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PRESS RELEASE

Mamuşa/Mamushë Municipality to provide a greater importance to the Tomato Festival

Within the project of transparency oversight of Mamuşa/Mamushë municipal executive, in November, EC Ma Ndryshe has looked at the issue of municipal government's expenditures related to the organization of the Tomato Festival.

According to the official figures it appears that the Municipality of Mamuşa/Mamushë in the year 2013 has spent close to 15,000€ in the organization of the Tomato Festival, which is the same amount of funds that was spent for the 2012 edition.

Based on spending invoices for the year 2013, 5,210 € were paid for aeroplane shipment from Istanbul to Prishtina, then for transport by buses en routes Prishtina–Mamuşa and Prizren–Mamuşa, altogether with the regulation of the stage, lighting and sound system. Whereas, 3,294 € has cost the accommodation of guests, while food and promotional materials have cost 6,485 €.

EC Ma Ndryshe is very well aware that Tomato Festival is one of the key events of this municipality, where agriculture is one of the most important economic activities. It therefore welcomes and encourages municipal authorities to continue with undertaking activities promoting agricultural products of this area – and hence the image itself of this new municipality.

Yet, considering the amount of funds spent, that is 15,000 €, which corresponds to the amount that the Municipality of Prizren allocates for “Dokufest” as an internationally recognized cultural event, EC Ma Ndryshe considers that Mamuşa/Mamushë Municipality should engage greater efforts that for that amount of money to ensure greater value for the public.

This conclusion is anchored in the fact that municipal revenues of the Municipality of Mamuşa/Mamushë in the year gone have been limited, i.e. around 43,000 €, meaning that expenditures on hosting this festival exceed one third of its own source revenues.

According to these findings, EC Ma Ndryshe recommends the Municipality of Mamuşa/Mamushë:

- To ensure that the money spent will result in added value for the Municipality and the residents of Mamuşa/Mamushë by promoting the district and agricultural products with qualitative and far-reaching activities that would have an effect on the entering into agreements, respectively on the increasing of the sales of tomatoes and of other agricultural products;
- To enter into collaborative work with the civil society and the Ministry of Agriculture for organizing the Festival, and

- To announce and publish Calls for Proposals on the concept and the organization of the Festival for each and every edition.

EC Ma Ndryshe's project for the transparency oversight of the executive branch will continue on publicizing monitoring findings through regular press releases and the project's website, where the findings will be posted directly by the monitors. So far, all monitoring findings, including regular press releases and other information relative to local governments of Prizren and Mamuşa/Mamushë, are being regularly published on the project's website: www.online-transparency.org.

Thank you for your cooperation,

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