

Corruption and Shady Practices Frustrate Dog Population Management:
A Strategic Report on Animal Shelter Operations in Bulgaria

Emil D. Kuzmanov

June 2011

Bulgarian Animal Programs Foundation

animalprograms.org

Contents

Summary.....	3
I. Situation Overview.....	3
II. Research Goals and Dataset.....	4
III. Data Assessment.....	7
IV. Key Findings.....	14
V. Recommendations.....	16
VI. Conclusion.....	18
References.....	19
About the Author.....	24

Summary

This report presented by Bulgarian Animal Programs Foundation is the first national comprehensive effort in documenting impoundment and disposition of stray dogs in Bulgaria and related animal welfare issues that emerged as a result of the post-1989 dog control. The survey analyzes primarily the underappreciated interrelationship between legislation, shelter operations and measuring pet population dynamics. It focuses on how the unreported or badly reported intake and disposition of dogs involved in the shelter system reflects the real pet overpopulation problem and thus prevents solving the same problem.

The document summarizes the status of notable shelter-related problems in the municipalities and recommends the new regime that officials can take to enforce as a set of clearly defined obligations in a fiscally responsible manner. The recommendations, while targeting only some of the issues related to reporting animal control operations, begin to point the way toward policy improvements that could influence both the quality of life in communities in Bulgaria and the welfare of animals.

The principal findings are reviewed in the six sections below. Situation Overview makes brief description of the context in which animal shelters work. Chapter II points out the research goals and provides the dataset that this study employed. Chapter III provides an assessment of the data collected and compares Bulgaria's policies with those accepted in many communities of the United States of America, seeking to extract lessons about how these policies can influence shelter-related practices in Bulgaria. Chapter IV summarizes key findings from the data-collection and analysis process and makes general observations about the status of animal disposition issues in the municipalities. Chapter V provides recommendations to the government based on the data analyzed. The final section offers concluding remarks. Taken together, these sections lay the groundwork for creating an institutionalized initiative in Bulgaria.

I. Situation Overview

Since 1989, the control of supply, demand and possession of dogs in Bulgaria and particularly in the urban areas has been totally neglected. This has led to continuous pet over-reproduction and an increase in the number of roaming dog population.

The problem with the dog population dynamics has in turn been aggravated by the widely adopted non-transparent stray dog control. For instance, year after year thousands of stray dogs, including unwanted, abandoned and lost, are appearing on the streets of Sofia. The Law stipulates that their collection and disposition is under the municipalities' jurisdiction, without any requirements for accountability and reporting. Amateur footage taken by Pavel Atanasov in 2000 and aired on Nova TV Channel revealed the Sofia municipal animal shelter's illegal activity by exposing scenes of spraying dozens of dogs confined in boxes with some anesthetic substance, then loading them in a truck and driving away to an unknown destination.

So far the private interest in unreported disposition of roaming animals nationwide seems to be the only reason for passing laws and implementing practices that are ineffective for interrupting the pet overpopulation crisis and the avoidable suffering of large numbers of animals. It is this private interest that in 2008 provoked the enforcement of the Animal Protection Act banning euthanasia of healthy dogs and cats and obligating municipalities to sterilize and then release an unlimited number of unwanted animals back on the streets.

Many municipalities engaged in animal care and control are charged to the limit with addressing minor issues while the pressure of the dog population has left them searching for solutions to a variety of related problems - ranging from concerns about dealing with unwanted animals to the relationship between pet ownership and roaming population. Some legal provisions are too narrow in scope to

counteract the problems that spurred their creation. Similarly, coordination between government and local authority is often aimless, resulting in piecemeal strategies that are often ineffective or vulnerable to budget cuts during difficult economic times. Adequate proposals made by the non-governmental and private sector are often lacking.

Animal protection legislation as it relates to reporting shelter animals was left extremely uncompleted. Prior to 2008, the law did not provide shelter reports to protect stray animals. Since January 31, 2008, the new Animal Protection Act became effective. But sufficient obligations for the reliable reporting on animal control activities were not enacted again. According to Article 44, the animal shelter manager shall only keep animal intake and disposition records. This deficit results both from historical and political factors and from the particular policies proposed by the animal protection community in Bulgaria.

II. Research Goals and Dataset

Previous reports on roaming animal issues in Sofia conducted by the animal shelter community or Municipality of Sofia are generally intended to advance the goals of the persons functioning in the animal shelter or rescue sector. The findings of these studies do not meet agendas of local community and global animal welfare movement.

This document sets out on a different course. It aims to make an important first step in revealing the most important deficits in animal shelter operations and assessing the animal control services in Bulgaria. The report focuses on several important issues related to the humane pet population control, which have been thoroughly left neglected in Bulgaria, namely: how well the data on animals entering shelters in a municipality reflects the local pet population dynamics, expressed on a per capita basis; what is the actual dog population increase rate in urban areas where, in most cases, an institutionalized animal control is in place; and whether shelters mitigate or increase the suffering of roaming animals.

The author of this research believes in the importance of transparency and the open sharing of accurate, complete animal-sheltering data and statistics in a manner which is clear to both the animal welfare community and the public. He assumes that readers already have acquired a basic understanding of the ethical and cultural issues that accompany the safe and humane treatment of animals and strives to expand public understanding of the role of the shelter reporting policy in the overall pet population management.

The strategic purpose of this report is to put Bulgaria on a different path with a fact-based understanding of the pet population dynamics. The report seeks to start a general discussion of national and municipal laws that govern all pet population management issues. That discussion shall be followed by a legal initiative with respect to the area of animal birth control. It requires to bring together government departments and elected officials to comprehensively solve the whole pet population management problem. However, this document stays focused on the scope of introducing legal requirements to interrupt unreported disposition of shelter animals (i.e. pound seizure) and proposing the respective solutions that, through the implementation, could affect both community and animals. It limits its recommendations to those that relevant government departments and their counterparts in the municipal sector could feasibly implement. The recommendations promote new partnership between government and municipalities that would minimize the financial burden on the taxpayers.

