

INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS IN KOSOVO FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF RAE COMMUNITIES





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INTRODUCTION:

With an overall population of fewer than 1.8 million inhabitants, the Kosovo population is rather diverse. Thirty-three out of 38 municipalities in Kosovo are multi-ethnic, composed of several ethnic groups legally recognized as “communities”. Since the official census of 2011 was extensively boycotted by Kosovo Serbs, usually the data provided by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is taken into account. According to their estimations, ethnic Albanians comprise 87% of the population, and Serbs comprise 8% of the population, while the rest is composed of smaller ethnic groups, namely Turks, Bosnians, Roma, Ashkalis, Egyptians, Goranis. (There are two other groups, Croats and Montenegrins, which were recognized as communities after the declaration of independence and thus are not included in the Kosovo constitution (ECMI Kosovo 2013).

Due to the current political climate and the historical narrative, inter-ethnic relations in Kosovo are usually seen through the lens of relations between Kosovo Albanians and Serbs, both of whom dominate the politics of Kosovo. As expected, numerous studies were conducted with a focus on the relationship between the two groups, often leaving other smaller ethnic groups outside of the equation and the general debate on advancing their rights and improving the current state of affairs, as a precondition for a stable multi-ethnic and democratic society in Kosovo.

To this day, Kosovo is lacking in regards to the full integration of minorities in the political, social, and economic life of the country and compliance with the national legal framework and the international standards on minority rights. One of the main arguments and conclusions drawn on the minority rights situation in Kosovo is that the laws are “perfect on paper” only because there is a lack of an implementation mechanism to guarantee the realization of minority rights.

This policy brief argues that the most under represented, discriminated-against, second-class citizens on almost all indicators are the three ethnic groups of the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians (hereinafter, RAE). Thus, it aims to analyze the current situation of the RAE communities as a backdrop for analyzing inter-community relations in Kosovo and provide recommendations for the relevant stakeholders and the general public.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Kosovo Constitution, as the highest legal act, defines Kosovo as a multi-ethnic society consisting of Albanian and other communities. The same article in the constitution also highlights the principles of equality and the protection of the rights of and participation by all Communities and their members (Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo 2008). Besides, the Constitution of Kosovo has a separate chapter on the Rights of Communities and their Members. Most importantly, the representation of all communities is guaranteed through the highest legislative body, the Assembly of Kosovo, where 20 out of 120 seats are guaranteed for all the minority communities residing in Kosovo (ibid). Out of these 20 seats, RAE communities have each one seat guaranteed at the Kosovo Assembly, and one additional seat is granted to the Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian community with the highest number of votes. Usually, this seat is obtained by Ashkali-backed political parties (ECMI Kosovo 2013).

Kosovo's legal framework on community rights is quite rich in terms of a wide variety of legislation adopted after the declaration of independence, mainly based on the Ahtisaari Plan of 2007. Besides the Constitution, there are four laws specifically tackling the protection of the rights of all communities living in Kosovo:

- Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Communities and their Members in Kosovo;
- Law on the Use of Languages
- Law on Anti-Discrimination;
- Law on Local Self-Government;

The following section of this paper will briefly discuss each of the four major pieces of legislation to provide a clear view of some of the rights and obligations deriving from these laws regarding the protection of the RAE communities in particular.

The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Communities and their Members in Kosovo

Jointly, the Law on the Protection and the Rights of Communities and their Members in Kosovo and the Law on the Use of Language compose the most important laws framing community rights (ECMI Kosovo 2013). The Law on the Protection and the Rights of Communities and their Members in Kosovo specifically calls for the promotion of peace, tolerance, inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue, and support for reconciliation between communities. It also outlines numerous provisions on identity rights; use of languages; education, economic and social opportunities; media, religion, health, and political participation rights; and the establishment of a Consultative Council for Communities (CCC) under the auspices of the President of Kosovo (Law No. 03/L-047 2008). However, there is no data available on the composition or the procedural work of the CCC on the official website of the Presidency of Kosovo.

The Law on the Protection and the Rights of Communities and their Members in Kosovo also foresees the development of public employment programs and other initiatives aimed at overcoming direct and indirect discrimination against persons belonging to communities, with a special consideration for RAE communities (Law No. 03/L-047 2008).

