

**The Report of the Conference:**  
**The Socio-Economic Profiles of the Municipalities of the**  
**Mitrovica Region**  
**Mitrovica, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019**

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## INTRODUCTION

On July 1st, 2019, in Mitrovica took place the Regional Conference on the topic “Socio-Economic Profiles of the Municipalities of the Mitrovica Region,” organized by the Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development (KIPRED), with representatives of the Kosovo Police, and the leaderships and members of municipal assemblies of the municipalities of this region. In this Conference the findings of the work of KIPRED, “The Socio-Economic Profiles of the Municipalities of the Mitrovica Region”<sup>1</sup> were presented and discussed, and this discussion had as its goal to encourage the opening of the public debate, as well as to support municipal and national decision-makers in formulating and enforcing the policies that will address the needs of the youth, more particularly, of those belonging to the age-group 15-29 years. From the findings of the work, and from the discussions in the Conference, the following issues were identified that need to be treated urgently by municipal and national authorities:

- a) The Municipality of Mitrovica should increase substantially its budget for youth, sport, and cultural activities, in order to fulfill basic needs of the youth in these fields.
- b) The Municipality of Mitrovica, together with the Council of the Islamic Community in this municipality, should be careful on the issue of building new mosques, and first of all, on the issue of origins of donations for their building, on the needs of the community, and on urban planning.
- c) In the Municipality of Vushtrri the number of police officers, and their geographic distribution in urban/rural terms should be increased, because of high levels of criminality in this municipality.

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<sup>1</sup> Socio-Economic Profiles of the Municipalities of the Mitrovica Region, KIPRED, June 2019.

- d) The Municipality of Skenderaj should increase its budget for youth, sport and cultural activities, for addressing the basic needs of youth in these fields.
- e) The Government of Kosovo should cover fully the expenses for annual activities regarding the manifestations of 5–8 March, for averting the budgetary burden for the Municipality of Skenderaj in the fields of culture, youth and sports.
- f) The Government of Kosovo, municipal authorities, and civil society, should focus their attention on the phenomenon of non-voting in national and municipal elections of persons with radical religious convictions, who have full loyalty towards the Sharia Law, and who refuse the judicial and constitutional order of Kosovo.

For having the best possible connection between the work that was presented, and the discussions in the Conference, the later will be summarized according to the respective municipalities of the Mitrovica Region.

## **The Municipality of Mitrovica**

After the introductory section of the Conference, in which the work on the Profile of the Mitrovica Region was presented by KIPRED, the discussion begun by the Lieutenant-Colonel Nysret Mehmeti, the Regional Deputy Director at the Regional Directorate of the Kosovo Police. He discussed the issues pertaining to security in this Region, as well as on the work carried out by the Kosovo Police which is related to these issues.

In his discussion, Lieutenant-Colonel Mehmeti stressed that Police has two strategies of its own that are related to the issues discussed in the Profile that was presented. He focused on the Strategy of the Police in the Community, which was developed in two phases, the first of which went on from the year 2012, and the last from the year 2017, and which is planned to continue until 2021. In the framework of this Strategy, he mentioned, the sectors are divided, and there are several sub-objectives, among which the most important is the gathering of early information on the persons which can be involved in extremism, as well as monthly reporting, which is delivered to the General Directorate of the Kosovo Police.

Regarding the penal deeds in the Mitrovica Region, the Lieutenant-Colonel Mehmeti stressed as a particular problem the difficult economic condition in the Region, which causes the increase in the number of penal deeds. Otherwise, he mentioned the Periodic Report for the Mitrovica Region, which points out that, thanking to the work of Police, during the year 2018 the number of penal deeds in this Region has decreased for 184 cases compared to 2017, which is a – 6.4% decrease.

After Lieutenant-Colonel Mehmeti, spoke Vesel Neziri, a member of the Municipal Council in Mitrovica from the Justice Party. At the beginning he focused on the issue

that the religion in Kosovo is not financed by the state. Given that the state of Kosovo does not pay the imams, he said, they are being payed from foreign organizations, from Yemen, Siria, Iraq, Iran, etc., and with these payments, according to Neziri, these foreign organizations make the imams to belong to them. These organizations, as he explained, build a mosque to the imam, in the garden of the mosque they build him a house, and then they tell him to tell the Kosovar believers which are the Kosovar religious rituals and traditions. Regarding this issue, Neziri stressed that the Government of Kosovo is paying the orthodox priests for religious education that they teach in the Republic of Kosovo, and, relating this fact with the one that imams are not being payed by the state, he infered that imams are not on equal grounds with the priests. By commenting on this issue, Neziri added that nowhere in Europe, in the countries which have 95% of Christian population, the religious minorities do not have as many rights as the religious minorities in Kosovo. Neziri also added that the foreign religious organizations in Kosovo have entered from all the sides: he mentioned that there are many Islamic organizations, but he added that there are also numerous other religious organizations which have brought and distribute Bibles and religious Christian journals.

