

## Lorenzetti's Brush: More Governance, Less Government



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# LORENZETTI'S BRUSH: MORE GOVERNANCE, LESS GOVERNMENT

## a Story of the Effects of Good and Bad State Governance

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## Executive Summary

'Good governance' is one of the most commonly used and heard buzzwords in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Aside from the likes of reconciliation, rule of law or constitutional reform, it has been one of the focuses of reforms, interventions and donor activities for much of the country's 20 years' post-war period. While the concept is difficult to define, it is certain that the implications of it permeate the lives of 'ordinary citizens' every day. Good governance is related to just about any policy, ranging from social policy or rural development, healthcare provision or educational standards, to road maintenance or utility policies.

Experiencing inadequate provision of drinking water, a collapsing healthcare system or low schooling standards, it is clear to almost every citizen of BiH that the government in this sense is not performing well. But in spite of the central role good governance plays in ensuring the (at least the very basic) quality of lives of Bosnians, it is not a topic discussed in the media, among citizens or let alone by politicians. To demonstrate this and show the consequences of side-lining real-life issues for other, nearly other-worldly ones, we selected one of the most contentious topics in the capital of BiH at the moment - stray dogs, or rather the policy of animal welfare and protection.

As our paper explains, this particular policy and its implementation in the Canton of Sarajevo - while they might seem trivial at first - in fact lie at the intersection of all possible deficiencies, ailments, omissions, faults and failures of governance in BiH. What's more, systemic flaws illustrated in this story are also a common thread in other regions of BiH, and when continuously tolerated by various segments of the society they are leading towards the deepening of the existing crisis and the further crumbling of the already bad governance.

## Renaissance Allegory



Figure 1. Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Detail from the fresco “The Allegory of Bad Government”  
(Source: Web Gallery of Art)

In the center there is Tyranny; dressed in black, with fangs and horns, and a dagger in its hand. It is surrounded by Cruelty, Deceit, Fraud, Fury, Division, and War. Avarice, Pride, and Vainglory are flying over it. All of them together rule the barren landscape, the crumbling city, the suffering people; the people are hungry and poor, and in constant confrontation. This is the painting<sup>1</sup> of Ambrogio Lorenzetti<sup>2</sup>, one of the most important Italian painters of Siena, which shows the consequences of bad government. It was painted in the Salon of Nine<sup>3</sup> as one in a series of three frescoes. The scene of the town reflects a deviation: nothing is as it should be. The city is in ruins: windows are wide open, houses are collapsing, and the economy is almost non-existent. Nothing is in operation except for the armory. The streets are deserted.

This composition is facing a fresco titled “*Effects of Good Governance in the City and in the Country*” on the opposite wall. There, Lorenzetti painted a bustling city, with all its treasures, a sort of utopia where humans took control over the society.

<sup>1</sup> Ambrogio Lorenzetti: “The Allegory of Bad Government” (26/2/1338 – 29/5/1339).

<sup>2</sup> Ambrogio Lorenzetti was an Italian painter, born in Siena around 1290. He is well-known for his innovations and presentation of secular and humanistic themes in his work.

<sup>3</sup> The Salon of Nine (Ital. Sala dei Nove) is located in the town hall of Siena, Italy. The city council that ruled Siena sat in the salon. Three out of four walls are covered with frescoes, with the south wall (the one with the windows), the only one without a fresco.



Figure 2. Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Detail from the fresco "Effects of Good Government in the City and in the Country" (Source: Web Gallery of Art)

People are in a hurry; they are producing, buying and selling. Shops are open, captivating the passers-by with a variety of products. A wedding is underway, and girls are dancing in the streets that are neat and safe, albeit busy and full of people. The entire scene is a display of an atmosphere of well-being and prosperity, possible only *because* of good government presented in Lorenzetti's third fresco - "*The Allegory of Good Government.*"

The central figure, an old and wise ruler, surrounded by the virtues of Peace, Fortitude and Prudence on the left, and Magnanimity, Temperance and Justice on the right, symbolizes good government.



Figure 3. Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Detail from the fresco "The Allegory of Good Government" (Source: Web Gallery of Art)

The fact that the very Council that ruled Siena commissioned these frescoes as a reminder of the potential consequences of their own (lack of) work proves that good government was one of the most important political ideals in the 14<sup>th</sup> century Siena. The mechanisms devised for fighting injustice and bad governance were introduced to the extent that the nine members of the local councils in Siena were exchanged every two months for new members to minimize the risk of corruption<sup>4</sup>. When Lorenzetti painted the most important frescoes of Siena around 1339, they primarily served political and didactic purposes, representing the common good as the foundation of good governance in the Italian city-states<sup>5</sup>.

Over seven-hundred-year-old political ideals epitomized in the frescoes still symbolize a warning sign to contemporary politicians. Compulsory rotation of members of the councils used at the time remains considered a necessity in a well-governed democracy. It is one of the mechanisms ensuring political moderation as it keeps politicians in a situation where they might have to leave their elevated stations at any time<sup>6</sup>. Neglecting this mechanism and the common good, while putting private interests to the fore, causes what is today called "bad governance."

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Beth Harris & Dr. Steven Zucker: "Ambrogio Lorenzetti's Palazzo Pubblico frescoes: Allegory and Effect of Good and Bad Government," Khan Academy, 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Rubinstein, Nicolai. 1958. "Political Ideas in Sieneese Art: The Frescoes by Ambrogio Lorenzetti and Taddeo di Bartolo in the Palazzo Pubblico", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 21(3/4); 179-207.

<sup>6</sup> Adam Przeworski, Michael Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub & Fernando Limongi: "Democracy and Development." Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

## Welcome to Reality

Seven centuries after Lorenzetti political opportunism and neglect of common good are the key causes of bad governance in Italy, but also around the world. Naples, the third-largest municipality in Italy, has been struggling with the problem of waste disposal since 1994. Several factors, including corrupted and problematic waste management businesses, the refusal of municipal workers to collect garbage, and political incompetence, have led to the escalation of the problem and emergency situations in several instances when the workers refused to transport the trash to brimming landfills. The 2007/2008 winter in Naples was marked by plastic garbage bags that have flooded the streets and town squares, while toxic and medical waste lay along the main street. Air, soil, and water - everything was polluted, and the health of the citizens of Naples was put at risk, even though they have been paying increasing prices for deteriorating communal services.



Figure 4. Piles of garbage in the streets of Naples, 2007.  
(Source: TheGuardian.com; Photo: Ciro Fusco/EPA)

After several unsuccessful attempts to quickly fix the problem - such as to export garbage to Germany or the Netherlands - citizens were still dissatisfied with the services offered to them. Exactly a year ago (2013), tens of thousands of Neapolitans took to the streets because of a “garbage” crisis. They demanded the provision of basic services they have regularly been paying for. Langella, a resident of Naples quarter Terzigno, told the reporters:

*“It is terrible. The state has abandoned us. We have to keep our children inside, with the doors and windows shut, but even that is not enough [to protect ourselves from the stench of garbage].”*

<sup>7</sup> Poor Waste Management Sparks Protest in Naples, Waste Management World. 18 November 2013.

Similar problems are part of everyday life in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Government inefficiency, lack of transparency, irrationality in prioritizing and spending, bureaucratic procedures, monopolistic nature of public administration as well as the inaccessibility to citizens are all integral parts of bad governance. Only that in BiH, these problems that are common in developed democracies and economies too, have greater or worse consequences due to the country's inertia, as well as the asymmetric administrative and complex political structures.