Data Collection

The analysis conducted for the study involves a set of publicly-accessible data on shelter operations that can serve as baseline views of the worth of animal control services. Research behind this effort

began the summer of 2007 when Animal Programs Foundation started reviewing the animal- and funding-related data publicly reported by the Sofia officials. In late 2010 and early 2011, the author collected similar data from numerous internet sources related to the greater municipalities. During this period, considerable time was spent to analyze the data and reviewing the municipal costs in Bulgarian communities associated with animal control operations, and examining the shelter accountability being used by animal control services in many communities in the United States of America so that the Bulgarian authority could learn from their experience.

The process of data collection covered all Bulgarian municipalities with population over 35,000 people, where the official stray animal control is often performed (a total of 40 municipalities out of 264). In the course of the survey, it was found that less than half of them had reported any statistical data. Moreover, the data in certain cases was completely unapplicable, hence not included in this report. Thus, the study was based on data from 14 municipalities having a total population of 3,193,348 people, or 43 % of the entire population of Bulgaria.

The dog intake and release data analyzed in this report has been found in Internet publications published by the following reliable sources:

- news.burgas24.bg - a quote by the Burgas Environmental Protection Director, Pavlin Mihov, in a report from January 11 2010 entitled "More than 300 stray dogs were neutered in Burgas last year."

- varna.bg (official website of Varna Municipality) - a legal document entitled "2008-2011 Municipal Stray Dog Control Program."

- dnevnik.bg - a quote from a written reply by Varna Municipality in a report from February 10 2011 entitled "Varna Municipality to spend 250,000 leva for building a dog shelter."

- radiovelikotarnovo.com - a quote by the Veliko Tarnovo Mayor, Rumen Rashev, in a report from March 30 2010 entitled "1643 dogs neutered in two years."

- dnesbg.com – a report from February 2 2011 entitled "Up to 4000 leva penalty for mayors over stray dogs."

- dariknews.bg - a quote by the Vratsa Mayor, Kostadin Shahov, in a report from January 26 2010 entitled "50 leva spent for every homeless dog in Vratsa Municipality."

- grada.bg - a quote by the Dobrich animal shelter manager, Maria Velikova, in a report from April 30 2010 entitled "Coordinated action of municipalities, NGOs and government will solve dog problem."

- kazanlak.bg (official website of Kazanlyk Municipality).

- standartnews.com – a report from May 2 2010 entitled "Only 8 dogs registered in Kyrdzhali."

- dariknews.bg - a quote by the Montana Deputy Mayor, Rumen Angelov, in a report from February 9 2011 entitled "Montana Municipality to spend 107,000 leva on dog shelter costs."

- posredniknews.com - a quote from a written reply by Pleven Mayor, Nayden Zelenogorski, in a report from January 28 2011 entitled "A total of 1715 dogs neutered in Pleven in 2008-2010."

- plovdiv24.bg - a quote by the Plovdiv Municipality Chief Ecologist, Hristo Minkov, in a report from February 7 2011 entitled "460 stray dogs impounded in Plovdiv last year."

- ruse-bg.eu (official website of Ruse Municipality) - official annual reports from the municipal shelter for 2008-2010.

- sliven.bg (official website of Sliven Municipality).

- press.sofia.bg (online press office of Sofia Municipality) - a legal document entitled "2008-2011 Municipal Stray Dog Control Program."
- 19min.bg – a report from April 9 2009 entitled "11,000 stray dogs roaming the streets of Sofia."
- novinar.net - an interview with the Ecoravnovesie Sofia Municipal Enterprise Director, Petyr Petrov, from May 28 2010.
- focus-news.net - an interview with the Ecoravnovesie Sofia Municipal Enterprise Director, Petyr Petrov, from January 11 2011.
- inews.bg – a quote by a Shumen Municipality source in a report from February 21 2011 entitled "Shumen to provide 72,000 leva for dog shelter."

Additional Information

Stray animal control in seven of the municipalities under survey (Burgas, Varna, Veliko Tyrnovo, Vratca, Kyrdzhali, Montana and Plovdiv) is carried out by municipal organizations.

Stray animal control and running municipal shelters in Pleven (2008-2010), Dobrich, Shumen and Kazanlyk were contracted to non-governmental organizations. For Pleven it is the Pleven 2008 Animal Protection Society. For Dobrich and Shumen it is the Deutsch-Bulgarische Strassentier-Nothilfe e.V. For Kazanlyk it is Oesterreiche-Bulgarische Hilfe fur die Tiere, which is a local branch of Tierhilfe Sueden e.V. Austria. It should be noted that the website information of both foreign organizations is available only in German language, which makes it inaccessible to the general public.

Stray animal control in Ruse is legally carried out by the Municipal Communal Services. A private shelter run by non-profit organization Deutsch-Bulgarische Strassentier-Nothilfe e.V. operates alongside it. Summary statistics from both animal shelters are not available. No reports from the private shelter were found. It should be noted that the website information of the NGO is available only in German language, which makes it inaccessible to the general public.

Stray animal control in Sliven (i.e. the capture, sterilization and release, and in some cases euthanasia of stray dogs) was tendered to a private veterinary clinic.

Stray animal control in Sofia is legally carried out by Ecoravnovesie Municipal Enterprise whose shelter capacity is 200 dogs. Up to May 2011, it is known that 3 more animal shelters run by NGOs operate in the area of Sofia Municipality:

- Municipal shelter in Slatina district with capacity about 90 dogs run by Tierhilfe Sueden e.V. Deutschland. They have repeatedly stated that their priority is the transfer of animals for adoption in Germany. It should be noted that even though the staff employed at the shelter in Sofia is primarily Bulgarian, the website information of this NGO is available only in German language, which makes it inaccessible to the general public.
- Municipal shelter in Hladilnika (Lozenec district) with capacity about 100 dogs run by Deutsch-Bulgarische Strassentier-Nothilfe e.V. They have repeatedly stated that their priority is the transfer of animals for adoption in Germany. It should be noted that even though the staff employed at the shelter in Sofia is primarily Bulgarian, the website information of this NGO is available only in German language, which makes it inaccessible to the general public.
- Private shelter in the village of Dolni Bogrov (under Sofia Municipality) with capacity about 400 dogs rented by the Municipality and contracted to Animal Rescue Sofia / Animal Rescue Bulgaria Foundation as of April 2010. They have repeatedly stated that their priority is the transfer of animals for adoption in Holland. The only data available for the period April 2010 - March 2011 reveals 480 dogs transferred for adoption abroad and 79 dogs adopted in Bulgaria (source: <http://www.standartnews.com>, March 9 2011).

