



**Non-governmental organization Emancipimi Civil Ma Ndryshe  
EC MA NDRYSHE**

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**Press Release**

**European Commission presents its concern for the systematic degradation of cultural heritage**

Systematic degradation of cultural heritage, with particular emphasis in Prizren, as well as the continuing habit of impunity regarding illegal demolition of monuments are mentioned as concerns within the Kosovo Report of the European Commission (link: [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2016/20161109\\_report\\_kosovo.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2016/20161109_report_kosovo.pdf)). Furthermore, systematic degradation of cultural heritage in Prizren, according to this report, represents an increasing risk to public safety.

"Incidents of illegal demolition of cultural heritage have continued and sanctions against perpetrators have not been enforced. The systematic degradation of heritage, particularly in Prizren, is of great concern and poses an increasing risk to public safety," said the report, in the cultural rights section. The report mentions that the Task Force for the Historic Centre of Prizren that was set up in 2014 for the treatment of illegal constructions has had minimal impact. "Intensified efforts to ensure adequate protection and management of cultural heritage throughout Kosovo are needed," reads the report.

In addition, the European Commission has noted that the Council for Cultural Heritage of Prizren is integrated in the municipal structures and functions in accordance with the relevant law, while noting that in June 2016, the Municipality of Prizren has appointed two additional inspectors for the Historic Centre. It is also noted that the Government has increased its cooperation with civil society regarding the management of cultural heritage.

Considering the concerns addressed in this report, EC Ma Ndryshe considers that all state institutions should take immediate actions to stop the systematic degradation of cultural heritage, in the centre of Prizren in particular and in the whole country in general.

For more, to eliminate the increasing risk to public safety and to put these values in order to have a cultural, social and economic development, immediate actions of all institutional hierarchy in relation to cultural heritage in the Historic Centre of Prizren are necessary.

The project "Spatial Planning Transparency in Prizren" aims to open the spatial planning documents of Prizren, in order to meet the obligations of the Charter for Opening Data, and to increase the level of public accountability in this sector. The opening of the database and of the spatial planning documents will create greater opportunities for supervising the work of public authorities in relation to urban planning, building permits, development planning and management of cultural heritage.

*Sincerely,*

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**SOROS**

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