Two entities, one with 10 cantons and 79 municipalities, and the other with 63 municipalities with no cantons, independent Brčko District, and 12 cities are levels that together with relevant policies form the basis of sustainable economic and social development of the community. But, instead of socio-economic development, an improving quality of services or the establishment of new ones, Bosnians most often hear about the different interpretations of the imprecise legislation and the switching of responsibilities from one administrative level to another. Taking the capital city of Sarajevo as an example, the consequences of this kind of work are problems experienced by citizens every day: reduced water supply, heating that "goes off" at night, dangerous public transport that is falling apart, 10,000 stray dogs, 150,000 cars, a dirty city, neglected parks and playgrounds, etc.

The citizens of BiH just like the citizens of Naples, and Italy, are essentially facing the same problems, but with one significant difference: in BiH, citizens have been tolerating them for an unusually long period of time. That is, citizens of BiH cities and towns, including Sarajevo, have never taken to the streets in tens of thousands to express their disagreement and dissatisfaction with the poor quality of public utility services. Although the level of citizens' satisfaction with local government and the services it provides such as waste disposal, or road maintenance, for example, is in most cases below 50%,<sup>8</sup> only every fifth citizen is willing to report their dissatisfaction.<sup>9</sup> Under the influence of media, citizens, just like politicians, are heavily burdened by the complex and abstract political issues and themes that are often presented as essential, but unsolvable. Such practice and rhetoric are so widespread that citizens collectively tend to forget about real-life problems that can often be solved with relatively little effort. Instead of topics along the lines of constitutional change or vital national interests, the focus should be shifted to life issues that concern us all. While public services are rapidly disintegrating, the authorities in BiH seem ever closer to Lorenzetti's fresco of bad governance and its consequences.

Mapping the entire picture of failures in BiH governance and the corresponding effects would entail a multi-year project. Nevertheless, in order to illustrate the imperfections of the system we live in, Popolari decided to look at a relatively pressing problem that grew over the foreseen proportions - the protection and welfare of stray dogs.

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<sup>8</sup> World Bank. 2009. "From Stability to Performance: Local Governance and Service Delivery in Bosnia and Herzegovina". Sustainable Development Department, Europe and Central Asia Region.

<sup>9</sup> World Bank. 2009. "From Stability to Performance: Local Governance and Service Delivery in Bosnia and Herzegovina". Sustainable Development Department, Europe and Central Asia Region.

## Dogs - Man's Best Friends?

Since 2011, the issue of stray dogs, especially in Sarajevo, has been vigorously debated in public. Although intense, the discussion which included an unusually large number of actors has been charged with emotions, often freed from fact, and highly polarized. This kind of public debate and discussion so far failed to yield results in terms of constructive solution(s) to the growing problem of stray dogs, especially in BiH's urban areas. Unfortunately, the policy of protection and welfare of abandoned animals, including dogs, has been presented in the media and the public as a question of ethics and cultural values, instead of what it actually is: a policy at the state level regulated by state law and by-laws that must be carried out.

The framework for the implementation of measures and the establishment of a management system for the protection and welfare of stray dogs has been set with the state Law on the Protection and Welfare of Animals, adopted in early 2009 by the BiH Parliament. The Law, adopted on the recommendation of the European Partnership<sup>10</sup> and at the invitation of the British Royal Society,<sup>11</sup> is a very sophisticated and advanced piece of legislation - it regulates the responsibility of people for the protection and welfare of all animals, along with the relationship to the abandoned animals, and pets, including dogs and cats.

The adopted Law and by-laws, enacted during the following year (2010), among other things assumed the establishment and development of a functional system of protection and care for abandoned animals, i.e. dogs.

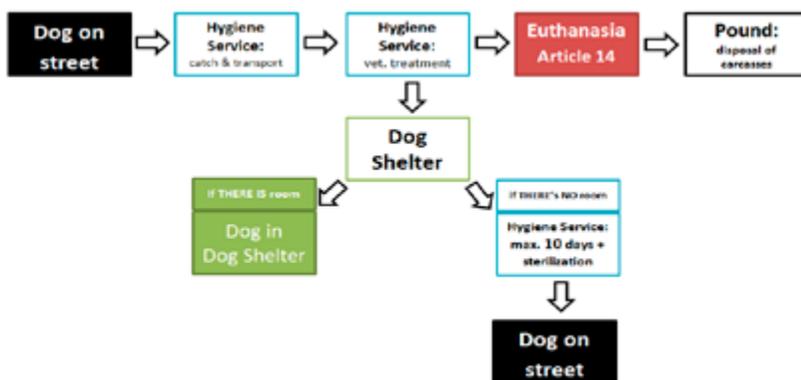


Chart 1: Functional system of protection and care for abandoned dogs; Source: Popolari's own elaboration

<sup>10</sup> European Partnership was one of the instruments of the Stabilization and Association Process, and served as a kind of checklist by which the progress of Western Balkan countries, potential candidates to the EU accession process, was measured. The European Partnership is a document which defines the key short-term (1-2 years) and medium-term (3-4 years) priorities of a country to move closer to EU membership. The EU has offered European Partnership to the countries that were a part of the Stabilization and Association Process at the Thessaloniki Summit in 2003 with the aim of deepening the relations with the countries of the Western Balkans. The first European Partnership with BiH was adopted in 2004, the second in 2005, and the third in 2007 by the Council of EU.

<sup>11</sup> The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) was established in 1824 in London, UK. Their vision is a world in which all people are respected and live in harmony with all members of the animal kingdom. They are the first organization of its kind in the world.

The diagram above shows the system as it was envisaged: a hygiene service catches an abandoned dog that roams the streets and transports the animal from the capture point to the hygiene service's facilities.<sup>12</sup> Immediately upon arrival in the hygiene service, the dog needs to be registered and quarantined, which means that the hygiene service must also have adequate rooms - nine of them<sup>13</sup> - for the reception and admission of dogs.

From the hygiene service, if healthy, the dog goes to a dog shelter.<sup>14</sup> After it has been admitted to the shelter, the dog's characteristics are put on record, while the animal is isolated for a period of 10 days, during which the dog and its health condition are observed and estimated. If capacities of the shelter are full, the hygiene service must take the dog back to its own premises, also for the period of 10 days. After 10 days, the hygiene service must perform sterilization and mark the dog in collaboration with a veterinarian, upon which the dog should be returned to the street.

If the dog is healthy, and the capacity of the dog shelter allows it, the dog remains at the shelter until it is rehomed. This may be an indefinite period of time, until the dog dies of natural causes - legislation in BiH does not foresee a maximum period of time for keeping a dog in a shelter, after which it can be euthanized. Most of the developed European countries have limited the length of a dog's stay in the shelter. The so-called "holding period" ranges between 3 and 60 days in Europe.<sup>15</sup> During this period, the dogs are treated by a veterinarian, vaccinated, neutered, can be returned to their owners or can be adopted by compassionate citizens. After the defined time period expires, dogs without owners or those who have not been offered a new home are euthanized. The reason for this is purely economic. Dogs cost money, while the state bears the costs.

At the moment when the law was passed in 2009, around 700 stray dogs roamed the streets of Sarajevo, according to unofficial estimates of the local non-governmental sector.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> To be effective, and humane, hygiene service must possess appropriate vehicles for the transport of animals, equipment to capture animals (leash/strap, cable trapping, deep nets, cages and muzzles), as well as employ trained workforce capable of catching dangerous dogs with the help of chemical substances for sedation (acepromazine is used in the form of a gel, tablet or through food) and anesthesia (a combination of ketamine and xilazine or Tiletamine using pipes for blowing).

