steps towards the establishment of a committee or an advisory body composed of prominent citizens in the community, amongst whom there will be considerable number of elderly who will review and provide advice on certain public policies affecting various population categories.

Recommendation 4: Local responsible authorities to draft and approve a resolution that promotes active support and involvement for a city that would have elderly friendly policies and spaces.

Recommendation 5: In consultation with social actors, local government of Prizren to draft an action plan that would provide a structured response to all issues identified by the elderly. Action plan needs to

be published and implemented activities should be accompanied with the results for the community of elderly.

Recommendation 6: Municipality of Prizren should include in the institutional agenda project for the construction of the asylum and cultural center for the elderly. For this purpose it needs to allocate funds from the municipal budget or to find donors. Initially, municipal authorities should establish an experts group who in consultations with the community of elderly will help the relevant municipal authorities in taking the relevant decision on the location for these two important facilities for the elderly. The possibility for adaptation of Lazër Lumezi's house into a "Teacher Museum", which will have space for daily meetings of elderly, also needs to be reviewed.

Recommendation 7: To undertake urgent measures for the improvement of health service quality provided for the elderly, bearing in mind the specifics of this social category. Transportation amenities to the health facilities should also be provided. Medication supply in public pharmacies be done in compliance with the legal requirements of the elderly.

Recommendation 8: To apply practices enabling the primary health care at the elderly community level to promote health, prevent diseases and manage the chronic conditions.

Recommendation 9: To review the possibility for establishment of a health scientific center in coordination with the central authorities that would be composed of prominent health experts and help the Municipality in drafting of development plans. To build the capacities for pension and health insurance schemes within the public universities.

Recommendation 10: To undertake necessary measures that all urban planning projects implemented in Prizren municipality ensure that inner and outer public spaces be pleasant, safe and accessible for the elderly.

Recommendation 11: To pay special attention for the residential building to have elderly friendly design. Old façades of collective residential buildings be refurbished. To make it mandatory for private facilities to put façades.

Recommendation 12: Streets and sidewalks be accessible and maintained throughout all yearly seasons in order to enable free and safe movement of elderly in the traffic. To undertake required measures for traffic safety improvement in Prizren. To plan the bicycle tracks.

Recommendation 13: To review the opportunities for the reform of urban transportation lines to align it with the daily needs of Prizren citizens. To inspect the taxi drivers price list institutionally.

Recommendation 14: DUSP and ID to act more strictly in law enforcement. Facilities failing to meet the urban planning criteria and Prizren environment be not legalized in order to protect the historic city image. IN case of inaction, to penalize the inspectors too.

Recommendation 15: Municipality should work towards the establishment of the Urban Development Fund of Prizren from the increase of its own source revenues that would tackle the urban planning priority issues throughout the municipal territory.

V. Women and Urban Planning in Prizren

Employed Women

Written by Rozafa Basha

Executive Summary

Cities have the opportunity to give something for everyone, only when they are built for all. Jane Jacobs¹⁹

Cities should be created bearing in the mind the principle of equality and fairness for all, and this means that there should be accessible places, created and managed through inclusive processes. Civic participation is a key component of inclusive processes enabling the citizen to give its contribution in decision making for the city. When talking about the decisions taken during the city planning exercise, an inclusive planning process, alongside the field experts, should also involve the citizens as non-experts because a city is inhabited by its non-expert residents, who with their day-to-day experience may contribute in identification of problems and finding of solutions for the city.²⁰

In democratic societies we expect that the citizen's voice be represented in decision-making through their representatives in the city councils. In reality, in most of the cases these representatives do not raise the voice of marginalized groups left outside of political processes. This is the reason why opportunities should be created for citizens to contribute and communicate actively with the purpose of turning the urban changing processes towards the improvement of their life in the city. Moreover, an active citizenry needs to be further developed, so that we could have an active citizen²¹, who instead of waiting from authorities to effect the change, with his/her commitment towards the community and urban environment leads the change independently and pushes the community to get actively involved in decision-making processes.²²

The marginalized groups in most of the cases are disenfranchised communities or those with symbolical political, economic or cultural representation. These communities are very often closely related to their living environment and are mostly affected by the injustice and burden of the mistakes in decisions taken for their urban living environment.

Despite the existing legislation in place that, amongst others, brings gender equality and equal opportunities for the participation of both, men and women into political, economic, social and cultural development, women in Kosovo continue to have symbolic representation in urban governance decision making processes. Presence of women is almost insignificant also in the public discussions of the Municipality with citizens since on her behalf speaks a man from the family or neighborhood. To what extent such a representation can bring the needs and problems of women in urban space? Cities we are living today represent deeply rooted perceptions on women's role in the society. They were shaped by

¹⁹ Jacobs, J., *The Death and Life of Great American City*, p. 238, Random House, New York, 1961, cited from Ellin Nan, *Good Urbanism – Six Steps to Creating Prosperous Places*, p. 33, Island Press, Washington, 2013 (Amazon Kindle edition).

²⁰ Urban Trends, BMW Guggenheim lab, <http://www.bmwguggenheimlab.org/100urbantrends/#!/new-york-city>, (accessed on 10 December 2014, at 14:00 hrs)

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

the urban planning system and decision-making powers dominated by professional men²³. Only few women are in position to contribute to the urban governance. Key stakeholders in local governance are connected to the government and academia elites, with consultants, media and businesses. Exactly this is the partnership that shapes the city spaces²⁴, and elevates them from the barriers women face on daily basis.

This Report summarizes the needs and obstacles in women's daily life in the urban space of Prizren, and tries to recommend solutions for its improvement. The Report is a product of discussions of two focus groups and a debate with employed women and women rights activists of Prizren city, that were held this year within the Project "Inclusive City – Participatory Planning for Sustainable Urban Development in Prizren" supported by Olof Palme International Center, Sweden.

Introduction

Men and women experience the city differently when it comes to residence, use of transportation, employability, sheltering and house maintenance responsibilities²⁵. Due to an almost universal sexist division of work, women in most of the cases take the burden of maintenance and reproduction duties in the family and community.

According to Helen Jarvis, cities function as basic spaces of production, consumption and reproduction of gender and identity norms²⁶. At the same time, citizens themselves are shaped through gender personifications and social realities of daily routines – at home, in the public and in their daily movements.²⁷

Cities we are living today represent deeply rooted perceptions on women's role in the society. They were shaped by the urban planning system and decision-making powers dominated by professional men. Only few women are in position to contribute to the urban governance. Key stakeholders in local governance are connected to the government and academia elites, with consultants, media and businesses men. This is exactly the type of partnership that shapes the city spaces²⁸.

According to Dolores Hayden, the perception that "woman's place is at home" was one of the key principles of architectural designing and urban planning at the turn of XX century in USA.²⁹ The approach to urban planning did not differ in Europe, too. In USA, this sort of approach resulted with

²³ Greed, C. Planning the Non-sexist City: the Eurofem Initiative and Beyond, <http://www.gendersite.org/case-studies/planning-the-non-sexist-city-the-eurofem-initiative-and-beyond.html>, (accessed on 10 December 2014, at 14:02hrs.).

²⁴ Jarvis, H. with Cloke, J., Kantor, P., *Cities and Gender*, Kindle loc. 4495, Routledge critical introductions to urbanism and the city, Routledge, New York, 2009 (Amazon Kindle edition).

²⁵ Jarvis, H. with Cloke, J., Kantor, P., *Cities and Gender*, Kindle loc. 17, Routledge critical introductions to urbanism and the city, Routledge, New York, 2009 (Amazon Kindle edition).

²⁶ Jarvis, H. with Cloke, J., Kantor, P., *Cities and Gender*, Kindle loc. 206, Routledge critical introductions to urbanism and the city, Routledge, New York, 2009 (Amazon Kindle edition).

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Jarvis, H. with Cloke, J., Kantor, P., *Cities and Gender*, Kindle loc. 306, Routledge critical introductions to urbanism and the city, Routledge, New York, 2009 (Amazon Kindle edition).

²⁹ Hayden, D., What would a Non-Sexist City be like? p. 170, *Speculations on Housing, Urban Design and Human Work, Signs*, Vol. 5, nr. 3, pp. 170 – 187, Supplement, *Women and American City*, (spring 1980), <file:///C:/Users/User/Desktop/Hayden%20-%20Non-Sexist%20City.pdf>

typical city structure composed of the city core with employment opportunities that was the main focus of men, and the outskirts, where mainly women “stayed at home” performing the reproduction and house chore duties – unpaid jobs. In the Europe of XX century, entire cities expanded on the principle of zoning based on modernistic urban planning, where the residential neighborhoods were planned far away from the employment zones with a complicated transportation system enabling men to drive cars and arrive at work on time. This way of planning that was based on a rationale of public health and effectiveness, in fact was in line with traditional and historical perceptions on the “right place” for women in the city of men³⁰, who is separated and “at home”. Nowadays many women work, and alongside their professional work they continue to take care for children, house and shopping. The modern zoning of the city goes in contradiction to the models of movement and needs of an employed woman.

Some urban feminists agree that the city vision that would correspond to women needs is a non-sexist city or a “city of day to day life”. This city would entail short distances with wide distribution of numerous local services, shops, schools and kindergartens. As such, the city would decrease the commuting need and would help the creation of sustainable, accessible and fair cities. In a micro level, this city would enable women and men to commute in public transportation, to walk or to cycle; public transportation would be more accessible, and public spaces would not have physical barriers for parents pushing go-carts or persons with special needs who move with aids, etc.³¹

In creating a non-sexist city, the urban planning policies should be tackled from the gender perspective and not related only to the child care or women personal safety, but also to the planning of transportation, employment, sports and culture, which until recently were treated as issues exclusively pertaining to men.³²

Today, at the era of concerns related to environment, scarce energy resources, large number of urban population, as well as economic and social problems stemming from them, but also with a not so bright future projected by these developments, the dominant idea where everyone is trying to find refuge is the one focused on the sustainability. The vision of a non-sexist city, or of the *day to day living* city, which is focused on the representation of the rights of all through inclusive processes, but also on the promotion of a more concentrated urban spaces with mixed content, as well as on the public transportation and healthy mobility ways, seems to be in full compliance with the spirit of sustainable development – with women being its promoters.

Current Situation

Despite the existing legislation which, amongst others, protects gender equality and ensures equal opportunities for the participation of men and women in political, economic, social and cultural developments, women in Kosovo continue to have symbolic representation in urban governance decision-making. In line with Article 1.3 of Law on Gender Equality No. 2004/02, the elimination of all barriers in reaching the gender equality is guaranteed, meaning the equal participation (which is

³⁰ Greed, C. Planning the Non-sexist City: the Eurofem Initiative and Beyond, <http://www.gendersite.org/case-studies/planning-the-non-sexist-city-the-eurofem-initiative-and-beyond.html>,) accessed on 10 December 2014, at 14:00 hrs.)

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

considered to exist when a participation of either men or women is at least at a 40% level) of women and men in all legislative, executive, judicial and public authority bodies.

When talking of local level participation, according to the above Law, local gender equality offices need to draft policies aimed at the promotion of gender mainstreaming in civic inclusion through different measures and actions with the purpose of creating equal opportunities for women and men in employment, education, as well as in political, economic and cultural representation. A Gender Equality Plan (2012 – 2014) was also drafted by the Prizren Municipality, according to which the municipal authorities shall apply affirmative action in women employment, in the provision of business development opportunities and inclusion of women in municipal policy planning and development.³³ However, in practice women continue to be outside of these developments, as they are not a part of urban planning efforts. This can be proved through the data of third research on Prizren urban planning issues, within the Project “Inclusive City” that was carried out in June 2014, with the participation of 300 respondents. Out of the total number of respondents, 64% of women were not aware that they can be involved in the development of different city plans and regulations. Similar percentage is seen from the survey results on urban planning issues held in Prizren with 249 respondents.³⁴

In general, the number of citizens participating in public discussions on urban planning issues is low. Numbers of residents receiving the information for public discussions is small since the information methods selected by the Municipality very often do not reach the public, and even if they reach it, they don't manage to mobilize it. Due to the lack of proper information but also due to mobility issues, the presence of women is almost insignificant in the municipality public debates, and very often a man from the family or neighborhood speaks on her behalf. To what extent such a representation can bring into focus the needs and daily problems of women in urban space? Which are the ways to increase the participation and the women activism with the purpose of voicing their needs and solutions that would in turn contribute to the improvement of physical environment for her and for all other citizens?

This is the second year that within the Project “Inclusive City – Participatory Planning for Sustainable Urban Development in Prizren” aimed to articulate the needs, problems and impediments in the daily life of Prizren citizens, EC Ma Ndryshe works on several focus group and debate cycles with Prizren citizens. Targeted citizens for these focus groups belong to communities, the interest of which is less represented in local government. Five different communities were included in focus groups, and with each of them two focus groups and a public debate were held. Citizens invited in debates had the opportunity to raise their concerns and ideas for the city in front of Prizren municipal government officials and other representatives.

This Report is a product of discussions in two focus groups and a debate with employed women and women right activists of Prizren city. The first focus group was held on 18 February 2014. This event was attended by 12 women of different professional backgrounds and women right NGO activists. The discussed topics in this focus group had to do with the physical infrastructure in the city, employment,

³³ Gashi, E., Women and Urban Planning , Summary of Reports “Inclusive City”, EC Ma Ndryshe, p. 15, January 2014, http://www.ecmandryshe.org/repository/docs/Qyteti_Gjithperفشires.pdf, (accessed on 09 December 2014, at 21:00 hrs.).

³⁴ EC Ma Ndryshe, short analysis “Urban Planning for Citizens”, Prizren, September 2013. http://www.ecmandryshe.org/repository/docs/ANALIZA_Planifikim_urban_per_qytetaret.pdf, (accessed on 9 December 2014, at 21:00 hrs.).

health and public services³⁵. The second focus group was held on 23 June 2014 with 11 women participating. Topics discussed there had to do with education, public safety, culture and environment³⁶. The concluding debate of focus group discussion cycle with women was held in September. On this occasion, employed women and activists had the opportunity to unfold their needs and ideas to the representative of Urban Planning Directorate in Prizren Municipality.³⁷

Findings

The findings of focus group discussions and concluding debate with the community of employed and activist women are summarized in two main groups: urban area of Prizren and rural area of Prizren municipality. Within these two groups, problems and other discussions were structured in the discussion topics.

1. City of Prizren

Public Space

Public Space - sidewalks:

Unobstructed movement of pedestrians in sidewalks is prevented by vehicles parked on the streets and sidewalks. According to focus group participants, this comes as a result of small number of parking space in the city.

The surface of sidewalks and streets is damaged and has a lot of potholes. In addition, these spaces happen to be usurped with merchandise and items put there by the nearby business premises. This obstructs the movement of parents with baby strollers, people with disabilities, etc.

Sidewalks in the vicinity of schools are occupied, among others, by street vendors, who critically narrow or totally obstruct the sidewalks for the movement of children on their way to school. Children are forced to walk on streets, thus exposing themselves to the danger of being hit by cars. This is the reason why parents do not feel comfortable to leave their children alone on their way to school and drive them instead. At the times when the classes start and end there is always a big mess caused by cars, street vendors and parents coming and going in front of schools.

Green Areas – parks:

Focus group participants acknowledged the increase of green areas in few recent years, but the fact that there is always a service business opened in the vicinity is quite concerning because, according to them, this degrades and hampers the proper functioning and free use of those green areas. In addition, stray dogs are often seen there, but also citizens walking their big dogs without protecting masks. This increases the sense of insecurity amongst the people visiting these areas.

Public Services

³⁵ Basha, R., first focus group Report “Women and the City”, Project “Inclusive City – Participatory planning for sustainable urban development in Prizren”, EC Ma Ndryshe, February 2014.

³⁶ Basha, R., second focus group Report “Women and the City”, Project “Inclusive City – Participatory planning for sustainable urban development in Prizren”, EC Ma Ndryshe, June 2014.

³⁷ Selimi, V. Basha, R., debate Report “Women and the City”, Project “Inclusive City – Participatory planning for sustainable urban development in Prizren”, EC Ma Ndryshe, September 2014.