Talking on Islamic radicalization, Neziri mentioned the impact – negative, according to him – of the people who doesn't have anything to do with religion, but who go out publicly and say that there is no need to built mosques. Related to this, he mentioned several public protests in Mitrovica, in which the protesters were demanding for the mosques not to be built. He stressed that, despite of the fact that it is being stated that the number of the mosques built is large, he, himself, quite often has to conduct religious rituals in very difficult conditions. As an example, he mentioned the cold during the winter, when prayers, given the large number of believers, have to be

conducted outside of the mosques. Here he mentioned the protest against building a mosque in Mitrovica, in which participated around twenty protesters, who were saying that there is a need to build schools, not mosques. Such an approach, according to him, can lead towards further Islamic radicalization. As an additional factor which can cause radicalization, Mr. Neziri mentioned the need to introduce the teaching of religious doctrine in the curricula of the schools, a practice which is not exercised in Kosovo. According to Neziri, when something is forbidden, people insist exactly on it, they want to break the taboo, and this is one from the reasons why they become extremists.

For the difficult condition in Mitrovica, Mr. Neziri put the blame on the fact that from all the projects which were started in Mitrovica, none was finished. In this, as well as in the difficult condition of this municipality, he compared Mitrovica with the Municipality of Gjakova.

In his discussion, the member of the Assembly of the Municipal Council of Mitrovica, Mr. Fidan Ademi, reacted on the issue of the protest organized in Mitrovica against building of a mosque, which was mentioned previously by Mr. Neziri. On the number of mosques in Mitrovica, Mr. Ademi expressed his opinion that this number is adequate. Furthermore, he stressed that many from the mosques in the villages are empty, given that there are no believers that are visiting them. He emphasized that the protest against the building of the mosque happened because of the donation: this, as he pointed out, was a suspicious donation, made by a suspicious businessman, from a suspicious state in the Middle East. This was the rationale behind the protest, and, according to Mr. Ademi, the conviction of the community should be respected.

Otherwise, talking about the discussed Profile, Mr. Ademi said that, in his opinion, a deficiency of this report is that it doesn't put forward the issue of the need of an analysis of the ways in which the indoctrination of the extremists is conducted. The

issue of the indoctrination through social networks, that is, through web-sites that continuously make such exclamations, according to Mr. Ademi, is one that should be analyzed. He stressed that it is interesting to make an estimation on how much impact did these web-sites have in the decision of a number of Kosovars to go and join the war in Syria.

Mr. Ademi also stressed that the issue of the decrease of population, which is shown by the demographic data in the Report, is very worrisome. On this issue he said that it is very disquieting that in this Conference the highest representatives of the three municipalities were absent, despite of the fact that they were invited. Otherwise, related to the problems of the economic condition of Mitrovica, Mr. Ademi said that in earlier periods Mitrovica was a highly industrialized municipality, and, later, with the destruction of the industry came its economic weakening and impoverishment of the population.

At the end, Mr. Ademi opened the issue of the non-inclusion in this research of the Northern part of Mitrovica. He stressed that the part in the North is the most violent and extreme in Kosovo, and that the Serbian Orthodox Church continuously calls for genocide and ethnic cleansing of Kosovo. According to him, in Europe there is no other case that the functioning of a Church which calls for extinction of the population in the territory where it exists is allowed. Mr. Ademi illustrated this claim with the fascist vocabulary that was used by the representatives of this Church in the celebration of the Serbian ceremony of Vidovdan.

On the issue of the North of Mitrovica and its non-inclusion in the research, the Chair of the Conference, the Executive Director of KIPRED, Mr. Lulzim Peci, explained that the reason for this was the lack of access to the North. The only information that KIPRED had the possibility to gather, was the information from the Kosovo Police. Mr. Peci also

mentioned that the municipalities in the North did not participate in the Kosovo census, and, therefore, KIPRED did not have any possibility to get any demographic data for that part of the Region. At the end, Mr. Peci stressed that the Report of KIPRED did not aim to provide any assesment of religions, but only to present the religious infrastructure of the municipalities of the region: that is, the number of mosques, churches, and similar things.