Summary statistics from the animal shelters in Sofia do not exist. The data concerning animal shelter activity in Sofia included in this report refers to the operations performed by the municipal shelter only.

Dataset

Table 1. Dog intake and release data from larger municipalities allowing analysis.

Municipality	Period	Received/Stray	Adopted	Euthanized	Neutered and released
Burgas	2010	--	130	--	266
Varna	July 2000 – Dec 2010	15,080	482	308	14,020
Veliko Tŕrnovo	2009-2010	2205	20	10	1981
Vratca	2009 г.	851	--	--	--
Dobrich	May 2002 – Apr 2010 г.	> 5200	--	--	5200
Kazanlyk	2009	431	NA	0	431
Kyrdzhali	2009	599	4	27	500
Montana	2010	405	7	--	--
Pleven	Aug 2008 – Dec 2010 г.	2513	--	35	1715
Plovdiv	2010	460	--	1	--
Ruse *	2008-2010	1812	289	25	1302
Sliven	2009	865	--	99	766
Sofia	Sep 2006 – Dec 2010	20,946	1425	3962	14,822
Shumen	June 2003 – Dec 2010	> 4000	--	--	4000

* The 2008 report from Ruse Municipality also listed types of disposition under categories "Transferred," "Died," "Ran away" and "On hand by the end of the year"; the 2009 report includes "Transferred."

III. Data Assessment

A realistic data assessment of reported dog intake and release in the shelter system of Bulgaria needs a comparison with models and data from other regions of the world where proper mechanisms of reporting these activities are in place. Hence this chapter includes a sample of data reporting from the state of Virginia, shelter data reported from urban areas in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom, as well as euthanasia statistics from certain urban areas in the United States where animal birth control has been lagging behind.

The survey found that most legislative initiatives within the United States of America involving companion animals are designed to reduce the pet overpopulation and animal control costs, protect the public or animals, protect the public's health and enhance the quality of life. For example, State of Michigan amended in 2000 state law (Pet Shops, Dog Pounds, and Animal Shelters Act, 1969) to mandate that all 176 Michigan-licensed animal shelters collect and report data annually regarding the admission and disposition of all their dogs, cats and ferrets. Since 2008, Code of Virginia requires a person to immediately make a record upon taking custody of any animal in the course of his professional duties. "A summary of such records shall be submitted annually to the State Veterinarian in a format prescribed by him," the law states.

Table 2. Standardized data on dog intake in Virginia animal shelters for 2010. The top five rows show data from the five shelters in the Roanoke area submitted to the Department of Agriculture in Virginia (VDACS). The bottom row shows data reported by the Department of Agriculture as a compilation of data submitted by all shelters within the state.

Organization	On Hand January 1	Stray	Seized	Bite Cases	Surrendered by Owner	Received From Another Virginia Releasing Agency	Others	Total
Roanoke City Animal Control	0	40	0	0	0	0	0	40
Roanoke County Animal Control	0	31	0	0	0	0	0	31
Roanoke Valley Regional Center for Animal Control	57	1741	41	0	861	1	4	2705
Roanoke Valley SPCA	65	0	0	0	58	674	19	816
Salem City Animal Control and Pound Facility	13	372	32	9	235	0	30	691
VDACS	4595	45066	2615	1168	30340	9819	2543	96146

Table 3. Standardized data on dog disposition in Virginia animal shelters for 2010. The top five rows show data from the five shelters in the Roanoke area submitted to the Department of Agriculture in Virginia (VDACS). The bottom row shows data reported by the Department of Agriculture as a compilation of data submitted by all shelters within the state. NB: The result totals in the right column match the capture totals in the right column of Table 2.

Organization	Reclaimed by Owner	Adopted	Transferred to Another Virginia Releasing Agency	Transferred by Approved Out-Of-State Facility	Died in Facility	Euthanized	Miscellaneous	On Hand December 31	Total
Roanoke City Animal Control	0	0	0	0	0	40	0	0	40
Roanoke County Animal Control	29	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	31
Roanoke Valley Regional Center for Animal Control	771	8	691	5	10	1139	0	81	2705
Roanoke Valley SPCA	0	761	1	0	2	4	0	48	816
Salem City Animal Control and Pound Facility	239	282	0	0	4	154	0	12	691
VDACS	18385	27900	11247	5984	711	27228	35	4656	96146

Whereas some states of the United States of America like Michigan and Virginia have state standards, oversight, and special regulation requiring animal shelter accountability through the reporting of intake and discharge data, in Bulgaria it remains quite unaddressed by the law. The investigation explored

the major reporting issues appearing in Bulgaria’s shelter system and most tremendous differences to the policies being pursued and implemented by many American communities. The following sections provide analysis of the the major differences.

A. Intake numbers

The analysis of pet over-reproduction performed in many countries is possible thanks to the comprehensively reported shelter data, particularly the intake and euthanasia numbers. Animal Programs Foundation believes that despite the ban on euthanizing healthy pet animals in Bulgaria, the number of dogs entering a local shelter per year should, to an extent, reflect the birth rate of local dog population for that year. And all municipalities should be expected to report high intake rates, while there is no established infrastructure for wide pet sterilization (i.e. free and low cost neutering schemes) and accidental and intentional pet breeding remains a common practice. This rate should be even higher given the number of lost pets.