Public Transportation:

While municipal authorities state that public transportation in Prizren is working well, one cannot see significant numbers of people using it. The city of Prizren is widely expanded geographically, and has a surroundings area with over 70 villages. The fact that numerous citizens use their vehicles to cover short distances contributes to the heavy traffic and obstruction of sidewalks. This shows that public transportation in Prizren should cover larger areas and be more qualitative.

Waste Disposal:

In certain neighborhoods, especially close to abandoned facilities, irresponsible citizens dispose large amounts of waste. Municipal authorities do not remove it, and as a consequence neighborhood residents have to cope with bad smell, rats, stray dogs and fear of contracting contagious diseases.

Due to improper waste disposal trucks, in many neighborhoods waste containers are emptied by initially putting all the waste on the ground and then shoveled to the truck. Liquid waste and fermented products in containers, in most of the cases are left on the streets with bad odors causing problems for their residents.

Disposal of Sewage Waters:

In some neighborhoods, sewage waters are disposed on the streets, and residents are concerned for general hygiene conditions and bad odors.

Maintenance of Graveyards:

The bad condition of graveyards was raised as a topic of discussions, whereby it was requested from the Municipality to take measures for their rehabilitation.

Education

Education Infrastructure:

City of Prizren does not have sufficient number of schools to accommodate large number of students. This is the reason why some schools are overcrowded with students. This situation causes concern to parents related to adequate maintenance of school facilities and their general level of hygiene. The first focus group discussed the large number of students in primary school 11 Marsi, where women participants underlined that construction of a new school in that neighborhood is more than necessary.

Teaching Quality:

The focus group where the education was discussed pointed out that teaching quality is decreasing as a consequence of various and frequent reforms. According to women participants, poor teaching quality comes as a result of low quality of teachers, who are employed based on their political party affiliation rather than on the grounds of their professional qualification.

Children Safety at Schools:

Children safety at schools (on the way to/from school and in schoolyard) is a huge concern for parents. Harassment of girls on the streets and within schoolyards, as well as the violence with cold arms amongst the primary and high school children having as consequence injuries and even their death in schools is another serious concern. Other children safety issue is the large presence of stray dogs during evening hours, endangering small children who at that time go back from school to their homes.

Employment

Number of working women, especially of those in decision making positions, is low. The focus group discussions requested that this issue be tackled. According to focus group participants, this happens because sometimes women choose not to apply for decision making positions due to their family obligations. The lack of kindergartens and adequate child care, as well as of other services that would facilitate child care obligations and house chores for women, are impacting elements for women not to choose to apply for decision making positions. Another reason for small number of women in these positions, according to the majority of women involved in discussions, is failure to provide them with equal opportunities when applying for jobs. Those small numbers of women in those positions, work there only if they are members of a political party, and as such they are politically instrumentalized.

Participation in Public Discussions

Another issue that was discussed in focus groups is non-participation of women in public discussions on urban planning. The reasons why women numbers in these discussions are so low are numerous, with the most important ones being: ineffective information by the municipal authorities, lack of confidence on local government, negligence of citizens, etc.

Culture

Cultural Heritage:

Cultural heritage of Prizren city is seen as an asset. Discussion participants complained that often when they want to show to local or foreign guests the heritage sites, these facilities are closed and people responsible for them cannot be found.

Environmental Pollution

Dangerous Radiation:

Mobile telephone antennae placed everywhere pose a radiation danger for the population.

Asbestos Roofs:

There are numerous roofs in Prizren covered with “Sallonit” (asbestos fibers) tiles, which are extremely dangerous, especially if older than 25 years. Discussion participants requested the Municipality to hire as soon as possible expert teams who would remove/replace and eliminate these materials. It is not recommended for non-professionals to remove these tiles themselves due to the high danger of inhaling the cancerogenous asbestos fibers.

Toxic Gases:

Char mechanics in some residential areas of Prizren use car paints without employing the required protection measures, and some bakers burn tires causing toxic air pollution that is hazardous to environment and people.

2. Rural Areas – surroundings of Prizren municipality

Road Infrastructure in the Vicinity of Schools:

Sidewalks around schools but also alongside the streets that could be used by children going to school are inexistent. As a consequence, a number of children have recently been hit by cars, with some accidents resulting in fatalities.

School infrastructure:

The school hygiene is at a concerning level, specifically in the toilets. Many of these schools have toilets with toilet seats, using of which poses danger to children for contracting infectious diseases.

Installing Toilet Aids for People with Disabilities:

Schools in villages do not have toilets for people with disabilities. Access paths and other aids are also missing.

Lack of Sewage Systems and Pollution of Streams and Rivers from Sewage Waters:

Some villages use septic holes that are not built properly, while others discharge their sewage waters on the rivers (e.g. village of Krushë discharges its sewage waters in the Drini i Bardhë River).

Health Infrastructure:

In the small number of Family Medicine Centers located in the villages, doctors and nurses do not adhere to their working hours. Since the medical staff there is not present, women living in these villages are compelled to travel to Prizren for medical check-ups.

Employment:

Women are not given equal opportunities when applying for vacancies in decision making positions. In vacancies for school principals, despite having women with adequate education and experience applying, only men are selected.

Recommendations

Road Infrastructure – to insist that local authorities intensify their efforts in removing vehicles and other obstructions from sidewalks, but also in removing street vendors working close to schools. Sidewalks should be constructed in the vicinity of village schools, including the building of safer roads for the students of these schools.

Green Areas – We recommend the Directorate of Urban Planning to restrict the number of commercial activities close to green areas and parks, since they obstruct their public purpose and free use of this space by citizens.

To take measures in removing stray dogs from city parks and green areas and to request from the dog owners to use protecting masks for their dogs to avoid the danger of biting.

Removal – cleaning of waste – to arrange the cleaning of containers in city streets. To try providing specialized cleaning trucks for the street cleaning company.

Teaching Quality – To request from the relevant municipal directorate that the employment of teachers be based on their professional qualifications rather than on political affiliation. The current employment policy is significantly contributing to the poor quality of education.

Children Safety at Schools – competent authorities should take measures to tackle the ever more concerning insecurity of children at schools (on the way to/from schools, in schoolyards and inside school premises), specifically against the violence with cold weapons amongst the primary and high school children.

Employment – focus groups requested that the number of employed women be increased and their inclusion in decision making positions be as wider as possible. Strict implementation of the Law on Gender Equality and Municipal Action Plan for it was also requested. At the central level, the review of Labor Law was required, which for the time being hampers women to pursue their professional carriers in parallel with their family obligations. Proper conditions should be created (more public kindergartens, improvement of public transportation, etc) to enable the mothers to work.

Cultural Heritage – the relevant directorates (Directorate of Culture and the one of Tourism) are requested to make the heritage sites available and accessible for visitors on daily basis.

Asbestos roofs – it is recommended that the Municipality funds the replacement of the so called “sallonit” roofs throughout the city and to establish a specialized team for this purpose (to avoid involvement of citizens or unqualified people).

Toxic Gases – to completely prohibit or put under control (through protection measures) car painting in residential neighborhoods, due to high risk for the emission of poisonous toxins for the people and environment. To prohibit the burning of tires by the bakers in neighborhoods.

Doctor in Rural Areas – To insist with relevant directorates that the regional medicine centers in villages observe their working hours (full time), but also to have more specialists so that women should have to go to Prizren for such specialist check-ups.

Participation in Public Debates – concerning the low participation of women in public debates on urban planning issues, the focus groups participants suggested that for a more active involvement focus information campaign should be carried out. Except for the information methods already used by the Municipality (posters, TV, radio, etc), other women mobilization methods should be found through NGOs and associations, around which neighborhood women are organized. In order for these debates to be as fruitful as possible, they need to be held in small discussion units – focus groups (focus group of women from one residential building entrance, bloc or neighborhood). It is easier for small discussion groups to come together, and their discussion is not difficult for facilitation.

Finally, by referring to authors Goltsman and Iacofano, in helping a community to take a more active role in a society, they need to be initially convinced on their role and contribution in that society and then to be encouraged to actively participate in all city strategy drafting and planning stages.³⁸ Moreover, an active citizenry should be promoted, namely, an activist citizen³⁹, who, instead of waiting from the authorities to make the change, through its commitment towards the community and urban environment, leads the change independently and pushes the community to get actively involved in decision-making processes.⁴⁰ Through a wide participation, the sense of ownership for a certain project

³⁸ Goltsman, S, Iacofano, D, (2007), *The Inclusive City: Innovative Solutions for Buildings, Neighborhoods, and Urban Spaces*, MIG Communications), obtained from Basha, R., “Qyteti dhe PNV-të”, in report summary “Inclusive City”, EC Ma Ndryshe, p. 26, January.

2014. http://www.ecmandryshe.org/repository/docs/Qyteti_Gjithperfshires.pdf

³⁹ <http://www.bmwguggenheimlab.org/100urbantrends/#!/new-york-city>, accessed on 10 December 2014 , at 14:00 hrs.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

and their city in general amongst the community will be increased.⁴¹ This type of commitment puts the citizen on the centre of urban changes.

VI. Persons with Special Needs and Urban Planning in Prizren

Education, Health and Employment

Written by Dea Pallaska O'Shaughnessy

Executive Summary

The number of persons with disabilities is rising, while access, in accordance with human rights, extended toward this community was crowned with the approval of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The rights to education, health and employment take up an important place within the CRPD, as well the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the implementation of which is guaranteed through the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo.⁴²

Some of the general principles of the CRPD are “respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one’s own choices, and independence of persons ... full and effective participation and inclusion in society,”⁴³ therefore the inclusive city should specifically promote these exact values, beside non-discrimination, gender equality, access, equal opportunities for all, etc..

The findings show that persons with disabilities actually participate very little in the life of the city, whereas they participate even less in the decision-making processes that pertain to the development of the city. The reason why persons with disabilities are excluded from the urban life are physical or architectonic, institutional, information or communication related and cultural barriers (approach). The main issues that preoccupy citizens with disabilities are blocking of pavements by vehicles, lack of public transport lines, lack of road maintenance, problems relating to movement of persons with disabilities, lack of public parks and recreational areas, which are also a matter of concern for all other surveyed citizens. This once again proves that citizens with disabilities share the same concerns with all the others and that they need to be comprehensively included in all the processes aimed at making a city better for everyone.

The improvement of the city and, consequently, of the lives of citizens is an unstoppable and progressive process, therefore the recommendations presented here should also be viewed as a result of actual findings, where, in the meantime other, possibly more specific recommendations may emerge from the citizens. Recommendations are divided into general recommendations that are related to the comprehensive inclusion of citizens with disabilities in all the city development processes, and specific

⁴¹The Inclusive City, Inclusive Design Criteria and Policies.

<http://www.inclusivecity.com/Content/10002/InclusiveCityDesignCriteriaandPolicies.html>, (accessed on 1 November 2013), taken from Basha, R., “Qyteti dhe PNV-të”, in the summary of reports “Inclusive City”, EC Ma Ndryshe, p. 27, January 2014, http://www.ecmandryshe.org/repository/docs/Qyteti_Gjithetheperfshires.pdf

⁴²Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo.(2008). *Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo*. Downloaded on 5 October 2014 from <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Kushtetuta.e.Republikes.se.Kosoves.pdf>

⁴³United Nations General Assembly. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. New York. Downloaded on 5 October 2014 from http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/crpd_albanian.pdf

recommendations that are related to the improvement of inclusive services in education, health and employment. Specific recommendations would be the following: to create a database for children with special needs; to draft an action plan for better access to education; to eliminate the barriers in accessing health services; to increase the disability awareness of health workers and other personnel; to create a database of persons with disabilities who are interested to work; to promote employment of persons with disabilities.

Introduction

“Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”⁴⁴

“An Inclusive City promotes growth with equity. It is a place where everyone, regardless of their economic means, gender, race, ethnicity or religion, is enabled and empowered to fully participate in the social, economic and political opportunities that cities have to offer. Participatory planning and decision-making are at the heart of the Inclusive City.”⁴⁵

The number of persons with disabilities is increasing, partially due to the increase of longevity and partially due to the wider spread of chronic diseases, while it is calculated that this community currently makes up about 15% of the world’s population.⁴⁶ Based on the forecasts for the population of Kosovo, by 2061, population aged over 65 will make up 23.6-40.6% of the overall population⁴⁷, which means that Kosovo cities, buildings and services, need to be planned with aforethought for the elderly and citizens with disabilities.

Disabilities differ, where only some of the most prominent of its forms are visible and consequently not all persons with disabilities are faced with the same obstacles. Beside this, the numerous cultural barriers and the stigmatization attitudes raise the need for open discussion of persons with disabilities about their access limitations.

There is no clear concept of urban planning and urban life in the Science on Disability, however what may be most frequently encountered is an implied mix of ideas as to what meaning urban planning may have for the comprehensive inclusion in the community, social cohesion, citizenship and opportunities for self-development.⁴⁸ Various authors underline different aspects of social inclusion, which the cities should implement. Prince puts an emphasis on *mobility* and according to him “Movement geographically across areas, programmatically across services, and developmentally across life stages and ages can offer, *under supportive contexts*, benefits of continuity, belonging and a sense of social

⁴⁴United Nations General Assembly. (2006). *Convention for Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. New York. Article 1. Downloaded on 5 October 2014 from http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/crpd_albanian.pdf

⁴⁵UN-Habitat. (2001). *Inclusive cities initiative: The way forward*. Nairobi: UN Habitat. Downloaded on 5 October 2014 from http://ww2.unhabitat.org/campaigns/governance/docs_pubs.asp#Inclusive%20Cities

⁴⁶ World Health Organization & The World Bank. (2011). *World Report on Disability*. Malta. Downloaded on 5 October 2014 from http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/en/

⁴⁷Kosovo Agency of Statistics. (2013). *Kosovo: Population Forecast 2011-2061*. Prishtina. Downloaded on 5 October 2014 from http://ask.rks-gov.net/publikimet/cat_view/8-popullsia

⁴⁸Prince, Michael J. (2008). *Inclusive City Life: Persons with Disabilities and the Politics of Difference*. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 28 (1). Accessed on 5 October 2014 from <http://dsq-sds.org/article/view/65/65>

integration” for persons with disabilities.⁴⁹ Whereas, Hall identifies six themes important to the social inclusion of a person: 1) being accepted and recognized as an individual beyond the disability; (2) having personal relationships with family, friends and acquaintances; (3) being involved in recreation, leisure and other social activities; (4) having appropriate living accommodation; (5) having employment and (6) having appropriate formal and informal support.⁵⁰

The entry into force of the Convention on Rights for Persons with Disabilities was the driving force that pushed a lot of governments into approving strategies, policies and laws that promote more inclusive lives for persons with disabilities. However, bringing this inclusion to life practically remains a challenge. Usually physical inclusion is easier than the social one. Martin and Cobigo, suggest that “A clear definition of inclusion and its measurement is needed for decision-makers and service providers to define the nature of their responsibilities, set actions, and assess their effectiveness in achieving inclusion.”⁵¹

Bearing all this in mind, it is clear that during the upcoming years it will be more than likely that careful attention will have to be paid to the developments in the field of urban planning, as well as to the attempts to respond to the needs of citizens with disabilities to live dignified, independent and qualitative lives. In the meanwhile, some of the examples to be used as models are:

Christchurch, New Zealand⁵² – Following the earthquake from 2011, the loss of 185 lives and huge material damage suffered, the earthquake recovery authority, in cooperation with local and central authorities reached a decision to rebuild Christchurch into a city of equal rights and access for persons with disabilities. Citizens with disabilities participated in identifying the fields that were in priority need for intervention, offered their expertise in planning accessible buildings, employment opportunities were also created for them in fields related to the rebuilding of the city; they helped in designing and implementing the most effective emergency responses for persons with disabilities. All this was made possible because there was belief in equal values for a better life, coordination between institutions of various levels and sectors and participation of citizens with disabilities throughout all project stages.