Regarding the discussion of the member of the Assembly of the Municipal Council of Mitrovica, Mr. Ademi, there were comments given by Mr. Vesel Neziri, a Member of the Municipal Council of Mitrovica from the Justice Party. He repeated the issue that he discussed earlier on the financing and controlling of the Islamic Community of Kosovo (BIK). According to him, it was necessary for BIK to be put under Kosovo institutions, and to be paid by them, in order to work under their supervision. Unfortunately, according to Mr. Neziri, this did not happen, and now we have financing from abroad, and a situation in which a new spirit of Islam is being introduced in Kosovo from abroad, and that this new spirit does not correspond with traditional Islam.

Mr. Neziri also stressed that during the war in Kosovo there were efforts to introduce into the war the religious element, in order to transform the war in Kosovo into a religious one. He pointed out that there was a need of tremendous efforts to prevent this from hapening, and that this introduction of the religious element in the war was wanted mostly by Serbia.

One from the issues raised in the Conference was the one of relation between high level of criminality in the three discussed municipalities, and investments made in youth in these municipalities, and these data exposed a very interesting phenomenon. The data provided in the Profile of the Mitrovica Region were mentioned and discussed: The highest level of investments on youth is for the Municipality of Vushtrri, and the total

amount of these investments is 435 thousand € a year; the same investments in the Municipality of Mitrovica are approximately four times smaller, 102 thousand € annually (despite of the fact that the Budget of Mitrovica is bigger than that of Vushtrri), meanwhile, the Municipality of Skenderaj invests on youth around 280 thousand € a year. From this one might expect that the level of criminality should be the highest in Mitrovica (even more so because of its position – given that it is a municipality in the border, the possibilities for smuggling are larger there than in other municipalities). But, in reality, the level of criminality, according to the Profile, is the highest in Vushtrri. (In terms of the level of criminality, Mitrovica is in the second place, and in the third is Skenderaj.)

The participants at the Conference provided their opinions for interpreting this phenomenon. Thus, Nexhmedin Spahiu, from the NGO Mitrovica said that in Mitrovica the poverty is high, and, consequently, the migration is higher. On this issue, he mentioned also the data provided on the Profile, on the decrease of the population of Mitrovica during the period from the year 2011 up to 2018. And he continued by explaining that during the migration it sometimes happen that the problematic part of the population migrates. He illustrated this claim with his personal experience: he mentioned that during an earlier period his offices were being broken and stolen very often, almost once a week, but when the great departure occurred, when around 100 thousand people migrated, the breaking of his offices stoped, and it was never repeated – given that, most probably, the burglars who were conducting the thefts earlier had gone abroad.

On this explanation an objection was raised, that in socio-economic terms the weakest municipality is the one of Skenderaj, but, at the same time, Skenderaj has the lowest level of criminality. Mr. Spahiu replied by mentioning the experience of Albania in the

turmoils of the year 1997. In that turmoil, when in Albania the state had collapsed, according to Mr. Spahiu, the level of criminality in the city of Shkodra had remained the same, and, on the other hand, in the city of Vlora there were around two thousand people killed. The cause of this huge difference, according to him, was the fact that the Kanun is applied in Shkodra, but not in Vlora. By drawing this comparison, Mr. Spahiu tried to explain the causes of different levels of criminality in the three municipalities of the Mitrovica Region with different levels of functioning of Kanun in these three municipalities.

Regarding the issue of different levels of criminality Lieutenant Colonel Nysret Mehmeti from the Kosovo Police, the Regional Deputy Director of the Regional Police in Mitrovica, mentioned that the Region of Mitrovica is small, and that, therefore, there is a movement of perpetrators of criminal deeds, which is a fact that has to be taken into account when talking on this issue. He stressed that before two years, the most difficult condition was in Mitrovica, but in the last two years there was considerable improvement there, and an increase of criminality in Vushtrri. Lieutenant Colonel Mehmeti also mentioned the fact that at the Kosovo level a very problematic issue was the alarming number of robberies. But, compared with other regions, the Mitrovica Region did have smaller number of robberies.