This report, however, found major differences between the intake numbers from different municipalities. Additional discrepancy was found between shelter data reported until 2007 and those reported since 2008 (especially in Sofia and Veliko Tyrnovo). When expressed on a per capita basis (per 1000 human population), intake rates per year reported by the three most populous Bulgarian municipalities in 2010 ranged from 1.3 in Plovdiv to 3.3 in Sofia and 3.5 in Varna. Overall, the suspiciously low reported numbers of dogs that enter Bulgarian shelters are a result of the hollow animal protection legislation. As previous noted, the fatal role of the legislation in Bulgaria’s shelter system has allowed that a local shelter authority reduce arbitrarily reported euthanasia rates by presenting low intake and high release numbers. The above circumstances give rise to concerns about the credibility of virtually all official data. These valid concerns render the reported data unsuitable for making a serious analysis and assessment of dog population dynamics for the purposes of this document or any other study.

An unbiased conclusion would be that, expressed on a per capita basis (per 1000 human population), the dog population increase rate in Bulgarian urban areas is not less than 8 unwanted dogs (that figure refers to surviving and treated animals, and not to birth rate). The estimation is based on the additional data and calculations, provided in this section.

Data reported by seven municipalities prior to 2008 (before the banning of euthanasia enacted by the Animal Protection Act since January 2008) reveals that the annual dog euthanasia rates per 1000 of human population ranged from 8 in Lovech to 20 in Razgrad. Since then, no wide pet sterilization has been launched in Bulgaria and the pet over-reproduction remains unchanged.

Table 4. Data on dog euthanasia prior to 2008.

Municipality	Period	Human population x 1000	Dogs euthanized	Dogs euthanized per 1000 of humans
Veliko Tyrnovo	2007	89	900 *	10
Vidin	2007	68	900 **	13
Lovech	2007	54	476	8
Razgrad	2007	53	1100	20
Silistra	2007	55	800 ***	14
Sofia	1999-2004	1170	64,306	9

* Available data shows only 965 dogs impounded.
 ** Available data shows 600 dogs euthanized in the first eight months of 2007.
 *** Available data shows only 850 dogs impounded.

Alternatively, applying a hypothetical model for estimating the dog increase based on the percentage of the females that give birth, the offspring's early age survival rate and the mortality rate of dog population in urban areas, shows a minimum annual dog population increase rate of 8 animals per 1000 of human population. According to a Market Links survey, the number of dogs owned by Sofia citizens was approximately 250,000 in 2009. From this, the average dog number per 1000 of human population in Bulgaria is probably about 190. Having 47 % bitches, the overall female dog number per 1000 human population is 90. Dog pregnancy could be either accidental or deliberate due to the owners' personal convictions. Supposing that 9 bitches (10 %) give birth to an average of 6 puppies per litter, with 50 % surviving puppies, the result would be a progeny of 27 grown dogs per 1000 of human population per year. 19 of the young dogs compensate the annual population toll of about 10 % due to the natural mortality. The remaining 8 dogs represent the annual dog population increase per 1000 of human population or 4 % dog population increase per year.

The reliability of the above hypothesis may seem somewhat arguable owing to the fact that a significant proportion of dogs in this study belong to certain dog breeds rarely seen among stray dog population. However, an argument against that is many people own crossbreeds as guard-dogs in their property and allow them to roam and become pregnant more than once. Moreover, cases of accidental mixing of breeds are not uncommon. And every pet population analyst would agree that the annual dog population growth rate is not likely to be less than 4 %, while the percentage of neutered dogs remains insignificant (less than 10 %) and considerable number of owned dogs continue to roam.

Table 5. Annual dog euthanasia rates for 17 U.S. urban areas (per 1000 of human population).

City	Year	Human population x 1000	Dogs euthanized	Dogs euthanized per 1000 of humans
New York City	1974	7565	67,506	9
Indianapolis	2003-2007	805	7294 (average)	9
Evansville IN	2001	121	1246 (1)	10
Independence MO	2006	113	1176 (2)	10
Oklahoma City	2001	506	5600 (3)	11
Albuquerque NM	2006	507	5957	11
Wichita KS	1999	448	5472 (4)	12
Des Moines IA	2005	400	4900 (5)	12
Memphis TN	2009	677	8270	12
Knoxville TN	2006	405	5561 (6)	13
Tulsa OK	2006	383	5250 (7)	13
Springfield Mo	2002	152	2313 (8)	15
Charleston WV	2007	192	3014 (9)	15
Saint Clair IL	2006	264	4311	16
Columbia MO	2002	80	1411 (10)	17
Louisville KY	2005	700	13,800 (11)	19
Hamilton IN	2000	182	3642 (12)	20
Amarillo TX	2002	174	4075 (13)	23

N.B. Some of the source data represent totals for dog and cat euthanasia. The dog euthanasia numbers in the table are estimated by using the dog/cat ratio common for the particular area as proposed by Merritt Clifton: 35 % in the Midwest region and 46 % in the Appalachian and Gulf Coast regions. The source data and percentages are listed below under the relevant indexes:

1. 35 per cent of a total of 3561 dogs and cats
2. 35 per cent of a total of 3361 dogs and cats
3. 35 per cent of a total of 16,000 dogs and cats
4. 35 per cent of a total of 15,635 dogs and cats
5. 35 per cent of a total of 14,000 dogs and cats
6. 46 per cent of a total of 12,090 dogs and cats
7. 35 per cent of a total of 15,000 dogs and cats
8. 35 per cent of a total of 6610 dogs and cats
9. 46 per cent of a total of 6553 dogs and cats
10. 35 per cent of a total of 4033 dogs and cats
11. 46 per cent of a total of 30,000 dogs and cats
12. 35 per cent of a total of 10,406 dogs and cats
13. 46 per cent of a total of 8859 dogs and cats

Confirmation of a higher annual dog population increase can also be seen in shelter euthanasia data for some urban areas of the United States. It should be noted that the ratio between owned dogs and human population in urban areas in Bulgaria (according to a Market Links survey for Sofia) is approximately 1:5, close to that found in many U.S. and Canadian cities, and Australia.