Mooresville, USA – In 2012, Mooresville Board of Commissioners reached a decision to turn this city into a “model city” to address the needs of persons with disabilities.⁵³ This decision was followed by the establishment of a Mayor’s Council for Individuals with Disabilities. Initially, regulations were approved and six main fields of focus were identified: infrastructure, public awareness, culture and recreation, development of work force, public education and health care. Research followed this to identify best practices and recommendations were drafted for future short and long-term actions. Among the first interventions were those which had no or little budget implications, to pave the way toward later interventions that required a more considerable budget.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Hall, Sarah A. (2009). The social inclusion of people with disabilities: A qualitative meta-analysis. *Journal of Ethnographic & Qualitative Research*, 3 (3), 162-173.

⁵¹ Martin L, Cobigo V. (2011). Definitions Matter in understanding social inclusion. *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities*.8(4). 276-282.

⁵² Accessed on 5 October 2014 from

<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/thecouncil/policiesreportsstrategies/policies/groups/community/equityandaccessforpeoplewithdisabilities.aspx#jumplink19>

⁵³ Accessed on 5 October 2014 from <http://ci.mooreville.nc.us/DocumentCenter/View/1015>

Current Situation

“No person shall be denied the right to education.”⁵⁴

“The purpose of pre-university education is the development of pupil’s personality, talent and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.”⁵⁵

“All the citizens and residents have the right to equal access in healthcare.”⁵⁶

“Implementation of this law shall be in full compliance with the human dignity, fundamental rights and freedoms set by the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, international covenants and legislation...”⁵⁷

“State administration bodies, employers of private and public sectors and also non-governmental organizations are obliged to employ people with disabilities with appropriate conditions.”⁵⁸

“Each employer is obliged to employ a person with disability, in every fifty (50) employees.”⁵⁹

“Each municipality shall hold periodically, at least twice a year, a public meeting at which any person or organization with an interest in the municipality may participate.”⁶⁰

“In addition to the public meetings noted above, Municipalities are obliged to inform the citizens of the Municipality of any important plans or programs of public interest...”⁶¹

Despite the legal infrastructure which promotes inclusive services and participation of citizens, the situation in the field leaves a lot of room for improvement. Nearly half (49.3%) of those surveyed stated that they have no knowledge or information whether the city of Prizren has urban plans; over 60% have stated that they have no information whether the citizens can participate in the development of various plans and regulations that are related to the city, whereas only 1.3 % have stated that they participated in public debates (Ec ma Ndryshe, 2014). In this same survey, persons with disabilities expressed that, according to them, the main problematic issues are: blocking of pavements by vehicles (66.70%), lack of urban transportation lines (33.40%), lack of road maintenance (33.30%), movement problems for persons with disabilities (33.30%), lack of public parks (16.70%) and recreational areas (16.70%).

Exact records are missing relating to the number of children with special needs included in the education system in Kosovo; however some reports suggest that this number is around 1.3-2%.⁶² Finally, there were statements made by education officers that, at Kosovo level and during the academic year 2014/2015, a total of 6.049 pupils with special needs were enrolled, of which 4.871 in regular classes

⁵⁴Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo.(2011). *Law No. 04/L-032 Law on Pre-University Education in the Republic of Kosovo*. Article 3(1). Accessed on 5 October 2014 from http://www.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/1_Ligji_per_arsimin_Parauniversitar.pdf

⁵⁵Ibid. Article 1(2)2.1.

⁵⁶Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo.(2006). *Law No.04/L-125 on Health*. Article 4(2). Accessed on 5 October 2014 from <http://msh-ks.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Ligji-per-shendetesi-2013.pdf>

⁵⁷Ibid. Article 4(1).

⁵⁸Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo.(2008). *Law No. 03/L-019 on Vocational Ability, Rehabilitation and Employment of People with Disabilities*. Article 12(1). Accessed on 5 October 2014 from http://www.assembly-kosova.org/common/docs/ligjet/2008_03-L-019_al.pdf

⁵⁹Ibid. Article 12(2).

⁶⁰Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo. (2008). *Law No. 03/L-040 on Local Self Government*. Article 68 (1). Accessed on 5 October 2014 from http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2008_03-L040_al.pdf

⁶¹Ibid. Article 68(3).

⁶²Save the Children. (2013). *Kosovo Child Rights Situation Analysis (CRSA)*.p.63. Prishtinëa.

and 528 in joint classes, as well as 652 at Resource Centers.⁶³ These numbers are low compared to the goals of the Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016.⁶⁴

There has been no research on the experiences of people with disabilities in the health system and there are no records on the number of people with disabilities that are employed nor about their experience.

A document important to the field is the National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Kosovo 2013-2023⁶⁵, which was drafted on the basic rights that are guaranteed through the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities⁶⁶ and has 5 strategic objectives, that are related to health, wellbeing and social security, inclusion in education, equal access to legal protection and the establishment of equal opportunities to access, information, communication, participation and the creation of a unified data system for persons with disabilities.

Findings

The findings show that citizens with disabilities are faced with various types of obstacles, which hinder them to fully and effectively participate in the society in the same manner as others, thus preventing them from conducting independent, dignified and self-satisfactory lives.

"I cannot even imagine what a local bus looks like, because I never had the opportunity to ride in one!"
(EC Ma Ndryshe, Focus group 2014)

Physical or architectonic obstacles – are aspects of buildings or spaces that represent obstacles for persons with disabilities. Usually these obstacles are the easiest to be identified since they prevent physical access, namely hinder free movement of persons with disabilities. Such identified obstacles are:

- blocking of pavements by vehicles, thus preventing free movement of citizens in general, and especially, that of citizens with disabilities (wheelchair users, blind persons, disabled walkways users);
- total lack of access ramps, or ramps that have an unsuitable slope for wheelchair users at schools, banks, sports halls, house of culture, and other public facilities;
- lack of tactile areas and marking with high color contrast to enable the movement of the blind or persons with impaired vision;
- total lack or occupation of parking areas reserved for people with disabilities near the Municipal Assembly, White House and other public facilities;
- total lack of elevators, or functional elevators at schools, Municipal Assembly building, hospital, etc.;

⁶³Free Europe. (2014). *Inclusion of children with special needs into the education system*. Accessed on 5 October 2014 nga <http://www.evropaelire.org/content/article/26564437.html>

⁶⁴Republic of Kosovo, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.(2011). Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016. Accessed on 5 October 2014 from <http://www.uni-pr.edu/getattachment/b0997082-4539-497d-9622-a706294c9307/Plani-strategjik-i-arsimit-ne-Kosove-2011-2016.aspx>

⁶⁵Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo.(2013). *National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Kosovo 2013-2023*. Accessed on 5 October 2014 from http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/STRATEGJIA_NACIONALE_PER_TE_DREJTAT_E_PERSONAVE_ME_AFTESI_TE..._Shq+Ser+Ang.pdf

⁶⁶United Nations General Assembly. (2006). *Convention for Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol*. New York. Accessed on 5 October 2014 from http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/crpd_albanian.pdf

- inadequate toilets (very narrow) for wheelchair users and walkways within schools and other public facilities;
- parking areas that are very narrow for wheelchair users;
- public urban and interurban transportation that is inaccessible to wheelchair users and other mobility aid users;
- lack of suitable areas for wheelchair users at the House of Culture;
- the width of stairs in public facilities that are unsuitable for users of disabled walkways, crutches or the white stick;
- counters and ATMs placed too high for short people or wheelchair users;
- poor lighting in certain quarters, especially for partially-sighted persons.

Institutional obstacles – are related to policies and practices that discriminate against persons with disabilities. These obstacles may be: lack of legislation, discriminatory legislation, non-implementation of the law, exclusion of the needs of the community of persons with disabilities from municipal development plans, budget planning that lack objectives which address the needs of citizens with disabilities, non-allocation of sufficient funds to support services for persons with disabilities, etc. The following institutional obstacles were identified by the focus groups:

- lack of implementation of the relevant legislation, especially during in the construction of new facilities (Law No. 04/L-110 on Construction and Administrative Instruction No. 33/2007 on Technical Requirements for the Construction of Facilities and Accessibility of Persons with Disabilities);
- lack of transportation for children with special needs from their homes to the school and back (Law No. 04/L-032 on Pre-University Education in the Republic of Kosovo);
- lack of professional and support staff for the education of children with special needs in regular schools;
- lack of a budget for offering certain services to persons with disabilities (transportation, health, municipal, etc.).

Obstacles in information or communication – Occur when persons with disabilities fail to easily comprehend the information. Depending on the disability, persons communicate using various means, such as the Braille alphabet, sign language, large print text, easy read format of text, etc. Some of these obstacles identified are:

- lack of information inside public transportation buses and stations written in Braille alphabet for the blind, in an easily readable format for persons with intellectual disabilities, large print for partially-sighted persons;
- lack of guide information in an accessible format at the health care center, hospital and elsewhere;
- lack of interpreters for sign language for the deaf at institutions that offer health and municipal services, etc.;
- lack of appropriate signs at certain places in hospitals and other public facilities.

Cultural obstacles (approach) – Are amongst the hardest to be recognized, addressed and usually take longer periods of time to be overcome. Cultural obstacles represent the norms and expectations that individuals have for persons with disabilities. For example, thinking that persons with disabilities are inferior, or the assumption that persons with speech impediments fail to comprehend. These individual feelings, thoughts and behaviors become especially problematic if these are the characteristics of

employees that work in providing services because they impact the quality of services that are offered to persons with disabilities. Examples of such obstacles are:

- occupation of parking areas reserved for persons with disabilities by others that are under the assumption that there are no persons with disabilities that drive vehicles;
- non-employment of persons with disabilities under the prejudice that they don't know how to work, or that they are not good workers;
- blocking of the entryway/entry ramp at the Municipal Assembly by municipal employees themselves;
- non-functioning of the elevator for persons with disabilities;
- improper behavior of certain public service employees toward persons with disabilities;
- harassment of persons with disabilities by other citizens.

Recommendations

General recommendations:

- **To adopt human rights based approach.** – According to this approach, the citizens are the carriers of rights, whereas authorities of local self-government are carriers of obligations to secure those rights. Human rights, including the right to education, health and employment are universal and inalienable rights, which means that local self-government must make sure that services it provides are accessible for all of its citizens regardless of differences;
- **To adopt a “twin-track” approach.** – This approach means that the municipal authorities should, at the same time, address issues that concern the community of persons with disabilities as well as ensure that actions that are undertaken for the purpose of serving the citizens in general (directly by the municipality, or when private companies are contracted using public funds), are also accessible for citizens with disabilities.
- **To increase civic participation in the making of the city.** – Civic participation is one of the core elements of inclusive cities; therefore the municipality should ensure that its strategy of communicating with the citizens should especially reach marginalized citizens. This means that the attempts of the municipality should be directed towards increasing the participation of citizens with disabilities throughout all the stages starting from informing them about their rights, organizing accessible public hearings (language, audio or visual presentation, time, place), execution of programs and services and all the way to the monitoring and assessment of the same.
- **To enable access to all usual systems.** – Citizens with disabilities are no different than other citizens - they also go to school, get married, have families, pay taxes, go shopping, vote, plan and dream. This means that they also share the same concerns as other citizens, therefore they should be a part of discussions relating to all issues that preoccupy all of the citizens and we need to ensure that services that are aimed at the general public do not exclude persons with disabilities.
- **To secure adequate funding for services related to persons with disabilities.** – Persons with disabilities may have need of specific, support, rehabilitation and training services that may improve their lives. Therefore, during the drafting of budget plans, the needs of this community should be taken under consideration, and adequate as well as sustainable budgeting/funding should be provided for public services so as to avoid financial obstacles for access, as well as to ensure the provision of quality services.
- **To approve the municipal strategy for disabled people.** – The National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Kosovo 2013-2023 is in place, and the municipality

should, in accordance with this Strategy and in cooperation with other stakeholders, draft and approve a municipal strategy, accompanied by a detailed action plan and appropriate budget. Citizens with disabilities should be at the center of this process, through direct participation, or through representative organizations.

- **To involve persons with disabilities in the development of the city.**– Persons with disabilities should be involved and should participate actively in the process of drafting municipal regulations, strategic and developmental plans of the municipality, as well as in monitoring their implementation, through participation at public hearings, committees and other working groups. Persons with disabilities have the right to control their own lives and should be consulted on issues that directly preoccupy them.
- **To increase human resource capacities.** – This may be achieved through education, training and effective recruitment, which means that the personnel employed in municipalities, including professionals from various fields, should be trained on disability and principles of human rights.
- **To increase public awareness and understanding on disability.** – To achieve an inclusive city and society, there should be mutual respect and understanding between all the citizens; therefore the municipality should be engaged in improving understanding for disability by all the other members of the society.
- **To improve access and the quality of records on disability, and to promote analysis and research of these records.** – To be able to conduct appropriate intervention in the field of disability at municipal level, the municipality should engage in improving the database of persons with disabilities, for the interventions that are undertaken in this field, and the progress that is taking place in the implementation of policies.

Specific recommendations on education:

- **To create a database for children with special needs in education, both for those included and excluded.** – The records for this database may be collected by education workers at pre-school institutions, schools and resource centers, centers for social work, health institutions and non-governmental organizations of persons with disabilities. Statistical records are essential to calculating the level of the exclusion of children with special needs from the education system, as well as to take measures for their inclusion in education.
- **To draft an action plan for increasing accessibility to education.** – Start with mapping accessibility to schools, beginning with the assessment of physical accessibility (ramps, toilets, classrooms, labs), access to information provided (spoken, written) and all the way to access to active participation in the teaching/learning process. Based on the findings and in cooperation with the community of persons with disabilities, experts of inclusive education and other stakeholders, to create an action plan for the improvement of access to education. Focus on increasing inclusion in regular schools.

Specific recommendations on health:

- **To eliminate the obstacles in access to health services.** – First of all, eliminate physical obstacles, by providing reserved parking spots for persons with disabilities near health facilities, ramps in accordance with standards, tactile areas, functional elevators, adequate visual and acoustic signs. Elimination of obstacles to information should also be tackled, by producing

information in an accessible format, such as simplified information, large print, Braille alphabet, interpreting sign language, video-information in sign language, audio recordings, etc.

- **To raise the awareness of health workers and other staff about disability.** – This means offering trainings and knowledge related to competency and raising awareness on disability and the responsibility they have to act in accordance with the Law on Health and non-discrimination. This action contributes to removing cultural barriers (of positions) toward disability that exist within the health system. To create an accessible health service, it is required that everyone, starting from the guards and janitors and all the way to nurses and doctors, reflect this type of mentality. Doctors and nurses may need additional trainings on understanding and addressing specific situations that may be related to certain disabilities.

Specific recommendations on employment:

- **To create a database of persons with disabilities interested to work**– Encourage persons with disabilities to register with the regional employment center, to create a database of persons with disabilities, their qualifications and skills. Furthermore, offer trainings that would improve their chances of getting employment.
- **To promote employment of persons with disabilities.** – The municipality can do this by itself being the employer of persons with disabilities, by mediating meetings between potential employers and persons with disabilities, by promoting success stories of persons with disabilities and their employers, by offering information relating to the adaptations that may be carried out at work places for the purpose of increasing the efficiency of persons with disabilities, etc.

VII. Youth and Urban Planning in Prizren

Early Childhood and Primary School Pupils

Written by Zana Sokoli

Executive Summary

What is the most empowering thing for the community where ordinary citizens create better places, transform their lives and lives of others close to them, thus resolving the public problems of the day? The answer is inclusive planning. Planning has also given a voice to children and youth that often marginalized and excluded. Too often, planners, citizens, and officials hold stereotyped opinions about young peoples' capacity to grasp the long-term consequences of actions and their perceived limitations of experience and expertise.⁶⁷

Although the rights of children for participation and inclusion are guaranteed as well being an obligation based on numerous international conventions, their voice remains unheard. The largest battle that this group faces is invisibility. The importance of children cannot be distinguished as long as someone does not point out their values, as long as their presence in the society is not valued and as long as someone doesn't tell them that they are valuable and that they may be contributors to the public life of the place they live in. Urban planning is, first of all, the vision of our future cities and our future is exactly those children who, 20 years later, will be the main carriers of development in the country. Youth is the biggest potential of Kosovo; it is a key factor and an extraordinary catalyst to direct its sustainable development into an economy of knowledge.

Three debates took place within the project "Inclusive City – participatory planning for sustainable urban development in Prizren", and they were conducted with 7 different community groups, where the focus of the youth community centered on early childhood and elementary schools.