<sup>13</sup> 1) reception room (for identification/registration) and examination of the animals, performed by a doctor of veterinary medicine; (2) rooms (cages, tanks) for the holding of different types of animals, as appropriate; (3) a room for diseased animals; (4) storage for equipment; (5) a room for cleaning and disinfection products; (6) facilities for storage, preparation and distribution of feed; (7) room (freezer) for disposal of carcasses; (8) rooms for staff and (9) toilet.

<sup>14</sup> Shelters must be constructed according to specific standards. They must be built at least 250-300 meters from an inhabited area, all surfaces must be covered in concrete or asphalt, or those that are not should be green. System of reception and disposal of waste water, purification system, and space for the collection of solid feces, ventilation system and air conditioning, refrigerator for storage of carcasses are just a few of the many conditions shelters must meet in order to function properly. Space for dogs must consist of an enclosed part, which is not to be smaller than 2 x 2 x 1.8 m<sup>2</sup> and an outdoor area of at least 2 x 2 x 2.4 m<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> World Society for the Protection of Animals & The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals International. 2007. "Stray Animal Control Practices: An Investigation of Stray Dog and Cat Population Control Practices across Europe," March 2007.

<sup>16</sup> Populari interview with Jelena Paunović, journalist and animal protection activist, 29 September 2014, Sarajevo.

It would have cost about 50,000 KM only to catch and transport all of them to veterinarians.<sup>17</sup> Additional 55,000 KM would be required to provide them with full veterinary treatment,<sup>18</sup> and it would have taken additional 91,000 KM to sterilize/neuter the 700 stray dogs.<sup>19</sup>

These funds should have been provided by the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), the Canton of Sarajevo, the City of Sarajevo, and nine cantonal municipalities,<sup>20</sup> while according to the by-laws, the municipality has an obligation to set up a shelter for animals and hygiene service. The legislation also stipulates that at least eight types of institutions are involved in the policy of protection and welfare of animals in FBiH,<sup>21</sup> and that their compliance with the Law is overseen by the state Veterinary Office.<sup>22</sup> In accordance with the Law, the Veterinary Office, which is on top of the system, should have established and maintained a single record of pets in BiH. Due to the apparent lack of capacities and a rather weak position against other players involved, the Office has so far not fulfilled its legal obligation:

*“The registry of dogs, which should have been established here, in the Veterinary Office, is a political issue. You know, whenever there is something central, unitary at the state level, it is immediately a problem, and it turns into a political issue.”<sup>23</sup>*

Inga Dujmović, state veterinary inspector for animal welfare, further emphasizes that the registry has the purpose of *“monitoring and prevention of disease, rabies,”*<sup>24</sup> but it is also a mechanism through which inspections could fill budgets by punishing offenders and irresponsible owners.

The Law therefore requires investments in millions of KM, fantastic inter-institutional coordination and professional qualifications, but it appears that it has been adopted without knowledge of the actual political, administrative and economic landscape

<sup>17</sup> Lokom, for example, charges 75 KM for humane catching and transport of one stray dog.

<sup>18</sup> According to the price list of veterinary services in the Federation, the minimum price of a general clinical check-up is 20 KM, while the maximum amounts to 25 KM. Vaccination against rabies is charged between 20 and 35 KM, and polyvalent vaccines cost between 25 and 30 KM.

<sup>19</sup> According to the data of the Cantonal Veterinary Station at Stup, sterilization/neutering is charged around 130 KM.

<sup>20</sup> According to Paragraph a) of the Article 30 of the Law, there is also a possibility of other forms of financing (e.g. through donations or grants).

<sup>21</sup> At the municipal or city level, these include municipal and city services and utility companies as well as private and public veterinary organizations. At the cantonal level, there are cantonal ministries (of environment, economy or agriculture), cantonal veterinary inspections and official veterinarians who are taking action in case of violations of the law, and the cantonal veterinary stations that are in direct contact with the dogs and carry out the labeling of dogs (and cats), keep registers of dogs, and according to paragraph 2 of the Article 14 of the Law, give recommendations or make decisions on euthanasia of individual dogs. At the entity level, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry is in charge of this issue along with the Federal Administration of Inspection. Finally, the Veterinary Office within the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations at the state level is also involved.

<sup>22</sup> Veterinary Office was established at the state level, and is responsible for supervising the implementation of relevant laws, and it should be in charge of managing a single registry of all marked dogs (and cats). It should also pass or make proposals for detailed regulations stemming from the law (e.g. give the competent ministry a proposal of a guide on how to issue permits for the establishment of dog shelters).

<sup>23</sup> Populari interview with Inga Dujmović, State Veterinary Inspector for Animal Welfare, 22 September 2014, Sarajevo.

<sup>24</sup> Populari interview with Inga Dujmović, State Veterinary Inspector for Animal Welfare, 22 September 2014, Sarajevo.

in BiH. Or, in other words, the Law was adopted as if no one intended to implement it. It passed through the Parliament in less than four months with a very limited 20-minute discussion focused exclusively on traditional bullfighting, which is also regulated in the law. The failure to hold public hearings and discussion, and the exclusion of the profession from the entire process clearly indicates that the Law was perceived as marginal and essentially irrelevant. And, therefore, it was not given much attention; no one discussed the responsibilities or the resources needed which after the entry of the law and by-laws in force, led to different interpretations and fundamental disagreements over their implementation.

## Passing the Buck

Municipalities did not seem to understand that the local community - that is municipalities themselves - should be responsible for this issue, even though the Law on Principles of Local Self-Government in FBiH already back in 2006 clearly stated that the protection and welfare of animals is one of the competences of local governments.<sup>25</sup>

*"It's all about taking responsibility. Nobody is going to do their job, that's how it is. The local community is not the level at which we should talk about solutions [for the stray dogs issue]. This issue must be dealt with at the city or cantonal level."<sup>26</sup>*

But, neither the Sarajevo City Administration nor the mayor of Sarajevo, Ivo Komšić, consider the city to be the right place to address the issue of stray dogs' management. Even when involved and engaged, Komšić likes to present it as an act of good will, rather than the regular activity stemming from his job description:

*"I will continue to try and take action on this issue despite the fact that it's not my responsibility."<sup>27</sup>*

Consensus on who exactly is responsible for the enforcement of this particular law is lacking at the level of Sarajevo Canton, too. Even individual ministries within the Canton cannot agree on it. The Minister of Physical Planning and Environmental Protection, Zlatko Petrović, shifts the responsibility to the ministry with offices located only two floors above his:

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<sup>25</sup> According to Article 8 of the Law on Principles of Local Self-Government in the FBiH, the competences of units of local self-government include the protection of animals.

<sup>26</sup> Populari interview with Nijaz Hromo, Assistant to the Mayor of the Municipality of Novo Sarajevo for utilities and environmental protection, and Halil Dardagan, Assistant to Mayor of Novo Sarajevo for civil protection, 18 September 2014, Sarajevo.

<sup>27</sup> On the occasion of the increased number of attacks and dog bites - Komšić: Stray dogs must go from the streets, Source.ba, 11 September 2014.

*“Let me tell you - I am not the Minister in the Canton that is responsible for this issue [...] - it is the responsibility of the Minister of Economy [...], with whom you can talk about this issue.”<sup>28</sup>*

But in the Cantonal Ministry of Economy, they are not even sure whether this competence belongs to them or not:

*“After the adoption of the Law, the number of dogs on the streets has increased sharply. Then, some ministers came and convinced our minister [of economy] that he is in charge of this issue. But it's not just our responsibility because there is no provision in the Law saying that the Cantonal Ministry of Economy is the sole bearer of responsibility.”<sup>29</sup>*

Unfamiliarity with the Law and other regulations governing this area, avoidance of responsibility and transfer of responsibilities to another instance in the case of animal welfare Law enforcement in Sarajevo Canton go around in circles.

