

Results of the research about the cultural life in  
**MUNICIPALITY OF PRIZREN**



Prepared by:



ODA Theatre  
2010 -2011 Prishtina

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- ◆ NGO “Ec ma ndryshe” - Prizren
- ◆ Urim Ukimeri – Coordinator in the sector of culture, Prizren
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Local Partner: Municipality of Prizren and NGO “Ec ma ndryshe”.

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ODA sincerely appreciates the contribution of Municipality of Prizren, the Mayor of Prizren Z. Ramadan Muja, his team, and especially Mr. Urim Ukimeri, coordinator for culture that understood the importance of the Project and fully supported the implementation of the project.

At the same time, ODA also appreciates the local team led by Mr. Valon Xhabali from the NGO “Ec ma ndryshe” who helped in the research process at the municipality of Prizren.

ODA would like to thank the members of Youth Network of Prizren, artists and activists in the field of culture who have contributed with their ideas and participation during implementation of the research in the Municipality of Prizren.

Special gratefulness ODA directs to all citizens of Prizren who through their answers to the questionnaire have helped us with qualitative information about the cultural life in the municipality.

Last but not least, this project could not be accomplished without the financial support of the Swiss Cultural Programme and Olof Palme International Center.

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report about the results of the research in Prizren is to specifically inform all of us about the cultural life in the municipality and by determining the current situation to assist in the process of planning the strategy for the development of culture.

Let us remind you that the word culture originally comes from the Latin word "Colere" meaning "Cultivate" and one of the definitions is "common complex behaviors, values, goals and practices that characterize an institution, organization or specific group" there for it is seen as "a specific way of living that people in different sides of the world use to characteristically present their creativity and experiences." Culture is presented through art, literature, traditions and attitudes of members of a society and cultural values are providing identity to the society.

So in this aspect the goal of our project is to help municipalities to plan strategies which will further cultivate the values of their citizens.

To plan this strategy we needed the support from the municipal structures of Prizren, and then as the second step in achieving this goal it was necessary to gather information's about the current cultural situation in the municipality, therefore we see as very important the results from the process of research.

It is the joint goal of all beneficiaries of the project to finalize by the end of 2011 the strategy for development of the culture in Prizren and begin with its implementation.

Research was implemented in the municipality of Prizren in the period of June – December 2010 from the NGO ODA, with the continues support from Mr. Urim Ukimeri, coordinator of the culture and Mr. Valon Xhabalit from NGO "Ec ma ndryshe".

In the survey are included the Mayor of Prizren, representatives of municipal structures, representatives of the Youth Network, the artists from different cultural areas and 450 citizens who live in this municipality.

This research is part of a three-year project "Culture for / from all" in which apart from NovoBrdo, Gjilan and Prizren, as representatives of the Republic of Kosova, also are included three municipalities from Republic of Macedonia.

With Respect,  
NGO ODA

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## LOCAL CULTURAL POLICIES

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Culture should be the dynamic strength, challenging and independent based on the freedom of expression. All Citizens should have opportunity to participate in the cultural life. Creativity, diversity and artistic quality should be integral part for developing the society.

Society needs strong cultural life, through own potential they should inspire and move ahead because the culture contributes in two directions, in strengthening individuals and development of the society in general. Art should be allowed to be developed in its own way and should have space for new perspectives in the cultural heritage.

To achieve these objectives, cultural policies should:

- ◆ Promote opportunity for all to enjoy culture, participate in the educational programs and develop their creative abilities;
- ◆ Promote quality and artistic renovation;
- ◆ Promote dynamism of the existing heritage, used actually and the heritage that we are aiming to create.
- ◆ Promote cultural exchanges in the international and intercultural level as well as the cooperation in the cultural sector;
- ◆ To focus special attention to the rights of the children and youth for culture.

Society should be characterized and identified based on the richness of the artistic expressions that they own, regardless of the field and manner of expression.

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## CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

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Culture in many European and International Countries is considered as the powerful engine of the social and economic development. Latest years in many countries in Europe and around the world, the interest for the cultural industries as the economic power is obviously increased. European Commission indentified culture and its sectors as the main economic and social power in Europe. There is a little difference or no difference at all if we consider the incomes that big industrial cities generate comparing to the incomes that generate big cultural cities.

Cultural specifics of the cities are transformed to the bricks in developing their economic status and become the element that influences the business community to attract resources, people and capital.

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## **PROJECT ‘CULTURE FOR/FROM ALL’**

### ***Cooperative project of the Cultural Policies between Kosova and Macedonia***

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Project is based in assumption that the culture is not just the additional option for the Municipalities in Kosova and Macedonia, but it is the essential component for their social unity, for the improvement of the life quality of the citizens despite their ethnic, religious, educational and social background or their contribution to the economical development.

If the culture is about the identity, life style, behavior, ethics, governance and the manner how we live our daily life, then, it should not be difficult to be accepted. If we agree to have cultural policies or to relate culture with the acts that will lead to the development then we accept, in the determined or suggestive way, the logic of planning. Planning therefore is not only related to the “heavy infrastructure” but also with the soft and creative infrastructure, with the needs and vision of the citizens.

Project aims to **ensure progress in the cultural life of 6 municipalities in Kosova and Macedonia by developing necessary political infrastructure and integration of those policies within the programs of municipalities in both countries.**

By doing this, Project will develop capacities of the different groups from the selected municipalities, provoke productivity and cooperation of the artists, share gathered experiences between municipalities and other parties in the region and EU, and in the end it will:

- ◆ Facilitate and encourage participation of the citizens in the process of developing policies and decision making in local level;
- ◆ Identify and develop system of instruments in the field of culture which will lead to the systematic cultural development of the municipalities;
- ◆ Expand capacities of the artists and cultural operators to influence more in the processes of creating cultural policies in the local and national level in both countries and to encourage obvious critical approach towards the processes in the society;
- ◆ Improve regional cooperation between the municipalities of both countries involved in the project through the exchange of the artistic works, learning’s and experiences gathered during the three years joint process.

### ***Selection of the Municipalities***

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During the process of selecting municipalities, NGO ODA used variety of criteria’s, starting from the multi ethnic structures of their inhabitants, their economical and social development, size and cultural offer. We will list them in the row, by the size Prizren is the second city in Kosova, with very reach historical and cultural heritage for the Kosova conditions, Gjilan in the other hand is middle sized city, also with the multi ethnic character, once with very developed economy, and a center with the potential of human resources for development of cultural activities, and Novoberdo is the multi ethnic city, small but very ancient, with not developed economy and recently gained the status of the municipality.

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## METHODOLOGY OF THE WORK RELATED TO THE RESEARCH AND ANALYZING THE CULTURAL LIFE IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PRIZREN.

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### 1. Field Work

- ◆ Interview with the representatives of the municipal governing structures (qualitative analyses of the answers during the interviews)
- ◆ Questionnaires dedicated to the citizens of the municipality of Prizren (Quantitative analyses of data's)
- ◆ Meeting with focus groups – debate about the cultural situation (qualitative and quantitative analyses of the data's)

### 2. Office work – qualitative and quantitative analyzes of the gathered data's.

- ◆ Interviews with the representatives of the municipal governing structures (qualitative analyzes of the answers during the interviews)

Interviews with the representatives of the governing structures of the municipality of Prizren are done with the aim to gather information's about the opinion, attitudes and vision of the municipal governmental structures about the development of culture. Questions formulated from the NGO ODA Team were focused in the:

- Information about the municipality
- Opinions about culture and its development
- Civil society sector
- Minorities
- Media
- Business sector

- ◆ Questions dedicated to the citizens of the municipality of Prizren (Quantitative analyzes of the data's)

Questions for the citizens are compiled from the NGO ODA Team in cooperation with the partners from PAC Multimedia and their objective is to gather information's and the results of those information's will show the situation in the municipality of the Prizren, including the cultural offer and more important the proposals of the citizens for cultural development. Processing of the data's is done with the advanced statistic program and the results will be presented bellow in this report.

- ◆ Meeting with Focus Groups – debate about the cultural situation (qualitative and quantitative analyzes of the data).

Goal of meeting with the focus groups was to debate about the development of the culture in the municipalities, focusing on the actual problems, opinions for solutions and proposals for cultural development. Selection of the focus groups in the municipalities was done based on the criteria's of functioning the work on the group and how much they are active in the municipality.

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## **RESEARCH RESULTS**

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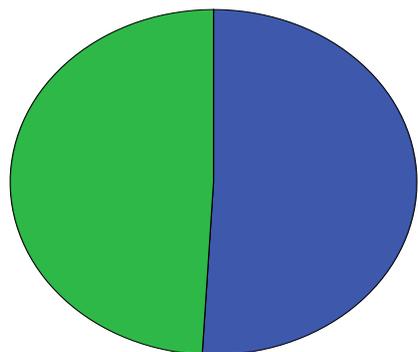
### **1. Results of questionnaires with citizens**

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Questionnaires are compiled from NGO ODA by giving the special attention to gender, age, ethnic background, marital status, social status and level of education. Research is implemented during the period June – November 2010 and for its implementation there were engaged active members of youth organizations who were previously trained and instructed. The criteria for the validity of the questionnaires was the fulfillment (answer) of all the questions and the total number of the citizens that answered the questionnaires was 320, from this number 14 were not valid since all the questions were not answered. The total number of the questionnaires entered in the statistical program was 300, same as we have planned in the beginning.