In his discussion on this issue, Mr. Nevzat Tahiri, a member of the Municipal Council of Mitrovica put an emphasis on the relation between the levels of criminality in particular municipalities, and the percentages of their budgets that are apportioned for youth. He expressed his opinion that the levels of criminality in these three municipalities are very low when compared with how little from the municipal budgets is given for youth. He mentioned that he himself had requested on several occasions the increase of subsidies that are delivered for youth issues, but he didn't have any support from other members

of the Assembly. The members of the Assembly, he said, look for getting some portion of the budget for building some small road in the districts where the voters who have voted for them live, and there is a very small number of them who focus on the general good, and one from such goods is, indeed, the youth.

The assembly member Tahiri emphasized that by profession he is professor of Physical Education, and that based on his experience he knows very well that the increase of youth, sport, and cultural activities, will bring about the decrease of criminality. He illustrated this with concrete figures. He mentioned that in Mitrovica there are 44 various sport-clubs, and the Municipality, for all three sectors related to youth – culture, youth, sports – provides a total of around 50 thousand € a year. This means that one sector related to youth gets from the Municipality around 16,600 € a year. Or, according to Mr. Tahiri, the Municipality of Mitrovica gives 16,600 € a year for 44 different sport-clubs. Therefore, concluded Tahiri, the criminality in Mitrovica is too low given how little financing is provided for youth issues.

## **The Municipality of Vushtrri**

In the introductory part of his discussion, the Lieutenant-Colonel Nysret Mehmeti, the Regional Deputy Director in the Regional Directorate of Kosovo Police in Mitrovica, talked on the state of security in the Mitrovica Region, by focusing on the strategy of Kosovo Police, and here he talked on the Municipality of Vushtrri as well. He discussed the strategy of the municipalities in this Region, and he stressed that in the Municipality of Vushtrri there are two Municipal Councils for Security in Community which provide their contribution in the field of security.

The attention on the Municipality of Vushtrri was also focused during the discussion of the ratio of municipal investments on youth and the level of criminality. In this discussion the participants stressed the fact mentioned earlier, that the Municipality of Vushtrri has the highest level of investments on youth from all the three municipalities of the Region, but, at the same time, it also has the highest rate of criminality.

In his discussion on this issue, the Lieutenant Colonel Mehmenti mentioned that Vushtrri has a better economic condition than Mitrovica, and that this fact is exactly one from the causes of the higher level of criminality in Vushtrri. He also stressed that the level of criminality in Vushtrri has increased during the last two years, given that earlier, the highest level of criminality was in Mitrovica. Also, as yet another factor which could have had an impact on this, he mentioned the fact that the Municipality of Mitrovica has a smaller number of villages, while the number of villages in the Municipality of Vushtrri is larger. Thus, given that a large number of criminal deeds is committed in the villages, this might have increased their number in Vushtrri.

In his discussion, Ymer Haradinaj, a member of the Municipal Council of Vushtrri, also focused on the above mentioned fact. He mentioned that Vushtrri is a municipality with lower level of security, by agreeing that one from the major reasons for this is certainly geography, and a large number of villages. He said that this municipality has 66 villages and the city. Consequently, regardless of how large the number of police officers in the Municipality of Vushtrri is, this number is actually small for covering all of the village-communities of this municipality.

Among other issues, the assembly member Haradinaj was focused on the fact provided in the Profile of the Mitrovica Region, according to which the Municipality of Vushtrri did not hold even a single meeting for treating the problems related to security. He stressed that indeed there were no special sessions that were focused only on the security issues, but, in the regular sessions, in which a larger number of issues was discussed, the police officials were present, and they report periodically on the security situation.

Otherwise, Mr. Haradinaj praised the cooperation that the Municipal Council and the people of Vushtrri have with the Kosovo Police. He illustrated this cooperation with joint activities that were done in order to eliminate traffic accidents which were happening in his own village, the Higher Stanovc, in the highway that passes through the village. He mentioned that in September of the previous year (2018) a joint meeting with the Kosovo Police took place with the aim of mobilizing the citizens for not passing the road barriers at the edges of the highway, which was the major cause of these accidents. Instead, the citizens were urged to use the existing underpasses. Ever since, according to the assembly member Haradinaj, there was not even a single minor accident registered.

Mr. Haradinaj also focused on the issue of the large number of mosques in Vushtrri, which was given in the Profile, and was mentioned and discussed during the Conference. He explained that this large number is a consequence of large number of villages in Vushtrri, where, each from the villages has the mosque of its own, and some from the villages have even two mosques.