Law on the Use of Languages

The Law on the Use of Languages was adopted in 2006 with the purpose to ensure the equal status of the Albanian and Serbian languages as official and equal languages of Kosovo, to respect the linguistic identity of all communities living in Kosovo and ensure the use of languages to communities whose mother tongue is not an official language in Kosovo institutions by elevating languages such as Turkish, Bosnian and Roma as languages in official use at the Municipal level (Law No.02/L-37 2006). If a community composes at least 5% of the population in a given municipality, its mother tongue earns the status of an official language in that municipal level. This diverges from the condition in which a language is considered a language in official use if it is the mother tongue of at least 3% of the total population of the municipality (ibid).

Law on the Protection from Discrimination

The first article of the Law on Protection from Discrimination defines the purpose of the law itself, indicating that the overall goal is the establishment of a general framework for preventing and combating discrimination based on nationality, or in relation to any community, social origin, race, ethnicity, color, birth, origin, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, citizenship, religion and religious belief, political affiliation, political or other opinion, social or personal status, age, family or marital status, pregnancy, maternity status, wealth status, health status, disability, genetic inheritance or any other grounds, in order to implement the principle of equal treatment (Law Nr. 05/L -021 2015).

The law defines discrimination as any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference on any ground specified on the above-mentioned paragraph with the purpose or impact of depreciation or violation of the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Examples of unequal treatments include direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment, incitement of discrimination, victimization, and segregation (ibid).

Law on Local Self-Government

The Law on Local Self-Government defines “community” as a group of communities belonging to the same ethnic, religious, or linguistic group (Law Nr. 03/L-040 2008). The law foresees enhanced municipal competencies to certain municipalities in the areas of health, education, cultural affairs and participatory right in selecting local station police commanders. More specifically, enhanced competencies in secondary health care are given to Municipalities of Mitrovica North, Gracanice and Shterpece, enhanced competencies in the University Education is given to the Municipality of Mitrovica North, whilst all municipalities in which Kosovo Serb are in majority have enhanced competencies in the area of culture and selection of the Local Police Station Commanders.

Furthermore, the law stipulates the establishment of the Communities Committee responsible for reviewing municipal policies, practices, and activities with the aim to ensure that rights and interests of the Communities are respected. It also specifies that in municipalities where at least 10% of the citizens belong to a community not in the majority, a post of the Chairperson of the municipal Assembly for Communities shall be reserved for a representative of that community (ibid).

BACKGROUND OF THE RAE COMMUNITIES

Based on the OSCE estimates, the Roma population has a higher number of citizens in Kosovo, compared to the Ashkali and Egyptian populations. There are around 15,696 Roma living in Kosovo (or approximately 0.84% of the population), most of whom reside in Prizren, Gracanice and Peje. The count is slightly lower for the Ashkali community, which total about 15,546 citizens (or about 0.83% of the total population). The majority of the Ashkali community resides in Ferizaj, Fushe-Kosove and Lipjan. Finally, the Egyptian community comprises the smallest number among RAE communities with around 11,524 citizens (about 0.64% of the population), mainly residing in Gjakova, Peje and Istog (ECMI Kosovo 2013).

Ashkali and Egyptian communities are native Albanians speakers. This can be considered an advantage when it comes to access to education and public institutions. However, Roma are native Romani speakers and thus they either speak Albanian or Serbian as a second language, depending on the location in which they reside in Kosovo.

RAE communities share a lot of similarities in terms of cultural and socio-economic issues. For this reason, they are often studied separately from other communities living in Kosovo. Even though jointly they comprise over 2% of the overall population, their situation remains disadvantageous as they make up the most vulnerable and marginalized groups within the society. This stands in contrast to the fact that it has been 20 years since the Kosovo War, 12 years since Kosovo declared independence, and just as many years since their rights were protected constitutionally.

While all the communities living in Kosovo have specific challenges and needs due to the current socio-political and economic situation, the RAE communities, in particular, face difficulties in every sphere of life. A comprehensive survey by the UNDP and the World Bank confirms that the RAE communities, as discussed in greater detail below, are the most excluded groups in every aspect of human development: basic rights, healthcare, education, housing, employment and standard of living (UNDP, World Bank 2018). In addition, the latest edition of the OSCE Community Assessment report explicitly highlights the immediate need to integrate Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in the social, economic and political life of the country (OSCE 2015).