A lack of interest in this matter was present even among those who should control the implementation of this Law and punish violators. After the Law was passed, veterinary inspectors strongly resisted this policy. According to Inga Dujmović, the state animal welfare inspector, things are better today; but instead of doing their job, the Cantonal Veterinary Inspection still commits too much time to ethical issues and questions relating to the interpretation of the Law.

*“In Sarajevo, in the Municipality of Stari Grad, there is one such [illegal] sanctuary for dogs, a small animal shelter; it is not registered. We have turned a blind eye on them. It is better for dogs to get shelter and food there than to be outside in the streets.”<sup>30</sup>*

With an attitude in direct contradiction with the Law, like this one of Joka Hlubna, chief cantonal veterinary inspector, the Canton will not be able to achieve long-term results. At the same time, the theory that inspections could fill up the cantonal budget through the punishing of law offenders, and that the collected fines could then be used for further development of this policy area, promotion of dogs' rehoming and raising awareness, cannot be sustained in practice. Inspectors, the final and the most rigorous instance of control over the implementation of each and every paragraph of the Law, are thus only yet another link in a whole chain of problems related to the care of stray dogs. That the inspections today are only a shadow of the former respectable institutions is what worries some veterinarians, too:

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<sup>28</sup> Populari interview with Zlatko Petrović, Minister for Physical Planning and Environmental Protection, Sarajevo Canton, 23 September 2014, Sarajevo.

<sup>29</sup> Populari interview with Ljubica Livaja Mitrović, Assistant to the Minister of Economy, Sarajevo Canton, 1 October 2014, Sarajevo.

<sup>30</sup> Populari interview with Joka Hlubna, Chief Cantonal Veterinary Inspector, Cantonal Administration for Inspection, Sarajevo Canton, 25 September 2014, Sarajevo.

*“The weakest link in this story about stray dogs is the disregard of the Law, i.e. inactivity of inspections. Inspectors have virtually privatized inspection service. It is incredible! [...] And the problem is primarily caused by the fact that the profession is not allowed to deal with this issue.”<sup>31</sup>*

Since the very adoption of the Law until today the debate on who is and who is not responsible for its implementation has wasted a lot of time. In such an atmosphere the attempts at solving this growing problem were put on the back burner and given almost no attention until the end of 2011, when citizens began filing law suits against municipalities for dog attacks and endured fear. In 2012, municipal courts began issuing sentences in favor of the citizens and against municipalities. The latter finally received a clear message on who is responsible when it comes to the problem of stray dogs.<sup>32</sup>

At the time, the number of dogs on the Sarajevo streets was estimated at around 11,000,<sup>33</sup> i.e. 15 times more than in 2009 when the Law was adopted. The number of persons reporting dog attacks and bites in 2012 stopped at 745, and thus in relation to the previous year (2011) increased by 29.11%.<sup>34</sup>

Only with the worsening of the problem in late 2011, and early 2012, did Sarajevo Canton finally start thinking of a systemic solution to the problem of stray dogs. Since then, however, various levels of government have had a try with their “solutions”, mostly without much coordination and effect.

## The Cantonal Solution

As the situation was already serious, and municipalities have not even begun to address the problem, and as lawsuits started flowing in, the Canton of Sarajevo or the Cantonal Ministry of Economy more specifically, took the lead at the end of 2011 to establish the system and start implementing the legislation in the entire canton. The idea was to establish the first public-private partnership in the Canton; the private construction company Murai Komerc, based in Vogošća, near Sarajevo, was supposed to find land, build and start operating a dog shelter, and provide related services. The Sarajevo Canton, the nine cantonal municipalities and the City of Sarajevo would, on the other hand, provide funds to rent this shelter and pay for services. The public-private partnership did not get off the ground as planned; regardless, the shelter was built. Due to the worsening problem of stray dogs on the streets and constant pressure coming from NGOs and the public,

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<sup>31</sup> Popolari interview with Senad Arnautović, former Director of the cantonal public company “Veterinarska stanica d.o.o” (Veterinary Station), 25 September 2014, Sarajevo.

<sup>32</sup> In early 2012, cantonal, city and municipal authorities in Sarajevo faced accusations due to non-compliance with the Law on Protection and Welfare of Animals. Regional Committee of the political party “Naša stranka” filed a complaint to the Cantonal Inspection Administration in light of an increased number of stray dogs on the streets of Sarajevo, which they considered a direct consequence of the lack of implementation of the Law and the non-existent construction of shelters for animals.

<sup>33</sup> More precisely, 11,168, which is the data provided by the British charity for dogs “Dogs Trust” at the end of 2012.

<sup>34</sup> The data of the Institute for Emergency Medical Services of the Sarajevo Canton.

*“on 29 December, all municipalities, the city and two cantonal ministries signed the agreement stating that they will together allocate money from the 2012 budget to the shelter.”<sup>35</sup>*

“The Agreement on Co-Financing of the Lease for the Shelter for Animals” with Murai Komerc was intended to lead to the removal of about 500 dogs from the streets of Sarajevo within 60 days, and included a plan of financing the dog shelter in Prača with 942,000 KM on the basis of a precise contract that was to be signed in March 2012 when the shelter in Prača was to open officially.

Sarajevo cantonal shelter for dogs “Prača” opened in the municipality of Pale-Prača, in Goražde Canton, 39 km from Sarajevo, on investor’s private land. The shelter is hard to find and can be reached by taking a turn off the main road and following a narrow track through the forest landscape with no signalization whatsoever. While it might seem idyllic, the shelter that can offer sanctuary to around 600 dogs and covers 4,000 m<sup>2</sup> (3,200 m<sup>2</sup> of which is enclosed area), is hardly able to provide Sarajevo Canton, the City of Sarajevo, and the nine municipalities with a 24/7 service - primarily due to its location.



*Figure 5: Cantonal shelter for dogs Prača, in Prača, 39 km from Sarajevo  
(Source: klix.ba)*

<sup>35</sup> Popolari interview with Ljubica Livaja Mitrović, Assistant to Minister of Economy, Sarajevo Canton, 1 October 2014, Sarajevo.

The owner and director of Murai Komerc, Muriz Alić, claims that the shelter is an investment of 1.4 million KM,<sup>36</sup> and that there is a registered hygiene service, veterinary service, refrigerator for carcasses, so they have practically everything the Law and by-laws prescribe,<sup>37</sup> including 15 employees, veterinarians and veterinary technicians.

In March 2012, when the shelter opened, the lease contract with Murai Komerc was signed for a period of 10 years.<sup>38</sup> Although only three months prior to the shelter's opening ceremony the then Minister of Economy of Sarajevo Canton, Rusmir Sendić, expressed his concern that the problem of

*"5,000 to 20,000 stray dogs cannot be solved by one shelter,"*<sup>39</sup>

he, in contrast, proudly commented during the ceremony:

*"We have shown that the problem can be solved."*<sup>40</sup>

Yet, the problem was far from being solved and the system it established was far from being functional. Already in the summer of the same year, the media started reporting disturbing news about the condition of dogs sheltered in Prača.<sup>41</sup> NGOs and activists started warning of fraud and abuse related to this shelter. Pictures of starving, neglected dogs in cages, or released to roam freely within and outside the shelter, were far from a solution that was advertised to the citizens only a few months ago at the ceremonial opening.