Shelter euthanasia data from 17 urban areas in the U.S. (Table 5) reflects the lack or delay of animal birth control over a relevant period, which quite resembles the current situation in Bulgaria. The data included covers only areas having average winter temperatures similar to those in Bulgaria. Data from Albuquerque and Amarillo (belonging to the Sun Belt region) is also included due to the higher cities elevation and relatively cold winter temperatures.

In fact, the lower dog intake numbers, reported by most municipalities in this study, shroud the issue with the real dog population increase as well as the ongoing unofficial practice of catching and disposition a large number of strays, including lost pets and unwanted roaming animals coming from adjacent municipalities. For instance, annual dog population increase in Sofia (1.3 million people) is now over 10,000. It means that more than 40,000 new unwanted dogs have joined the current roaming population between 2007 and 2010, plus thousands of lost pets and strays from outside Sofia Municipality. Most of them have fallen victim to an unreported shelter activity and inhumane treatment.

Table 6. Reported intake and euthanasia numbers and their ratio compared to the estimated local dog population increase rate.

Municipality	Period	Human population x 1000	Estimated dog population increase for the period, minimum	Dogs received	Percentage of dogs received to estimated dog increase	Dogs died and euthanized	Percentage of dogs died and euthan. to estim. dog increase
Varna	July 2000 - Dec 2010	330	27,720	15,080	54 %	308	1 %
Veliko Tŭrnovo	2009-2010	88	1408	2205	100 %	10	0.7 %
Vratca	2009	76	608	851	100 %	--	--
Dobrich	May 2002 - Apr 2010	95	6080	> 5200	> 85 %	--	--
Kazanlyk	2009	73	584	431	73 %	0	0 %
Kyrdzhali	2009	67	536	599	100 %	27	5 %
Montana	2010	54	432	405	93 %	--	--
Pleven	Aug 2008 - Dec 2010	133	2571	2513	97 %	35	1 %
Plovdiv	2010	332	2656	460	17 %	1	0.03 %
Ruse	2008-2010	167	4008	1812	45 %	37	0.9 %
Sliven	2009	125	1000	865	86 %	99	10 %
Sofia	Sep 2006 - Dec 2010	1308	45,344	20,946	46 %	3962	8 %
Shumen	Juny 2003 - Dec 2010	99	5940	> 4000	> 67 %	--	--

Undoubtedly, municipalities are responsible for unreported shelter intake even in the cases of Sofia and Ruse where the NGO sector is running private facilities alongside the municipal shelters. The law requires municipalities to supervise overall stray dog catching (it shall except dogs already neutered and released). Furthermore, there is no evidence and it is very unlikely that the above mentioned private shelters carry out regular stray dog catching in large numbers. They shall be considered as partner organizations dealing with manageable pet animals taken from municipal shelters and civil

persons. Reports from Ruse municipal shelter and some statements made by Sofia officials also confirm the practice of transferring shelter animals to NGOs within and outside Bulgaria. The daily newsfeed also shows that most roaming dogs in Sofia are impounded by Ecoravnovesie Municipal Enterprise. The Ecoravnovesie Director, Petyr Petrov, revealed in an early 2011 interview that the company employs four catcher teams and four large vans. This proves that the number of dogs impounded by them is larger than the officially mentioned, i.e. the assumption that each team would have to impound an average of only 4-5 dogs per working day seems implausible.

B. Unreported types of disposition

The data collected from the municipalities under this study tends to reveal only four types of allocation: "Impounded," "Adopted," "Euthanized" and "Neutered and Released". This data doesn't mention the following categories: "Returned to Owner," "Transferred to other organizations," "Died," "Stolen/Ran Away," "Total Number at the Beginning of the Year" and "Total Number at the End of the Year." Only the 2008 report from Ruse Municipality also listed types of disposition under categories "Transferred," "Died," "Ran away" and "On hand by the end of the year"; the 2009 report includes "Transferred."

1. "Returned to Owner." While American shelters are required to collect virtually all roaming dogs, including lost and stray, the Bulgarian legislation clearly obligates municipalities to only collect and neuter roaming dogs that are obviously unowned. The obligation to impound and report lost pets is not clearly stated as such and is liable to subjective interpretation. The category "Returned to owner" remains outside the attention of Bulgarian community and is virtually missing in all reported data. The observations show that the effort of many dog owners of Sofia to find their lost pets ends with no success. Evidently, lost animals often become subject of theft. The suspicion that Sofia's Ecoravnovesie and other animal control agencies from other municipalities participate in an organized pet theft is well-grounded.

Table 7. Dogs returned to owner per 1000 human population - 2008 rates in some cities in Canada, United States and United Kingdom

City	Human population x 1000	Dogs returned to owner	Dogs returned per 1000 of humans
Independence, USA	114	774	6.7
Fort Wayne, USA	351	1630	4.6
Berkeley, USA	101	336	3.3
Terre Haute, USA	107	331	3.0
Columbus, USA	1145	2836	2.4
Lodi, USA	100	212	2.1
Richmond VA, USA	203	369	1.8
Mobile, USA	191	278	1.4
San Antonio, USA	1328	1550	1.1
Calgary, Canada	1005	4399	4.3
Edmonton, Canada	750	2326	3.1
Vancouver, Canada	610	884	1.4
Belfast, United Kingdom	268	393	1.4
Aberdeen, United Kingdom	210	258	1.2

2. "Transferred to Other Organizations." Data reporting of this type of disposition is virtually non-existent. At the same time, reports from the municipal shelter in Ruse for 2008 and 2009 and the reports from the one in Kazanlak for 2009, as well as some statements by the Ecoravnovesie Sofia Director, confirm the existence of a regular practice of transferring shelter animals to local and foreign NGOs.

