



Non-Governmental Organization Emancipimi Civil Ma Ndryshe
EC MA NDREYSHE

EC MA NDREYSHE ANNUAL PROGRAM 2014

OJQ Emancipimi Civil Ma Ndryshe (EC Ma Ndryshe)
Rr. Saraqët 5, 20000/Prizren ~ Rr. Perandori Dioklician 14 (kati V), 10000/Prishtinë
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I. Context

Year 2014 will find municipalities of Kosova mostly with new leaderships. Although many current mayors are running for consecutive terms, not all of them will remain in power, while considerable changes are expected in municipal assemblies and boards of directors. Nevertheless, citizens will keep on being disconnected from the local governance and decision-making dynamics. Municipality of Prizren makes no exception. Since the local governance system changed in 2008, Prizren has become one of the most frequently criticized municipalities regarding the rule of law. A powerful mayor and executive seem to be quite incapable of bringing qualitative changes in the living standard of Prizren citizens. Moreover, they are producing an unprecedented reality of violating the laws and harming democracy locally. A considerable number of Prizren local government high officials (including the Mayor) are charged for serious crimes and abuse with the power. Such a reality makes democratic and efficient governance almost impossible, thus necessitating the role of civil society and especially the policy oriented watchdog organizations at local level.

The central characteristic of local governments in Kosova is the lack of transparency and accountability, reflected in all spheres of governance. Although there are slight changes and positive indications towards a more open and democratic system of governance, yet Kosova faces too many challenges in breaking the chains of impunity. There is a lot to be done in terms of strengthening judiciary and consolidating the watchdog role of civil society at local level. In addition, the local government of Prizren has been incapable of designing and implementing a developmental agenda for the city and its surroundings. Although the city has a rich cultural potential, the local government has so far been able only to destroy the cultural heritage through uncontrolled and most of the time illegal construction, happening both in the Historic Center of Prizren and outer urban neighborhoods. There is a total lack of interest in development necessary cultural, urban and environmental policies that would enable sustainable development.

Kosova 2013 Progress Report issued by the European Commission has corroborated concerns of civil society in Prizren and Kosova on the degradation of cultural heritage. The report explicitly finds that, "Business interests frequently prevail over interests of the cultural heritage. At the same time, the European Commission, in the section of cultural rights of this Report, has called for "Robust action needs to be taken to stop illegal construction and to correct illegal construction which has already taken place." For a long period of time EC Ma Ndryshe has been closely tracking construction activities in the Historic Centre of Prizren. Throughout this time monitoring staff have provided countless evidence of illegal constructions, which as a consequence are destroying cultural heritage of this zone.

As of the Historic Centre of Prizren, the Progress Report message must be very carefully read and translated into immediate action by the municipal authorities of Prizren as well as central government during 2014. Civil society must further consolidate its capacity to build on these calls, and ensure that state authorities comply with their obligations in ensuring a democratic process of urban development, especially in the Historic Center of the city.

II. EC Ma Ndryshe

NGO EC Ma Ndryshe was established in March 2006. The main goals of the organization are to promote participatory citizenship and democratic governance as well as to utilize cultural resources for sustainable local development. EC Ma Ndryshe is among the founding members, representing Kosova in the South East European Network of organizations working in cultural heritage – SEE Heritage Network. It is also the founder and leader of the Prizren Cultural Heritage Forum and the Network of Culture

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Organizations of Prizren. In addition, EC Ma Ndryshe was among the founding members of the Cultural Forum – Network of Independent Culture Organizations in Kosova.

EC Ma Ndryshe has continuously exercising direct pressure on local government in Prizren to enable the access of the civil society and the citizens for joint decision-making. Apart from the direct participation in public consultation, EC Ma Ndryshe has been advocating on regular basis about the need to respect legal obligations for public consultation, the wide inclusion of communities in public consultation and the need to include concerns and necessities of the community in the public policy documents. Aiming to offer a concrete model of public consultation, EC Ma Ndryshe has run the project “Open Citizens’ Forums”, where the forum instrument was promoted as a functional model of civil participation in decision-taking. Furthermore, through the Prizren Cultural Heritage Forum, EC Ma Ndryshe has set an advocating platform for the cultural community of the city, thus turning the Forum into an active participation in formulating the cultural policies at local level.