In the following pages we will present the results:

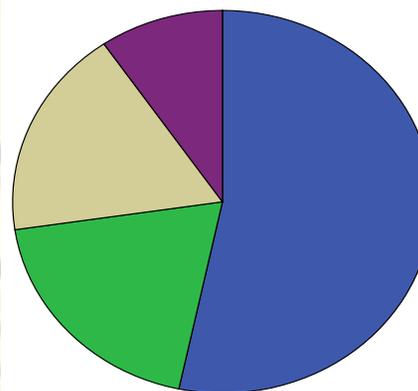
Gjinia



Gender:

- In Prizren from 450 citizens, 229 or 50.9 % were males and 221 or 49.1 % were Females.

Mosha

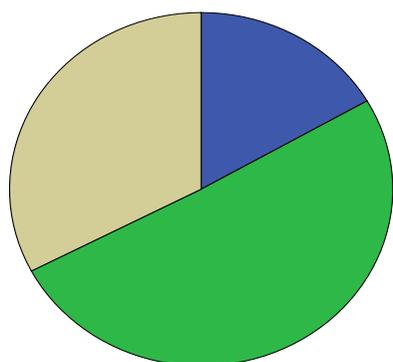


Age:

Age of the respondents was:

- 18 up to 28 - 240 persons or 53.3%
- 28 up to 38 - 87 persons or 19.3 %
- 38 up to 48 - 80 persons or 17.8 %
- Over 48 - 43 persons or 9.6 %

Arsimi

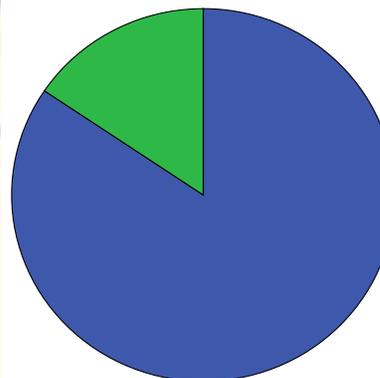


Educational level:

Educational level of respondents was:

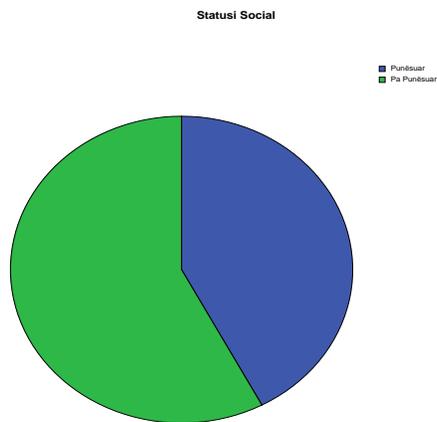
- Primary: 75 persons or 16.7 %
- Secondary: 228 persons or 50.7 %
- Superior: 147 persons or 32.7 %

Nacionaliteti



Ethnic background:

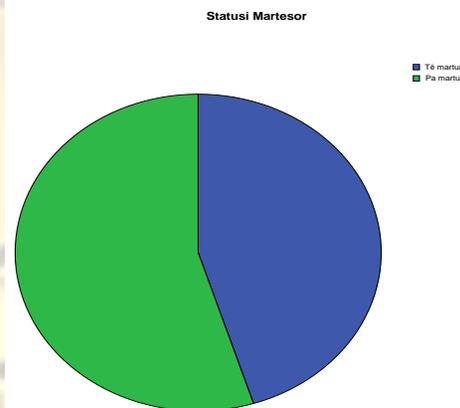
Albanians: 380 persons or 84.4 %  
Other: 70 persons or 15.6 %



**Social status:**

Employed:  
190 persons or 42.2 %

Unemployed:  
260 persons or 57.8 %

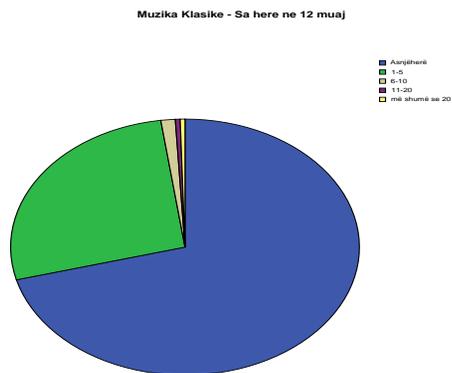


**Marital Status:**

Married  
203 persons or 45.1 %

Not Married  
247 persons or 54.9 %

1. In the following questions citizens were asked about their visits to the cultural events and the number of the visits:



a) For the number of Classic music concerts that they attended:

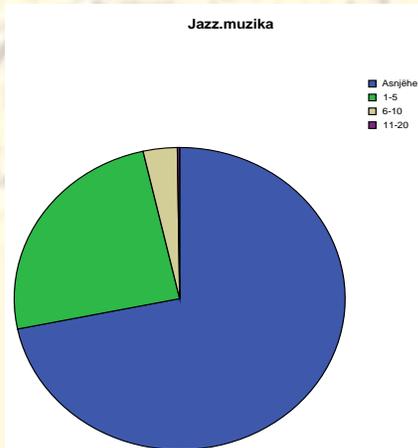
Never: 319 persons or 70.9 %

1 up to 5 times: 121 persons or 26.9 %

5 up to 10 times: 6 persons 1.3 %

10 up to 20 times: 2 persons 0.4 %

Over 20 times: 2 persons or 0.4 %



b) For the number of Jazz concerts that they attended:

Never: 323 persons or 71.8 %

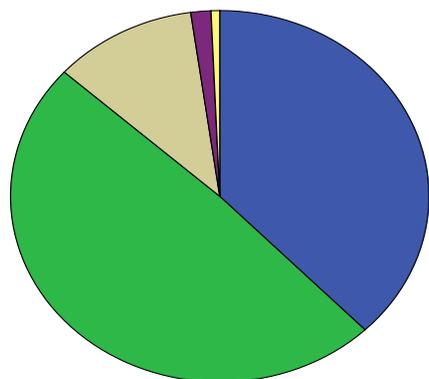
1 up to 5 times: 111 persons or 24.7 %

6 up to 10 times: 15 persons or 3.3 %

11 up to 20 times: 1 person or 0.2 %

Over 20 times: 0 persons or 0.0 %

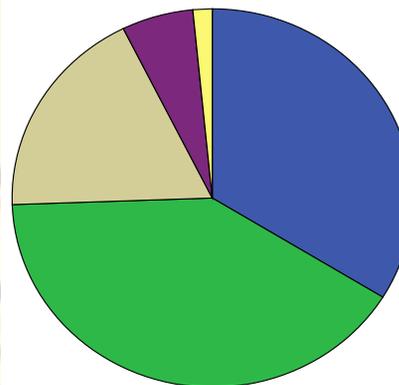
Teater



c) Visiting Theatre performances:

Never:  
170 persons or 37.8 %  
1 up to 5 times:  
220 persons or 48.9 %  
6 up to 10 times:  
50 persons or 11.1 %  
11 up to 20 times:  
7 persons or 1.6 %  
Over 20 times:  
3 persons or 0.7 %

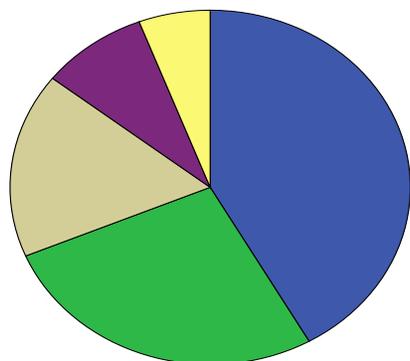
Muzika.folklorike



d) Attendance in the concerts of Folk music:

Never:  
152 persons or 33.8 %  
1 up to 5 times:  
183 persons or 40.7 %  
6 up to 10 times:  
82 persons or 18.2 %  
11 up to 20 times:  
26 persons or 5.8 %  
Over 20 times:  
7 persons or 1.6 %

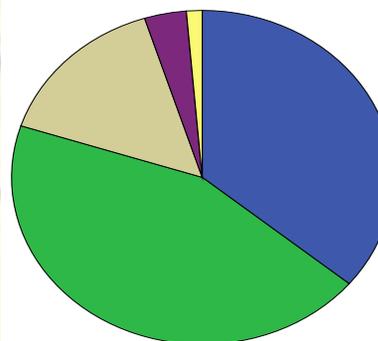
Pop muzika



e) Attendance in the Pop Concerts:

Never:  
188 persons or 41.8 %  
1 up to 5 times:  
121 persons or 26.9 %  
6 up to 10 times:  
76 persons or 16.9 %  
11 up to 20 times:  
39 persons or 8.7 %  
Over 20 times:  
26 persons or 5.8 %