The conclusions of these debates are numerous worries and concerns that children have about the environment and neighborhoods where they live, schools they attend, places where they play and relax as well as the manner and difficulties of movement within the city. The lack of their knowledge about the existence of regulatory plans in the city of Prizren is quite concerning. However, beside the concerns, the debates also resulted in numerous recommendations to address the children's needs and requests, and which have been summarized in this Report.

This report, above all, places an emphasis on the immediate need for inclusion of the young in planning. As George Wood, an educator, states, it is vital that the youth are included in the early stages of visioning of the planning process. According to him, the ideal planning process is achieved when:

- a) Young people have multiple opportunities and ways of expressing the issues that concern them;
- b) They experience a sense of satisfaction about their participation in the process;
- c) They know they have had real influence over issues that are critical to improving the quality of life in their communities;
- d) They become genuine partners of planning 'experts'.

⁶⁷ Youth Engagement in Planning, Ramona Mullahey - Tools and Techniques, p.6.

When these goals have been met, the young develop the feeling of belonging, develop their democratic souls as active citizens, which shall consequently impact their social responsibility for the social good, the right over the city.⁶⁸

Introduction

'Cities possess the ability to provide something for everyone, only because, and only when they are created by everyone' - Jane Jacobs

According to Michael Rodriguez, the main reason why planners usually encounter failed public participation stands in the fact that citizens do not learn about planning and its basic rules in schools. According to him, the ability to read a geographic map in itself is not sufficient. The vocabulary of design which includes expressions like level, rhythm, walk, or the social vocabulary which includes mobility, sense of place, community values, or equality, are essential in the planning process. These are not concepts that are learned and which are intuitively comprehended; our schools are obligated to teach these to us.⁶⁹

The idea of inclusiveness has been promoted and encouraged throughout the world for the past half-century. Pioneers of this movement, such as Kevin Lynch, Jane Jacobs, Jan Gehl and others, as well as their contribution in this regard, today are an integral part of programs and platforms of various world organizations such as UNESCO, UN-HABITAT etc.; which are attempting to create visions of future cities where the voice of each individual will be heard. The initiative "Cities for Children – towards a city that we need" by UN-HABITAT and World Vision International is exactly such an initiative. What is being attempted through this interactive platform is organizing Children's Assemblies from various countries, where they, through methods that are easy for them, will present their ideas on equitable cities. To present their views on the city they dream of, the children shall: a) **Paint**, 'My dream city, b) **Debate**, draft a Children's Charter on their right to be heard in the city and c) **Build a Child friendly space/neighborhood**, using Lego blocks. These assemblies, which aims to become an annual event, attempt to answer the following questions:

- a) How can children give shape to future cities, in the sense of achieving urban sustainability?
- b) What are the ways that would result in their voice being heard and for them to be included in the planning process, so that we may come to the point of more equitable cities?, and
- c) What are the key messages that the children carry through these debates?⁷⁰

UNESCO, on the other hand, promotes the guideline "Growing up in Cities", inspired by Kevin Lynch's book of the same title. This organization thinks that today's cities are failing to meet the needs that children and their families have. This guideline attempts to answers questions such as:

- a) How does the urbanization process impact the lives of young people?
- b) To them, what makes an urban neighborhood enjoyable to grow in?
- c) Can today's cities be positive places for young people – places that support and nurture their constructive development, as future contributors of the civil society?

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Let's Teach Children Planning, <http://www.planetizen.com/node/40827> (accessed on 08 October 2014)

⁷⁰ <http://worldurbanforum7.org/Media/Default/PDF/Children's%20Assembly-eng-1.pdf> (accessed on 14 October 2014)

This project is a global initiative that attempts to recruit the energies, ideas, hopes that the young have to assess the situation itself, to define their priorities, and, most important of all, to make a change! It also promotes the implementation of the principles of UN Habitat Agenda, Agenda 21, and Convention on the Rights of Children.⁷¹ Other initiatives that are worth mentioning are ‘Box City and Kids City’, ‘New York Academy of Urban Planning’, ‘The Garden Campaign – Urbana Youth etc.’⁷² It is Save the Children organization in Kosovo which, through campaigns such as “Inclusion is a Right”, a call to educate children with special needs, or “Children’s Participation”, is attempting to increase the awareness of the Kosovar society about the role of children in the future of our cities.

Current Situation

It is Article 4 of Law No. 04/L-174 on Spatial Planning in Kosovo that determines principles such as promotion of common interests of citizens of Kosovo, promotion of democratic process of public participation and cross-sector inclusion, or providing public access to all spatial planning documents.⁷³ Further, it is Article 11 of the above Law which states that it is the responsibility of municipal authorities responsible for spatial planning and management to also encourage and ensure public participation in the process of drafting and implementation of spatial planning documents. It also foresees public notification and review of the plans prior to them being finalized.⁷⁴ On the other hand, it is Law no. 03/L-040 on Local Self Government which, through its Article 45 determines that meetings of the Municipal Assembly and all its committees are open to the public to present opinions. Members of the public are permitted to participate at meetings.⁷⁵ However, based on the analyses and debates held within the project “Inclusive city” of EC Ma Ndryshe organization, the situation in Prizren results to be quite concerning. Half of the citizens are not aware that there are urban plans, 60% of them do not know that they may participate in public debates, whereas research shows that only 14% of them have ever received an invitation to a public debate and that only 12.6% of them stated to have participated in any of them.⁷⁶

The group of young people that are also the focus of this Report, specifically primary school pupils in Prizren, stated during the debates we had with them that they have no knowledge on what a regulatory plan looks like, nor what it contains. They were not even aware about the existence of these plans and the rights that they have to be included in the drafting of the same. The executive branch continues to be the party that determines the needs of Prizren’s youth, which further proves a total disregard for this vulnerable group of the community. Until now, the manner how this marginalized group of the society expressed their concerns in relation to the city of Prizren was by partaking in analyses and researches conducted mainly by non-governmental organizations. The study of EC Ma Ndryshe relating to the perceptions of the citizens of Prizren on urban issues shows that there is a large number of issues that concern the youth of Prizren. Of special emphasis is the lack of recreational and cultural areas, blocking of sidewalks by vehicles, lack of green areas in the city, illegal constructions, kindergartens, lack of public parks, etc.⁷⁷ Currently, the biggest challenge for the youth is to find out appropriate methods so that

⁷¹<http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/Dr-Karen-Malone-Child-friendly-cities.pdf>
(accessed on 15 October 2014)

⁷² Youth in Action: The Incorporation of Urban Youth in Planning-Related Practices, May, 2011.

⁷³ Law no. 04/L-174, ON SPATIAL PLANNING, p.5.

⁷⁴ Ibid. p.13.

⁷⁵ LAW NO. 03/L-040 ON LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT, p.15.

⁷⁶ EC Ma Ndryshe, Urban Planning for Citizens 2 p.25.

⁷⁷ Study on the perception of citizens of Prizren on urban issues, June 2014 , p.19.

their inclusion becomes more efficient. Despite the fact that non-participation in the decision-making process is a product that is directly related to the mindset of the society and current politics in Prizren, the municipality should not be seen as the only party responsible. Inclusion of planning in curriculums, extracurricular activities, various workshops in the cooperation chain between Municipality-School-NGO, raising of problems by students' councils, as well as their representation in a louder voice by the Local Youth Action Council are, at the same time, the challenges as well as possible alternatives that, in the case of functioning in parallel, would play an essential role in advocating the rights that the children have. As long as inclusion is the aim, municipal officials, planners and urban planners should not be afraid to allow ideas and the creativity of young people challenge their own creativity. Quite the opposite in fact, planning is an inclusion and the exclusion of any of the groups of the community from the process is a violation of their fundamental rights that for the city where they live.

Findings

The practice of non-inclusion of citizens in the process of urban planning produces plans that do not reflect the situation on the ground, do not meet the needs of the citizens and nearly always fall short of the local government implementing capacity. EC Ma Ndryshe, through its activities in the city of Prizren, engages in redefining the relation between the citizen and the city. EC Ma Ndryshe thinks that the city belongs to all of us, we are jointly responsible for it and its functioning and building should be done on the principles of democracy. Among community groups we work with, a special place was also given to the young people; this time specifically to early childhood groups and primary school pupils. Since the children, based on their age and current level of education that they have, are not able to understand the planning process in all of its complexity, the methodology of working with them was based on a facilitating plan, that contained information and helpful questions, so that they may be focused on what was discussed about.

EC Ma Ndryshe, within its project "Inclusive City..." included the young in its research through a survey and in three focus groups that were implemented during different times of 2014. In the study conducted by EC Ma Ndryshe relating to the perception of the citizens of Prizren on urban issues, 48.4% of young people state that their main concern is the lack of recreational areas, 41.8% raised their concerns about vehicles blocking sidewalks, whereas 35.2% are concerned about the lack of cultural areas.⁷⁸

Within the debates held with focus groups, the biggest concern resulted being the lack of knowledge about the existence of regulatory plans in the city of Prizren. The key problems and needs raised by this group of young people are presented below:

Road/school Infrastructure and Public Safety

- The construction of high rise buildings near the roads represents a threat in cases where the pavements are narrowed thus depriving students of their ability to move freely on their way to school.
- The limitation of free movement of students of all schools by vehicles that are blocking sidewalks and other spaces close to and inside the schools.
- Lack of traffic lights (i.e. at the Green Market and 'Sezai Surroi' sports center), or their inadequate operation and malfunction (at MiniMax center).
- High fees for public transportation which are unaffordable for the young people, inability of riding bicycles due to lack of tracks and parking areas at key points of the city.

⁷⁸ Perceptions of Citizens on Urban Issues in Prizren 1, NGO EC Ma Ndryshe p.19.

- Lack of public lighting and the presence of stray dogs is a big concern, especially for students attending lectures on the third shift.
- Low level of safety within school premises, lack of emergency exit signs, non-usage of school uniforms, lack of emergency stairways and entry ramps for persons with special needs.
- Lack of education infrastructure (Chemistry, Biology, English language, IT labs and geography maps) is an issue that nearly every school in Prizren is faced with.
- Presence of green areas at schools, but the lack of adequate maintenance makes it impossible for students to utilize the yard during the recesses.
- Damaged school infrastructure with a special emphasis on school toilets.
- Lack of cooperation between LYAC with the schools, namely with representatives of primary and secondary schools in Prizren.

Environment

- Children consider the city of Prizren to be a city which is 50% unclean, and this specifically due to the carelessness of its citizens. This also causes the pollution of the river, parks and other public areas of the city. Beyond the carelessness, it is the lack of waste containers nearly throughout every neighborhood that forces children to throw waste in inadequate places.
- New multi-apartment buildings constructed without any criteria result in lack of green and recreational areas. The closeness between them also prevents sun rays from penetrating the apartments of the citizens, which results in children having a Vitamin D deficiency.
- Quarters like “Rexhep Kabashi”, “Ortakoll”, “Rambuže” or roads “Ismet Jashari Kumanova”, “Nexhat Matranci” etc, are characterized by their lack of adequate green and recreational areas and public parks. Acoustic pollution, dust and dirt threaten the lives of children that spend their free times at these quarters. Quarter “Arbana” has been forgotten by the municipality, unpaved road, lacks a sewage system and has very poor waste management.
- Existing parks of the city are not maintained, they lack lighting and the games area cannot be used by the children since they are damaged.
- The flea-market day in Prizren disrupts the normal functioning of the city every week, due to a lack of a special area where the vendors would be able to accommodate themselves. The chaos in traffic, unpleasant smells, blocking of sidewalks and the waste are only some of the details which, beside the environment, also damage the image of the city.

Health

- The lack of doctors of various health fields has been recorded at the participating schools “Emin Duraku”, “Lidhja e Prizrenit” and “Lekë Dukagjini”. Pupils have requested the presence of a dentist in schools, as well as the required presence of a psychologist who would listen to their concerns when these cannot be addressed by the teaching staff. Doctors in schools would also prevent pupils from missing classes, since they wouldn't seek treatment outside of school facilities.

Culture and Sports

- The fundamental request of young people from Prizren is the preservation of cultural heritage and increasing the awareness of the citizens for its values. They have expressed continuous concerns about the degradation that is being done to the city and the inadequate protection that is being offered to valuable monuments.
- Technical infrastructure and school equipment are lacking (musical instruments, musical cabinets, ballet rooms, computer, etc. are all missing).

- 'DokuKino' cinema has a very high admission fee, which is unaffordable for the pocket of children.
- The young are, beyond all, asking for a cycling track, to increase the current number of users and to protect them from possible traffic accidents.
- They are requesting the construction of an Olympic-sized pool, something which the city of Prizren actually lacks.
- Sport fields are missing lighting which makes it impossible to use them at night time. The sports inventory is also missing.

Recommendations

Always based on the findings of this Report, which are the result of an intensive, one year cooperation with children and other representatives of the society and institutions, bellow are concrete recommendations that will serve as guidelines for the local government so that during drafting and implementation of urban plans it could draw from this youth component.

- From the practices of other cities, urban planning resulted in success when the fresh voice of children and other marginalized groups was heard. The children need to know their right to participate in the planning process. Since they are of a young age, the municipality should offer them alternative means of cooperating with them, so that the results would be fruitful and consultation with them not only a formality. The visioning of cities would be able to be take place at the schools of the city. Workshops, competitions, drawings and other writings by the students could bring to light the next vision of the city of Prizren.
- Inclusion of urban planning in school curriculums. The complexity of this process should begin to be digested from childhood through forms and methods that are comprehensible to children. It is suggested that practices and guidelines that already are successful and made by various world-renowned organizations mentioned in this report are followed.
- The preservation of Prizren's cultural heritage. The municipality should pay attention to new construction, to prevent further degradation of the city and to avoid the chaos in urban traffic, a disease that is affecting nearly all cities in Kosovo. A call is also issued to the schools that when they organize excursions they need to bear in mind the drafting of an adequate agenda for visiting cultural heritage buildings and values of a city. This would have an effect on children of not only getting acquainted with the country and the wealth that it possesses, but also would make them more responsible toward it, by increasing the feeling of belonging.
- The establishment of local communities within neighborhoods is more than necessary and all this would facilitate the process of presenting the problems or needs that a neighborhood has, in this case the community of young people to the representative of the local community or neighborhood.
- Making the city greener, especially green-designated areas within schools, neighborhoods and the improvement of conditions within existing parks of the city. Public spaces are present within the city, however, their use is being questioned. Debates with residents and children of various quarters to look into possibilities of establishing recreational spaces. Architects, artists and other renowned professionals of this field are obliged to increase the awareness of the citizens on how a public area, if left unattended, may be re-functionalized.
- Maintenance of Lumbardh and other public spaces in the city. The cleanup of the river that takes place once a year is considered to be insufficient. An increase of citizens' awareness on protecting the environment is also required, besides equipping the city with waste containers.

- Towing of vehicles or fining all vehicles that park on sidewalks located near schools or any other areas in the city.
- The immediate need for a cyclist's lane. An increase in the level of movement utilizing this ecological transportation device would positively impact the health of citizens and would discourage the usage of motorized vehicles. Of course, all of this results in further protection of the environment.
- To establish new urban transportation rules, bearing in mind the ticket prices for student/pupils and the issuing of monthly or semester-long tickets for them.
- To offer affordable prices for pupils and student at the city's cinema and other cultural activities.
- An accessible city and one that is in the service of all, meaning offering adequate conditions for persons with special needs, especially improving their access to public facilities, specifically in schools.
- An immediate resolution of the stray dogs' problem. Third shift students are under constant threat by stray dogs.
- Every primary school in Prizren must have its own general practitioner, dentist and psychologist.
- Activation of students' councils in schools, as the best way of emphasizing the problems of the school and articulating the same to municipal bodies. The adequate functioning of these councils is an incentive toward having the voice of the students heard and articulated and finally be brought to the attention of not only the respective municipal entities, but also the senior management of the Municipality.
- Cooperation between students and Regional Police of Prizren in reporting cases when students consume and are in possession of tobacco and narcotic substances. Better management of areas surrounding schools is also recommended, together with the removal of illegal street vendor stands that trade cigarettes and the closing of facilities near schools that offer video-games and which cause students to miss classes.
- Equipping schools with the appropriate infrastructure for the normal functioning of the learning process (Chemistry, Biology, English, IT labs, musical instruments, ballet area, sports hall) etc.
- Cooperation of technical school with other schools, community and the municipality for the production of waste containers, parking lots for bicycles, etc. at half the price. This activity would help both the school and the community, while the community would spend less on the same investments. Also the students would feel proud about their contribution for the benefit of the city.
- The safety of students in schools should be supported by the Kosovo Police, which should provide the public safety that the students need. The student should, in no form or manner, be forced into paying for their own safety.
- Equipping all sports field in the city with lighting and sports inventory. Also, the construction of an Olympic-sized pool.
- Improvement of the functioning of all damaged traffic lights in the city as well as the placement of new traffic lights especially at points that are most frequented by students on their home-school trips (by the Green Market and 'Sezai Surroi' sports center, at MiniMax centre).
- Appointment of a new location where street vendors would accommodate themselves, so that they may be relocated from the road during the flea-market day. Adequate equipment and infrastructure for normal functioning of this market.