Since its establishment, EC Ma Ndryshe has been actively involved in citizens’ empowerment to shape and influence public policies at the local level, with a special focus on cultural policies. Its mission is to establish a civically responsible citizenship at local level and utilize culture as a mean of local economic development. During 2014 EC Ma Ndryshe will focus on strengthening local democracy and efficient governance, which constitute prerequisites for a process of sustainable local development. Due to the specificities of the local context where the organization operates, cultural heritage constitutes EC Ma Ndryshe’s specific area of specialization. The work of organization focuses in three levels of operation, targeting policy issues, empowering the community and applying means of direct intervention for the purpose of protection and promotion of cultural heritage. EC Ma Ndryshe’s strategy of work employs the *culture – participation – development* (resource – mean – result) triangle approach. This approach suggests that culture is a resource to be utilized; participation is a mean of action, while economic development is the desired result.

Fostering economic development, although is not the field of expertise of EC Ma Ndryshe, falls directly within the work strategy of 2012 – 2014 (and the annual program 2014). Indirectly the above mentioned factors lead to the field of local economic (sustainable) development which is closely related to the community engagement; Prizren not only houses many cultural events which bring an enormous income to the city and community itself, but with the new law on historical center Prizren places itself as one of the “protected” area, which will then serve to bluster the economy when it comes to promoting tourism and promoting Prizren as a city of cultural heritage. This will be another milestone achievement when it comes to integrating the cultural potential and resources into the local economic development. Therefore, the program of cultural heritage becomes closely integrated within the public participation and democratic governance areas which will further contribute to the civic engagement and public participation in the decision making process of the city (municipality) itself.

III. Programs and strategic orientation

During 2014 EC Ma Ndryshe will continue to operate with its two main programs: Citizens’ Participation and Cultural Heritage. In addition to its two programmatic pillars, the organization will set the foundations of a research component, which in a natural progression will transform into the third program of the organization, whose objective is to feed programs and projects of the organization through knowledge production. The work of the organization is focused on three activity levels: Address the public policies, Mobilize the community, and Use means of direct intervention for protection and promotion of cultural heritage.

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During 2014, the organization is strategically narrowing its focus to meet more professionally and objectively the demands for greater accountability and transparency in urban planning and development. The transparency monitoring project in Prizren has expanded to Mamusha municipality during 2013 and it is planned to develop an additional component for Prishtina as well (focusing on urbanism). A spin off project of transparency monitoring is the Urbanism Watch project, which will intensify its activity during 2014 and look at the institutional chain of responsibility in urbanism at both levels of governance. The cultural heritage and regional development project will further expand its activities in all municipalities of Prizren region, while the public participation through social media project will transfer its knowledge and experience from Prizren and Gjilan to a third municipality to be identified by the end of 2013. The experience of the Inclusive City project from Prizren constitutes and easily transferable knowledge and contacts have been established with partners to expand the project to Rahovec municipality during 2014.

In brief, during 2014 the organization will focus on strengthening the current projects which portray the professional profiling of EC Ma Ndryshe. A strategic feature of this focus is expanding the geographical scope of these projects, aiming to transfer the knowledge and experience acquired in Prizren to other municipalities as well. The new projects that are planned for 2014 have come out as natural responses to the challenges faced by the current project and initiatives, and they include: Culture and urban activism in Prizren, Place Matters Prizren and Local democracy in Kosova.

Public participation

EC Ma Ndryshe is committed to change the political culture of the Kosovar society, through changing the citizen's approach towards state authority. This transformation can be achieved through empowering the citizens' role in decision-making processes. Namely, EC Ma Ndryshe is committed to create and advance legal mechanisms of participation, to increase the sense of institutional responsibility and transparency in decision-taking as well as overcoming psychological barriers of the society in relation to the state authorities. The local level of engagement for citizens' involvement gives the organization an advantage of action, and consequently increased opportunities to achieve results and concrete change.

Cultural heritage

EC Ma Ndryshe is an organization specialized in cultural heritage. Since its establishment in 2006, the organization has proven itself with concrete action for the promotion and protection of Kosova's cultural heritage, focusing on the city of Prizren. As a result of its performance, EC Ma Ndryshe represents Kosova in the most successful regional network of Cultural Heritage called the South-East European Heritage Network (seeheritage.org). A key engagement of the organization in the field of cultural heritage is the promotion of this heritage emphasizing its developmental potential.