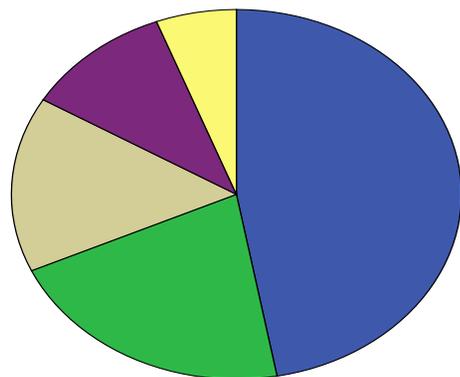
Kinema



f) Visit to the cinema:

Never:  
162 persons or 36.0 %  
1 up to 5 times:  
198 persons or 44.0 %  
6 up to 10 times:  
68 persons or 15.1 %  
11 up to 20 times:  
16 persons or 3.6 %  
Over 20 times:  
6 persons or 1.3 %

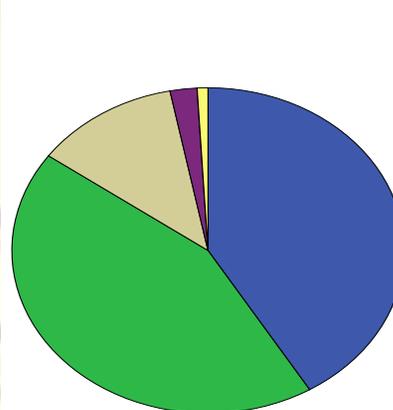
Techno Party



g) Attendance in "Techno Party":

Never:  
212 persons or 47.1 %  
1 up to 5 times:  
95 persons or 21.1 %  
6 up to 10 times:  
69 persons or 15.3 %  
11 up to 20 times:  
48 persons or 10.7 %  
Over 20 times:  
26 persons or 5.8 %

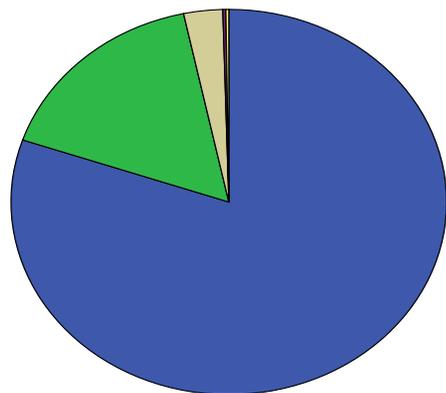
Vizita Muzeut



h) Visit to museums, galleries or exhibitions:

Never:  
186 persons or 41.3 %  
1 up to 5 times:  
196 persons or 43.6 %  
6 up to 10 times:  
54 persons or 12.0 %  
11 up to 20 times:  
10 persons or 2.2 %  
Over 20 times:  
4 persons or 0.9 %

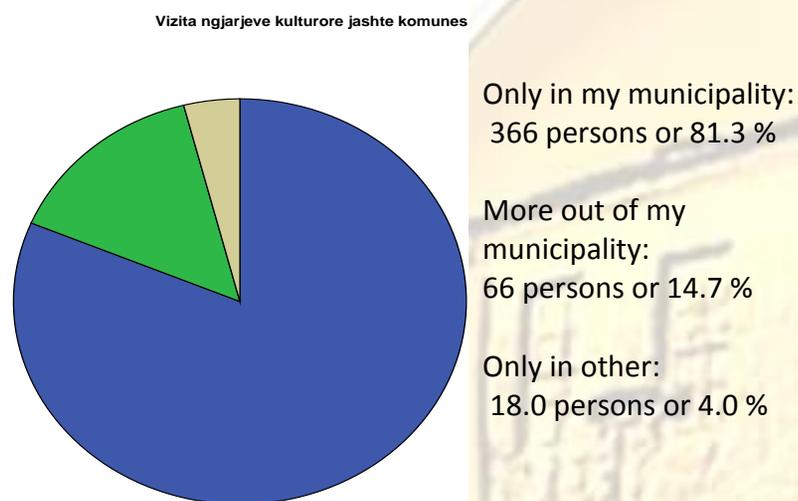
Balet, Opera, Filharmoni



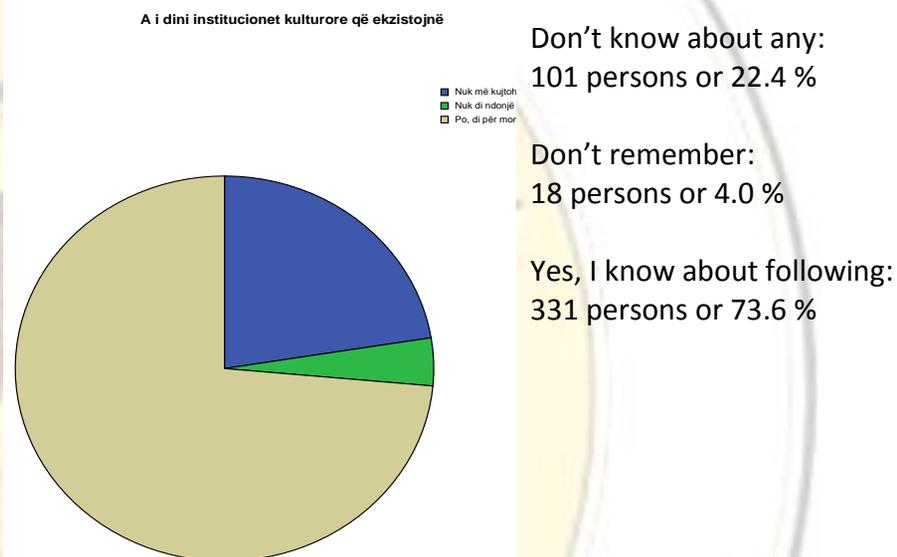
i) Visiting Ballet, opera, Philharmonic concerts:

Never:  
361 persons or 80.2 %  
1 up to 5 times:  
74 persons or 16.4 %  
6 up to 10 times:  
13 persons or 2.9 %  
11 up to 20 times:  
1 person or 0.2 %  
Over 20 times:  
1 person or 0.2 %

2. In the question how often they visit cultural events out of their municipality, the answers were as follow:



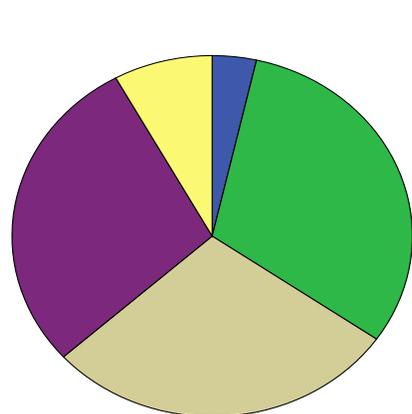
3. We were interested to know how much citizens know about the institutions in their municipalities, and in this case answers were:



From the citizens that had knowledge about the institutions (monuments) it was requested to mention concretely the specific institution or monument, and we can state that 100 % of the cases they mentioned Old Castle, Theatre, and in few cases it was mentioned the city cinema and library.

4. When you visited those monuments?

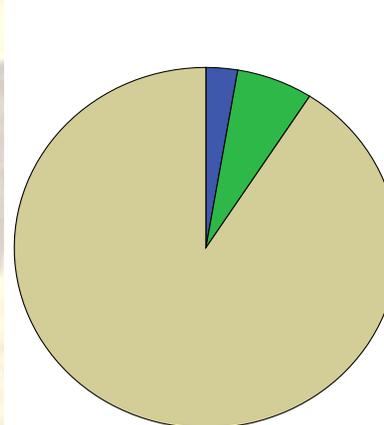
Kur per here te fundit i vizituar institucionet



I never visited them: 16 persons or 3.6 %  
 Before less than a month: 140 persons or 31.1 %  
 Between 3 up to 6 months: 129 persons or 28.7 %  
 Before 1 Year: 129 persons or 28.7 %  
 Don't know: 36 persons or 8.0 %

5. About the knowledge of the citizens related to the historic monuments of culture in their municipality:

A dini per monumente Kulturo-historike

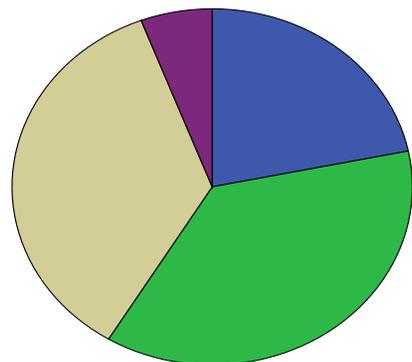


Don't know: 12 persons or 2.7 %  
 Don't remember: 29 persons or 6.4 %  
 Yes: 409 persons or 90.9 %

In this case as well, citizens mentioned monuments such as Old Castle, but there were cases when they mentioned "The house of Prizren League" Hamam (old Turkish bath), religious buildings, etc.