VIII. Poor Neighborhoods/Informal Settlements and Urban Planning in Prizren

Tusuz neighborhood, Prizren

Written by Nol Binakaj

Executive Summary

Communities living in informal settlements are marginalized when it comes to participating in decision-making. They are not sufficiently included in local level developmental policies decisions that impact their community, or are only informed about these decisions. This approach is seen as only an attempt to meet the legal requirements, without creating opportunities for the community, through inclusion mechanisms, to at least negotiate or come to a compromise on development policies which, at the end of the day, are drafted for the community itself.

For an adequate process of urban regulation to take place, there is no doubt that the community should be a part of the process from the very beginning. Active participation of the community means any process in which, through inclusion and receiving information from them, a point of decision-making is reached, or a resolution of the problem is found. This process is qualified at the same time as information, education, consultation, participation and cooperation which results in the inclusion of the interests of special groups, values that they cherish and their suggestions for the improvement of basic conditions in regulatory policies.

Within the project “Inclusive City – Participatory planning for the sustainable development of Prizren”, debates took place with various stakeholders at “Tusuz” neighborhood, where themes and problems were addressed, as well as urban planning opportunities/priorities were identified. The problems are mainly related to the informality of the settlements, lack of drinking water, lack of a waste-water network, problems related to lacking things starting from basic and all the way to those that are related to increasing the welfare of the citizens, such as services relating to health, care, education, lack of recreational spaces, lack of public lighting and the general safety of the residents.

The recommended path to improve the existing situation in the “Tusuz” neighborhood is based on improvement and development of infrastructure and improvement of existing services. The advantages of this approach are that they do not disturb the social and economic lives of the community. The active participation of the community in the process of improving the settlement is highly valued and is more than just required, whereas the municipality should focus on legalizing buildings that were illegally constructed, improvement of environmental, social and economic conditions through improving the infrastructure, increasing public areas, establishment of access to basic public services such as schools, public transportation, adequate waste management, water supply, phones, Internet.

Introduction

It is without doubt that, for an adequate process of urban regulation to take place, the community needs to be a part of the process from the very beginning. Active participation of the community in every process in which, through the inclusion and receiving of information from them, a point of decision-making or resolution of the problem is reached. This process, at the same time, qualifies as information, education, consultation, participation and cooperation resulting in the inclusion of the

interests of special groups, values that they cherish and their suggestions for improving the elementary conditions in regulatory policies.⁷⁹

The participation of the community, besides being a legal requirement, has an impact of increasing the quality of the decisions, increasing the responsibility of both local authorities as well as that the community itself in the implementation of such decisions, and also has an impact of achieving transparent and good governance. The participation of the community contributes in good and rational decisions, because the decision-makers are informed about the problems, facts, values and views of the public, especially when we are dealing with addressing informal settlements. The decisions or plans drafted in such a way are realistic and implementable, as well as measurable. As a result of the participation of the public, each decision is legitimate and supported and the possibility of it being rejected by the public during the implementation stage is very low.

Some of the best cases and models are mentioned bellow; ones that resulted in concrete resolutions for various stakeholders. These models were applied in western and regional countries and, bearing in mind the Kosovar context, are easily implementable.

Albania– Participatory Local Planning

A joint project of the UN “Empowering Vulnerable Local Communities in Albania” aims to promote human security among the RAE community. The project is implemented by the local authorities of Durrës, Elbasan, Fier and Tirana regions in cooperation with the joint program of the UN.⁸⁰

Participatory planning comprises one of the three components of the project. As part of the process of participatory planning, an advisory group was established comprised of RAE community members; the group also had a balanced gender representation. It was the duty of the group to identify and prioritize local needs. Communication between the group and the local level was done using an elderly person. The problems and priorities were included in the local development plan and the implementation of the same was conducted in cooperation with the UN program. Projects that stemmed from these priorities are roads, waste-water systems and social infrastructure. This approach actually is being extended to other regions such as Berat, Korça and Vlora and is funded by the European Union project “Social Inclusion of the RAE Community in Albania”.

Montenegro – Drafting of local action plans for the integration of RAE community

The drafting of local action plans for the RAE community was initiated by NGO Pocetak in Niksic in 2007, by collecting data through the help of an expert, and was continued in Herceg Novi and Tivat by NGO Mladi Romi in cooperation with the local level. The plan in Niksic was financially supported by the USA Embassy in Podgorica and the plans for Tivat and Herceg Novi were supported by the Foundation Open Society Institute.

Municipalities of Berane, Bijelo Polje and Ulqin in 2012 established work groups comprised of members of the RAE community, local administration staff, education, health, social welfare and urban planning.

⁷⁹ Manual for the Inclusion of the community in the Process of Regulating Informal Settlements, MESP, 2013. Tsenkova, S., 2008. In Search for Sustainable Solutions for Informal Settlements in the ECE Region: Challenges and Policy Responses. Economic Commission for Europe, *Committee on Housing and Land Management*, Geneva, 22-23 September 2008.

⁸⁰ Guide for the Inclusion of the community in the Process of Regulating Informal Settlements, MESP, 2013.

The work group was tasked with drafting local action plans based on the experiences of Tivat, Herceg Novi and Niksic municipalities.

Austria – Vienna “Women-Work-City”

Within the context of urban expansion, a pilot project was implemented in Vienna’s suburbs, where alongside work with women and children, analysis of their needs for facilitating the undertaking of their daily activities, the elements of urban planning and designing were drafted by women experts of the field.

The main objective of this approach was in making the manifold facets of a women’s everyday life an essential criterion of design and planning. Furthermore, commissioning only women architects for this project was also motivated by the expectation that their highly complex everyday life - which is totally different from a man's - will be positively reflected in their designs.

This approach resulted in adequate planning, which enabled a facilitation of the daily activities of women, starting with a shortening of the road to the bus station, integration of complementary functions such as kindergarten and family health centers nearby, or even at their own places of residence in parks that are easily accessible and have no barriers. Also, the safety situation in the neighborhood has improved by investing in public lighting and along other parts of the settlement that previously were seen as unneeded.⁸¹

Current Situation

Informal settlements are widespread in Kosovo municipalities. There are different types of informal settlements; however they are mainly characterized by informal and insecure possession of property, inadequate access to basic services, lack of physical and social infrastructure. Based on the research conducted on Spatial and Urban Plans approved until now, as well as results of regional workshops for identifying Informal Settlements with Kosovo Municipalities, a total of 174 informal settlements have been identified.⁸²

Communities that live in informal settlements are marginalized when it comes to participating in decision-making. They are insufficiently included in the decisions of the local level relating to developmental policies that impact their community, or are only informed about the decisions. This approach is seen as only an attempt to meet the legal requirements, without creating opportunities for the community, through inclusion mechanism, to at least negotiate or come to a compromise on development policies which, at the end of the day, are drafted for the community itself. Also, until now, the lack of a unified strategy and a guide for the inclusion of the community in the planning process may be noticed.

Within the activities of regulating and developing existing informal settlements, one of the key challenges is the completion of legislation through drafting of laws and administrative instructions so that the land market may be directed as well as contribution is provided to the compact development of settlements. The approval of Law for the Legalization of Illegally Constructed Buildings no. 04/L-188, together with administrative instructions, is qualified as one of the key laws through which the re-

⁸¹Frauen-Werk-Stadt - A Housing Project by and for women in Vienna Austria, <http://www.unesco.org>

⁸²Strategy and Action Plan for the Prevention and Regulation of Informal Settlements in Kosovo, MESP 2010.

assessment and categorization of these zones and existing structures is made possible, together with the creation of opportunities for development through adequate planning, always bearing in mind the demands of the communities. One of the key challenges at the municipal level is the implementation of the Law on Spatial Planning No. 04/L-174, namely harmonization of drafted plans with the requirements of the new Law, revisions of Municipal Development Plans and creation of area maps, through which informal areas would be registered as priority areas to be addressed.

An immediate need is the compiling of profiles and establishment of a database of informal settlements by the municipality so that a determination may be made relating to settlements that should be addressed with priority. Consequently, these records will present the missing physical and social infrastructure in informal settlements, as the basis for drafting municipal programs and budget forecasts to improve these conditions.

Findings

Within the project “Inclusive City – Participatory planning for sustainable urban development in Prizren” debates were held with various stakeholders from “Tusuz” neighborhood, where themes, problems and urban planning opportunities were addressed. In total, 7 discussions with residents about different topics were organized, which is where the problems and demands that should be taken under consideration during the planning stage stemmed from, and which, at the same time, also present a reflection of problems of all Prizren residents. The following issues were raised in discussions with citizens:

Lack of drinking water in the neighborhood

The most significant problem, most spoken about and still unresolved remains drinking water for the residents of this neighborhood, namely its outskirts located above “Xhevat Berisha” Street, where, some of the houses have no water all, specifically parts of “UÇK” neighborhood. Even in those houses that are supplied with water, the water is not suitable for drinking, washing, etc. and this is clearly evident based on how dirty it looks. As a consequence, the majority of residents have dug their own wells at their houses despite the fact that it has been proven that this water is not suitable to drink. Regardless of the fact that a city water supply line was taken from “Qeshmja e Pashës” and the fact that there is an “abundance” of water, the lack of drinking water still remains a priority.

Lack of a waste-water network

The lack of a waste-water network along some of the secondary roads in the neighborhood has also been stressed as being problematic, so much so that the pollution of the environment and the stench are unbearable.

Narrow and blocked sidewalks

An occasional request of the residents directed to the municipal inspectorate and police was the blocking of sidewalks, where the residents have usurped public property by extending parts of their houses and yards all the way to the road and by leaving very little space for pedestrians to use, coupled with the haphazard parking and endangering of residents through reckless driving, the lack of sidewalks is putting mostly the young and the elderly of this neighborhood at risk.

Lack of public lighting

The main streets of this neighborhood lack public lighting, or there is lighting for a very short period of time. The residents that are most at risk due to lack of lighting are the elderly that attend the neighborhood mosque, as well as students that travel to school and back.

Road maintenance

The road cleaning company that is charged with clearing the roads does not cover the entire neighborhood as part of UÇK neighborhood is left aside; road cleaning is done from the city hospital and all the way to “Xhevat Berisha” school.

Urban transportation

Same as the other problems raised above relating to UÇK neighborhood, there is a similar situation with urban transportation where the line goes all the way to the school, and from here to the mentioned neighborhood - a distance of around two kilometers through to its end, where cleaning of the road is not done.

Local Office

Was constructed a few years ago in the neighborhood but has not yet opened its doors to the citizens. Day by day it is being destroyed by rural tradesmen who use that area to conduct their daily business (a statement expressed by everyone at the debates about the villagers who tie their cattle around the facility until such time they finalize their trade).

Neighborhood health clinic

It operates a total of five days a week with a doctor and technicians; whereas during the weekend it is not operational (a demand during the meetings held in the neighborhoods and in focus groups was that it also operates during the weekend).

House of culture

During the debate, the residents expressed their need for the construction of a House of Culture in their neighborhood. While talking about the area where this facility would be placed (existing space in the neighborhood outskirts), they indicated that it would aid them immensely in the performance of their cultural activities, various meetings, etc. Also the construction of a connecting bridge which would connect “Tusuz” and “Bajram Curri” neighborhoods is seen as more than necessary as the heavy traffic which occurs as a consequence of narrowing the streets in this neighborhood would be improved.

Those present requested assurances from the representative of the Municipality (respective Directorate, DUSP) as well as the beginning of engagements for drafting an Urban Regulatory Plan for this neighborhood, since any construction and repair work in this part of the city pushes it in the opposite direction, where such investments result in various investment problems and inadequately planned and legally groundless projects.

Recommendations from meetings with the residents:

- The municipality should, as soon as possible, resolve the problem of drinking water for this neighborhood;
- To interject in the competencies of Hidroregjini Jugor (Hydro region South) so that drinking water may be returned to the neighborhood;
- To cover the entire neighborhood with uninterrupted public lighting;
- Connection to the waste-water network;

- To make the Local Office operational;
- Urban transportation, as well as road maintenance should cover the whole neighborhood;
- Construction of the Centre for Culture;
- The health clinic of the neighborhood should also serve the citizens during the weekends;
- Construction of an additional road, or construction of a bridge that would connect “Tusus” neighborhood with “Bajram Curri” neighborhood;
- To begin drafting a detailed Regulatory Plan for the neighborhood.

Recommendations

Starting with the fact that each resident should have “their right to the city”, which means the right to have shelter, access to infrastructure, services and opportunities to actively contribute in spatial and urban planning, it stems that it is an inalienable right of communities of informal settlements to be included in the process of regulating the same. In this regard, laws, programs, policies and practices should be harmonized and discussed publicly, to draft guides so as to achieve a satisfactory level of participation of the residents in spatial and urban planning, namely to ensure the legitimacy of urban management policies.

The recommended approach to improve the existing situation in “Tusuz” neighborhood should be based on improvement and development of infrastructure and improvement of existing services. The advantages of this approach are that they do not disturb the social and economic lives of the community. The active participation of the community in the process of improving the settlement is highly valued and is more than just required, whereas the municipality should focus on drafting a Detailed Regulatory Plan, in accordance with it to legalize buildings that were constructed illegally, to improve environmental, social and economic conditions through improving the infrastructure, establishment of public areas, to offer basic public services such as schools, public transportation, waste management, water supply, phones etc.

Regulating through improving and developing the current situation based on the requests of the residents

Regulation of informal settlements through improvement and development of the neighborhood is characterized by an inclusive approach. This approach ensures that everyone from the community has been heard and that their needs were taken under consideration, while the municipal and central level should observe and analyze the impact on a wider area and monitor the strategic complications that may arise on the way. The main advantage of this approach is that should any inconsistencies or discrepancies arise at the political level and financial allocations, the problems are identified earlier and the same are tackled at the very beginning. This fact alone promotes a more strategic approach to find solutions for the complex environment of urban informality.

Beside the Regulatory Plan, urban practices in improving informal settlements have identified a process comprised of four steps that need to be taken in finding a solution:

- The process should start off with an inclusive workshop so that a clear vision of this area may be determined.
- The second step includes the involvement of relevant municipal departments to promote full transparency of the process and reporting of the results.

- Thirdly, a forum needs to be established for the continual inclusion of the community through all the stages, so that the ownership of the process is secured by the beneficiaries, meaning residents of the neighborhood.
- The fourth step is accountability of the professional team and the community within the project. This emphasizes the importance of information exchange and support for one-another to face the change.

The more complete this integrated approach is, the more the development of social and physical infrastructure shall be incorporated, as one of the key conditions of improving the situation of the neighborhood. This will also permit a situation to occur where financial implications for the improvement of the infrastructure may be secured through cooperation between the community and municipality, bearing in mind the fact that this integrated approach, except for building a relation between the community and municipality, also makes communication possible and easier.

The small budgets of Kosovo municipalities are incapable of adequately responding to various financial needs for regulating and improving the living conditions, especially for informal settlements, the regulation of which demands greater funds. The municipalities need to find alternative forms of funding through:

- Encouraging public-private partnerships;
- Creating opportunities for the participation of the community to co-finance the basic infrastructure;
- Using the work force from the community of informal settlements for the implementation of infrastructure projects as well as regulating the houses of informal settlements;
- Encouraging micro-financial institutions to offer ways to generate funds for offering loans;
- Researching partnerships with international financial institutions to implement new mechanisms for making the improvement of informal settlements possible;
- Mobilizing financial sources from the central and local levels of the government to fund the regulation of informal settlements.