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Research component

EC Ma Ndryshe is currently engaged in a wide institutional development process that will enable the organization to become more effective in its advocacy efforts by expanding and strengthening the research component of the organization. The research component is crucial to further strengthening the work of EC Ma Ndryshe, as an agent of social and cultural change in Kosova. By strengthening its research component, which feeds the two main program areas, it will directly contribute to the developing of open and just society as well as improve the decision-making processes and build practices for transparency and accountability of local and central government.

During the last 5 years, EC Ma Ndryshe has successfully produced a number of research products that have raised awareness about issues of local governance; transparency etc. The research had impact at the local and national level. EC Ma Ndryshe sees the research as an important tool to inform its work but also the work of other stakeholders. In its strategic document EC Ma Ndryshe further consolidates its research and publication capacities by initiating the establishment of the research component (program). Meanwhile, the quantity and quality of research products is planned to rise substantially, as a concrete way to strengthen advocacy efforts

In order to position itself as a credible interlocutor for the government and other public actors EC Ma Ndryshe will undertake thorough research, and develop thematic expertise to inform public debates in a responsible and accurate manner. The research component does not stand alone as a project, but rather as a cross cutting component which aims at producing evidence based research which will inform and feed each program, project and activity. The overall objective of this component is to raise the research capacity of EC Ma Ndryshe for sustainable development, effective program planning, and implementation in order to engage effectively in successful advocacy efforts towards achieving participatory citizenship and democratic governance in Kosova. To strengthen the role of EC Ma Ndryshe as an effective advocacy organization that affects change to benefit citizens at the local and Kosova-wide level.

IV. Project and publications

EC Ma Ndryshe has implemented a number of projects in its almost eight years of its existence, possessing an extensive record of activities and achievements. The following are the main projects of the organization: Urbanism Watch – Urbanism of Prizren under scrutiny (2013 – 2014), Public participation through social media in Prizren and Gjilan (2013 – 2014), Inclusive City – participatory planning for sustainable urban development in Prizren (2013 – 2015), Cultural heritage – the central pillar of sustainable local and regional development in Prizren (2013 – 2014), Culture Volunteers (2012 – 2013), Public participation in local cultural policies (2012 – 2013), Online transparency of Prizren, Mamusha and Prishtina municipalities (2012 – 2014), The civil society's role in promoting cultural heritage (regional project, 2011 – 2013); A Balkan tale, the Otoman heritage in the Balkans (regional project, 2011 – 2013); Raising the cultural awareness among the young people through documentaries (2010); Strengthening of civic activity in promoting and protecting the Cultural Heritage (2009); the "Culture 2013" Platform (2008-2009), Restoration Camps (2007, 2008 & 2009); Open citizens' Forums (2007); European Heritage Days in Kosova (2006, 2007 & 2008); The Prizren Orchid Song Festival (2006).

The publications include: Who guards the guardian – accountability of civil society in Kosova (2013), Youth and Transparency – excluded or ignored? (2013), Urban planning for citizens (2013), Public participation in local cultural policies in Prizren (2013), Prizren, "city of culture" – documentary film (2013), Erroneous – analysis on numerous and continuous errors in cultural heritage (2013), Prizren,

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where civilizations meet (cultural catalog of Prizren) (2013), One year monitoring for more transparency (2013), Natural and Urban degradation (2012), Adherence to the law in local governance (2012), Good governance is not a buzzword (2012), Transparency of local governance in Prizren (2012), Silent Balkans, documentary film (2012), Cultural Life in Prizren Municipality (in cooperation with the ODA Theater, 2010-2011), Low Cost Intervention (2009), Voluntarism and Cultural Heritage (2009), Prizren in Retrospect (comparative photo-catalog of Prizren, 2009), Strategic document on Organizing the Days of European Heritage in Kosova (2008); Cultural Heritage and Culturism in Prizren (2008).

V. Objectives 2014

The overall objective of EC Ma Ndryshe for 2014 is to influence democratic governance as a prerequisite for sustainable local development in Prizren and other municipalities where the organization works and plans to expand. The specific objectives of the organization's work include:

- To raise the transparency of local governance and open the process of decision-making to community,
- To utilize cultural potential and resources for the needs of sustainable local development, and
- To promote an active and civically responsible citizenship.