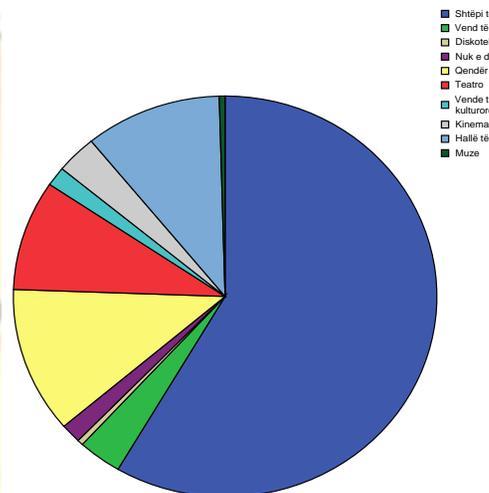
## 6. When you visited the historic monuments of culture?

Per here te fundit vizituar monumentet



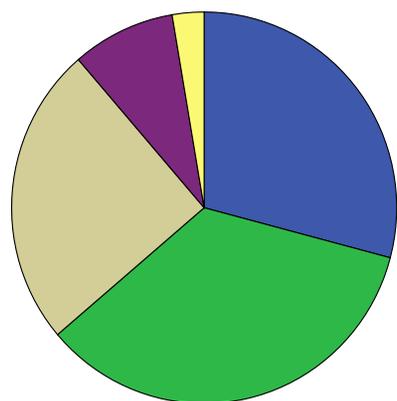
Before 1 month: 98 persons or 21.8 %  
 Between 3 up to 6 months: 166 persons or 36.9 %  
 Over 1 year: 160 persons or 35.6 %  
 Can't remember/Never: 26 persons or 5.8 %

## 7. Where the cultural activities are organized in Prizren?



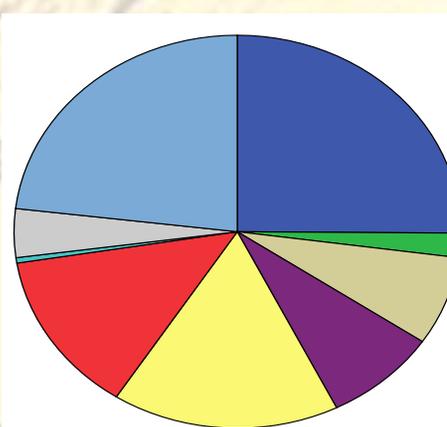
House of culture: 263 persons or 58.4 %  
 Cultural center: 53 persons or 11.8 %  
 Theater: 40 persons or 8.9 %  
 Independent places/NGO: 7 persons or 1.6 %  
 Cinema: 14 persons or 3.1 %  
 Sports Center: 47 persons or 10.4 %  
 Museums: 2 persons or 0.4 %  
 Open places: 15 person or 3.3 %  
 Disco clubs: 2 persons or 0.4 %  
 Don't know: 7 persons or 1.6 %

## 8. How much you are interested in the Theater performances produced by Theater of Prizren:



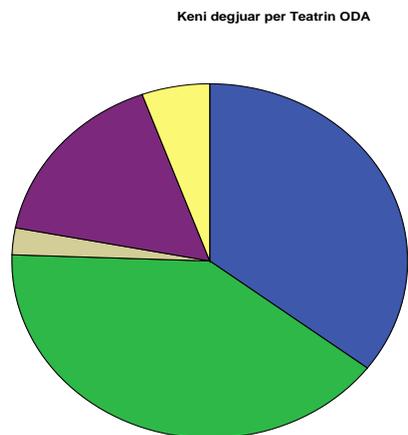
Not satisfied: 131 persons or 29.1 %  
 Not satisfied enough: 156 persons or 34.7 %  
 Moderately satisfied: 112 persons or 24.9 %  
 Quite satisfied: 39 persons or 8.7 %  
 Excellent: 12 persons or 2.7 %

## 9. We requested citizen's opinion, what should be the characteristic of the Prizren in the cultural aspect? Here are the answers:



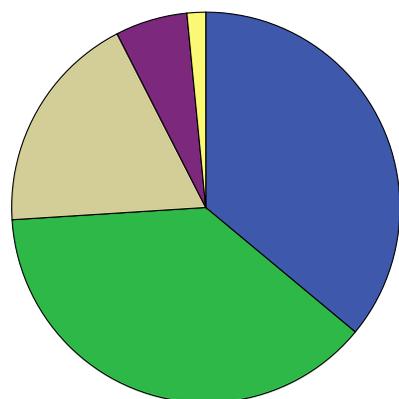
Architecture and old historic monuments: 113 persons or 25.1 %  
 Religious buildings: 9 persons or 2.0 %  
 Cultural tourism: 33 persons or 7.3 %  
 Theatre: 37 persons or 8.2 %  
 Folk Music: 74 persons or 16.4 %  
 Dokufest: 60 persons or 13.3 %  
 Handcrafts: 2 persons or 0.4 %  
 League of Prizren: 18 persons or 4.0 %  
 Don't know: 104 persons or 23.1 %

10. Did you hear about the ODA Theatre from Prishtina, if yes what is your opinion about the work of this institution?



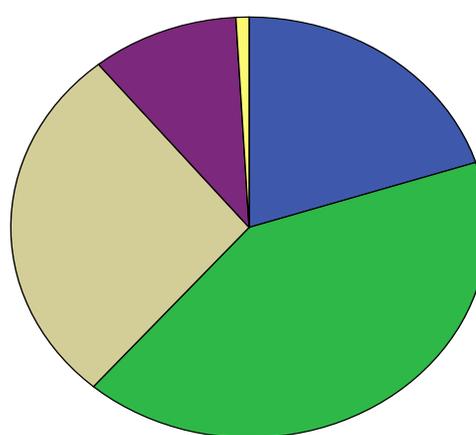
Never heard: 159 persons or 35.3 %  
 Yes, I heard but I don't know much about their work: 181 persons or 40.2 %  
 Yes, I heard and I don't like their work: 11 persons or 2.4 %  
 Yes, I heard and I like their work: 74 persons or 16.4 %  
 Po, I heard and I like very much their work: 25 persons or 5.6 %

12. Are the citizens invited from the municipality? We tried to find the answer by asking how much they are invited from the municipality regarding issues for development of culture?



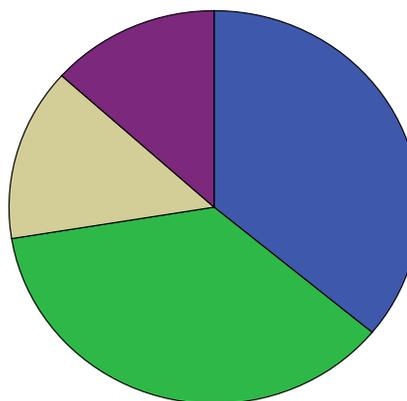
Not involved at all: 162 persons or 36.0 %  
 Not enough: 171 persons or 38.0 %  
 Medium: 83 persons or 18.4 %  
 Almost always: 27 persons or 6.0 %  
 Always: 7 persons or 1.6 %

11. The opinion of citizens about the involvement of municipality in organizing cultural life, here are the answers:



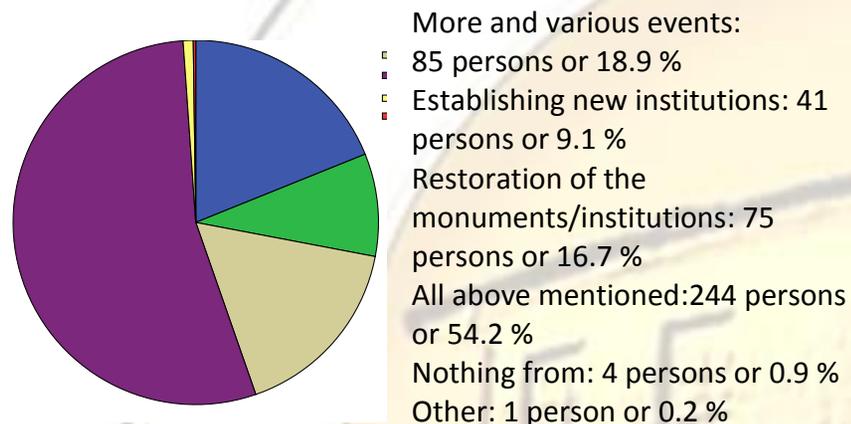
Not involved: 90 persons or 20.0 %  
 Not enough: 186 persons or 41.3 %  
 Medium: 125 persons or 27.8 %  
 Enough involved: 45 persons or 10.0 %  
 Excellent: 4 persons or 0.9 %