Regulation through Legalization

Legalization of illegally constructed buildings should begin immediately, since the approval of the Law has already taken place. Legalization is related to providing a legal mandate to the residents of informal settlements, and this would bring the formally accumulated wealth to the formal market. This concept is strengthened further with the possibility of increasing public income through the collection of property tax.⁸³

The importance of securing the owners is undeniable due to the benefits that it offers for private individuals, as well as it helps and supports the development of the formal property market, thus also contributing to the city as a whole.⁸⁴ In the aspect of planning, a reassessment and categorization of existing structures within them would be made possible through legalization, and this would create

⁸³Tsenkova, S., 2008. In Search for Sustainable Solutions for Informal Settlements in the ECE Region: Challenges and Policy Responses. Economic Commission for Europe, *Committee on Housing and Land Management*, Geneva, 22-23 September 2008.

⁸⁴Fernandes, E., 2001. Regularizing informal settlements in Brazil: legalization, security of tenure and city management. Paper presented at the ESF/N-Aerus Annual Workshop, 23-26 May 2001. Leuven, Brussels.

opportunities for development through adequate sustainable planning, always bearing in mind the demands of the communities.

Urban and Social Infrastructure

Research of informal settlements in Kosovo shows that 155 settlements, or 88.91% do not have, or have a partial urban infrastructure; at the same it is considered that these settlement are direct environmental polluters. Whereas, 122 settlements or 70%, do not have the required social infrastructure. In this regard, the Municipality, within the program of regulating informal settlements located on their territories should offer social and physical infrastructure and also improve services to an optimal level. The municipal budget drafts for the upcoming years, related to infrastructure projects for priority informal settlements, need to foresee a satisfactory budget so that it may compete for donations in the shape of additional funds for this purpose.⁸⁵

The main recommendations, within this item, which are also a reflection of the problems that citizens have and have expressed through public discussions, are:

Improvement of the Water Supply and Waste Water Network

The water supply, fecal and atmospheric waste-water network should be planned and installed, in accordance with modern standards, always based on the number of residents and functions that take place in this area, and which stem from the urban profile of the existing situation of the environment, as well as by foreseeing developmental trends of the neighborhood based on the urban regulatory plan of the area.

Improvement of Road Network and Citizen's Safety in Traffic

Systematization of the road and their categorization based on the frequency of use needs to be. The roads need to be planned based on modern standards and of size, always complemented by supplementary infrastructure, sidewalks and green belts. Also, the possibility of alternative use of roads should be looked into. Those roads that were there, and which are qualified as main roads, may only be used for vehicle traffic, whereas other secondary roads may be utilized for pedestrian or bicycle traffic. Therefore, the possibility of creating of arteries that would only be used for pedestrian and bicycle traffic needs to be looked into, and these arteries would in the future connect the school, health clinic/family health center and the cultural center. The usage of traffic signs is also recommended to regulate traffic. Road signs and house signs should also be put up. Within this recommendation, as a specific demand, would be the construction of a bridge or the construction of a new additional road that would connect Tusuz and Bajram Curri neighborhoods.

Increasing Residents Safety in the Neighborhood

In this regard, special attention should be given to public lighting, and this especially through parts that are most frequented by the residents and roads connecting parts of the neighborhood with other social functioning facilities, such as school, family health center, local office, etc. The inclusion of physical barriers utilizing green belts in areas where the main roads are located and where heavy traffic is envisioned, would clearly divide vehicles and pedestrians. The usage of road signals is recommended to direct traffic.

Improvement of Social and Recreational Infrastructure

⁸⁵Strategy and Action Plan for the Prevention and Regulation of Informal Settlements in Kosovo, MESP 2010.

The local office has been refurbished by the municipality and will become functional. According to information provided by the municipal official during the debates, he stated that the mentioned office was part of discussions at the board of municipal directors and that this facility will become functional within two months. The health clinic should provide services at all times, and not only during weekdays. Another demand of the residents is the construction of a center for culture in the neighborhood. This should be a multi-purpose building, so as to create the necessary spaces for various activities for both young and elderly group ages. Also, so that the construction of the facility would end up being rational both financially and space-wise, a portion of the building should also be used as a kindergarten/pre-school education. Sports fields should also be foreseen within the center, and these would be maintained better by the building management.

Improving Access to Public Transport

Adequate planning of traffic should be taken under consideration and paid special attention to during the drafting of the Detailed Regulatory Plan of the area; the distribution of public transportation bus stops should be done in the most optimal manner and in accordance to standard design projects with the purpose of creating easy and sufficient access for the residents of the area.

IX. Environment and Urban Planning in Prizren

The environment and sustainable development

Written by Eliza Hoxha

Executive Summary

“We won’t have a society, if we destroy the environment” - Margaret Mead

Living in harmony with nature is not a new concept in addressing urban issues. Man, since becoming aware of himself, has built and created by adapting to and using the respective environment in the geographical, cultural and economic sense. Since ancient times, the majority of buildings used local materials, and were shaped to suit and adapt to the relations between usability and climate that they were impacted by. Old Prizren is no exception to this.

We can find these universal rules of building in harmony with nature in numerous examples and books, such as “Ten Books on Architecture” by Vitruvius, also in numerous texts and elaborations by Palladio and Serlio up to the Renaissance Period, letting us understand that the majority of these important historical buildings throughout the world today owe their very survival to the implementation of these theories. But, as long-lasting as these types of constructions are, there is a saying that raises a question today: “What is a building and its use, if you don’t have the plans / adequate environment to place it in?”. The industrial revolution of the 18th century was glorified through achievements in construction of various kinds, which adapted mechanical systems of heating, ventilation, and insulation and through this influenced a new way of creating cities as well as the lives in them. At the same time, the increase of global fuel consumption and other combustible materials, both for production as well as movement/communication, would cause an increase of greenhouse gas emissions. This era marks a boom in city growth and a great migration from rural to urban areas. Numerous research conducted worldwide estimate that around 80% of the world’s population will live in cities by 2025.

Man became the one who would challenge the environment in the sense of physical and socio-economic development, but the final result ended up being – dirty, unsafe and unhealthy cities. As a consequence of this, numerous movements for greener and healthier cities began being promoted by architects at the beginning of 20th century. We recall the publication “Garden Cities of To-morrow (1898)”, by Ebenezer Howard, as a new call for a life that is in harmony with the environment, which turned into a guideline of the garden-cities movement in the United Kingdom. Or the calls put forth by Le Corbusier for healthier cities, where the residential areas would be fully free and steeped in greenery as well as being fully disconnected from other functions in the city. Despite the idea of bringing humans and nature closer, these types of concepts failed to lower the social and economic differences, and failed to increase the safety in the cities. Jane Jacobs, speaking specifically about this approach, emphasized that the majority of these architects and planners of the time, simply forgot to imagine and understand that “healthy cities are complex, organic, spontaneous and messy systems”⁸⁶. It is that same variety which should be seen as a value where its cohesive points should be the spaces that would

⁸⁶Jane Jacobs Was Right: Gradual Redevelopment Does Promote Community.

<http://www.citylab.com/housing/2013/03/jane-jacobs-was-right-gradual-redevelopment-does-promote-community/4917/>

bringing people closer to each-other and to the nature as well. Today, numerous international agendas address the issue of healthy cities, green cities and principles of living in harmony with nature, which may all be found within a single framework of sustainability principles.

Within all these development, the city of Prizren has a lot to do, just like all other cities of Kosovo. Firstly, we should recognize the value of old constructions using natural materials and we should reconsider it for other new forms of construction and interpretation in cities and villages. At the same time, we should attempt to absorb all of the impacts of swift but late industrialization, as well as the drastic changes in the traditional 1999 post-war phase. Throughout this journey, the only thing that we can be proud of when we talk about the development of cities in harmony with nature is the legal framework of Kosovo, which for years attempted to follow the entirety of global/European agendas for the environment and harmonize them with local needs. Relating to this, the sector of civil society attempts to provide aid as well as have its say. The project “Inclusive City-Participatory planning for sustainable urban development in Prizren”, is among those that attempts, through the inclusion of various community groups, to identify the current problems and concerns and to direct them through a joint consensus. The numerous meetings and researches on the ground related to the topic “Planning and Environment” bring to light the concerns of the Prizren community, especially related to the lack of green areas, water and air pollution, destruction and cutting of woods and the issue of waste management.

Introduction

“I don’t want to protect the environment. I want to create a world where the environment does not need protecting”

Although the principles of sustainable development began being a subject of discussion 50 years ago, it’s only during the last 25 years that numerous global initiatives began raising their voices relating to the numerous implications for our planet caused through exploiting resources, gas emissions and solid waste. We remind ourselves of 1972, when, for the very first time “Club of Rome” received attention through the “The limits of Growth” report. However, it was only 20 years later that these issues received the deserved amount of debate and attention at the United Nations international conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The final document of the conference, approved by 179 member states of the UN pushed forward the interdependency of three main issues, such as: **economy, environment and society, or social equality**, which should be given equal attention so that sustainable development may be given shape and life⁸⁷. Two years later, in 1994, following the Rio conference, at the city of Alborg in Denmark, the “European campaign for sustainable cities” was promoted. Based on “Agenda 21”, the Alborg Convention attempts to address the issue of cities in Europe in detail and through specifics⁸⁸. Its ratification by 44 countries of the European Union in 2001, brought with it a convention that was structured in three pillars which address the rights to:

- “Public access to information about the environment
- Civic participation in certain decisions with environmental relevance
- Access to Courts of Law or Tribunals for environmental issues.”⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Local Agenda 21, http://www.partizipation.at/contact_en.html

⁸⁸ Aarhus Convention, <http://www.partizipation.at/aarhus-convention.html>

⁸⁹ Aarhus Convention, <http://www.partizipation.at/aarhus-convention.html>, (pdf-download)

At this time there are movements and calls made by various organizations of the civil society for Agenda 21 to be reviewed in 2015 (post-UN 2015), with a proposal to add culture as a component of the above⁹⁰, to use it as a platform to address issues such as: “Decreasing poverty, education, sustainable settlements, equality, ecosystems and biodiversity and economic growth”⁹¹.

All the above-mentioned documents are only the basis to addressing the development of cities and planning their future, by emphasizing the importance of the triangle of balance: Economy, Environment and Social equity. In the field of planning, different perspectives for the city come from three types of planners:

- “Urban planners that address the component of economic growth and see the city as an environment where production, consumption, distribution and innovation take place. The space is viewed as an opportunity for growth, infrastructure and exchange.
- The environmental planners see the city as a consumer of resources and a producer of waste. The city is usually in competition with nature for resources and land by turning into a threat to it. Space means nature, ecosystem, landscape, rivers, etc.
- Social planners see the city as a location of conflict based on distribution of resources, services and opportunities. The competition is within the city itself, among different social groups. Space means the social space of the communities, neighborhoods, and trade organizations, space as an opportunity for access or even segregation”⁹².

European Union has drafted a set of policies for the protection of the environment, waste management, and promotion of sustainability, and what takes central place currently is the “EU 2020 Strategy”⁹³, which aims the expansion of Western Balkan countries through promoting and empowering the principles of sustainability and inclusion.

Finally, for the purpose of stimulating cities to increase their environmental performance, the award “European Green Capital” has also been conceived. “It is very important that cities are recognized for their efforts and their work in improving the urban environment, by aiming for healthier and sustainable living areas”⁹⁴. The award certainly marks the achievements of a city by turning it into an example to others as well as making it the focus of people’s interest to visit it, or even live and work in it.

If we go back to the local context, let us remind ourselves that Kosovo has moved ahead in regard to numerous legal documents which ensure inclusion and promote joint decision-making for a more qualitative living environment. However, how much these long and mid-term policies have been implemented along the cities and rural areas, this comprises an issue all in itself, as well as being a concern at the same time.

⁹⁰ www.culture2015goal.net

⁹¹ www.culture2015goal.net

⁹² [Scott Campbell](#), “Green Cities, Growing Cities, Just Cities?” ,Urban Planning and the Contradictions of Sustainable Development ©*Journal of the American Planning Association* (1996).

⁹³ Prizren Municipal Development Plan 2025 “Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report (draft), UN-HABITAT, Prishtina, Municipal Spatial Planning Support Program in Kosovo.

⁹⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/about-the-award/index.html>

Current Situation

“The environment is everything that isn’t me” – Albert Einstein

The Government of Kosovo, through Law on Environmental Protection No. 03/L-025, aims to “harmonize economic development and social welfare with basic principles for environmental protection according to the concept of sustainable development”.⁹⁵ The package of laws that address environmental issues is large and at the end it also includes the conditions for assessing the impact caused to the environment by sectorial development strategies of the central or local level. On the other hand, Law on Spatial Planning - No. 04/L-174 is the platform on which the overall drafting of developmental documents of the central and local level on the principle of inclusion as the sole necessity to ensure an alternative future for all stakeholders is based. These legislative packages are later further enriched through other numerous strategic/sectorial documents at the local level. When it comes to the field of the environment, the Municipality of Prizren has drafted a number of these, some of which are “Municipal/Urban Development Plan 2015”, “Local Developmental Strategy”, “Environmental Action Plan 2011”, “Local Biodiversity Action Plan in the Municipality of Prizren 2013-2017”, “Municipality of Prizren Solid Waste Management Plan 2014-2018”, etc. These documents should be the real basis of addressing future urban/rural development of Prizren, but what may be noticed in some of them is the lack of deeper and thematic analysis, and the usage of the same general material, which is part of two different documents, and which, above all, makes them seem frivolous. However, despite this, the implementation of these documents in practice is always late, partially due to lack of funds and partially due to the lack of goodwill, or at times even due to neglect of citizens themselves. Numerous NGOs played an important part by frequently playing the role of the “supervisor” in the process of implementing programmatic municipal policies, and, at the same time, also in increasing social awareness on general environmental issues, renewable energy trends, waste recycling and others. “Ec ma Ndryshe” has been working for a while now, through various activities, on attempting to bring the issues of sustainability and inclusion to the primary agenda of the Municipality of Prizren. In the meetings and debates with interest groups on the topic “Urban Planning and Environment”, the main focus of the debate were subtopics such as: natural heritage, sustainable development, rivers, and natural resources, pollution of the environment and natural landscape/parks and public spaces. The main challenges seem to be the lack of green areas, water treatment, as well as illegal constructions”.⁹⁶ What should be understood and emphasized, and what is the key point among the concerns raised by the participants is that the environment knows no boundaries. Our irresponsible actions against it do not have an isolated impact, since they do not recognize urban or local, municipal or state, regional or global boundaries.

Findings

“Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s need, but not every man’s greed”

The results of the latest research on the perceptions of citizens about the urban planning of the city of Prizren (August 2014 – EC Ma Ndryshe), show that the biggest concerns seem to be the lack of sidewalks and illegal constructions.⁹⁷ The second biggest concern of Prizren citizens is the lack of green areas in the

⁹⁵Law No. 03/L-025, Law on Environmental Protection, Article 1.

⁹⁶Audio from the debate with stakeholders on “Urban Planning and the Environment”, EC Ma Ndryshe.

⁹⁷Main findings of the research, Survey 1, EC Ma Ndryshe, p.1

city at 42%, where 36.3% of the male believed this to be the case, whereas 31.7% of the female population also thought so. Infrastructural problems (waste-water and water supply) take up a part in the research with a quota of 18.6%. The citizens, at lower percentage, raise their concerns also for the lack of public parks and recreational areas in the city of Prizren. Green areas, public parks, pollution of the environment (air and river) and general lack of protecting the environment are also viewed as problems by other communities of the city, such as retirees, persons with special need, or even certain organizations and interest groups.⁹⁸

Also, based on the debates organized directly with interest groups, it seems that the list of concerns is approximately the same. Focus groups such as: associations of the civil society, students, artists, pensioners, regional water company, cultural heritage forum, Red Cross of Kosovo – Prizren branch, representatives of public institutions, emphasized the issues of drinking water supply in the city of Prizren, commercial and technical losses in the network, expansions of this infrastructure to certain neighborhoods, and at the very end stated that supplying the city with water 24 hour basis is impossible.