3. "Died." Statistics for dogs in this category exist in only one report – the one from the Municipality of Ruse for 2008 (6 dogs died). The common practice of omitting this category can be explained by the

intention of some to conceal the allegedly high mortality rate existing in the shelters. For example, video footages taken at the Sofia municipal shelter and uploaded on youtube.com by Milena Makedonska indicate an on-going shelter practice for leaving whole litters of puppies to die.

4. "Stolen / Ran away." Statistics for such dogs exist in only one report – the one from Ruse Municipality for 2008 (5 dogs ran away). The common lack of precise reporting on the intake and disposition of dogs creates an opportunity for the lower-ranked shelter staff to take arbitrarily decisions on dealing with shelter animals, including theft.

5. "Total Number at the Beginning of the Year" and "Total Number at the End of the Year." The lack of such categories discards the possibility of having a final annual balance.

The unreported categories listed above indicate the existence of a range of shady practices for disposition of shelter dogs. It should be stressed that any assumption of employing illegal euthanasia as a relatively humane end for the thousands of unwanted pet animals would be extremely unrealistic. The law bans euthanizing healthy unwanted animals and the drugs and medical supplies related to it cannot be accounted for. In an article from September 23 2010, Milen Enchev from dnevnik.bg cited eyewitness reports for at least two cases of brutal murdering of dogs at Plovdiv Municipal shelter. From the above, it follows that any animal entering a Bulgarian shelter is exposed to great risk of becoming victim of extremely inhumane treatment.

C. Dogs released and funding

Table 8. Total number of dogs reported as neutered and released; number of dogs released per 1000 of human population; ratio between total number of dogs reported as neutered and released, and stray dogs at hand.

Municipality	Period	Human population x 1000	Stray dogs available (of which neutered)	Dogs neutered and released, total	Dogs released per 1000 of people	Percentage of dogs released to dogs available
Varna	July 2000 - Dec 2010	330	5000	14,020	42	> 280 %
Veliko Tŕrnovo	2009-2010	88	--	1981	22	--
Dobrich	May 2002 - Apr 2010	95	--	5200	54	--
Kazanlyk	Oct 2005 - Dec 2009	75	--	1275	17	--
Pleven	Aug 2008 - Dec 2010	133	--	1715	12	--
Sofia	Sep 2006 - Dec 2010	1308	9500 (8075)	> 17,148 *	> 13	> 212 %
Shumen	June 2003 - Dec 2010	99	964	4000	40	> 414 %

2326 neutered dogs at hand as of September 1 2006 have been added to the number of dogs released for the period under the study. That figure is derived as a difference between the number of neutered stray dogs at hand as of July 8 2007 (4968, according to a survey by Konstantin Dimitrov et al.) and the number of dogs released for the period September 1 2006 - July 8 2007 (2642, according to the Sofia Municipal Council's "2008-2011 Municipal stray dog population control program").

The number of dogs reported in the "Neutered and Released" category raise both distrust and concern. This type of disposition involves the majority of shelter animals in all municipalities under this study ranging from 68 percent in Pleven to 100 percent in Kazanlyk. In Bulgaria, the issue of pet population dynamics remains completely unresolved and it is the reason for yet another wave of unwanted dogs appearing on the streets each year. If only half of them are neutered properly and then released to live freely, that alone would lead to a doubling of stray dog population in a couple of years. However, over the last decade there has not been any case of exceeding stray dog population increase reported anywhere in Bulgaria. Instead, there has been a persistent evidence of huge discrepancy between the number of dogs reported as released and the number of those roaming the streets, i.e. the dogs from the "Released" category are missing from the streets.

This survey found the largest number of missing animals - more than 9000 - reported as released alive by both Sofia and Varna Municipalities. Meanwhile, Dobrich Municipality, in its eight years of Catch-Neuter-Release approach, reached the ratio of 54 dogs released per 1000 of human population - the highest in the country, yet unsupported by any data on the number of neutered dogs at hand. An assumption that someone purposefully re-collects thousands of released dogs seems unjustified, as this would be in breach of the legal interest of the relevant municipalities and animal control agencies. However, none of them responded to that in any way. Far more justified assumption would be that the real number of dogs released has been much less than the reported numbers, i.e. after their initial impoundment, most of the animals have become subject of an illegal disposition carried out by the relevant organization. The above circumstances inevitably raise the question of the real activities performed by the Bulgarian animal control agencies.

The reporting of large number of missing animals as treated raises fiscal concerns as well. For example, in 2010 the average cost per dog entering the municipal shelter in Sofia was 315 leva. In comparison, the reported budgets of the other six shelters show that this cost ranges from 56 to 147 leva. Of the more than BGN 4.8 million the Sofia city spent on stray animal control in 2007-2010, roughly 60 per cent was spent for 9000 missing dogs reported "Neutered and Released." As a better case scenario, if these unwanted dogs had been legally euthanized without further cost to the shelter (at over BGN 300 per dog), it would have saved the city the expense of Catch-Neuter-Release and spent in near BGN 3 million in enhancing the sterilization rate of total cat and dog population. If a mechanism had been in place to have a low-cost neutering schemes provided, it would have improved animal birth control by neutering in the same period some 30,000 or more owned pet animals.

Table 9. Shelter budgets and expenditure per animal sheltered.

Municipality	Year	Human population x 1000	Dogs received	Budget	Average budget per 1000 of people	Average budget per dog received
Varna	2010	338	1211	152,492 leva	451 leva	125 leva
Vratca	2009	76	851	125,105 leva	1646 leva	147 leva
Kyrdzhali	2009	67	599	34,000 leva	507 leva	56 leva
Pleven	2010	131	818	82,216 leva	627 leva	100 leva
Ruse	2010	165	1162	135,000 leva	818 leva	100 leva *
Sliven	2009	125	865	72,000 leva	576 leva	83 leva
Sofia	2010	1350	4588	1,446,622 lv.	1071 leva	315 leva

* The overall 2010 budget of Ruse municipal shelter was EUR 135,000 including treatment costs for 60 cats.

IV. Key Findings

This chapter summarizes some of the principal findings from the data analysis. It is divided into six sections: reporting practices; animal intake; animal disposition; animal welfare, public health and safety and fiscal issues; government responsibility; and policy effectiveness. Each of them discusses different aspects of the shelter accountability issue.