13. Do you know about the web page of municipality and services that provides?

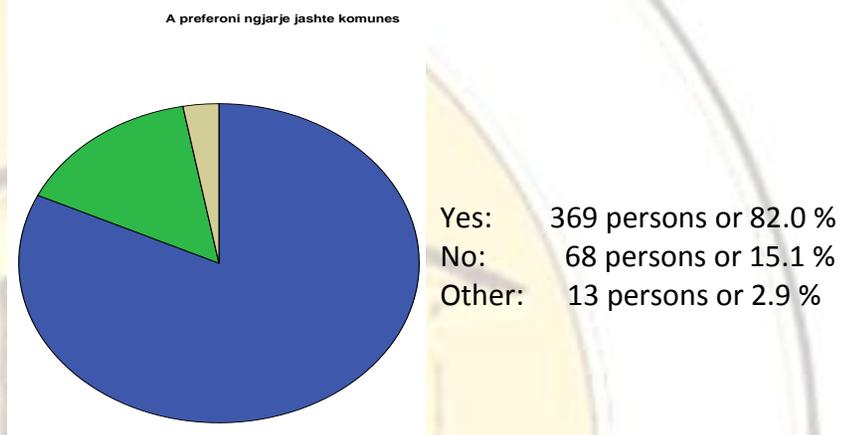


Don't know about the web page of Prizren: 162 persons or 36 %  
 I heard but never visited: 164 persons or 36.4 %  
 I visited but don't know much about the services: 83 persons or 14.2 %  
 I visited and I'm informed about the services: 34 persons or 13.3 %

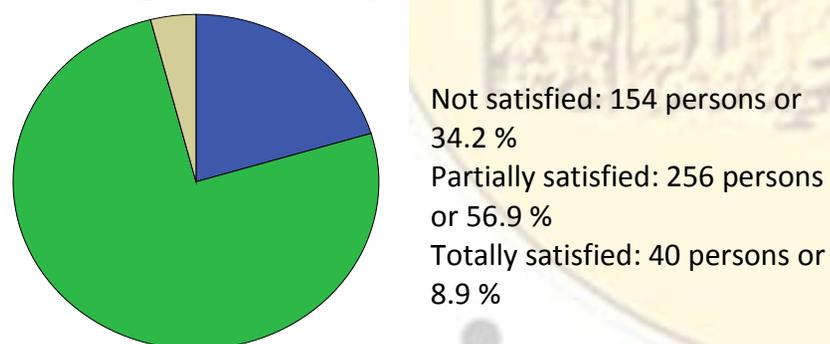
14. We were interested about the ideas of citizens related to the development of the culture in Prizren? Here are their opinions:



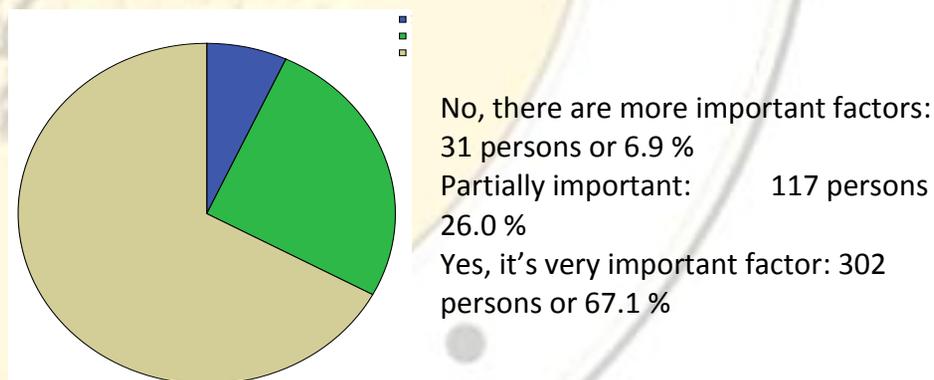
15. Would the citizens of the Prizren prefer to visit cultural events in other places or municipalities?



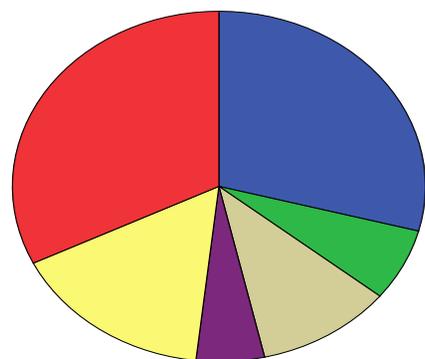
16. How much are citizens satisfied with their own involvement in organizing cultural life in Prizren?



17. What citizens think about culture being important factor for development of Prizren?



## 18. What are expectations of citizens from the mayor of Municipality of Prizren related to the development of culture?



- Të zhvilloj kulturën
- Të mbroj me ligj monumentet e vjetra
- Të krijoj kushte për artistët dhe të rinjtë
- Restaurimin e monumenteve
- Të angazhohet më shumë për kulturën
- Asgjë tje re

To develop culture: 131 persons or 29.1 %

To protect by law our heritage: 30 persons or 6.7 %

To create conditions for artists and youth: 48 persons or 10.7%

Restoration of the monuments: 24 persons or 5.3 %

To be more engaged for culture: 72 persons or 16.0 %

Nothing: 145 persons or 32.2 %

Since there were various answers we tried to classify them in the groups that are presented above.

*Comment: There were answers that had nothing to do with the culture there for we classified them in "Nothing", for example answers such are: to build factories, roads, etc.*

### **Summary of suggestions:**

At the suggestions of the citizens of Prizren dominated the desire to build a new cinema and the renovation and opening of the theater, there were not lacking the suggestions for cooperation of Municipality with NGOs in the sphere of culture, supporting cultural activities of minorities, support craft, etc..

As very interesting we evaluated the request to create a strategy for cultural tourism, the creation of an Agency "tourist guide," the organization of public debates on the development of culture and the extent of cultural activities in villages.

## **2. Results of the oriented interviews**

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Interviews were conducted with the Mayor of Prizren, Mr. Ramadan Muja and Coordinator of the Cultural Sector in the Municipality of Prizren, Mr. Urim Ukimeri and Mrs. Adelina Beqiri, members of Municipal Assembly in Prizren. Interviews included questions on several topics but focused on cultural issues. We will present you the answer of the following interviews:

### **INTERVIEW**

**Mr. Ramadan Muja**

**Mayor of the Municipality of Prizren**

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#### **About the municipality of Prizren.-**

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- Although no official census since 1981 the exact number of residents is not known, a figure which refers to the time of UNMIK recorded 240,000 residents in the municipality of Prizren, according to which figure the budget is allocated from the central level, but it is believed that only the city has that number.
  - There are signs that the population is growing even though not with the former trends, but the number has increased.
  - Construction of the highway is considered a strong potential for economic development which enables the connection of Prizren and the Adriatic Sea and other parts of Albania and Macedonia.
  - Establishment of the University of Prizren is considered as a factor that will affect the economic but also cultural development, since students will also require cultural life in the city.
  - Budgeting capital investments is growing every year, 2 more millions will be invested in 2011 and this will contribute to cultural development as well.
  - Many archaeological remains have been lost due to increased water in Vermica area due to increased flows from Lake Fierza, then because the new constructions covered Vlashnje location.
  - There were cases of deviating the highway with the goal to preserve archaeological remains.

#### **Culture in Prizren.-**

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- The city of Prizren has numerous cultural monuments as the city around 2500 years old, the Castle in the city is the evidence.
- Preservation of monuments that have remained in Prizren after the demolition of architectural heritage from the Serbian government in the name of urban development. Many buildings are made on the trail of our

heritage.

- Development of economic tourism by putting signs and landmarks for orientation.
- As far as artistic activities, it's still functioning the cultural and artistic group (society) "Agimi" established after World War II, then many sports clubs, we mark dates such are Independence Day, then the League of Prizren, celebrated with many artistic activities since they are very important day's for Prizren.
- Also traditional music festival "Zambaku Prizren" .
- In Prizren we organize festival "Dokufest" where many artists gather from around the world; this event is strongly supported from the municipality. This activity also has economic components which contribute to the municipal economy.
- Theatre of Prizren has a distinguished history and it is factor of pride for the municipality, where except the events organized from the amateur cultural workers this professional institution offers to the citizens Theater performances.
- All activities are supported by the municipality on the basis of financial opportunities and based on the economical development we will increase the support for the cultural sector.
- Special priority is the development of touristic economy, related to this goal we established separate department and with the support of international donors we have plans for developing rural tourism, in this field we already organized for two years the Prizren Cheese Fair followed with the artistic activity from the folkloric groups, this event is also supported from the municipality.
- Lack of infrastructure is known as a major problem for cultural development in the municipality.
- Construction of Art Center with an internal space of 3500 m2 is a space that will be available for art and culture, other efforts will be made for the establishment other buildings with public-private partnership that will serve the arts and culture in other neighborhoods of the municipality.
- The arrival of new professional staff in Culture is potential and perspective for cultural development.
- Preservation of cultural folk traditions and values are an important asset that represents a good potential for the municipality of Prizren.
- Despite the loss of many artifacts, however, some valuable exhibits were saved and are in the fund of the Archaeological Museum in Prizren.
- Participation of citizens in decision-making is not as we desire but there is a possibility that they can be involved through various associations, and the president is often on the field work to listen the citizens' needs and they are interested in cultural development.
- There is great potential of artistic events and also cultural heritage that seduces the citizens of other municipalities across the territory of Kosova to visit Prizren.
- Cooperation with the Ministry of Culture mainly focuses on cultural heritage and the Institute for Protection of Monuments in Prizren.
- There are efforts to transfer the Ministry of Culture in Prizren.

### **Civil Society -**

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- Civil society is involved in the decision making of the Municipal Assembly through their representatives in public debates organized by the Municipality.
- Nearly 23% of capital investments are for minorities and the treatment of minorities in cultural sector is equal to the others.