Otherwise, the assembly member Haradinaj expressed his pleasure by the fact that, according to the Profile, the Municipality of Vushtrri has the highest investments on youth. However, he stressed that except for the investments, it is necessary to raise the concerns of the youth in the Municipal Councils. He mentioned that he is a teacher at the High School, and that he has noticed that the major conversations of the pupils in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades are on the topic on how to graduate and acquire any visa for migrating into some foreign country, that is, how to get out of Kosovo. Related to this issue, Mr. Haradinaj focused on the decrease of the population, in the Municipality of Vushtrri, where the number of inhabitants have fallen during the period from 2011 until 2018 from 69,000 into 64,000, and in the Region. Otherwise, according to him, this can be noticed also in the decrease of the number of pupils in the schools.

On the issue of persons who came back in Kosovo from the wars in the Middle East, he said that he doesn't know if the municipal bodies were engaged about them, but, he added, there is a need to conduct studies on the factors which have influenced them to go and join those wars, what kind of people have affected them to leave, as well as on the factors which have made them to get back. At the end, the assembly member Haradinaj also raised the issue that some from the more religious persons which do not coincide with the traditional form of Islam, do not vote in the elections. He said that from the talks he have had with some from them, they told him that they don't take part in the elections altogether, so he posed the question on why they act like this.

The organizers of the Conference answered this question by focusing on the influence of several from the juridical interpretations of Islam which prevent the voting, given that they do not accept the democratic system. However, this question caused the reaction of Nevzat Tahiri, a member of the Municipal Council of Mitrovica, who raised his doubt on the division of Islam into the recent and traditional forms. Islam, he said, is not an issue of the beard, or of the clothes. The organizer of the Conference reacted on this remark by commenting that indeed there is only one Islam, but within it there are different juridical schools, which means that Islam is quite plural.

Mr. Nexhmedin Spahiu, from the NGO Mitrovica also joined the discussion on this issue. He stressed the difference between political movements and religious doctrines. The clothes, as he said, are not an issue of the religion, but of the given tradition. Among us, Albanians, he said, the national tradition has 'the plis' [the white hat, part of the Albanian folk dresses], and we, time after time return to our tradition, and we put 'plises' in our heads. And, the Arabs have their own traditions as well. For instance, said Mr. Spahiu, the Saudi nation has the traditions of its own, and our Kosovar people who are being educated there adopt them, given that they are being financed by the Saudi state, and the Saudis want to promote their own values among the foreigners. The problem here doesn't fall on Saudis, who want to promote their values, but on us, because we don't stop and decide what we want to accept, and what not.

Mr. Spahiu also focused on several expressions in the public opinion of an anti-Islamic spirit, which quite often use to be exasperating and offensive. These expressions, stressed Spahiu, cannot pass even in a country like Sweden, where the majority is Protestant, while the Muslims are in absolute minority. If the Swedes used to talk like this, the Sweden would have reacted immediately on that. Therefore, concluded Mr.

Spahiu, this anti-Islamic spirit should be removed from our political discourse, through the response of institutions.

On this last issue raised by Mr. Spahiu, the organizer of the Conference commented by saying that in the Penal Code of Kosovo the encouragement of religious and national hatred is forbidden, but, unfortunately, no one is dealing with this issue. The problem, therefore, is in the fact that the actions foreseen in the Penal Code of Kosovo are not being undertaken.

## **The Municipality of Skenderaj**

As said earlier, in the introductory part of the Conference, the Lieutenant Colonel Nysret Mehmeti, the Regional Deputy Director in the Regional Directorate of the Police in Mitrovica discussed the major issues on the security in the Region. Regarding the Municipality of Skenderaj he mentioned the cooperation of the Municipality on the issues that have to do with security, by stressing that this cooperation is exercised through the two Municipal Councils on Security in the Community.

Mr. Pajazit Isufi, the assembly member at the Municipal Council of Skenderaj did firstly focus on the demographic issues, and particularly on the decrease of population in the Mitrovica Region, an issue that was mentioned several times during the Conference by several from the participants as a matter of serious concern (but was not a topic of broader discussion). Mr. Isufi expressed both, his surprise with this fact, and his pleasure that his Municipality of Skenderaj is the only from the three discussed municipalities that has had an increase of population, despite of immigration. Regarding the migration problem he said that he has a friend who is the owner of an insurance agency, and that he was informed by him about the alarming figure of some 5.700 youngsters who are waiting for the terms of meetings in the foreign embassies. This, according to him, is one from the gravest threats for both, Skenderaj and Kosovo.