Although the shelter is envisaged for as many dogs as possible to pass through it, according to the head of the dog shelter in Prača, Hamdo Alić, only 2,000 dogs have been sheltered there since its opening.<sup>42</sup> With 400 adopted or rehomed, and approximately 150 euthanized,<sup>43</sup> 380 dogs currently reside in Prača, 15 of which are dangerous and could be euthanized immediately according to Article 14 of the Law on the Protection and Welfare of Animals BiH.<sup>44</sup>

However, these numbers do not add up and seem to be random, rather than a result of keeping accurate records. And even if records exist, they are inaccessible to the public, while a visit to Prača is not possible. The inexistence of records and the non-transparency of operations funded from the budgets of the Sarajevo Canton, the cantonal municipalities and the city represent a gross violation of existing laws and bylaws. In spite of this, the Sarajevo cantonal veterinary inspection since the opening

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<sup>36</sup> Populari interview with Muriz Alić, owner and manager of Murai Komerc, and investor in the cantonal dog shelter, 22 September 2014, Vogošća.

<sup>37</sup> Rulebook on Establishment and Conditions to be met by Animal Shelters.

<sup>38</sup> Statement of Muamer Musić, an employee of the dog shelter in Prača, in the article: "Semir Efendić: Shelter in Prača has yielded no results", *Oslobođenje*, 4 September 2013.

<sup>39</sup> Rusmir Sendić, Minister of Economy, Sarajevo Canton, 29 December 2011.

<sup>40</sup> Rusmir Sendić, Minister of Economy, Sarajevo Canton, 30 March 2012, in the article "Prača Dog Shelter Opened," *Radiosarajevo.ba*, 30 March 2012.

<sup>41</sup> Among others, the media published articles titled: "Employees of the Prača dog shelter refused to admit dogs and order to throw dogs in the container!" "A testimony of volunteers: Prača shelter is a concentration camp!" and "Sarajevo: a concentration camp for dogs without shelter!"

<sup>42</sup> Populari interview with Hamdo Alić, the head of the dog shelter in Prača, 22 September 2014, Vogošća.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

of the dog shelter in Prača has not paid a visit to the facility. The chief veterinary inspector in the Canton states that it is the division of powers and competences that prevents her from going to Prača:

*“It is a different canton, so we cannot carry out monitoring there. It must be controlled by cantonal inspections of the canton, in which the shelter is located, i.e. Goražde Canton.”<sup>45</sup>*

To whom the head of the shelter in Prača submits reports about their operations is not clear, but judging by the words of the Murai Komerc director Alić, and available budgets of cantons, cities and municipalities, the public authorities, too, do not fulfill their part of the contract (and thus their legal obligations):

*“The state failed to respect the deal; they simply did not do their job. So, we now have a contract between two cantonal ministries, the city administration and nine municipalities to pay rent to us for the 10 coming years. The agreement on the financing of the lease is implemented only in 50%. Some municipalities do not fulfill their financial obligations.”<sup>46</sup>*

There are no reliable data on how much money the canton, the city and nine cantonal municipalities so far invested in Prača. Information about budget funds invested in these activities is very scarce, difficult to access and largely unreliable. Municipalities often refuse to answer questions about budgets, ignoring the Freedom of Access to Information Act and the fact that budgets should be publicly available or insist on providing information on a CD instead of sending it over in an email.<sup>47</sup>

The content of budgets is in most cases very general and vague with names of items and budget lines<sup>48</sup> varying from year to year or budget executions not systemized in the same way the budget was planned.

The chart below demonstrates the funds that the canton, the city and six out of nine cantonal municipalities planned and allocated in their budgets to what is explicitly stated as the financing of the animal shelter construction.

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<sup>45</sup> Popolari interview with Joka Hlubna, Chief Cantonal Veterinary Inspector, Cantonal Administration for Inspection, Sarajevo Canton, 25 September 2014, Sarajevo.

<sup>46</sup> Popolari interview with Muriz Alić, owner and manager of Murai Komerc, and investor in the cantonal dog shelter, 22 September 2014, Vogošća.

<sup>47</sup> Municipality of Ilidža has charged Popolari 5 KM for public information – the budget and its implementation for 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 on the grounds that it does not send information over email, but rather provides them on a CD. Thus, it does not actually charge for information, but for the means of data transfer.

<sup>48</sup> Various titles of budget items and budget lines which relate to similar types of expenditures appear in budgets. E.g. “grant for the construction of dog shelters,” “co-financing the animal shelter in Sarajevo Canton,” “expenditure for the construction of shelter for the care of animals,” “support for the construction of a home for animals,” “necessary repairs of lodging for stray animals” – all of them imply the same type of costs, but they differ among municipalities and also across different years within the same municipality.

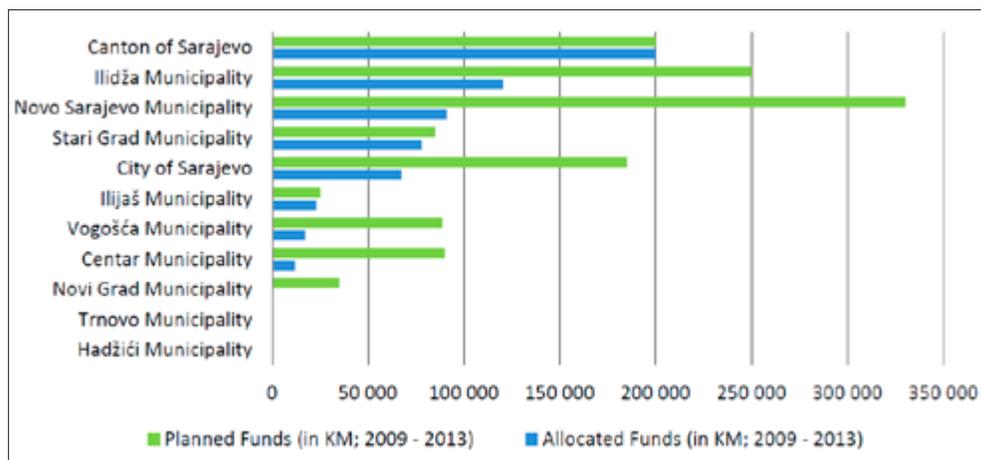


Chart 2: Funds Planned and Allocated for the Construction of a Shelter for Stray Dogs (2009 - 2013); Source: Popolari's own elaboration

Looking at the available budgets of municipalities, the city and the canton, in 2009 and 2010, only the city administration planned and allocated budget funds for the care of abandoned dogs. Municipalities and the canton joined the following year, in 2011, when they planned to assign a total of 300,000 KM for the care of stray dogs/ construction of a shelter for abandoned dogs. But by the end of that year, only the canton realized its plans, singling out one sixth of the total planned amount (300,000 KM), i.e. 50,000 KM. In 2012, the funds planned and allocated for the construction of shelter(s) grew compared to the previous year; they reached 445,000 KM, out of which less than a half has been realized. The same situation followed in 2013, with a total of 556,650 KM planned, and 248,411 KM realized - again, mostly thanks to the canton that in 2013 from the budget assigned twice as much funds for the dog shelter as it did in previous years. Over the last two years and out of six municipalities that planned funds for this purpose, Ilidža has allocated the largest amount of funds from its budget,<sup>49</sup> while the Centar municipality distributed almost 5 and ½ times more for sterilization/castration purposes to the Cantonal Veterinary Station (65,000 KM) than for the lease of an animal shelter (realized 12,044 KM out of the planned 90,000 KM) in the period between 2008 and 2013.