### **Media.-**

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- Good relationship exists with the media through public relations office and generally well reflected in the media work of the municipality.
- The work of the municipality is transparent and the public has access to official documents.

### **Business sector.-**

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- We facilitate the business registration in Prizren; in agreement with the Ministry of Trade there is no need to go to Pristina for business registration.
- It is obvious interest for the development of trade and handicrafts as well as small and medium businesses.
- Business is stimulated also by reducing the municipal taxes.

### **International Donors.-**

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- It's a good relationship with international donors and many investments are made by these donors, almost as much as the municipality invests in capital investments during the year (around 14 million Euros in 2011).
- Mainly donations are from European governments and the European Commission.

### **Mayor Muja**

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- Lives in neighborhood Ortakoll,
- Active in politics since 2002

- Likes music, played the violin and mandolin, prefers serious music.
- Visits theater with great pleasure.
- Reads the daily press and interested in published new books.
- Likes scientific journals for history and archeology.
- Mostly likes historical books.
- During the weekends prefers recreation in nature and walks an average of about 10-15km.
- Drink coffee with friends mainly in the “Shatërvan” (Downtown).

**Interview –**

**Mr. Urim Ukimeri**

**Coordinator for the sector of culture**

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**About the municipality of Prizren.-**

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- Number of inhabitants in the Municipality of Prizren is slightly increasing.
- There is a strategic plan for culture.
- Prizren sees in the future as a center of culture and art, which will promote the historical heritage values and cultural tourism.
- Issue that should be mentioned is the provision of regular budget lines for financial support of the projects in the sphere of culture
- The municipality tends to gradually increase the budget, within the normal trend of the business community, good geographical position and human resources.
- His opinion is that the priorities of the municipality must be investments in the infrastructure, revitalization of certain branches of economy through subsidies (agriculture, viticulture, and livestock), promotion of cultural and natural heritage, creating an environment for economic activities of small and medium enterprises.
- Prizren sees with great potential of natural and human resources, good geographical position,
- His opinion is that citizens are not involved enough but for this situation he doesn't blame Municipality.
- As a “tool” to involve citizens are organized public debates with citizens.
- Believes that Prizren has enough human potential to achieve the vision they have for the development of the municipality, its mission and goals.

## **Culture in Prizren.-**

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- Thinks that the municipality has attractive cultural offer not only for citizens of other municipalities, but also from the countries of the region and beyond and counts the events such are Dokufest, Zambaku Prizrenit, Hasi Jehon, fluturat, Rock live, art fest international, and other events.
- Explains that they have proposed that the Ministry of Culture should be based in Prizren and adds that the municipality has the infrastructural capacities to accommodate the Ministry of Culture.
- Relatively good is his opinion about the cooperation with the Ministry of Culture.
- Thinks that the culture is an important factor for development when it comes to the city of Prizren.
- Thinks that the municipality as a potential that should use has cultural heritage and natural resources.
- After 15 years Prizren sees with the public green spaces, the use of alternative energy, protected environment from pollution, and social welfare.
- Thinks that currently there is lacks of more powerful financial support from the entities and individuals in the field of culture and the development of cultural infrastructure.
- Main priorities are compiling the local cultural policies and supporting the cultural and artistic projects.

## **Civil society -**

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- Explains that in Prizren there is cooperation with civil society organizations.
- He would include in decision-making representatives from various forms of citizens organizations (domestic councils, individuals, civil society organizations) and adds that they have already, in some cases proved this.
- For the municipality of Prizren says that there is an active civil society scene, and the same are occasionally supported based on project applications.

## **Minorities. -**

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- For minorities explains that the municipality develops policies to support and promote their cultural values.
- While for funding he informs us that 22.8% of subsidies and transfers are allocated to minorities.
- Proposes that we should work on the integration of minorities in the cultural life with the majority.
- Think that there are no tensions between different ethnic groups in the municipality of Prizren since the city of Prizren is known for tolerance, ethnic, and religious, its multi-cultural city.
- About gays shows no knowledge for this unusual category of human being in Prizren. Thinks homosexuality is a kind of pathological degeneration, a phenomenon of the grotesque, cynical and even hated for our mentality.

## Media.-

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Thinks that the national media is concentrated mainly in center on the other hand peripheral municipalities are much less presented in them.

- For cooperation with local media explains that it is mutual and almost daily. Providing information about cultural events and not only for them is important pillar for the editorial programs of local media in Prizren, even more they are the best arbitrators for evaluating our work and our commitments.
- Thinks that the municipality of Prizren is well presented in the local media but for the national media it's desired to be more present.
- For public relations explains that they have developed a strategy and informs us that there is a special office only for communication and information, or public relations office.

## Business Sector -

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- About the business sector explains that they managed to create mutual and correct relationships and up to now they had partnerships at local level.
- Some businesses in various cases have been sponsors of the municipality and carried out many joint projects which are now organized every year.
- About the cooperation with international organizations he mentioned: "FPHI" – Canadian Foundation for the International Historic Heritage, "CHWB" - Swedish Association for Cultural Heritage without Borders, "PSF" - Heritage without Borders, based in Paris, the European Commission Liaison Office, and other international entities.
- And, related to the grants from foreign donors to support the projects he mentioned the European Commission, TIKa, FPHI, etc..

**Interview –  
Mrs. Adelina Beqiri  
Councilor in the Municipal Assembly**

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**About the culture.-**

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- A strategic plan for development of culture does not exist or at least as such is not presented to the municipal legislation. But there is a Local Development Plan which includes the cultural sector as an important component for development of the city.
- Her vision for Prizren is to be built on the roots and its ancient traditions to become the economic center for trade, investment, business, tourism and culture. Prizren will be proud for a local government accountable and committed, which collaborates with its citizens and stakeholders in creating an attractive environment for business development and encourage the best use of local economic potential, natural and human resources especially in tourism and agriculture, while maintaining the values of cultural heritage.
- Acute and the largest problems within the municipality of Prizren are: The high rate of unemployment, illegal construction and uncontrolled exploitation of resources, inadequate institutional coordination of activities between the business community and local government, Use of insufficient human resources, lack of coordination between different actors in local and regional level and inadequate public services.
- While the advantages and positive circumstances in the municipality of Prizren are: strategic geographic position, adequate water sources, heavy infrastructure in good shape compared to most municipalities of Kosova, the city attractive to visitors and potential investors (historical sites, quiet town, favorable climatic conditions), population educated and trained (thanks to the high school and university in Prizren)
- Large number of people working in a foreign country / western Europe
- Very broad Cultural-historical heritage are potential for development and expansion of tourism and tourism-related businesses
- Young population by age (availability of inexpensive labor force)
- According to her influences from outside which have negative effects in the municipality are: political instability, an incomplete legal infrastructure that should support the market economy, Unfair Competition (application of a tax regime that discourages domestic production), Field of undefined responsibilities between local and central administration. Limited progress towards meeting European standards and not being recognized from 5 EU countries
- Priorities of the municipality of Prizren for the following 4 years are: economic development, reforming education, improving infrastructure, providing better health services, preservation of cultural heritage and youth empowerment.
- Thinks that the potentials of the municipality of Prizren, which can be used for development of the municipality are: rich with mineral and human resources and experience in traditional activities in agriculture, food processing and handicrafts;

## **Culture in Prizren.-**

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- Thinks that the municipality with its cultural offer in this moment has the potential to attract the attention of citizens from other municipalities and cities, examples such as "Dokufest", which gathers many guests from all cities of Kosova. Then "40 Bunarfest", " Meetings of Gjeçov" in Zym, and the music festival "Lily" of Prizren, Hasi echoes in Gjonaj, etc.
  - Thinks that the institutions in the field of culture should be transferred in Prizren since this is considered the cultural capital city of Albanians, in this case she mentioned the transfer of the Ministry of Culture in Prizren.
  - Agrees that in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture they should establish a working group which will gradually be transfer the Ministry in Prizren, so far cooperation with the ministry is not considered as effective.
- Thinks that culture is a key segment for the development of Prizren in particular they should use the resources of cultural and natural tourism in the municipality of Prizren.
  - Prizren after 15 years will be with the ancient tradition, the economic center for trade, investment, business, tourism and culture, with local government responsible and committed, which collaborates with its citizens.
  - She would like to offer to the citizens a functional city cinema, library with sufficient capacity, sustainable calendar of cultural activities (annual), etc. Priorities to be established in terms of culture: Adopt a law to protect the historic area of Prizren, completion of Art Center, Building / functionality of a cinema and restoration of cultural heritage objects
  - Would change the approach of officials in the department of culture, the Ministry of Culture and the allocated budget, by making at least 5% of municipal budget to be allocated for the sector of culture.

