



ECMI Kosovo Statement:

The Tragic Incident in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje involving a Roma Child and the Need for Urgent Measures to Address the Issue of Unemployment and Poverty Prevalent among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo

On 18 December a 7-year old child in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje was brutally attacked in the early morning hours by stray dogs and as a result he subsequently died as a consequence of injuries he sustained. The child—a resident of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje and of Roma ethnicity with the initials D.J.—was, according to statements provided by family members, going through waste containers looking for food when he was attacked by dogs. ECMI Kosovo is deeply saddened by this event and would like to offer its condolences to the family of the child. The incident, however, reveals a larger problem in the form of the unresolved issue of unemployment and widespread poverty prevalent among the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities in Kosovo.

The incident took place close to waste container bins in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, where D.J., according to his family, was going through said containers in search of food. Similar scenes are common throughout Kosovo and reveal the disadvantaged position of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo society, forcing a numbers of them to look for food or valuables in waste containers, often in particularly harsh conditions. This tragic event showcases a serious problem with stray dogs all over Kosovo, as evidenced by a rise in incidents involving stray dogs. Incidents of this nature have also occurred in the past in other parts of Kosovo (on 19 March 2009 in Kamenicë/Kamenica stray dogs attacked a child, E.F. while going to school, with the child also tragically dying as a result). ECMI Kosovo would also like to express its dismay and stress that incidents like these are completely avoidable, and call upon municipal and central authorities to deal with the growing problem of stray dogs^[1].




The tragic death of D.J. brings to our attention the fact that there is an urgent need to address issues affecting these three communities, chief among them being high unemployment, poor economic conditions, and lack of integration and marginalization. ECMI Kosovo has previously written on the poor economic and social conditions, as well as the challenges to their integration efforts, these three communities are faced with in its December 2014 report *Challenges to Kosovo's Integration Efforts: Rising Emigration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians*, as particularly vulnerable members of Kosovo society.

For further reading please see our latest reports and political updates:

- *A Political Update: The Formation of the New Government of Kosovo, Minority Community Representation and Challenges Ahead* <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?cat=192>;
- *Challenges to Kosovo's Integration Efforts: Rising Emigration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians* - <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=5847>;
- *Bridging the Divide: Establishing a Joint Board for the city of Mitrovica* <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=4953>;
- *ECMI Kosovo Short Update on Political Developments: Minority Communities Want the Stalemate Over* - <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=5779>;
- *ECMI Kosovo Information Bulletin - An Overview of the Recent Security Situation in Kosovo* - <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=5803>;
- *General Elections in Kosovo: A View of Issues, Challenges and the Political Scene ahead of Voting on June 8th* - <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=4878>;
- *An Overview of some of the Changes in the Draft Law on General Elections in the Republic of Kosovo* <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=4735>;
- *Transitional Justice, Minority Rights and Communities in Kosovo* - <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=4676>;
- *Delivery of Education to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje* <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=3262>;
- *Segregation in Education in Gjakovë/Đakovica: State of Play* <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=3345>;
- *Promoting the Economic Empowerment of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Women in Kosovo* <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=4202>;
- *Findings of the Assessment of Communities and Returns 2009-2013* <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=4990>;
- *Delivery of Education to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje* <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=3262>.

Please click here for the [Albanian](#) and [Serbian](#) version.

[1] On their part, municipal authorities have noted that applicable laws in Kosovo do not allow them to "eliminate" dogs, and that they have done everything in their power by castrating dogs. For more, please see here <http://koha.net/?id=3&l=37530>.

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About ECMI Kosovo

ECMI Kosovo is the principal non-governmental organisation engaged with minority issues in Kosovo, with the overarching aim to develop inclusive, representative, community-sensitive institutions that support a stable multi-ethnic Kosovo. ECMI Kosovo contributes to the developing, strengthening and implementation of relevant legislation, supports the institutionalisation of communities-related governmental bodies, and enhances the capacity of civil society actors and the government to engage with one another in a constructive and sustainable way.

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