There have been attempts, at least legally, over the years to tackle the inclusion of RAE communities. One attempt, in particular, is “The Strategy for Inclusion of Roma and Ashkali Communities in the Kosovo Society 2017 – 2021”. Though it is not the first of its kind, it serves as a follow-up of a prior strategy drafted after the declaration of independence in 2008. The aim of the strategy, as stipulated in the documents, is to serve to strengthen the multi-ethnic and multi-character nature of Kosovar society (Office of the Primeminister 2017). The document identifies four priority fields to be addressed in line with the EU framework on National Strategies for Integration of Roma through 2020, namely education, employment and social welfare, health and housing.

However, there is no information as to what the Action Plan of the strategy has achieved and how much of the set objectives were met. Several studies and reports conducted through out the years highlight this concern. For example, the 2019 European Commission report for Kosovo states that the level of implementation of the strategy remains weak and not systematically evaluated (European Commission 2019). Similarly, the Community Assessment report by the OSCE also underlines the failure of the Kosovo institutions to implement the action plan accordingly (OSCE 2015).

To this day, the majority of projects dealing with the improvement of the RAE communities living in Kosovo are associated with the international community and the civil society in Kosovo, thus being donor-driven. While it is understandable that the minority rights are high on the agenda of the international community in Kosovo, it is far from being a priority for the governments in Kosovo, which seemingly perceive the full integration of RAE communities as the “responsibility” of “others” (meaning the international community and civil society) rather than a prerequisite for a well-functioning multi-ethnic democratic state or a legal obligation of theirs deriving from the legal framework.

In the following section, this brief will focus primarily on breaking down some of the main challenges surrounding the RAE communities. It is of course not exhaustive, given the complex nature of the situation, but it gives an indication of the problems surrounding these communities.

EDUCATION

Education is undoubtedly a crucial resource which provides each new generation with knowledge and skills, not just for future employment but also for civil and political awareness and participation. Education is often an indicator of the general social position of a social ethnic group within the society. Unfortunately, education for RAE communities is still considered a luxury rather than a granted right.

Despite the improvements in the field of education across the years, some of the main challenges when it comes to education among these ethnic groups are access to education, drop-out rates (especially among girls), low levels of achievement and motivation, bullying and discrimination/segregation in schools and language barriers (especially for the Roma community).

According to the latest estimations by the UNDP, access to education in pre-primary education is generally low for all children living in Kosovo (29%). However, for Roma children it is among the lowest, with only 24%. It should however be noted that pre-primary education is not mandatory according to the pre-education law, but it can have a tremendous impact on the level of performance in later education (UNDP, World Bank 2018). For example, a recent study by UNICEF concludes that children who attend pre-primary education have among others better learning and academic performance in literacy and math and have a higher earning potential later in life (UNICEF 2020).

While the overall enrolment rate in compulsory education (which includes primary and lower-secondary education) is around 96%, the gross enrolment rate in compulsory education for RAE children is 85%(MEST 2016). The number of those who complete compulsory education is even lower (60%), and disparities between young men and women have arisen, meaning that the percentage of women who complete compulsory education is lower than that of men (UNDP, World Bank 2018). Other data by the Kosovo Agency of Statistics have also shown concerning results for the education indicators of the country. For example, while the literacy skills among youth of age 15-24 nationally is at around 98% for both females and males, the percentages are significantly lower for RAE communities: respectively, 73% and 87% (The Kosovo Agency of Statistics 2014).

To counter these challenges, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has approved the Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021 in which several measures are foreseen to achieve objectives regarding the education of RAE children (Office of the Prime Minister 2017). Similar to the strategy for inclusion, the strategic plan underlines the inclusion of members of marginalized social groups of RAE in all levels of education with a special focus on pre-school and upper-secondary education considering the low levels of participation. For example, the plan foresees an increase by 10% of the inclusion of children in primary education and 20% in lower and upper-secondary education (MEST 2016).

There are still no effective administrative and financial policies in place to incentivize education among RAE communities. In some cases, the provision of transport is a challenge leading to the increased drop-out rates. For example, Ashkali students from some villages in Gracanica and Lipjan and Roma students in Gjilan, Novoberde and Shterpece attending Kosovo curriculum schools are not regularly provided with transport (OSCE 2018). The effect of this trend runs in tandem with the lack of knowledge, lack of importance placed on education and the overall socio-economic status of these communities.