A. Reporting Practices

At present there are no reliable statistics of how many roaming pet animals shelters collect, kill,

release and transfer annually. Thus, no concrete answer for what is happening to roaming animals and no concrete data on the overall pet population dynamics upon which the legislature can base any legislative conclusions it may wish to make in order to deal with the public fiscal, health and safety, animal welfare, environmental and other issues presented by the roaming pet population and disposition of shelter animals.

To a considerable extent, the problem is dealt with by animal shelters, both public and private. In addition, animal welfare and animal care stakeholders do not currently have a standard format for data collection that would lend itself to data aggregation and analysis.

B. Animal Intake

Reported numbers of dogs impounded at local shelters as a whole do not correspond to the estimated annual increase of the local dog populations.

C. Animal Disposition

The principal method by which the shelters deal with the incoming pet animals is by their unreported and opaque disposition.

Based on reported data, no animals that entered shelters were returned to their owners.

Based on reported data, 68 to 100 per cent of the animals entering shelters were reported as neutered and released. Most of them are not available now within the roaming population.

Based on reported data, estimated Total Outcome do not correspond to the estimated numbers of Total Intake. No reported data that include both Beginning Shelter Count and Ending Shelter Count.

The annual number of dogs impounded is very high, however it is falsely reported or it is not reported at all. A considerable part of the animals should be referred to the missing categories as "Died or Run Away" or "Transferred" - a category including the transfer of animals to research facilities best known in many countries as "Pound Seizure." For the remaining cases it can only be assumed that the dogs are being killed in a cruel manner.

D. Animal Welfare, Public Safety and Health, and Fiscal Issues

The practice of unreported and badly reported intake and disposition involving large numbers of roaming pet animals annually has consequences for the animal welfare, public health and safety, environment, and fisc.

E. Government Responsibility

The serious problem of managing pet overpopulation which raises public fiscal, health and safety, animal welfare, and environmental questions shall be from time to time addressed by the Government.

F. Policy Effectiveness

Bulgaria could improve its approach to companion-animal related issues by learning from the best practices and policies of other communities. Appropriate data collection by the Ministry of Agriculture shall be made to ensure that the government and relevant stakeholders have sufficient information to draw firm conclusions about all of the factors contributing to companion animal related issues or their solutions.

V. Recommendations

Bulgaria needs an enhanced collaborative, cooperative effort between policy makers, executive, local officials, animal welfare organizations, community leaders, animal business owners, pet owners, residents, and all stakeholders. This effort should rely on data (both quantitative and qualitative) allowing to identify the issues, relevant solutions and success or failure.

It is essential to standardize methods for collecting and reporting statistical shelter data, in order to promote transparency and better assess the rate of healthy and treatable animals. It would allow stakeholders, municipal officials and the public to track movements of pet animals and determine the success of initiatives. These statistics need to be collected for each individual organization, for the community as a whole and nationally, and need to be reported to the public annually (e.g., web sites, newsletters, annual reports). Both individual organizations and community coalitions should strive for continuous improvement of these numbers. Such data collection and its corresponding analysis would allow the shelters to scientifically monitor and document the population entering the system and the process by which animals exit the public shelters. In partnership with non-profit agencies, who would also track data on animal entering and leaving the shelter system, policy makers would be best positioned to devise initiatives that speak to the problems evident in the community.

Bulgarian authorities should place a high value on collecting data when animals enter the shelter. Based on the outlined research tasks and key findings, an institutionalized initiative emerged as the second step.

Government routinely proposes new legislation related to managing companion animal issues at a national level. We strongly encourage Council of Ministers to move our recommendations forward within six months of this report.

The legislative framework suggested below refers at many points to the International Society for Animal Rights' "Model Euthanasia Statistics Statute." Recommendations are grouped in seven sections: terminology; reporting requirements; policy requirements; data compilation; penalties; rules and regulations; and effective date.

A. Terminology.

The following words and phrases when used in this act shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Pet animals." The term includes dogs and cats. "Animal shelter" and "operator of animal shelter." The term includes all shelters operated in whole or in part for dogs and cats and all public and private agencies, organizations and associations operating animal shelters, regardless of source of funds and whether for profit or not for profit.

"Reported year." The calendar year for which a report is made under Reporting requirements.

B. Reporting requirements.

1. Content. All animal shelter operators shall, on an annual basis, make a report to the Agriculture Minister. This report shall include all of the following:

- (a) The number of pet animals, by species and breed, on hand as of January 1 of the reported year.
- (b) The number of pet animals, by species and breed, on hand as of 11:59 p.m. on December 31 of the reported year.
- (c) The number of pet animals, by species and breed, entering the shelter during the reported year (including animals redeemed and adopted but returned by their owners during the reported year).
- (d) The number of pet animals, by species and breed, redeemed by their owners and not returned during the reported year.
- (e) The number of pet animals, by species and breed, adopted and not returned during the reported year.
- (f) The number of pet animals, by species and breed, transferred to other organizations which shall be specified.
- (g) The number of pet animals, by species and breed, neutered and released.
- (h) The number of pet animals, by species and breed, killed during the reported year.
- (i) The number of pet animals, by species and breed, which have run away or died naturally or were subject to such other disposition which shall be specified.
- (j) The report shall specify the method of killing and the manner of disposition of the remains.
- (k) The amounts of public funds and the amounts of private funds and the sources thereof which are expended in support of the activities which are the subject of the report.

2. Form. The Agriculture Minister shall develop and provide a standard reporting form. The form shall include a statement that the maker of the report certifies it to be true and correct.

3. Fee. The Agriculture Minister may charge a reasonable fee to cover the cost of collecting and processing these reports. This fee shall cover the cost of reproducing the reports and mailing them to persons who may request them.

C. Policy requirements.

Shelters and municipal impound centers should publish the photos of impounded pet animals on the Internet. Ideally, these efforts should be coordinated so that all stray pets can appear on one regional web site.