In general, a lot more was planned than was intended to be realized. Over four years, from 2009 to 2013, the canton, the city and nine municipalities planned to allocate nearly 1.3 million KM for the dog shelter, while in reality, they allocated less than half of that amount: slightly over 600,000 KM.

<sup>49</sup> In 2012, when the Ilidža Municipality allocated funds from the budget to finance a shelter for stray dogs for the first time, the municipality also signed a financing agreement with the Agricultural Cooperative "Ilidža". The Cooperative opened a dog shelter in Gladno Polje (Municipality of Ilidža) that same year. Although it is not entirely clear from the budget, the funds allocated by the Municipality of Ilidža for these purposes were probably intended for the dog shelter in Gladno Polje, rather than for the joint project in Prača.

Although obliged to provide almost 1 million KM each year to the dog shelter in Prača, the canton, the city and municipalities failed to do so. It is also clear that there has been no systematic approach in the execution of their contractual obligations. This resulted in a lack of funds for the shelter, which was immediately reflected in the poor quality of accommodation and poor feed for stray dogs in Prača, etc. The problem of stray dogs, however, remained:

*“This shelter cannot be closed, but it also cannot continue to function as it functions now. The key problem remained the same to say the least, and might actually worsen during winter. It is quite clear to me that many - especially municipal mayors and the mayor of the city - do not fulfill their obligations in terms of paying the shelter, even though they should do so because this is one of the solutions when the problem of stray dogs in Sarajevo is in question. It is very easy to solve this problem, but obviously there is no will among those responsible.”<sup>50</sup>*

The story about the dog shelter in Prača is anything but successful and transparent. And thanks to the lack of transparency of the cantonal and municipal administrations, it is not known exactly how exactly much has been allocated from their budgets to Prača and Murai Komerc.<sup>51</sup> The situation on the ground soon revealed that whatever the amount, the money was wasted. As the problem was even after the establishment of Prača simply not solved, the local community remained under pressure from the public. Therefore, in 2013, the municipalities began looking for and investing in more or less successful solutions independently.

## Municipal Initiatives

At the time, the mayor of Novi Grad municipality was among the most vocal critics of the joint project in Prača, and he did not try to hide his disappointment:

*“If anyone in Sarajevo noticed that the shelter [in Prača] solved anything, we would like to hear their arguments [...]. We tried to work with them several times, and what we have seen is that they are not able to respond to the requirements of catching and caring for animals.”<sup>52</sup>*

So, Novi Grad resorted to their own solution - they registered a municipal hygiene service within the already existing Public Company “Lokom” which normally takes care of the management, protection and maintenance of facilities owned by the Novi Grad Municipality. Even though it is not within the scope of business they are

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<sup>50</sup> Statement by Nermin Pećanac, Minister of Internal Affairs, Sarajevo Canton, upon visiting dog shelter in Prača, with the Delegation of the Sarajevo Canton, 21 October 2014.

<sup>51</sup> Even though on several occasions during the research Populari tried, on the basis of the Freedom Of Access To Information Act, to get information about overall budgetary allocations for the protection and welfare of animals, taking care of abandoned animals, etc., the data remained unavailable or partially available. This practice further confirms the thesis about bad government and unaccountable and non-transparent local government institutions.

<sup>52</sup> Semir Efendić: Shelter in Prača did not give any results, Oslobođenje.ba, 4 September 2013.

registered for, they established and opened a hygiene service in May 2013. The idea was that the hygiene service within “Lokom” catches stray dogs in the municipality of Novi Grad, as well as beyond, and then - based on the contract signed in 2013 with the cantonal veterinary station - takes them to the veterinary station for sterilization/neutering, while “*larger animals, causing fear among citizens*”<sup>53</sup> are taken to contracted animal shelters.<sup>54</sup>

Thereby, the Municipality of Novi Grad began fulfilling its legal obligations. However, right from the very beginning both “Lokom” and the municipality faced disapproval from part of the non-governmental sector and the public. They also faced charges alleging that they are catching stray dogs, and executing euthanasia illegally. This, though, did not prevent “Lokom” from continuing carrying out these activities, and the municipality to support them with 110,000 KM from the budget in 2014. But, the hygiene service cannot achieve meaningful results on its own, without an animal shelters and veterinarians. Thus, Novi Grad Municipality turned to the illegal dog shelter located in the Gladno Polje village in the Municipality of Ilidža.

In 2012 the Agricultural cooperative “Ilidža” in Gladno Polje turned the former premises of asylum for refugees from Kosovo into a shelter for stray dogs.<sup>55</sup> It is an area that can accommodate around 150 dogs; yet, the conditions here are far from the standards prescribed in the legislation. The infrastructure is not fully adapted for new purposes, and some of the dogs - currently, 200 of them are sheltered there - are free to move outside of the shelter. An unknown number of them is marked, and they are not sterilized.

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<sup>53</sup> Hygiene service started working in full capacity, Lokom.ba, 30 May 2013.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Populari interview with Branislav Čolo, employee of the Agricultural Cooperative “Ilidža” in Gladno Polje, 17 September 2014, Gladno Polje.



Figure 6: Former agricultural cooperative “Ilidža” – Current dog shelter in Gladno Polje  
(Photo: Populari)

It is clear at first glance that this is far from being a dog “shelter”:

*“That thing over there in Gladno Polje - that is horror, improvisation [...] You don’t even have enough people to take care of these dogs there. The director has not complied with the law.”<sup>56</sup>*

Branislav Čolo, an employee of both the cooperative and the dog shelter, says that alongside him two more people care for the dogs, which clearly violates the regulations that require one employee per 50 dogs. Also, the shelter has no night watchman. But Branislav says that the cooperative - even though it has a financing contract with the Municipality of Ilidža that has committed to pay 50,000 KM per year<sup>57</sup> - does not have enough money to pay salaries regularly, let alone to employ more people. Caring for a dog costs about 100 KM per month<sup>58</sup> in this shelter, and if capacities are full (but not overcrowded, as they are currently), only simple mathematics is required for one to calculate that 50,000 KM a year is not enough to cover the costs of all the care these dogs need, and the salaries of employees.

<sup>56</sup> Populari interview with Inga Dujmović, State Veterinary Inspector for Animal Welfare, 22 September 2014, Sarajevo.

<sup>57</sup> Populari interview with Branislav Čolo, employee of the Agricultural Cooperative “Ilidža” in Gladno Polje, 17 September 2014, Gladno Polje.

<sup>58</sup> The monthly expense of a dog differs from one shelter to another. In Hadžići it amounts to 140 KM, while in Gladno Polje, it takes 100 KM a month, according to the dog shelter employee, to provide the dog everything it needs.

Nonetheless, Branislav highlights:

*“Dogs are neither hungry nor thirsty. Volunteers visit daily to bring food, or to clean facilities, but that is still not enough. It’s pretty obvious that dogs are suffering here. And there are other problems too. For example, during the night, people come, they enter facilities and steal dogs, especially the purebred dogs.”*<sup>59</sup>

Although established and funded by a public institution as a part of its legal obligation, the dog shelter in Gladno Polje survives mainly thanks to improvisation and willingness of individuals - volunteers and activists - and cooperative employees, who continue providing shelter for almost 200 dogs. But a shelter that operates in this way, and depends on good will and volunteers’ efforts, can, at any moment, turn into a potential threat, rather than a solution. In case this enthusiasm is lost or these individuals lose motivation or interest, and the currently available sources of money finally dry out, these dogs would return to the streets. A system, once it is established, should provide safety nets that prevent something like this from happening in the first place, while in the worst case scenario it should provide a quick response. The fact that in the case of Gladno Polje and other dog shelters around Sarajevo, these safety nets and the system itself are missing is yet another illustration of the collapse of governance the citizens of Sarajevo are witnessing daily.