VI. Methods of work

EC Ma Ndryshe utilizes a combined work methodology. Although it is mainly considered an advocacy and grass-roots organization, EC Ma Ndryshe will strengthen its think-tank (policy analysis) methods of work as well. One of the strongest components of organization's work strategy is its focus in internal networking (within civil society) and direct policy dialogue with local government for the necessary reforms. The following are the methods of work that EC Ma Ndryshe employs:

- Monitoring local governance – an ongoing effort which is not limited only to the municipal bodies, but to other relevant state institutions as well, including judiciary, police, central government, etc. Monitoring generated evidence-based information and equips EC Ma Ndryshe with a variety of tools, incentives and background for its advocacy, policy reform and democratic governance activities,
- Awareness raising and community mobilization – the central pillar of EC Ma Ndryshe's work philosophy is community's self-initiative. In this respect, we regularly target the general public (and specific community groups) through campaigns and relevant outreach activities that aim at mobilizing community around sensitive issues of city governance and development,
- Advocacy – a variety of tools are utilized to exercise direct pressure on local and central government, as well as other state institutions. Advocacy activities of EC Ma Ndryshe are centered at transparent and democratic local governance, local cultural policies and development and protection of cultural and natural heritage of Prizren,
- Policy dialogue – the organization does not employ a guerilla approach, it rather engages – whenever the will is present – into a policy dialogue process with the local government. This process is usually built around designing, drafting and delivering concrete policy solution, signing of MoUs, jointly preparing and implementing policy documents (and relevant strategic documents),
- Networking – EC Ma Ndryshe is bringing a new dynamics to the civil society of Prizren by becoming a focal point of synergies between CSOs and relevant stakeholders at local level. We believe in the power of the organized many, and regularly promote the idea of sectoral networking of civil society,
- Research – there is a solid number of research documents that EC Ma Ndryshe published so far. Research and publication are becoming more and more important in the work of civil society.

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- Direct intervention – cultural heritage protection requires direct intervention methodology, which will be one of the methods of work during upcoming years. Since direct intervention in cultural heritage monuments is an expensive undertaking, the respective activities will be carried out depending on the available funding.

VII. Projects and initiatives 2014

Main projects of the organization within the public participation and cultural heritage programs during 2014 include:

1. **On-line transparency of PMP municipalities (2014 – 2015)** – The purpose of the project is to contribute to strengthening the good governance in Prizren, Mamusha and Prishtina municipalities, by creating mechanisms that would contribute in increased transparency of the executive branch,
2. **Local democracy in Kosova: revisiting mayoral system of governance (research study) (2014 – 2015)** – The research study will analyze the implementation and the functioning of the mayoral system of local governance in the municipality of Prizren, after the change of institutional relations between the Mayor and other municipal bodies in 2008. The research will aim at identifying the system's changes in relation to the efficiency of public services offerings and stimulate the debate on the functioning of the mayoral system of local governance,
3. **The inclusive city: participatory planning for sustainable urban development in Prizren (2014 – 2015)** – The project objective is to encourage and raise the participation of under-represented community groups at all levels of urban planning for an increased standard of living. The intermediate objectives are: to identify and translate community needs and interests into relevant and implemented urban plans, to institutionalize (formalize) the participatory urban planning methodology, and to cultivate the sense of ownership for and belonging to the surrounding environment,
4. **Cultural heritage, the central pillar of sustainable regional development in Prizren (2013 – 2015)** – The overall objective of the project is to valorise cultural heritage and utilize its potential for the sustainable development of Prizren region. The project aims to mobilize the cultural heritage community of Prizren region and engage them effectively in its protection and promotion. A special focus of the project is facilitation of the dialogue between civil society (and community at large) and local governments in utilizing cultural heritage for developmental ends, as well as to promote the integrated approach of cultural heritage conservation as an effective methodology for local development,
5. **Urbanism Watch – Urbanism of Prizren under scrutiny (2013 – 2015)** – The project aim at installing a permanent monitoring system of the state activity (both levels of governance) in the area of urban management and development of Prizren, with a particular focus on Historic

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Center of the city. Through the monitoring findings, this system will be complemented with the components of publication and advocacy to ensure urbanistic order in Prizren,