Otherwise, the assembly member Isufi confirmed the fact that was mentioned in the Profile, that there was not even a single meeting that was took place in the Municipality of Skenderaj on the issues related to security, but he added that there were several meetings, in which he himself was invited, and where these security issues were discussed and treated by several non-governmental organizations.

He also stressed that, unfortunately, the Municipality of Skenderaj has had participants in the War in Syria, and one from them was killed there. He explained that this person was from the village of Tushica, and that he was from an extremely poor family. It was exactly this what made Mr. Isufi to be very surprised with the fact that in the homage that was organized for this person there were many people who belonged to a very rich strata. It was extremely weird, said Mr. Isufi, to see all those so expensive cars in a homage organized by such a poor family.

Yet another topic in which Mr. Isufi focused was the one of the comparably small number of mosques in the Municipality of Skenderaj. He said that in Skenderaj the number of the mosques is probably smaller than in two other municipalities, but he added that this number is sufficient. He also mentioned here the case of one from the mosques in Skenderaj municipality that was closed, in which mosque the imam was from Albania, and he stressed that this mosque and its activity was very damaging for the entire municipality.

Otherwise, the assembly member Isufi also commented the discussion of Nexhmedin Spahiu from the NGO Mitrovica. In the section on the Municipality of Mitrovica of this Report, it was stressed that Nexhmedin Spahiu tried to explain the relation between investments on the youth and the criminality rate in the three municipalities of the Mitrovica Region, by drawing a comparison of the number of victims in Shkodra and Vlora in the turmoil of 1997, and that he explained the difference in these numbers of victims with the fact that the Kanun functions in Shkodra, but not in Vlora. With this, Mr. Spahiu attempted to explain the difference in the criminality rates in the municipalities of Mitrovica, Vushtrri and Skenderaj with the levels of the functioning of Kanun in these three municipalities. On this issue, Mr. Isufi commented that the lower level of criminality in Skenderaj is not a consequence of the functioning of the Kanun,

but rather the fruit of the cooperation of schools and educational institutions with the security institutions and with citizens.

In the section of his discussion on the efforts made to transform the War in Kosovo into a religious war, which was mentioned in the section on the Municipality of Mitrovica, Mr. Vesel Neziri, member of the Municipal Council of Mitrovica from the Justice Party, stressed that the condition in Skenderaj regarding this issue is better, given that Skenderaj has received several larger donations and grants.

On this issue Mr. Neziri also added that the condition in Skenderaj was affected by businesses, and that there were also several commanders there, who had stopped the occurrence of such things. They have millions, said Mr. Neziri, and we do not have millions. After this, he compared this with the condition in Mitrovica: And, what is happening in Mitrovica, he asked. Everything is done in order to make citizens of Mitrovica to don't love this country, and to escape from here, in order for this part of Kosovo to go with Serbia.

Another part of the discussion on the Municipality of Skenderaj was focused on the budget of this municipality, and on the ways in which this budget is being collected and spend. In his reaction to the claims of Mr. Vesel Neziri of the Municipality of Mitrovica that the situation in Skenderaj is better given that it has had several large grants, Mr. Pajazit Isufi, assembly member of the Municipal Council of the Municipality of Skenderaj from the AKR party [The New Kosova Alliance] explained that the Municipality of Skenderaj manages with the budget of 13 million and 700 thousand €, in which amount the revenues of the Municipality are 7%. This, according to him, corresponds with 7% of the budget of the municipality which is allocated to investments in culture. Comparatively, according to Mr. Isufi, this is approximately equal with the Municipality of Vushtrri, for which the figure is 7.2%, and considerably

higher than the Municipality of Mitrovica with around 2%. According to him, the medium term budgetary framework of the Municipality of Skenderaj for this year has foreseen the construction of four sport halls for physical education in four schools, and in two local communities are foreseen the renovations of the houses of culture. He also pointed out that 3.8 million € out of the total of 13.7 millions, are foreseen for capital investments, meanwhile, around 11 millions are foreseen for salaries, services, and goods.

The assembly member Isufi also pointed out an additional difficulty with which the Municipality of Skenderaj is confronted regarding funding. He said that the Directorate of Culture in the Municipality also manages the anniversaries and commemorations, which, as he explained, in the Municipality of Skenderaj are numerous and begin on March 5<sup>th</sup>, and continue until June 16<sup>th</sup>. Given the large number of these manifestations, this activity absorbs a large portion of the total amount of funding, and this presents a large problem for other activities of this Directorate.

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