Several monitoring studies also show that segregation in school persists, where usually RAE students are placed in the back of the class or, in some more extreme cases, are put into separate classes. Some examples are the case of two segregated classes in Gjakova, one case in Ferizaj and two segregated classes in Peja (ECMI Kosovo 2013). Such cases are a direct example of illegal discrimination, but also indicate the lack of knowledge by the school staff, teachers and parents to report and condemn similar cases of discrimination.

Since Ashkali and Egyptian communities are native Albanian speakers, language is not a hindrance when it comes to access to education as provided by the MEST. However, Kosovo institutions do not provide comprehensive education in the Romani language, while for the Roma community residing in the Serb majority municipalities, Roma students attend the parallel education system taught in Serbian and provided by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia. While it should be noted that MEST has made some attempts to provide classes in Romani in Prizren, encompassing elements of Roma culture and history and publishing the first Roma language textbook in 2015 (OSCE 2015), this is the sole example of such efforts and the effects are thus yet to be determined

As regards to tertiary education, there are special reserved quotas for minority students at the Kosovo Higher Education system. Nevertheless, the number of RAE students currently pursuing higher education studies is limited. To illustrate this, there were only 62 RAE students enrolled at the University of Prishtina during the academic year 2017-2018—just 0.18% of a total of 34324 students (Kosovo Agency of Statistics 2018). Furthermore, several reports of quota abuses by students not belonging to the minority communities with the help of particular individuals within political parties have been reported (ECMI Kosovo 2015).

In Kosovo, quality and inclusive formal and non-formal education can play a crucial role in fostering inter-ethnic relations as a platform for peace building as a chance to educate youngsters in the spirit of multiculturalism and tolerance. Non-formal education generally is understood as educational activities outside formal education system of a country (compulsory schooling) but where there is educational intent and planning of teaching/learning activities (Lafraya 2011).

As we have seen from the several examples above, there are a lot of possible intervention areas and with the proper planning of learning objectives and activities, non-formal education could certainly have a positive impact in tackling the existing issues such as social exclusion, discrimination and segregations, hate speech, high drop-out rates and so forth. So far, the provision of non-formal education inclusive of trainings, seminars, conferences and so forth has been made possible through local NGOs and international organizations and foundations, and from observations drawn from the field, such initiatives can have a transformational role among communities and should thus be promoted strongly.

Formal education as provided by public and private institutions and licensed by the MEST unfortunately faces tremendous challenges and is prone to criticism for the overall lack of quality and poor planning which generally takes longer to undergo transformation. In comparison, non-formal education is much more flexible and should be seen as a continuous opportunity and an additional feature of formal education to change the status quo in regards to the inter-ethnic relations in Kosovo. It should be once again noted that the problems that RAE Communities face are of a different nature than those experienced by Albanians and Serbs, and this is one condition non-formal education providers should keep in mind.

Studies from several case studies of post-conflict countries and social inclusion of minorities through non-formal education around the world have shown that non-formal education can have a positive impact in building trust among ethnic groups since non-formal education initiatives have the potential to foster dialogue, consensus building, appreciation of the otherness and so forth (Datzberger 2016); (Mareva 2017); (Urías 2016). However, non-formal education is incentivized and strongly encouraged in developed countries as well. The European Union pays special attention to youth work and non-formal education. For example, in 2014, the Council adopted the EU work plan for youth prioritizing non-formal learning as a way to promote cross-sectorial cooperation, social inclusion, health and well-being and so forth (European Commission 2015).

For this reason, the government of Kosovo jointly with grass roots and international organizations operating in the domain of human and minority rights should give priority to investing in non-formal education as an opportunity to not only provide RAE communities with better education opportunities, but also serve as a tool of empowerment and a chance to educate and emancipate young people and, consequently, break ethnic stereotypes and prejudices towards all communities living in Kosovo and RAE communities in particular.

In this regard, there is an immediate need for the governance of Kosovo to rethink how education funds are allocated and ensure the sustainability of non-formal education initiatives and for civil society organizations to rethink their learning objectives and goals for the upcoming years. Non-formal education is generally oriented towards young people with fewer opportunities and bringing them from margins closer to the center of the society. By doing so, non-formal education providers encourage a sense of tolerance and belonging among Kosovo youth. As long as this is not the case, healthy inter-community relations will remain only a hypothetical scenario for Kosovo.