From the debates held in the previous year on the topic of environment and urban planning, it may be concluded that there is no improvement. NGOs consider that the main culprit for this is the government itself for not taking legal punitive measures aimed at promoting the environmental protection and its advancement

- The main culprit for the low percentage of green areas in the city is the disregard of regulatory plans during construction of new apartment blocks, as well as illegal construction.
- Those green areas in the city, such as public parks, are not sufficiently nor adequately supervised. The green areas are not maintained, there is a presence of waste and waste containers that are not cleaned on time. This discourages people to spend their time at these common public spaces.
- At the same time, people act irresponsibly toward public property and in this regard aspects of awareness and implementation of laws should come into play.
- Waste management, with the exception of the city, is considered to be a huge problem along Prizren villages. The illegal waste collection points in the village of Lubizhde and the stench from the landfill of solid waste in the village of Zhur are considered to be extremely problematic.
- Solid waste in the M.A. of Prizren, in nearly 90% of the settlements, is transported on to certain landfills.
- The level of air pollution due to the high level of ageing vehicles along the settlement of M.A. Prizren is considered to be very high. Responsibility for this falls on the central level, since air monitoring is not conducted by the municipality.
- MESP is engaged in taking steps to prevent damaging of the river beds and wild use of gravel from rivers, as well as hands out fines in cases where forests are damaged. For example, in the case of "Sharr" National Park.
- The non-determination of the river cadaster is another problem that has been found. These two alone, the maintenance and cleaning of riverbeds within urban areas of the city are considered to be insufficient, since the settlements in the Municipality of Prizren also have rivers which, in case of carelessness, would bring waste into the city. Therefore the lack of facilities and collectors was also ascertained.
- From the low level of care, the situation of the rivers outside of the urban area of Municipality of Prizren is considered to be alarming.

⁹⁸ EC Ma Ndryshe, **Urban Planning for Citizens 2**, p. 7-13

- Changing the flow of rivers for individual gain, uncontrolled use of the waters of Lumbardh, abuse of sand and eradication of fish species in the river is considered to be the result of inadequate functioning of relations between the municipal and central level of the government.
- The project approved by the M.A. of Prizren for restoring lateral parts of Lumëbardh is estimated to have only damaged the environment, since fully grown trees of this area had to be cut down to undertake such an action, trees that, amongst others, were also a part of the collective memory of citizens of Prizren.
- According to officers of the environment sector, the implementation plan to construct a waste-water treatment facility has begun for the treatment of waste-water of settlements along Gryka e Zhupës. The timely completion in line with the project is considered to be vital for the city of Prizren.
- The damaging of forests, their pollution and illegal hunting are considered to be the main threats to this natural heritage and also threaten the biodiversity and the ecosystem.
- Fires and lack of capacities to manage them are also risks to be considered.

Recommendations

“Some people look for a beautiful place, others make a place beautiful”

- The Municipality Prizren should take the responsibility that belongs to it in protecting the environment, protection and preservation of Lumëbardh and waste management. The municipality is encouraged to respect the law and to act pursuant to it when it needs to take punitive measures against those that degrade the environment through any type of action.
- Local government is encouraged to find different ways to increase the awareness of the citizens for the protection of the environment and for the importance that it has to the city and their own welfare.
- The municipality should include citizens in drafting local urban – economic/social/environmental policies from the very beginning of processes, because they are the local development-driving force.
- Cooperation between the Municipality and local NGOs in developing joint projects for the benefit of the city is a necessity, bearing in mind the possibilities for IPA funds from the European Union.
- Green living is something that should be promoted and cultivated by the Municipality of Prizren using all means of communication. The green package that was drafted by the REC should be seen as opportunity for the children to get acquainted with the concepts of sustainability from an early developmental age.
- Also the promotion of green architecture concepts as a focus for capital investments should enter the agenda to promote the quality of construction, alternative energy and self-sustainability of buildings.
- The municipality should look into finding opportunities to create alternatives for semi-public spaces which may be added to the overall green network in Prizren and to enrich the urban landscape as well as meet the needs of citizens for them.
- A forestation and a landscape program for the city and tourist area of Prevala should emerge in the upcoming years.
- MESP should cooperate closely with local government in maintaining forests. All those that damage forests in any form or manner should be fined and adequate capacities should be created to manage possible forest fires along forested areas.

- Equipping the city, not only the central zone, with waste containers. Especially the most frequented areas. Beside the need to raise their awareness, the citizens also need places where they can through their waste.
- Timely completion of the new facility for treatment of waste-water. Also the installation of new water collectors.
- To consider raising accumulation capacities as a possibility for irrigation and production of electricity, increasing tourist capacities, wood, sand, coal and numerous minerals, as a natural resource that Prizren region has.
- To conduct an analysis of environmental problems prior to intervening in certain areas. M.A. of Prizren should be encouraged to check beforehand what are its natural resources and the capacities that the city has in protecting and enriching the natural environment.
- Strictly upholding regulatory plans on norms and determinations about green areas by the multitude of those that construct apartment blocks in the city. Assessment of the impact on the environment is mandatory/environmental permit.

The challenges that face us are numerous, therefore to improve the environment in Prizren and to lead urban development by a good example we need to, above all, change our approach. We are all responsible and influential in some form or another in urban development and our roles come to life or change depending on the situation. I would like to conclude this report using two old, but in my opinion thought-provoking proverbs, that may push our minds to at least change our point of view, position, stance and approach toward the environment where we live.

*“The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago, the second best time to is now” (Chinese proverb) therefore
“be the change that you wish to see in the world” - Ghandi*

X. Culture and Urban Planning in Prizren

Economic Development through Cultural Tourism

Written by Hajrulla Çeku and Senat Haliti

Executive summary

A considerable number of strategic documents approved at both levels of governance in Kosovo set the developmental directions of the Municipality of Prizren. Based on an analysis of these documents we find that the development of tourism is one of the most realistic opportunities of strengthening the local economy in Prizren. A number of developmental documents ascertained the local development potential of Prizren based on cultural tourism. Some of these documents are the following: Spatial Plan of Kosovo and the future of Municipality of Prizren, Integrated Vision of Prizren and the Future of Municipality of Prizren, Prizren Urban Development Plan and the Future of Prizren Municipality, Municipal Development Plan of Prizren 2025, Conservation and Development Plan of the Historical Center, Guiding Strategy for Cultural Development in the Municipality of Prizren 2012 – 2016.

There is an immediate need to redefine the role of culture within general public policies, and specifically within urban planning. On the other hand, urban planning must not remain simply a physical and technical activity, but it needs to have the human dimension integrated into it. Today a lot is said about the “cultural turn” of urban planning, whereas advocates argue that, as important as they are, urban planners need to expand both their agendas as well as their approaches. Cities and living in cities are not related only to designing physical spaces, since people live their lives within these same spaces, and not infrequently in disparity with the original intent of planners. Urban and development planning must include a much broader social and cultural aspect which goes beyond just drawing different colored lines on a piece of paper.

Based on the findings of the project as well as existing documents and analysis in the field of culture (cultural heritage), as well as urban and development planning, below you may find the recommendations of the report:

- Redefining the role of culture and increasing communication with other fields of public policy,
- Drafting of a cultural tourism strategy, as a central policy to advise strategic actions for local development through tourism,
- Adherence to all central and local level strategic documents that envision the development of Prizren through tourism,
- Greater focus on cultural content (activities) than on infrastructure,
- Development of new and professional tourism products that would enrich the tourism offer of the city,
- Adherence to all laws for the protection of cultural heritage in Prizren, as a non-negotiable obligation of central and local institutions,
- Demolition of illegal constructions at the Historic Centre of Prizren to prevent total eradication of cultural heritage,
- Strict adherence to the Regional Center for Cultural Heritage, where each approval by this center should be binding for the Municipality of Prizren,
- Drafting of a local plan for cultural heritage would aid in strategic planning of cultural heritage,

- Inclusion of cultural heritage in drafting urban plans should be a key component of urban planning,
- Participatory budgeting in the sector of culture is a basic condition of democracy in governing and planning of the city,
- Establishment of a new mindset where cultural heritage would be a part of the school curriculum,
- Determining criteria for allocation of grants for independent culture through a system of criteria and based on merits.

Introduction

Culture is not a separate sector of policies, but an integral part of development planning, and through this also a part of urban planning. “Arts and broader cultural resources in general are being turned into strategic assets of urban planning and development, by playing an essential role in the development of new economy.”⁹⁹ The UN Habitat’s “State of the World’s Cities Report” from 2004 has documented a rising trend of re-branding cities as cultural heavens, which, according to the report presents “a creative attempt by numerous local governments to develop economies that are in need of urban revival mechanisms”.¹⁰⁰ The reports also finds that “on the assumption that culture may be a motor to generate employment, the governments are directing investments toward cultural industries and districts, including public spaces, the cultural commodities of which have a tendency to harmonize various social interests and increase the quality of urban life”.¹⁰¹

Urban planning must not remain simply a physical and technical activity, but it needs to have the human dimension integrated. A lot is said today about the “cultural turn” of urban planning, whereas advocates state that, as important as they are, urban planners need to expand both their agendas and approaches. Cities and living in cities is not only related to designing physical areas, since people live their lives within these areas, and frequently in disparity with the original purpose of planners. Urban planning must include a much broader social and cultural concept than just the drawing of some colored lines on a piece of paper.

There is an immediate need to redefine the role of culture in general public policies, and in urban planning in specific. Arts and culture should have means of communication with other political fields, such as spatial planning, economic development, tourism, youth and education, foreign policy, local governance, etc. This would promote a new governmental approach toward culture, by placing it at the center of planning of state policies. This approach, besides having an impact of increasing the state budget for culture, it would also provide an interaction of culture with the education system and artistic enlightenment of children, spatial planning and protection of the environment, sustainable economic development through creative industries, foreign policy and cultural diplomacy, local governance and other potential fields.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Colin Mercer, Cultural Planning for Urban Development and Creative Cities, 2006, posted on http://burgosciudad21.org/adftp/Shanghai_cultural_planning_paper.pdf

¹⁰⁰ UN Habitat, State of the World’s Cities Report, 2004, posted at <http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=1163>

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Cultural Forum, Why the Need for a Cultural Strategy?, 2012, posted at <http://forumikulturor.net/cms/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Pse-na-duhet-nj%C3%AB-Strategji-e-Kultur%C3%ABs.pdf>

A considerable number of strategic documents already approved by both levels of the government in Kosovo clarify the developmental directions of the Municipality of Prizren. Based on an analysis of these documents, it may be found that tourism is among the most realistic opportunities for strengthening the local economy of Prizren. A number of these developmental documents ascertain the potential of Prizren for tourism based local development: Spatial Plan of Kosovo and the Future of Municipality of Prizren, Integrated Vision of Prizren and the Future of Municipality of Prizren, Prizren Urban Development Plan and the Future of Prizren Municipality, Municipal Development Plan of Prizren 2025, Plan for Conservation and Development of the Historical Center, Guiding Strategy for Cultural Development in the Municipality of Prizren 2012 – 2016.

Cultural tourism comprises one of the biggest potentials for development in Kosovo, however the use and promotion of the same is very low. A number of events in culture are organized in various cities of Kosovo. These activities are mainly organized by civil society organizations and cultural operators, and they attract local and foreign tourists. One of the most influential yearly events in Kosovo is the documentary and short film festival of Dokufest in Prizren. According to the statistics of the festival, around 10,000 people attended the festival in 2013, with 23% of the total number of guests being foreign visitors. A research conducted by GAP Institute during the tenth edition of this festival (2011) shows that the economic impact of Dokufest on the GDP was €3.1 million, whereas this number is expected to be €21.9 million during the next four year period.¹⁰³

Current Situation / Strategic Framework

Spatial Plan of Kosovo 2010-2020+ drafted by the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning in 2010 proposes four areas/regions where Prizren is the Center of Gardens of Kosovo. This area is foreseen for cultural tourism, agricultural and trade industry where Prizren has a leading role through recreational and cultural potential, together with natural values and those of cultural heritage. The vision for Prizren, based on this plan, is the construction of a center on the traditional roots of this ancient territory, to turn it into a modern cultural-tourist center developed into a functional network by creating stronger ties with rural villages to motivate activities based on natural potentials, attractive to work and live in and sufficient space for the inclusion of the private sector in viniculture, agriculture and tourism. The plan also suggests the establishment of an attractive environment for conducting private business activities and encourages the better use of local economic potentials as well as natural and human resources, especially in tourism and agriculture.¹⁰⁴

Amongst the five general goals for Prizren determined in the Plan is also “the development of mountain and cultural tourism, protection of cultural, historical and natural heritage.” The consideration of cultural heritage in the Spatial Plan of Kosovo 2010-2020+ is an especially important step for the future development and the strategy of conservation (preservation) of the country. In this regard, Prizren is an important hub with its rich historic and cultural heritage, as well as its environmental resources. The Spatial Plan of Kosovo 2010-2020+ determines the role of Prizren as a “Museum City” to contribute in creating the conditions for the protection and use of heritage for local economic development. But based on the strategy, there is a need for action focused in the aspect of environmental and human resource protection, as well as the promotion of cultural and natural heritage, protection of the quality

¹⁰³Ministry of Trade and Industry, Tourism Sector Profile, 2014.

¹⁰⁴Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, Kosovo Spatial Plan 2010-2020+.

of agricultural land and promotion of local products, protection of mineral resources and their rational use as well as the growth control of settlements.¹⁰⁵

The integrated vision of Prizren drafted by the Municipality of Prizren and UN HABITAT in March of 2008 follows the vision set out in the Spatial Plan of Kosovo 2010-2020+, and Prizren is defined as: “center of cultural and natural heritage, with an economy that creates potential for the development of the society as well as a crossroads of the region where tolerance and law rule”. It has been structured in five basic fields of intervention regarding municipal development. These fields are: Urban Development and Planning, Mobility and Transport, Cultural Heritage and Natural Resources, Economic and Agricultural Environment, Infrastructure and Public Services.¹⁰⁶

Prizren Urban Development Plan was drafted by the Municipality of Prizren in 2003 and represents a ten year plan for the sustainable development of the center of Prizren. This plan does not have a clear vision for the future of the Municipality of Prizren. The plan highlights the immense importance of cultural and historical heritage of Prizren. The preservation and integration of buildings and construction complexes of historic and cultural values in modern developments play a huge role in permanent development. Protected heritage shall represent an important component of the overall look of the city. All heritage values should be regenerated. The purpose of this regeneration is achieving values that will be able to withstand spatial and temporal changes. Cultural and historic heritage is a potential for economic development. The promotion of these values represents the developmental trends of the tourism sector.¹⁰⁷

The vision of Prizren, determined in the Prizren Municipal Development plan 2025 is: Prizren is expected to have a central position as a modern cultural and tourist center through a functional network which creates stronger ties with rural villages. The results of the survey from the public debate PMDP 2025 also suggest the future role of Prizren as a cultural center that uses its rich cultural and natural heritage. The municipality of Prizren has a large driving force as is presented on the first page of PMDP 2025. These are: Rich cultural and natural heritage, rich/favorable environmental resources, socio-cultural diversity, a young, educated and qualified workforce, high agricultural and production potential, good transport lines with other parts of Kosovo and neighboring countries.¹⁰⁸

The key principles of the PMDP 2025 are:

- Principle 1: Preservation of cultural and natural heritage
- Principle 2: Environmental sustainability
- Principle 3: Social inclusion, social equality and high quality of life.
- Principle 4: Economic vitality
- Principle 5: Spatial integrity

Another strategic document is the Plan for Conservation and Development of the Historic Center. The basic objectives of the Plan for Conservation and Development of the Historic Centre have been grouped into four categories: Functional Qualification, Optimal Communication, Social and Cultural Integration, Positive environment for architectural and urban quality, Positive conditions for health and quiet,

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Municipality of Prizren and UN Habitat, Integrated vision of Prizren, 2008.