In the absence of the system, a major role in the solving of the stray dogs problem in Sarajevo Canton has been taken over by non-governmental organizations, namely local associations for protection of animals and promotion of animal welfare. This is emphasized also by Jelena Paunović, a journalist and animal protection activist:

*“Non-governmental organizations made a mistake here. They took over what is otherwise the responsibility of the government, instead of doing their job - monitoring.”*<sup>60</sup>

Given that their role is not set and defined in the law and corresponding by-laws, associations started carrying out a range of activities: they volunteer in dog shelters and donate feed, rescue injured dogs, promote and assist in rehoming of dogs in BiH and abroad, they participate actively in public debates on the welfare of stray dogs, they lobby, organize meetings and protests, implement fundraising campaigns over and through social networks for different purposes, such as, for instance, the payment of accommodation for dogs in illegal dog pensions in Sarajevo,<sup>61</sup> etc. Still, the opinions about the role of associations for animal protection are divided the same way the opinions on the problem of stray dogs are polarized.

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<sup>59</sup> Populari interview with Branislav Čolo, employee of the Agricultural Cooperative “Iliđa” in Gladno Polje, 17 September 2014, Gladno Polje.

<sup>60</sup> Populari interview with Jelena Paunović, journalist and animal protection activist, 29 September 2014, Sarajevo.

<sup>61</sup> Pensions for dogs are privately owned businesses intended for either pet or stray dogs, which unlike dog shelters, charge a monthly fee for accommodation or care of dogs. Presumably, between 10 and 54 of them exist in and around Sarajevo, and most of them are not registered. There are great differences in the quality of their services, which cost around 240 KM per month.

A number of actors consider the animal protection associations' involvement over-aggressive and non-transparent. They and the activities they implement in Sarajevo often face accusations of exploiting the issue for financial gain, rather than actually helping the dogs. Some of these organizations have even been accused of fraud and criminal activities. Although none of these allegations has so far been proven, they have greatly disturbed and destroyed relationships between the associations and other stakeholders; in some municipalities to the extent that the non-governmental organizations and the public are banned from accessing dog shelters.

Dog theft, entry of unauthorized persons after working hours, worried or curious activists, and similar problems were solved by the municipality of Hadžići through a less transparent model. In 2014, they registered a hygiene service and dog shelter within the Public Utility Company "Komunalac". The shelter is located at the former military quarters "Žunovnica" and started operating in February. It is completely isolated from the public and cannot be accessed. Employees of the public company say that their system functions well and that the problem of stray and dangerous dogs in Hadžići has thereby been solved. Currently, the shelter accommodates 50 dogs and has one employee, while a veterinarian or veterinary technician visit it periodically.

An employee of "Komunalac," Mirza Rašidović, says that all dogs have been neutered, treated by a veterinarian, chipped, registered and are held by standards set in the by-laws. They use humane methods of both catching and keeping the dogs in the shelter with the latter service costing 140 KM a month per dog. Hadžići is thus the first municipality in Sarajevo Canton that has fulfilled a legal obligation and established a system of care for stray dogs.

In the same way, and in order not to depend on anyone else any more, the municipality of Novi Grad, or rather its "Lokom," plans to build and open a dog shelter,<sup>62</sup> while a veterinary clinic has already opened.<sup>63</sup> Thereby, the Novi Grad municipality, too, has made a step towards building its own municipal system of protection and care for stray dogs.

However, all of the solutions mentioned suffer from a few serious drawbacks: some are entirely illegal, although they are functioning; others' work is non-transparent and statements of their employees about the condition of dogs, for example, cannot be verified; some do not keep records; but what is most striking is that none of these partial solutions at the level of individual local communities led to a long-term solution in the entire canton, or even in municipalities that launched these initiatives. The money wasted was far greater than the produced effect. Dogs, after all, are not objects that stay exclusively in the territory of one municipality; especially the city municipalities are bound to largely deal with the same dogs that easily cross municipal "borders." A solution to this problem within an individual municipality is therefore only the beginning of a solution to the issue at the cantonal level.

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<sup>62</sup> Populari interview with Mustafa Mrkulić, Director of the veterinary station of the Novi Grad Municipality (Veterinarska stanica Novi Grad), September 2014, Sarajevo.

<sup>63</sup> Veterinary Station Opened in Novi Grad Sarajevo, Novigradsarajevo.ba, 26 September 2014.

## Back to Square One

Another independent initiative grew along the lines of some municipal solutions. The largest British dog welfare charity “Dogs Trust” officially launched its project in BiH at the residence of the British Ambassador on 9 October 2012. The aim of the five-year-long project is to find a sustainable solution to the problem of stray dogs in BiH. On this occasion, they released an exclusive statement claiming that 11,168 stray dogs were present on the streets of Sarajevo.<sup>64</sup>

Since 2012, the local Dogs Trust office has established itself as one of the most important actors in the debate on stray dogs and in finding solutions to this problem in Sarajevo Canton. The Head of the Sarajevo office of Dogs Trust, Anel Bećirović, took a pretty great responsibility on a small team, even though they are a non-governmental organization, the role of which is not defined in the national legislation:

*“This will be a struggle on all fronts and we cannot do it alone. We need full support from all levels of government, non-governmental organizations, veterinary clinics and all other partners. It is only together that we can implement the Law on Animal Protection and Welfare and reach satisfactory results.”<sup>65</sup>*

But, in fact, for Dogs Trust, it is all about one front - the introduction of the policy of sterilization/neutering dogs as a long-term solution along with educational activities and public advocacy campaigns. Apart from educating school children about responsible dog ownership, Dogs Trust regularly conducts free training for BiH veterinarians and veterinary technicians. Veterinarians from abroad train BiH doctors of veterinary medicine about *“the latest techniques of surgical sterilization and castration of dogs”*.<sup>66</sup>

*“Dogs Trust is training people in what they already know - that is, sterilization of male and female dogs. I do not know why such distrust is present, but I do understand it partly. You know, our veterinarians are sloppy: How will we do it? - Easily! You know how it goes around here.”<sup>67</sup>*

With these trainings, Dogs Trust attempts to remind BiH’s veterinarians of the standards and regulations they already know and should already respect - but too often end up ignoring them: they do not wear white coats in the workplace, they lack proper equipment, their records are incomplete or non-existent, etc.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> This figure is presented to the public as the most accurate number of the population of stray dogs in Sarajevo. What exact methodology Dogs Trust is using to get to that precise number is not known, only that it is *“the state of the art methodology”* of counting dogs in urban areas, according to BiH’s Dogs Trust office PR, Sanja Bianculli.

<sup>65</sup> British solution to the problem of stray dogs, Radiosarajevo.ba, 9 October 2012.

<sup>66</sup> Dogs Trust’s free training of veterinarians continued in order to support entire Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dogs Trust Press Release, Dogstrust.ba, 11 November 2014.

<sup>67</sup> Populari interview with Senad Arnautović, former Director of the cantonal public company “Veterinarska stanica d.o.o” (Veterinary Station), 25 September 2014, Sarajevo.

<sup>68</sup> Populari interview with Senad Arnautović, former Director of the cantonal public company “Veterinarska stanica d.o.o” (Veterinary Station), 25 September 2014, Sarajevo.