(UN-) EMPLOYMENT

Though Kosovo has one of the youngest populations in Europe, The RAE communities comprise the youngest population compared to other communities in Kosovo including Albanians. See the comparative table below:

Community	Albanian	Serbian	Bosniak	Roma	Ashkali	Egyptian	Turkish	Gorani
Average Age	29.4	37.6	34	25.2	24	26.1	32.6	34.6

Source: (ECMI Kosovo 2013)

This condition may appear to be beneficial, since a younger work force can be more adaptive to the job market. However, this age discrepancy between the ethnic communities in Kosovo is less crucial, since the economic situation of the RAE communities is significantly more vulnerable in comparison to other communities in Kosovo, taking into consideration the overall economic situation in Kosovo, as one of the poorest countries in Europe.

In fact, unemployment remains among the top pressing issues concerning citizens of Kosovo (UNDP 2020). However, for marginalized and discriminated groups such as RAE communities, the situation is harder. A significant factor is, as discussed above, the level of education and training—or lack thereof—that RAE students receive. For example, a study commissioned by the UNDP in 2013 shows that in the municipalities of Obiliq and Fushe-Kosove the level of employment was a mere 7% for the Ashkali community. Additionally, this community had the lowest level of income, with only 132.5 Euro per month, compared to an income of 446.5 for the average Albanian household (Shaipi 2013).

This finding stands in stark contrast to the employment rates throughout Kosovo, at the national level, and the region, more broadly. According to the latest estimates of the UNDP on labor markets in the Western Balkans, the overall unemployment rate of the total labor force of Kosovo is 49%.

For the Roma community, this rate jumps to 78% (88% for women). Furthermore, 74% of Roma are employed work in informal jobs (UNDP, World Bank 2018). This statistic is a concern, since high inclusion in informal jobs is an indicator of the risk of financial instability and economic insecurity among households and the monthly income. The reports from ECMI from data obtained by UNDP in early 2011 although relatively outdated also show similar data with an unemployment rate at above 60% for Roma and Ashkali, while for the Egyptian community it peaks around 80% (ECMI Kosovo 2013).

Another indicator of the poor economic condition and discrimination rates for the RAE communities is their representation in the civil service of Kosovo. The OSCE 2017 study on representation of communities in civil service reveals that these communities are the most under represented communities in the civil service proportionally to their composition in the society (OSCE 2017). While Roma and Ashkali each comprise 0.84% of the population, they comprise only 0.20% of the overall civil service in Kosovo. The situation is not better for the Egyptian community as they comprise only 0.1% of the civil service in Kosovo (and comprise 0.64% of the population) (ECMI Kosovo 2013). In hard numbers, for example in 2015 there were only 13 Roma, 17 Ashkali and 9 Egyptian within the Kosovo Police, while none of the RAE members are part of the Kosovo Judicial Council (OSCE 2015). Contrary to this, Kosovo Serbs and Kosovo Turks are over represented as a proportion of the total population. This is however, not in line with the Law on Civil Service which foresees the representation of the minority communities through a quota of 10% at the central level and a proportional representation to the demographic composition at the local level (Official Gazzete of the Republic of Kosovo 2010).

These factors are closely interrelated with the overall access and quality of education which leads to lack of professional qualifications, lack of information and discrimination on ethnic grounds. The lack of access to employment opportunities interacts with a high request for emigration among the youth of the RAE communities.

Access to Public Institutions and Services

Additional indicators showcasing the current situation of the RAE communities and generally their living conditions are their ability to access public institutions and services without facing impediments. The first precondition to access public services among others access to education, employment, health services, social services and so for this obtaining identity documents which for the RAE communities is still a challenge. While 97% of marginalized Roma had birth certificates, fewer than 90% of Roma older than 16 are equipped with an identity card (UNDP, World Bank 2018). This is due to the lack of awareness and knowledge among the Roma communities, on the one hand, and a lack of institutional persistence in ensuring national coverage, on the other hand. While this might seem trivial at first it impedes their ability to enjoy other rights, such as enrolment in schools, reception of public services, and so forth. While there are no recent accurate data, a study by the UNHCR shows that in 2015 there were around 600 unregistered members of the RAE communities in Kosovo (Office of the Primeminister 2017).