6. **Public participation through social media in Prizren and Gjilan (2013 – 2014)** – The goal of the project is to encourage Prizren's youth (junior and senior high school students and university students) to become engaged with local government in the decision making process through an innovative outreach and education program that will help them understand their civic rights and responsibilities,
7. **Cultural and urban activism in Prizren (2014)** – Project aims to stimulate societal debate about the role of cultural activism in urban transformation of the city, based on the principles of democratic governance. Essentially, it is a cultural and artistic intervention initiative that tackles creatively current challenges of urban development and democratic reform in Prizren,
8. **Place Matters Prizren (2014 – 2015)** – Place Matters is an initiative to create an alternative inventory of the most significant places in Prizren, with a special focus on its urban area. The specific objectives of the project include: identifying places that have cultural and historical significance for the community, promoting the places that are significant for the community, and creating the inventory of places that matter,
9. **Cultural Heritage Foundation of Prizren (2014 – 2015)** – The project is both a response to the lack of sufficient funding for the Historic Center of Prizren and an awakening call for the citizens to cultivate a sense of belonging and commitment to city's cultural heritage. It falls under direct intervention activities of the organization and utilizes the Czech Republic's experience with 'public collections' for cultural heritage through an established partnership with a Czech partner organization.

Other initiatives

In parallel to its projects, EC Ma Ndryshe will take and engage into the following initiatives and activities during 2014:

- Petition against urban degradation – the signatures collected during August – December 2013 period were handed to the local government of Prizren. During 2014, the organization will regularly track the fulfillment of citizens' requests set in the petition and issue periodic progress reports,
- Cultural policy development (local and central) – the organization engaged in the policy dialogue for culture during last two years through the Network of Culture Organizations in Prizren (towards local government) and Cultural Forum (towards Ministry of Culture). During upcoming two years the policy process is expected to produce tangible results, namely cultural development strategies and accompanying policies at both levels of government,
- Regional cooperation – the regional level activity of the organization will be performed as part of SEE Heritage Network as well as specific initiatives and projects with partners from Albania, Macedonia and Serbia, targeting mainly culture, cultural heritage and tourism,
- Volunteering culture – during 2013 the organization implemented a volunteering initiative, recruiting and placing young volunteers into cultural institutions of Prizren. This initiative will enter into its second phase during 2014, while at the same time, there will be additional efforts to initiate a voluntary service covering the region of Prizren,

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- Cultural partnership with other countries – a successful activity of 2013 was the cultural program in Slovakia, where EC Ma Ndryshe presented the cultural and tourist offer of Prizren to Slovak public. Similar programs will be organized during 2014 targeting countries of region and the European Union.

VIII. Expected outcomes

Based on the annual objectives of the organization, as well as the list of projects and initiatives (ongoing and new ones) the following results are expected for 2014:

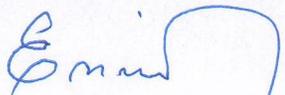
- Tangible policy amendments, changes and reforms with regard to transparency in local governance,
- Increased public pressure towards the executive body, in the form of access to official documents, participation in the official meetings, submission of petitions, and other forms of participation,
- Increased public interest in decision-making through participation in public consultations, budget hearings and other forms of direct participation,
- Initiation of necessary policy changes with regard to developing a developmental agenda for Prizren based on its cultural potential (cultural policies, Culture Strategy, Tourism Strategy, etc.),
- Greater community mobilization (especially culture and youth) in articulating and advocating for their needs and interests,
- Informed and engaged debates on the sensitive issues of local governance and development,
- Increased public awareness and institutional care for the cultural heritage monuments.

IX. Networking

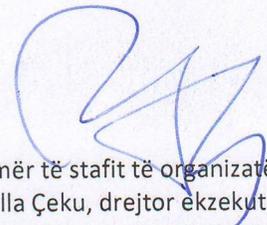
EC Ma Ndryshe is a founding member of the strongest regional network of cultural heritage organizations SEE Heritage Network (www.seeheritage.org). Members of the network are the most active Balkan NGOs operating in the field of cultural heritage. EC Ma Ndryshe is the founder of the Forum of Cultural Heritage of Prizren, where all organizations and cultural institutions of Prizren meet and deliberate.

The organization is one of the founding members of the largest network of independent culture organizations in Kosova, Cultural Forum (www.forumikulturor.net). At the same time, EC Ma Ndryshe is the founder of the Culture Organizations Network Prizren (www.rrok-pz.net), as well as a member of CiviKos Platform (www.civikos.net), the largest network of non-governmental organizations that are involved in the dialogue between civil society and government.

Programi vjetor për vitin 2014 u miratua në takimin vjetor të Kuvendit të Anëtarëve të EC Ma Ndryshe, mbajtur më 20 dhjetor 2013, në Prizren



Në emër të Kuvendit të Anëtarëve
Enver Batiu, kryesues i Kuvendit të Anëtarëve



Në emër të stafit të organizatës
Hajrulla Çeku, drejtor ekzekutiv



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