In order to qualify for participation in Dogs Trust's program of mass sterilization, veterinarians and their clinics must meet a set of criteria, including various requirements ranging from seemingly banal ones, like wearing a white coat, to a more detailed list of equipment the clinics must be equipped with if they wish to participate in the program. Re-trained veterinarians in possession of Dogs Trust's certificates,<sup>69</sup> and those clinics that meet Dogs Trust's criteria and requirements then take part in their mass sterilization actions, the core business of Dogs Trust. According to their own assessment, the problem of stray dogs in Sarajevo can be solved within 7-10 years with the exclusive implementation of their sterilization/neutering policy, i.e. catch, neuter, release (CNR) method.



*Figure 7: Taking photos of Sarajevans with mascots, Dogs Trust marked the end of the first half of the mass sterilization campaign (Source: klix.ba)*

According to Bećirović, by October 2014, Dogs Trust had already sterilized/neutered 8,000 dogs, and thus, as pointed out at the reception marking their second anniversary in BiH, reduced the number of dogs on the streets significantly. According to their most recent estimates, the current number of stray dogs that roam the streets of Sarajevo is around 10,000.<sup>70</sup>

Whether the work of Dogs Trust has actually contributed to the reduction of the number of stray dogs on the streets of Sarajevo is not known, but it is evident that the frustration of citizens has grown to the extent that the Sarajevo Canton

<sup>69</sup> According to Sanja Bianculli, PR of BiH Dogs Trust office, certificates awarded to veterinarians by the Dogs Trust after their completion of training, are in fact the certificates issued by the Veterinary Royal College based in London.

<sup>70</sup> Dogs Trust BiH celebrated two years anniversary with partners, friends and key people from Dogs Trust, Dogs Trust Press Release, Dogstrust.ba, 14 October 2014.

in September 2014 again took the initiative to solve the stray dogs problem at the cantonal level.

Five years after the legislation has been adopted and after a number of different approaches to resolving this problem has been tried, the local governments in Sarajevo canton again found themselves at the starting point. An increasing number of dog bites and attacks on people reported in Sarajevo, brought all those who have for years been avoiding taking responsibility or only accepted it partly, to a situation in which an intervention is absolutely necessary. No more time can be wasted on fruitless discussions about who should have done what and when. The cantonal government thus adopted a decision to activate the dog pound service within the Cantonal Public Utility Company "RAD" in order to remove rabid, dangerous and diseased stray dogs from the streets.

According to the decision issued in 2009 by the inspectorate,<sup>71</sup> "RAD," or rather its dog pound service, should have already been re-registered into a hygiene service in order to align its activities with the new legislation. Yet, up until September 2014 it only dealt with disposing of corpses of dead animals, including stray dogs. This September's cantonal decision again ordered "RAD" to re-register its dog pound service into a hygiene service to be able to perform the necessary activities for the cantonal government in line with the legislation. In essence, nothing new has happened: the cantonal government finally forced "RAD" to start catching stray dogs again with its three available teams, and transport them to the veterinary stations and clinics accompanied by veterinary inspections. All this in order to perform euthanasia on the basis of an on-site assessment by the veterinary inspector, in case a dangerous or sick dog has been caught. With the delay of four years, the cantonal government has, by this Decision, in fact, announced the implementation of Article 14 of the Law on Protection and Welfare of Animals, and re-activated "RAD."

Minister Zlatko Petrović explains how much money will be allocated from the budget for yet another "solution" to this problem:

*"According to my estimates, it is about 680,000 KM, but that does not include cars and other equipment (clamps, nets, etc.), which will require an additional 100,000 KM."*<sup>72</sup>

Although this decision has been ambiguously presented to the public during the recent election campaign as a "final solution" to the problem of stray dogs in Sarajevo Canton, the measures only apply to dangerous and aggressive dogs. And, according to Petrović's assessment, currently, there are around 200 dangerous and aggressive stray dogs in Sarajevo. But even with the best possible intentions and good will, neither Dogs Trust's mass sterilization actions nor the urgent interventions in terms of immediate removal of aggressive and dangerous dogs from the streets, do not and will not solve the problem of far too many stray dogs on the streets any time soon.

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<sup>71</sup> Populari interview with Inga Dujmović, State Veterinary Inspector for Animal Welfare, 22 September 2014, Sarajevo.

<sup>72</sup> Populari interview with Zlatko Petrović, Minister for Physical Planning and Environmental Protection, Sarajevo Canton, 23 September 2014, Sarajevo.

All of these solutions - from the joint one of the canton, the municipalities and the city to individual municipal solutions - have not yielded any tangible results in the period from 2009 until today, even though they wasted significant budgetary funds. All attempts were *ad hoc* solutions - partial, reactive and financially unsustainable.

## Conclusion

Good governance requires improving virtually all aspects of the public sector - from institutions that set the rules of the game for economic and political interaction, to decision-making structures that determine priorities among public concerns and allocate resources to address them, to organizations that manage administrative systems and deliver goods and services to citizens, to human resources that staff government bureaucracies, to the interface of officials and citizens in political and bureaucratic arenas.<sup>73</sup>

While it might not only be difficult, but even impossible to achieve, good governance, as presented in Lorenzetti's frescoes, is still considered to be the aim towards which functional, developed, stable, and prosperous societies and states are striving. Bosnian reality is closer to the opposite pole, and Lorenzetti's allegory of bad government.

Government incompetence and mismanagement have been demonstrated through the story of a specific policy - the management of stray dogs - in the Sarajevo Canton, which is at the same time a story shared by all of us, told countless times, on the street, at the workplace, in the hospital waiting rooms. Too often, government policies in BiH are no more than a collection of empty statements. Too often, institutions neither communicate, nor cooperate. Too often, the government does not have accurate information or reliable data, while good policies and their implementation are almost always lacking.

If it is the obligation and mandate of the government to understand and know the society, in which it operates, and to develop and enforce policies that will enable good, efficient and sustainable management, then it is the obligation of citizens to put constant pressure on the government to ensure that everything works. The World Bank Report on local governance and service provision published in 2009 showed that, among others, citizens are not in possession of high quality information, and that the channels or tools for requesting the delivery of proper services have not yet been established. While they are waiting for actual reform of the public administration, good managers and sustainable solutions, BiH citizens are unfortunately increasingly turning into passive observers of the collapse of the same society they once built.

In the meantime, the irresponsible government still has the budget at its disposal, and is spending the already limited resources irresponsibly without any concrete and visible results that would improve the quality of citizens' lives. At the same time, existing opportunities provided by various international donors, including the European Union and its IPA funds, intended exactly for the issues directly related to good governance at the municipal, and other administrative levels, are not utilized. Even the projects launched several years ago have so far failed to deliver tangible results; such is the

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<sup>73</sup> Merilee S. Grindle: Good Enough Governance Revisited A Report for DFID with reference to the Governance Target Strategy Paper, 2001, Harvard University. February, 2005.

reform of public administration, launched in 2004. It should have solved problems described in the context of welfare and protection of abandoned dogs in this report, like the absence of managerial systems, avoidance of institutional responsibilities and overlapping competences. But ten years after its commencement, the reform is far from being complete, and the problems faced by administrations at different levels, are piling up.

Due to the large scale and the depth of the problems presented, the set of recommendations would be unusually long. Then again, for most of these problems, strategies and feasibility studies have already been written, loans and funds have already been negotiated, and solutions have already been proposed. What is left to be done is to dust them off, and make the governments perform.





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