One of the biggest concerns is the health coverage which remains limited for the RAE community. Regardless of the fact that health coverage is a national issue and it impacts minority and majority communities, RAE communities in particular face discrimination and segregation in receiving public health services. For example, a study on the Quality of Antenatal Care in Kosovo concludes that women of such communities receive both a lower quantity and poorer quality of antenatal care, as compared to Kosovar Albanian and Serbian women (Stojanovski , et al. 2017). If one takes into account these communities disadvantaged economic situation and high cost of health care, the situation becomes even more aggravated: for example, in a study of 2013, 80% of Roma, 78% of Ashkali and 75% of Egyptian respondents stated that they faced difficulties in buying medicines. In contrast, only 27% of Albanians reported similar conditions (Shaipi 2013). Besides the financial burden, long distances to health facilities and long waiting times are additional obstacles that RAE communities face when accessing health services (Office of the Primeminister 2017).

Finally, when it comes to housing, besides living in overcrowded households, Roma are less likely to have access to almost all public services, including piped water, electricity, public sewage and waste collection. For example, in 2017, only 75% of Roma had access to public sewerage system as opposed to 90% of non-Roma; 89% of Roma had regular access to electricity, as compared to 97% of non-Roma; and 72% of Roma suffered from overcrowding, as opposed to just 49% of their neighbors (UNDP, World Bank 2018).

CONCLUSION

Following 12 years since Kosovo's declaration of independence, inter-ethnic relations and dialogue in the country remains fragile. While most of the focus is on the two largest ethnic groups—Kosovo Albanians and Serbs—the RAE communities are still in a highly disadvantageous situation.

Their socio-economic situation is a clear indicator that there has been no serious commitment from state institutions to ensure the rights and participation of all minorities in Kosovo deriving directly from the Constitution and local legal framework. To this day, most of the work for the promotion of the rights and participation of these communities in Kosovo is attributed to the international community, civil society, and grassroots organizations. While there are existing government strategies and plans specifically targeting RAE communities, it is unclear as to what they have achieved due to a lack of robust and consistent evaluation.

The main challenge surrounding RAE communities is, without a doubt, their economic situation which consequently affects all other spheres of life: education, standard of living, access to health services, housing etc. While the economic situation remains a national concern, additional focus should be placed on the access and provision of education for all members of the RAE communities at all levels. Education should be seen as an opportunity for inter-ethnic dialogue and co-existence can and should be promoted via both formal and non-formal education. Clearly, without the full participation of the RAE communities, such values will remain delusional. In addition, through qualitative education, the awareness and knowledge of members of the RAE communities will increase. This has in turn manifold benefits. One thing is for sure: Kosovo will not be able to meet international and local standards of democratic security without full support of the rights of RAE communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Kosovo's institutions should enhance national and local coordination in order to guarantee the full implementation of the legal framework currently in force regarding the minority communities living in Kosovo and ensure the financial and human resources to implement them.
- In line with the current law and Strategy for Inclusion of Roma and Ashkali Communities in the Kosovo Society, the Government of Kosovo should create special employment programmes for RAE communities considering their disadvantageous socio-economic situation. In this regard, special attention should be paid to increasing the proportional representation of RAE members in the civil service and their representation in senior positions in particular.
- The Kosovo Government and particularly the MEST should ensure the full implementation of the Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021 and the Strategy for Inclusion of Roma and Ashkali Communities in the Kosovo Society 2017 – 2021 and allocate the necessary funds to reach the objectives. So far, it is very unclear which objectives have been met. Systematic evaluation of the strategies is a precondition to do so.
- Kosovo's institutions should invest particularly in ensuring the full access of the RAE children and students to all levels of the education system and especially compulsory education. Successful initiatives such as the example of Roma classes in some schools in Prizren should most definitely be extended to other municipalities. Special teacher training for Roma teachers should be considered.
- Kosovo's institutions, jointly with International and local NGOs working directly and indirectly with the communities, should intensify their efforts with non-formal education among youngsters from communities living in Kosovo in order to contribute to a healthy interaction aiming at social harmony.
- Joint action should be taken to raising awareness of the importance of education and the rights of the communities, and combating discrimination and drop-out rates, especially among girls and young women.

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