¹⁰⁷ Municipality of Prizren, Urban Development Plan 2003-2013.

¹⁰⁸ Municipality of Prizren, Prizren Municipal Development Plan 2025.

optimal price and economic support, Flexibility and applicability. The objectives of the “Social and Cultural Integration” are:

- To transform one of the most important places in Kosovo once again into an attractive cultural and tourist center, by increasing cultural, archeological and natural values as well as the potential of architectonic heritage and the traditional urban structures that it possesses,
- To increase the public awareness about the conservation of cultural heritage by providing the educational environment,
- To improve the meaning of the conservation plan so that development of social structures is ensured,
- To call to attention the conservation, planning and the process of implementation with the full participation of the residents.

The general opinion of people is to assess the historical features of the area through various events in Prizren. The majority of people stated that they imagine the space to be used for tourism purposes and think that the majority of houses listed should be restored and used as hotels, restaurants and similar activities. People need an environment that has more pedestrian areas and that Prizren should be developed bearing in mind its tourist and cultural potential. MA of Prizren needs detailed plans of this kind as well as project-proposals bearing in mind that one of the key components for economic development of the Municipality of Prizren is also tourism and its development through using cultural heritage and the revitalization of valuable facilities, monuments, squares, establishment of ensembles of value as well as the revitalization of existing ones and cultural activities that may be undertaken, bearing in mind the character of the area.¹⁰⁹

The guiding strategy for cultural development in the Municipality of Prizren 2012-2016 is another commitment by the Municipality of Prizren to use tourism for the needs of local economic development. Thanks to the installed cultural infrastructure, which attempts to be in the function of preservation, cultivation and presentation of the values of cultural and spiritual heritage, the city of Prizren also attempts to design the development of tourism, as a profitable economic activity. Prizren has an enviable potential of cultural values inherited from various historic periods. With 24 identified archeological locations, 39 Christian religious objects, 46 sacred Islamic objects, over 74 facilities with pronounced features of folkloric architecture, Prizren aims to become a well-visited tourist center. The castle that is located on the hill above the city, the Saint Friday Church, Monastery of the Holy Archangels, Church of Holy Savior, Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Succor, Sinan Pasha Mosque, Gazi Mehmet Pasha Hamam, the Old Stone Bridge, are only a part of the material cultural heritage that may be encountered in the city of Prizren.¹¹⁰

Prizren is also renowned for its good tradition of cultivating fine arts. Numerous traditional cultural manifestations have been and continue to be organized in it. The long-standing citizens song festival “Lilly of Prizren”, the documentary and short film festival “Dokufest”, the initiation of the good work of the Professional Theater of the city, and a string of other cultural events both national and international make Prizren a more attractive place in the field of tourism. When we add the rare and beautiful sights of the Sharr Mountain range with its renowned ski-center to all this, one can rightly say that the “mosaic of the requirements of tourism” is met in its entirety.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Municipality of Prizren, Plan for Conservation and Development of the Historic Area of Prizren.

¹¹⁰ Municipality of Prizren, Guiding Strategy for Cultural Development in the Municipality of Prizren 2012-2016

¹¹¹ Ibid.

Despite all these strategic documents, Prizren has still not brought to life the developmental vision based on cultural tourism. Furthermore, this is a typical case of failure of state institutions to protect cultural heritage. Degradation of the values of the Historic Center came about as a consequence of the disregard of the legal framework for cultural heritage by both levels of government. While the MCYS did not meet its supervisory obligations, the local government of Prizren was unable to prevent the destructive actions by builders that damaged the cultural heritage. Even worse than that, local authorities of Prizren, through their disregard of the laws, Plan of Conservation and Development of the Historic Center of Prizren¹¹² and urban regulatory plans,¹¹³ were the main contributor in the eradication of cultural and historic values of the city.¹¹⁴

Kosovo (and consequently Prizren as well) still hasn't developed an integrated approach of planning and policy development. In this specific case, the integrated conservation policy represents a necessity for institutional coordination for the protection of cultural heritage. Such an approach presupposes that cultural heritage is a responsibility that is a lot wider than that of just a single institution. Integrated conservation is related to inter-sectorial cooperation between different public administrative entities, as well as the coordination of legislative measures so that they may expand and supplement one another.¹¹⁵

Findings

In September of 2014, EC Ma Ndryshe published the results of its wide-ranging third survey in the city of Prizren within two years, which aims to find out the main concerns as well as measures the citizens' level of satisfaction on urban planning. The research is part of the methodology of the project "Inclusive City ..." which, since January 2013 translates the needs of citizens into applicable urban plans of the municipality. The survey was divided into two parts, where general population participated with 300 respondents (of which 55% were female and 45% male) and with organizations and community groups where 100 interviews took place. The research also looked at the perceptions of cultural and environmental organizations in Prizren and found that the main five concerns of these groups are: pollution of the environment, destruction of the Historic Center, lack of an applicable plan on sustainable development of the environment, blocking of pavements and lack of cultural spaces.

These findings of the wide-ranging survey in Prizren are also confirmed by the focus groups and debates organized with the cultural community within the "Inclusive City ..." project.

During the focus groups part of the project with the cultural community, a lot of concerns of this sector related to urban planning were brought to light. These findings are presented below in groups within the cultural heritage and tourism. A portion of the findings also correspond to the discussions that were held in 2013 within the project, by confirming the delay of the municipality in addressing the challenges of this sector. A frequent finding of the discussions is that culture continues to not be a priority in the

¹¹²Municipality of Prizren, Plan for Conservation and Development of the Historic Area of Prizren, 2008, at <http://kk.rks-gov.net/prizren/getattachment/25fdb992-4fa8-4623-9811-ae22a0bd6b2a/Plani-i-Konservimit-dhe-Zhvillimit-te-Zones-Histor.aspx>

¹¹³ Municipality of Prizren, Regulatory Plans, at <http://kk.rks-gov.net/prizren/Projects/Planet-Rregullative.aspx>

¹¹⁴ EC Ma Ndryshe for the Forum 2015, Erroneous, 2013, at http://ecmandryshe.org/repository/docs/Gabim_pas_gabimi_ALB.pdf

¹¹⁵Basic considerations of integrated conservation was decided on the European Charter of the Architectural Heritage and the Declaration of Amsterdam, approved in 1975 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

policies of the Municipality of Prizren. It continues to receive a very low budget which only fund certain minor activities compared to the needed cultural development. The cultural potential that Prizren has should be translated into planning and development of Prizren, by getting included in the priorities of the municipality, by running away from the few hundred euro investments (subsidies) on behalf of supporting cultural activities. Above all, the Directorate for Culture is placed at the center of political bargaining by appointing directors of the wrong profiles and which do not even make the effort of meeting with the cultural community and neither to follow cultural activities. The problem of budgeting continues to be among the main challenges, since investments usually go into infrastructure and other categories that meet the political aims of the time.

Cultural heritage

- Cultural heritage facilities, besides lacking the investments required to protect them, are faced with a lack of appropriate marking, lighting and adequate enclosures,
- The municipality was the investor for certain restoration projects that were conducted in violation of the professional principles of intervention. A typical example is the project of the house of Shuaip Pasha, which, among others, was left without even a management plan,
- The citizens and civil society have frequently undertaken concrete actions to protect cultural heritage, but a large portion of these activities had no real impact due to the apathy and the lack of interest by state institutions,
- There is a lack of engagement to increase the awareness of children and pupils about the importance of cultural heritage and their engagement in protecting the city,
- The municipality and Law Enforcement Authorities are frequently unable to stop illegal actions at the Historical Center due to the lack of will to face persons who are considered to be powerful and above the law,
- There is a significant lack of coordination between institutions for the protection of cultural heritage, especially between the municipality and Regional Center for Cultural Heritage,
- Even inside the municipality, urban planning operates nearly entirely disconnected from the sectors of culture, inspectorate and tourism, thus making the approach of integrated planning impossible,
- Illegal constructions, especially those within the Historical Center of Prizren, are the main cause of the degradation of cultural heritage,
- The Conservation and Development Plan of the Historical Center of Prizren, approved by the Municipal Assembly in 2008 is a document that is systematically violated by municipal authorities themselves.

Cultural tourism

- The city failed to structure and present its cultural and historic offer, whereas basic products such as tourist packages are also missing,
- Despite the fact that lately certain promotional materials have been produced for cultural tourism, a considerable part of these lack content and presentation that would be attractive to tourists,
- The Tourist Information Center placed within the facilities of Beledije operates at limited capacity, whereas it does not serve a large number of visitors, due to its rather hidden location,
- Not only Prizren, but Kosovo in general lack tourism experts, whereas tourism itself is not treated as an integral part in planning cultural policies, cultural heritage, urban and rural development, economic development, etc.,

- Prizren lacks a mechanism for measuring the development of tourism, which would provide analysis of the spatial aspect by offering data on the development of tourism, number and profile of visitors, spaces required for tourism, etc.,
- Lack of adequate policies for the development of cultural tourism is the best indicator of the lack of dedication shown to development of tourism by the local government. Although the municipality did express their goodwill to draft a tourism strategy, this action is still pending,
- Despite the existence of a Directorate for Culture and a Directorate of Tourism, there is no communication or cooperation between them,
- Tourist operators of neighboring countries are benefiting from the tourist potential of the city, while the city would be able to benefit more on its own if such a strategy were to exist,
- Crafts of Prizren do not enjoy the merited treatment based on the cultural and trade importance that they used to have. Craftsmanship is an important segment of the development of the city and certain spaces in the city should be dedicated to the development and promotion of craftsmanship.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the Project through focus groups, debates, surveys conducted with citizens, as well as existing documents and analysis in the field of culture (cultural heritage) and urban planning by EC Ma Ndryshe and other sector organizations and institutions, below are the specific recommendations addressed to the local government of Prizren for integration of culture in municipal development planning (through cultural tourism).

- There is an immediate need to redefine the role of culture in public policies. Arts and culture need to have communication lines with other political fields, such as spatial planning, economic development, tourism, youth and education, foreign policy, local governance, etc. Prizren is in need of a cultural development strategy that would promote a new approach to culture, by placing it at the center of the planning process of municipal public policies, with a special emphasis on urban planning,
- Drafting of the cultural tourism strategy, whereas the planning and implementation of these local policies should follow along the line of integration, according to which cultural development means coordination between numerous sectors of local policies,
- Adherence to all strategic documents of the local and central level that envision the development of Prizren through tourism, with an emphasis on cultural heritage, cultural life (artistic production) and nature,
- More focus on cultural content (activities) than on infrastructure, since the cultural development cannot be achieved only through investments on physical spaces. The creation and enrichment of cultural content (artistic production) is at the essence of the cultural and tourist offer of the city,
- Development of new and professional tourist products which would enrich the tourist offer of the city. A central component of the tourist offer should be cultural and artistic production,

- Adherence to all laws on protection of cultural heritage of Prizren, as a nonnegotiable obligation of central and local level institutions to ensure a sustainable development of Prizren,
- Demolition of illegal constructions at the Historic Center of Prizren to prevent the total eradication of cultural heritage. Municipal authorities should undertake concrete actions for the demolition of illegal constructions violating the principles of cultural heritage,
- Strict adherence toward the Regional Center for Cultural Heritage, where each approval issued by this center should become binding for the municipality of Prizren, since they are based on international standards and state laws on cultural heritage. Therefore, any violation of measures foreseen through approvals of the RCCH should be prevented and/or punished by the local and central authorities,
- Drafting of a local plan for cultural heritage would aid in strategic planning of cultural heritage, whereas the municipality of Prizren would gain an important potential for local economic development. Local plan for cultural heritage would also pave the way toward better coordination based on principles of integrated conservation (especially with urban planning),
- Inclusion of cultural heritage in the drafting of urban plans should be a central component of urban planning of Prizren. During the drafting of urban plans, the municipality should uphold all the principles for protection of cultural heritage,
- Participatory budgeting in the culture sector is a basic condition of democracy in governing and planning of a city. The cultural community should be a part of defining the municipal budget, especially the part on culture and cultural heritage,
- Establishment of a new mindset where cultural heritage should be a part of the school curriculum and learning about cultural heritage should begin at the primary schools by including this subject into the official school curriculums,
- Determination of criteria for the allocation of grants for independent culture (expenditure of the municipal budget for independent culture) should be implemented through a system of criteria and based on merit.

EC Ma Ndryshe

The non-governmental organization “Emancipimi Civil Ma Ndryshe” was established in March 2006 in the culture-rich city of Prizren, Kosovo. The main goals of the organization are: the promotion of active citizen participation and the raising of civic awareness for the protection and promotion of cultural heritage sites. EC Ma Ndryshe is one of the founding organizations that represent Kosovo in the South East European Heritage Network - SEE Heritage - network of organizations that deal with issues regarding cultural heritage. Furthermore, EC Ma Ndryshe is the founder of the Cultural Heritage Forum of Prizren, the Network of Cultural Organizations of Prizren, and the Network of Independent Cultural Organizations in Kosovo’s Cultural Forum. Since its establishment, EC Ma Ndryshe has been exercising direct pressure on the local government in Prizren to generate greater access for civil society and its citizens in the decision-making process. In addition to direct participation in the public consultation processes, EC Ma Ndryshe has regularly advocated for the adherence to legal requirements for public consultations, wider community inclusion in public consultation, and the inclusion of the community’s needs and concerns in public policy documents.

Main projects: Cultural and Urban Activism in Prizren (2014 – 2015), Linking Communities to Justice providers (2014), Urbanism Watch – Urbanism of Prizren Under Constant Watch (2013 – 2014), Civic Participation through Social Media in Gjilan and Prizren (2013 – 2014), Inclusive City - Participatory planning for sustainable urban development in Prizren (2013 – 2015), Cultural Heritage - The central pillar of local and regional sustainable development in Prizren (2013 – 2014), Volunteers of Culture (2012 – 2013), Civic Participation in Drafting and Implementation of Cultural Policies in the Municipality of Prizren (2012 – 2013), Online Transparency of Municipalities of Prizren, Mamusha and Prishtina (2012 - 2015), The Role of Civil Society in Promoting Cultural Heritage (regional project) 2011 – 2013, A Balkan Tale, Ottoman Heritage in the Balkans (regional project) (2011 – 2013), Raising Cultural Awareness of the Youth through Documentaries (2010), Strengthening of Civic Actions for Promotion and Protection of Cultural Heritage (2009), “Culture 2013” Platform (2008 – 2009), Restoration Camps (2007, 2008 & 2009), Open Civic Forums (2007), European Heritage Days in Kosovo (2006, 2007 & 2008), Lilly of Prizren 2006.

Publications: Where is the Cobble-Stone of Prizren (2014), Prishtina Historical Center Counts its Last Days (2014), Public Money as “Dad’s Money” (2014), Youth and Transparency: Progress or stagnation? (2014), Documentary – How active, so transparent? (2014), Guide Municipal Transparency (2014), Laws are not Protecting the Historic Center (2014), Reading the City through Urbanism (2014), Historic Center of Prizren – a(n) (un)protected area (2014), Inclusive City (2014), Who Guards the Guardians – Accountability of civil society in Kosovo (2013), Youth and Transparency: Excluded or ignored? (2013), Urban Planning for Citizens (2013), Civic Participation in Drafting Cultural Policies in Prizren (2013), Prizren “City of Culture” – documentary (2013), Erroneous – An analysis of numerous and continuous faults in cultural heritage (2013), Five analysis of the “Online Transparency” project: 1. A Year of Monitoring for Greater Transparency 2. Natural and Urban Degradation, 3. Adherence to the Law in Local Governance, 4. Good Governance is Not Just a Phrase, 5. Transparency of Local Governance in Prizren (2012 – 2013), Silent Balkans, documentary of the “A Balkan Tale” project (2012), Cultural Life in the Municipality of Prizren (in cooperation with ODA Theater) (2010-2011), Prizren through the Rear-View Mirror - Comparison of old and new photos of Prizren (2009), Volunteering and Cultural Heritage (2009), Low Cost Intervention (2009), Strategic Document on Organizing European Heritage Days in Kosovo

(2008), Cultural Heritage and Cultural Tourism in Prizren (2008), Cultural Spaces in Kosovo (in cooperation with ODA Theater) (2008).

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