## **Civil Society. -**

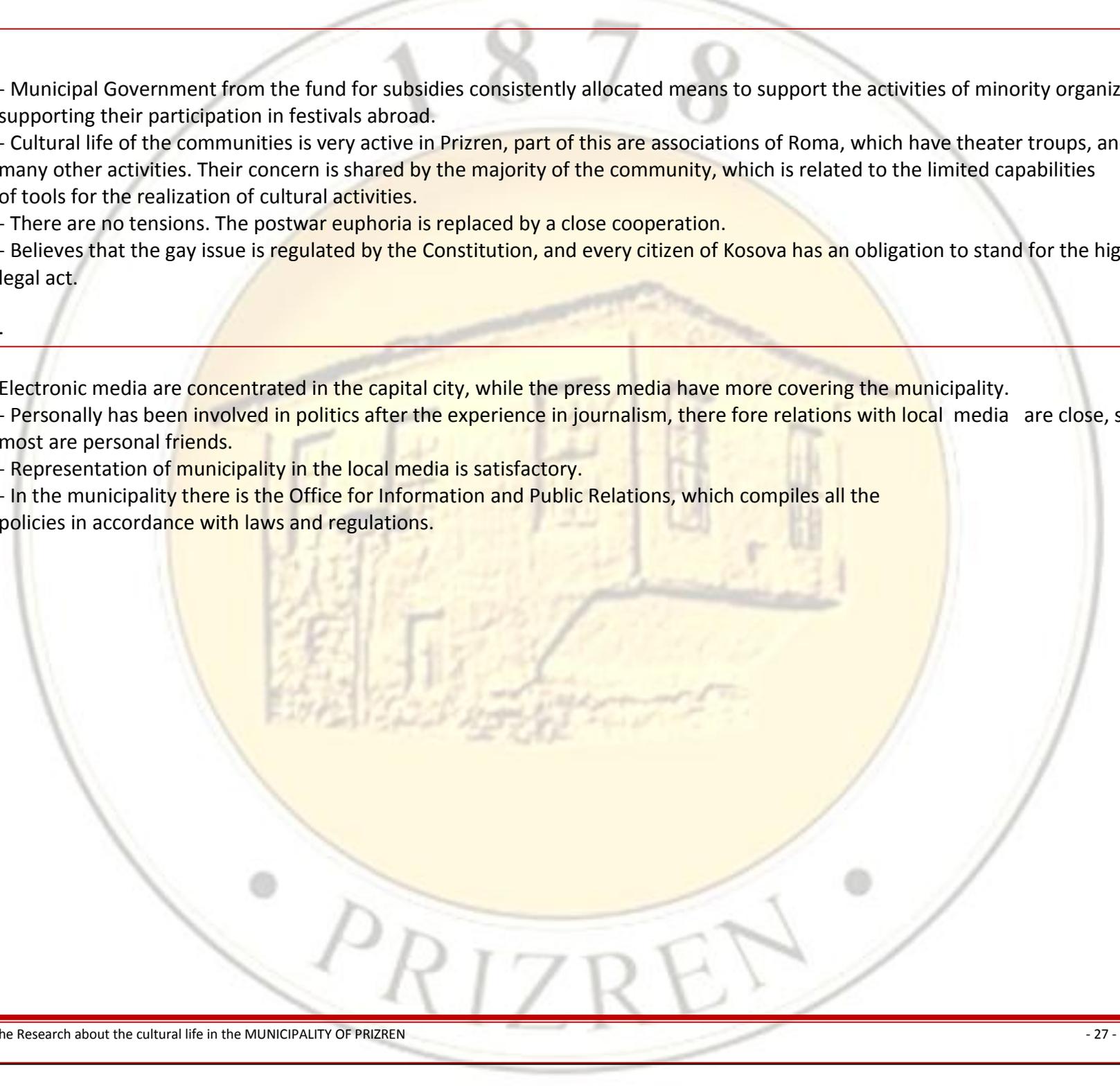
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- Significant parts of civil society are involved, or at least there are consultations before the adoption of certain decisions. A scene of civil society is relatively active. Associated with its support in lobbying local government to support their activities, but also to present their proposals to the municipal authorities.

## **Minorities. -**

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- Prizren is multi ethnic and multi cultural city. It is worth mentioning that after the war the Department for Culture is led by community members. In three terms member of Turkish community and currently the mandate is for a member of the Bosnian community.
  - Overall close to 23% of the annual municipal budget of Prizren, is allocated for minority projects.

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- Municipal Government from the fund for subsidies consistently allocated means to support the activities of minority organizations, supporting their participation in festivals abroad.
  - Cultural life of the communities is very active in Prizren, part of this are associations of Roma, which have theater troupes, and many other activities. Their concern is shared by the majority of the community, which is related to the limited capabilities of tools for the realization of cultural activities.
  - There are no tensions. The postwar euphoria is replaced by a close cooperation.
  - Believes that the gay issue is regulated by the Constitution, and every citizen of Kosova has an obligation to stand for the highest legal act.

#### **Media.-**

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- Electronic media are concentrated in the capital city, while the press media have more covering the municipality.
- Personally has been involved in politics after the experience in journalism, therefore relations with local media are close, since most are personal friends.
- Representation of municipality in the local media is satisfactory.
- In the municipality there is the Office for Information and Public Relations, which compiles all the policies in accordance with laws and regulations.

### 3. Results of the meetings with Focus Groups

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- Focus groups meetings as the third part of this research were organized in Prizren on the premises of "Cultural Heritage without Borders". The first group was the group of artists and all participants in the group were engaged in artistic activities. They belong to different ages and profiles. This focus group was organized by the coordinator and local partner NGOs from Prizren "Ec ma ndryshe."  
Focus group was focused on questions about existing cultural offer in Prizren, the problems faced by institutions, NGOs and independent initiatives in cultural, artistic fields in municipality of Prizren, the interest of public, relations and communication between cultural actors, citizens and local government.
- The other group consisted of young people of all communities living in the municipality of Prizren. This focus group was organized by the coordinator and local partner NGOs from Prizren " Ec ma ndryshe." Focus group has been focused on questions about existing cultural offer in Prizren, the public interest in general and youth in particular to cultural events, relationships and communication between citizens and local government in the field of culture.

#### FOCUS GROUP 1. (Artists)

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Organized in Prishtina on 22.10.2010

Premises of CHWB.

No. of participants: 8

Gender: Male 8

Age: 30-60

Education: Superior (University)

Profession: Artists (3) , Cultural operators, directors of the NGO's that work on the culture (5).

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These are main conclusions raised by the group:

#### 1. CULTURAL OFFER IN PRIZREN.

- Theatre of Prizren has been functioning better in the past and it was concluded that the offer of this institution is decreased in the large scale, adding the fact of the absence of a building for professional theater; theater actually works in the House of Culture, this building is used for many activities other than theater.

- Also other traditional activities as "Zambaku Prizrenit", then the activity of Cultural Group "Agimi" are considered as degraded and they offer very little to the public, both in quantitative and qualitative as well, and it's seen as the amateur offer.
- Many institutions remain closed to the public, some for reasons of prolonged renovation for years and others for not having any of the activities.
- Musical concerts are extremely rare and hardly remember the last real concert.
- Lack of space for cinema, concert hall, gallery (excluding Hammam Prizren as inadequate space, but used for display) stand out as major deficiencies of cultural life.
- The independent initiatives in the cultural field face great difficulties in funding and support and as such remain unrealized, or they can not be accomplished as designed.
- In Prizren works Theatre of the Turkish community and even with additional funds from the state of Turkey and Turkish KFOR they didn't have sustainable activities and its estimated as self-satisfactory.
- The role that should have municipality in support of these activities often becomes a barrier and municipal government is sharply criticized for the lack of support.
- As good examples it was mentioned Dokufest, as a traditional event already influential in the city of Prizren, City Library despite the lack of adequate space they have qualitative management and they have rich fund of books, survival of the Artists Colony, some Musical groups qualified as activities that strengthen the cultural life in Prizren.
- Publication of the City Guide of Prizren including the cultural sphere is considered as a good publication, which provides somewhat realistic picture of what is offered in Prizren.

## 2. PROBLEMS IN THE CULTURAL FIELD.

- The fact of a municipal budget of approximately EUR 25 millions that shares for Culture, Youth and Sports 100 000 Euros is presented as the basic problem that opens the chapter of problems in this area:
- Unwillingness of institutions and the Mayor's reaction not even to accept a meeting aside for not supporting the project was raised, based on individual experiences of participants in the focus group.
- Escape of the professional staff in Pristina - lack of opportunities to be engaged in their professions.
- Management of the Department of Culture among the minorities as a political agreement for 10 years in a row causes many problems, among other communication problems due to not knowing the Albanian and English language.
- Art Center - a project that started by the Municipality as a result of pressure for lack of cultural spaces, now ceased, although it was promised to be completed in August 2009. This approach sharply criticized the municipal government for not being transparent for the destination of this building, for not consulting with stakeholders in the field of culture and there is great mistrust about the fate of this facility because of danger of turning into a business center with limited space for cultural

activities, non-serious approach is illustrated by the fact that an object with capital investment of 1.5 million Euros allocated only 2000 Euros for the movie devices which was the core of this initiative.

