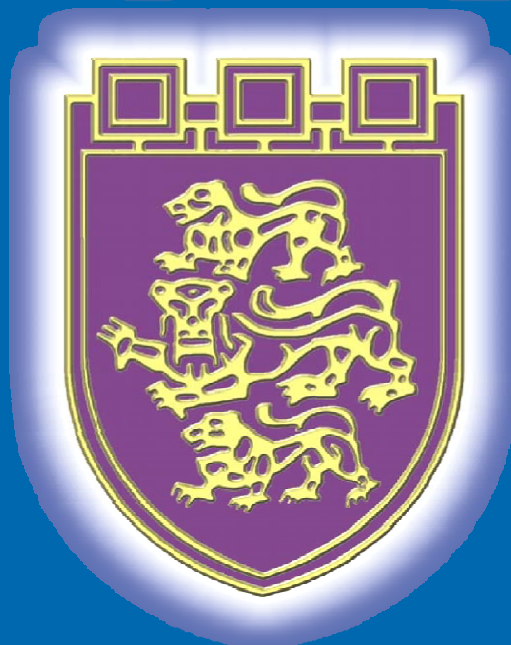


ОБЩИНА ВЕЛИКО ТЪРНОВО



**Vandalism to monuments of culture –
factor for restricting the access of
women to public spaces**

Background

- Veliko Turnovo has over 7000 years of history: capital of Bulgaria from 1186 to 1393;
- It has 865 monuments of culture of national significance;
- Today the city is a popular destination for historical and cultural tourism
- Tourism is the main industry making 60% of its GDP.

Vandalism and graffiti

- Recently, acts of vandalism, especially graffiti drawing, cause a number of problems to the police and the Municipality which is responsible for the maintenance of the monuments and ensure access to them and safe environment.



Perpetrators

- Groups of young people (mainly male) aged, 14-22 who are seeking for expression of their alternative arts or extreme sports
- They are characterized with expansionist behavior – often provoked by alcohol or drugs – which results in separation of these public spaces, vandalism to the monuments and abuses the rights of citizens to free access and safety public environment.



Problem

Such acts of vandalism influence the image of the city and create the feeling that these places could be risky for the citizens and the tourists.



Object of the survey

Two of the most popular and most attacked with acts of vandalism monuments situated in the city center, in nice surroundings and equipped with panoramic illumination



➤ "Mother Bulgaria"



➤ "Assevtsi"

R1 (representation)

- It is difficult to determine the exact number of men and women who do not have access to the areas – there is no statistics in the police as such acts are classified under disturbance of public order;
- 70% of the respondents in a former survey on the night visits to the museums avoid visiting the monuments at night because of the presence of the graffiti drawing groups there
- Based on the observations of the 24-hour guard of one of the monuments, very few people pass the area and almost no women after dark.

R2 (resources)

- **Approximately 20 000 BGN annually are allocated for cleaning the monuments and creating a nice and safe areas around them;**
- **Additional resources are used for their illumination and maintenance of the surrounding parks etc.**

Focus groups

- Two focus groups were organized in order to identify the attitude of the participants towards the problem with vandalism and how it could be solved.
- 1st group – young people at the age of the perpetrators (aged 13-20) and
- 2nd – citizens (aged 25-60).
- Both groups included 8 persons, equal number of men and women.

Results

- Both groups consider graffiti drawing on the monuments as an act of vandalism
- The groups gathering there cause problems with the protection of public environment, especially for women and young people;
- The first group cannot give ideas how to overcome the problems
- The second group suggests that only the joint efforts of the whole community can guarantee the rights of the citizens, the observance of public order and will not allow the occupation of public spaces. Effect can be achieved only through strict measures and punishment of the perpetrators.

Situation analysis – R3 (realia)

- The funds spent annually are not enough as a measure as very soon the monuments are again desecrated;
- After dark the citizens, and especially women, avoid these areas as they consider, they might be risky.

Action Plan



- To allocate financial resources for surveillance cameras in the areas of the monuments;
- To build an alternative youth territory with panels for drawing graffiti and practicing extreme sports;
- To organize information campaigns for the importance of historical heritage and encourage citizens to inform about acts of vandalism;
- To conduct a survey among school students regarding the reasons for aggressive behavior – already developed questionnaire.

Team

Municipality of Veliko Turnovo

- **Mina Ilieva, General Secretary**
- **Rozaliya Stefanova, Director of Administrative, Legal and Information Services Directorate**
- **Ivan Krastev, Chief Specialist of Public Relations**
- **Borislav Apostolov, Senior Expert, Eurointegration and Projects Department**
- **Zheni Sapundzhieva, Municipal Councilor, mandate 2003-2007**

Tel.: (+359 62) 619 307

E-mail: pirvt@abv.bg

ОБЩИНА ВЕЛИКО ТЪРНОВО



Thank you!