



**Non-Governmental Organization Emancipimi Civil Ma
Ndryshe
EC MA NDRYSHE**

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**PRESS RELEASE
Pavements of Prishtina still occupied**

To identify the level at which the areas dedicated for the movement of pedestrians in general are occupied in Prishtina, and within the activities of “Online Transparency” project, EC Ma Ndryshe during these recent weeks undertook a brief research regarding these problems that pedestrians in Prishtina face on daily basis.

One of the basic components of pedestrians being able to move within urban areas are pavements – pedestrian walkways. Pavements are those areas of public spaces in the city in which, beside the fact that they create a surface suitable for walking in public, they also provide security for the pedestrians against traffic accidents. Good pavements are those that accommodate at least two adults that can walk alongside each-other and are free of horizontal and vertical elements that hinder or fully block movement.

In the city of Prishtina it is specifically these pavements that are parts of those public spaces, which, through various obstacles that they have within them, make movement difficult, and at times even endanger the lives of the pedestrians. These obstacles are usually the result of pavements narrowing, decreasing or being blocked by parked vehicles, extensions of ground floors of the buildings as well as goods, advertising boards and other elements exhibited by shops.

Despite this being a problem of a critical nature, which is spread throughout the city with no exceptions, to illustrate the level at which the pavements are occupied, EC Ma Ndryshe selected three particular roads as samples for the research. The sampling was conducted based on the position of the road in the city, the frequency of vehicle and pedestrian traffic, road size and category. Thus, the roads where this investigation took place are as follows:

- Bulevardi Dëshmorët e Kombit (National Martyrs’ Boulevard) - one of the main axis of the city, which is characterized by a high frequency of vehicle and pedestrian traffic, the pavements of which extend alongside medium collective residences that have commercial ground floors;
- Rustem Statovci str.- a two-way street that branches off from one of the most frequented axis of the city - Agim Ramadani str. Characterized of medium frequency of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, the pavements of which extend alongside a mixed area of individual and collective residences.
- Armend Daci str – a one way residential road, of a medium vehicular and pedestrian traffic, the pavements of which on the one side of the road border medium buildings of collective residences, and on the other side border an area of individual residences.

The investigative methodology includes marking the obstacles along the above-mentioned roads onto a map and illustrating them through photos. The research was conducted during a working day, in good weather conditions and during those hours of the day when there is a higher frequency of both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

This research brought to light that, regardless of the road category and location, the level at which the pavements are occupied during working days is exceptionally high. High category roads, despite having wider pavements, are frequently characterized by extreme narrowing of the movement area, in which case the movement of pedestrians is made harder and the movement of those citizens that use wheelchairs, other assistance, as well as parents pushing strollers made impossible.

The situation on lower category roads is presented as even more difficult, since these areas have pavements that are narrower because of the category of the road, as well as because of the illegal constructions that are frequent in these areas, as well as the great number of various ground floor expansions that take over large portions of the pavement. Because of this, in these areas, due to the obstacles along the pavements, the citizens are forced to walk on the roads.

This research results that the most frequent obstacles along the roads of Prishtina City are:

- Vehicles parking on pavements
- Shop goods exhibited
- Advertising boards on the pavements
- Concrete vases in front of shops
- Various objects that are put up to prevent parking
- Lighting poles, bars, traffic signs and similar elements
- Extensions and expansions of ground floors that extend beyond the size of the building (stairs, plateaus and similar elements).
- Service establishment's furniture placed along the pavements, etc.
- Litter-bins and waste containers,

EC Ma Ndryshe, using the results of this research, drafted maps in which it marked the obstacles recorded along the investigated roads, where the most characteristic ones are illustrated through photos. These maps may be found at this link: <http://ecmandryshe.org/?page=1,17,267>

The recorded obstacles along the pavements of the three roads that were investigated are also evidence of the city-wide phenomenon of a high level of pavements and other public areas being occupied.

Being that the pavements along the roads of Prishtina City are publicly owned areas and that any action of their occupancy by irresponsible citizens or shop-owners is a violation of the law and further hinders and makes normal movement of citizens even more difficult in general; EC Ma Ndryshe invites the Inspectorate of the Municipality of Prishtina to undertake concrete measures to remove all obstacles as well as vacate all pavements so that they may be used by citizens.

EC Ma Ndryshe specifically also recommends to the Inspectorate of the Municipality of Prishtina:

- To remove all built structures (stairs, plateaus and similar) from the ground floors that were adapted into shops, which through their proportions drastically decrease the areas for pedestrian movement,
- To remove concrete vases, other obstacles, advertisements, goods exhibited in front of shops,
- To remove the furniture of service establishments from public spaces, where it hinders free pedestrian movement,
- In cooperation with the Kosovo Police, to prevent vehicles from parking on pavements and other areas dedicated for pedestrians,

- In cooperation with the Directorate of Public Services and Infrastructure of the Municipality of Prishtina to relocate lighting poles, other elements of the infrastructure, litter-bins and waste containers, road signs in such a way where they would not hinder the usage of pavements by the citizens,

The EC Ma Ndryshe project for monitoring the transparency of the Municipality of Prishtina will continue to publish the findings of the monitoring through regular press releases and through the webpage of the project, where all the findings will be posted directly by the monitors. All the findings from the monitoring, including regular press releases and a lot more other information related to the local government of Prishtina shall be published in the webpage of the project www.online-transparency.org.

Thank you,
ark. Rozafa Basha, project coordinator
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