



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

20 December 2016, Prizren

**Press Release
35 reviewed cases by the Task Force remain forgotten**

Nearly 8 months have passed since the municipal authorities have issued the announcements regarding 35 reviewed cases by the Task Force for the Historic Centre of Prizren, for the identified excesses in relation to building permits in different buildings within this protected area.

With these documents, it was requested to undertake reparation actions in accordance with the standards established by the Law on the Historic Centre of Prizren, in all private facilities where irregularities were found. The parties have had an available time period of 60+30 days for action. Meanwhile, the Inspections Department had informed in late August that they would start a compulsory execution on these cases, in accordance with the recommendations of the Task Force.

But the execution of these issues by the responsible municipal officials was not done. In addition, also the Task Force for the Historic Centre of Prizren has not been assembled since the end of May 2016.

In this way, the state authorities of different levels represented themselves as not serious regarding the handling of urban violations in the Historic Centre of Prizren, since it now means that they did not deal with the "35 cases", where 8 construction cases were in accordance with the project; 1 case has not begun constructing; in 9 cases it was decided to use plastics windows instead of wood; 5 cases of irregularities with fences, showcases, or facade ;11 cases exceeded the construction permit in different forms and in 1 case in gabarit excess.

In April 2016, EC has reacted on this issue, stating that the "35 cases" of the Task Force are for buying time, because the Task Force for the Historic Centre of Prizren, respectively the institutions that make up this body have decided to continue the installed habit for years by the competent authorities to escape from the responsibility to maintain the urban order in the Historic Centre of Prizren. EC had claimed that the establishment of urban order in the Historic Centre of Prizren requires more dynamic actions from the institutions that have legal and constitutional responsibility, to deal with extreme cases, and not to buy time counting constructions that are made in accordance with projects or irregularities with PVC windows.

For these reasons, EC remarks that the central authorities should be more active on the functionalization of the Task Force, while the Prizren municipal authorities must show a greater commitment to the establishment of urban order in the Historic Center.

EC considers that the changing of municipal line directors should have resulted into actions to increase efficiency in the establishment of urban order, as well as the preservation and protection of the Historic Centre of Prizren.

The inability of the authorities to prevent degradation in the Historic Centre of Prizren is confirmed also by the latest report of the European Commission for Kosovo. 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 this report, which also stated that the systematic degradation of cultural heritage in Prizren represents an increasing risk to public safety. At the same time, it emphasized 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. The report stressed that Intensified efforts to ensure adequate protection and management of cultural heritage throughout Kosovo are needed

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,

Valon Xhabali, Project Coordinator

EC Ma Ndryshe NGO

Bulevardi Nëna Terezë 30B H-I-5, 10000 Prishtinë www.ecmandryshe.org

& info@ecmandryshe.org

+381 38 224 967 & +381 29 222 771

The project "Spatial Planning Transparency in Prizren" is financially supported by the Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS).

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