- Generally regarded as insufficient level of information for public debates by the Municipality, information is shared in the small tables in the city and as the result many citizens are not informed.
- The decentralization process has left many cultural institutions dependent from the municipality, while in the past the law obliged the municipality to participate with financing 49% (51% from central), now the Municipality decides to support with very small symbolic amounts.
- Unwillingness of municipal government to functionalize existing facilities, such as the old cinema that doesn't work many years now, or other items that are not functional and can be used for artistic and cultural activities.

### 3. NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Organized in Unions - Associations
  - Consider a need for larger support of cultural life in Prizren, in addition to financial support, the recommended strategy of converting unused space for cultural purposes to enrich the cultural life of the citizens thus completing the activities that are being developed in municipality of Prizren.
  - Strongly recommends the organization of the cultural sector aiming to have a common voice in order to represent more powerfully the interests of the cultural sector and protect the right of citizens for cultural life.

#### **FOCUS GROUP 2. (Youth)**

Organized in Prizren on 22.10.2010,

Premises of CHWB

No. of participants: 6

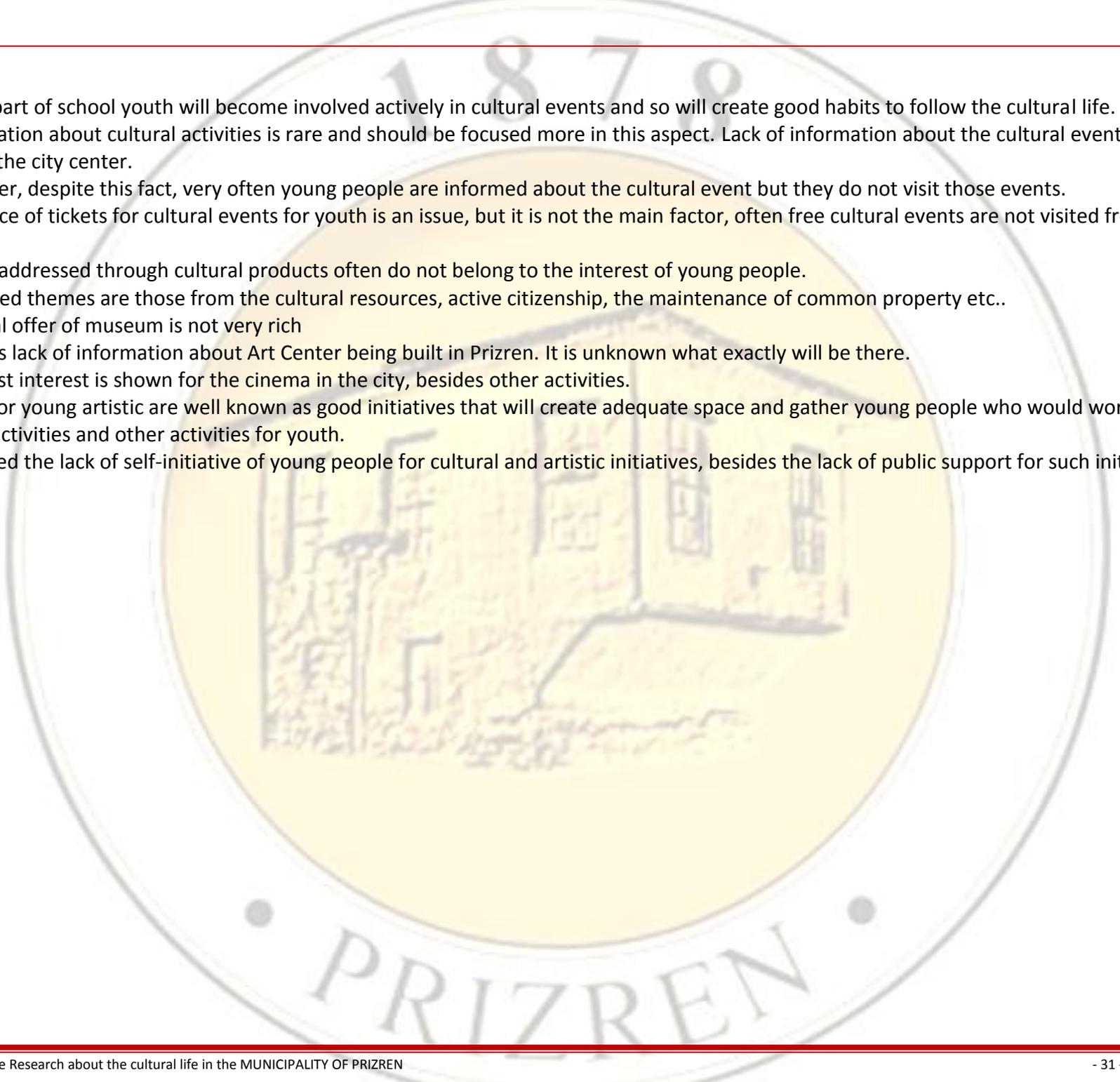
Gender: Male 4; Female 2

Age: 15-18

Profession: Students (1), Youth activists (5).

These are the main conclusions of this group:

- Although regarded as a cultural city from outside, while in fact there are no cultural events, except Dokufest that stand out as the biggest cultural events, and several other sporadic events.
- In general, there is not much interested in cultural events when they happen occasionally.
- Larger offers could increase the interest of visitors.
- Rare cultural events affect in the habit of many people for not being active in cultural activities.
- Artistic activities must be an active part of school life.

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- The seal of the Municipality of Prizren is a large, circular emblem in the background. It features a yellow center with a blue outline of a building. Above the building, the year '1879' is written in a large, stylized font. Below the building, the word 'PRIZREN' is written in a bold, serif font. The seal is surrounded by a white border with two small black dots on either side.
- Being part of school youth will become involved actively in cultural events and so will create good habits to follow the cultural life.
  - Information about cultural activities is rare and should be focused more in this aspect. Lack of information about the cultural events outside the city center.
  - However, despite this fact, very often young people are informed about the cultural event but they do not visit those events.
  - The price of tickets for cultural events for youth is an issue, but it is not the main factor, often free cultural events are not visited from youth.
  - Topics addressed through cultural products often do not belong to the interest of young people.
  - Preferred themes are those from the cultural resources, active citizenship, the maintenance of common property etc..
  - Cultural offer of museum is not very rich
  - There is lack of information about Art Center being built in Prizren. It is unknown what exactly will be there.
  - Greatest interest is shown for the cinema in the city, besides other activities.
  - Clubs for young artistic are well known as good initiatives that will create adequate space and gather young people who would work on artistic activities and other activities for youth.
  - Criticized the lack of self-initiative of young people for cultural and artistic initiatives, besides the lack of public support for such initiatives

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## CONCLUSIONS FROM THE RESEARCH IN MUNICIPALITY OF PRIZREN

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Questionnaires that were filled by citizens of Prizren provided enough data to draw conclusions about their cultural preferences, their knowledge of heritage and cultural institutions, the potential they possess, their participation and for their thoughts about cultural development.

Prizren citizens showed high interest for cultural events taking place in their municipality; they mostly go to the Theatre, Cinema and attend concerts of folk music for what Prizren is well known. Have knowledge of cultural heritage, especially with older historical landmarks that make this city attractive not only for residents of Kosova, but also wider, and therefore express the wish that they should be protected, restored and used as a tool for development of the City .

Citizens of Prizren think they have potential in the monuments, but also human resources to have a rapid cultural development, they think they should be involved more in the creation of cultural policies in order to contribute to the development of the city. After evaluating culture as an important aspect for development citizens propose to have more investment in sectors ranging from construction and capital investments as the cinema, theater renovation and opening up to the creation of strategy for the development of cultural tourism and greater involvement of professionals.

From oriented interviews with representatives of municipal structures we have also managed to collect information that will not only help us to understand the current situation but also to create a statement about where Prizren intends to go in the area of culture. Culture is appreciated from all as an important segment of development and with concrete examples showed development plans.

We, that are analyzing this information can draw the conclusion that Prizren is not only dedicated to strategies of cultural development but the culture is included as part of a general development strategy. Potentials which are available in Prizren are various and numerous therefore appropriate strategies for their use are more than necessary. Based on the vision of those interviewed we may also conclude that for the Prizren and it's culture batter days are coming thanks to the commitment and readiness to cooperate with citizens and certain interest groups such are artists and representatives of civil society.

From the focus groups was found that Prizren needs a reorganization very soon because many of the values that previously were now are being erased or degraded. The transfer of powers from central to local level has created a gap which is reflected in the quality of cultural events and many projects remain without being realized in the absence of adequate financial support. Identified problems which artists showed are the facts that many institutions on behalf of the renovations are being kept closed for very long time such is Theatre and at the same time demanded capital investment especially in cinema construction and operation of the facility. At these meetings they expressed a need for creating associations of artists who will assist in the development of culture and youth involvement in cultural events.

Prizren remains the most important cultural center in the Republic of Kosova and therefore it should not be left to rely only on the means of its own, but the support is needed from central level.

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*All of us involved in this project will owe to the citizens of Prizren if their suggestions and advices are not taken into account and not incorporated in a strategy that will really help the municipality to develop culture to the extent that citizens want.*

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