D. Data compilation.

The Agriculture Minister shall compile reported data on a statewide and on a province-by-province basis. Reports shall be maintained by the office for at least ten years. Reports made under this act shall be public records and shall be open to public inspection, and access to said report shall not be denied pursuant to any exemption in the Access to Public Information Act.

E. Penalties.

1. Failure to file. Failure to file a report under this act constitutes [here include appropriate punishment under the jurisdiction's criminal laws].

2. False statement. Any person who knowingly submits a false or fraudulent report or who supplies false or fraudulent information in a report commits [here include appropriate punishment under the jurisdiction's criminal laws].

F. Rules and regulations.

The Council of Ministers shall promulgate rules and regulations to administer and enforce this act.

G. Effective date.

This act shall take effect immediately upon being duly approved.

VI. Conclusion

The lack of reliable data on shelter animals only disguises the severity of the pet overpopulation problem in Bulgaria. Thus, the lack of accountability continues to play a crucial role in keeping the current dog population dynamics as it is. The absence of any effective measures against pet over-reproduction can easily be justified by the invalid or missing data reported up to date.

This report presented by Animal Programs Foundation is only the first step in positioning shelter accountability issues as part of the larger policy discussions regarding public fiscal, health, safety and quality of life, and animal welfare in Bulgaria. It seeks to establish Bulgaria as a regional leader in the policies related to animal control services through the development of a national database system that respects the interconnectedness of humane and safe treatment of roaming animals and the national pet population management agenda. The study has attempted to make the case that local shelter accountability policies be viewed within the larger context of national policies related to public fiscal, health, safety and quality of life, and animal welfare in Bulgaria. With these goals in mind, it has tried to provoke political initiatives by providing statistical information on the performance of existing policies, and outlining the need for developing a framework for measuring success.

We recognize that this document is only a beginning. A sustained effort will be necessary to establish in Bulgaria a truly effective cooperation between policy makers, law enforcement officials, non-governmental sector and other stakeholders. It is our hope that Bulgarian Government will review our findings and undertake an institutionalized initiative that, in turn, would create conditions for effective action.

References

- "11 хиляди бездомни кучета бродят из София." 19min.bg. 9 Apr. 2009. BAL Media. 6 May 2011 <http://19min.bg/news/8/12811.html>
- "50 лв. струва бездомно куче на Община Враца." DarikNews.bg. Ред. Елза Тодорова. 26 Jan. 2010. Darik Web. 6 May 2011 http://dariknews.bg/view_article.php?article_id=470260
- "460 бездомни кучета са били уловени за миналата година в Пловдив." plovdiv24.bg. 7 Feb. 2011. Media Group 24. 6 May 2011 <http://news.plovdiv24.bg/227231.html>
- Ангелова, Ирина. "Само 8 регистрираните кучета в Кърджали." Standartnews.com. Ред. Даниела Палазова. Standart News. 2 May 2010. 6 May 2011 <http://www.standartnews.com/news/details/id/66816/>
- Георгиева, Росица. "Петър Петров: 12 379 бездомни кучета са заловени в София от 2008 до края на 2010 година." Focus-news.net. 11 Jan. 2011. Информационна агенция Фокус. 6 May 2011 <http://www.focus-news.net/?id=f16816>
- Денева, Милка. "Санкция до 4000 лева заплашва кметовете заради уличните кучета." Dnesbg.com. Ред. Мила Милчева. 2 Feb. 2011. Издателска къща Янтрапрес АД. 6 May 2011 <http://www.dnesbg.com/ikonomika/sanktsiya-do-4000-leva-zaplashva-kmetovete-zaradi-ulitchnite-kutcheta.html>
- Димитрова, Петя. "107 хил. лв. отделя община Монтана за издръжка на кучешки приют." DarikNews.bg. Ред. Елза Тодорова. 9 Feb. 2011. Darik Web. 6 May 2011 http://dariknews.bg/view_article.php?article_id=666168
- Димитров, Константин. Добрева, Елена. "Изследване върху популацията на бездомните кучета на територията на Столична Община." iwps.org. Сдружение "На ти с природата." 4 June 2011 http://www.iwps.org/fileadmin/content/library/strays/Doklad_na_Ban_2006.pdf
- "Експресни резултати от Преброяване 2011." Преброяване на населението и жилищния фонд в Република България. Apr. 2011. Национален статистически институт. 6 May 2011 <http://www.nsi.bg/census2011/pagebg2.php?p2=36&sp2=37>
- Енчев, Милен. "Пловдив: Няма кучета - няма проблем." dnevnik.bg. Ред. Анна Христова. 23 Sep. 2010 г. Економедия. 6 June 2011 г. http://www.dnevnik.bg/bulgaria/2010/09/23/964679_plovdiv_niama_kucheta_-_niama_problem/
- "Информация от отдел Екология." sliven.bg. 2 Feb. 2010. Община Сливен. 6 May 2011 <http://www.sliven.bg/index.csp?f=news-17432>
- Йотов, Божидар. "Годишен отчет за 2008 г. по изпълнение на дейностите по програма за овладяване популацията на бездомните кучета на територията на Община Русе." ruse-bg.eu. Община Русе. 7 May 2011 <http://www.ruse-bg.eu/priut/2009/11/годишен-отчет-за-2008-г/>
- "Между 9500 и 10 000 бездомни кучета в София." Novinar.bg. Ред. Десислава Апостолова. 8 Feb. 2011. Новинар Медия АД. 7 May 2011 http://novinar.bg/news/mezhdu-9500-i-10-000-bezdomni-kucheta-v-sofiia_MzQ5OTsxMQ==.html

Минкова, Латинка. "Четири лапи." Sl-news.sliven.net. 12 Jan. 2010. Сливенски новини. 6 May 2011 <http://www.sl-news.sliven.net/index.php?id=16529>

Михайлова, Тихомира. "Бездомните кучета в София са между 9000 и 9500." Novinar.bg. Ред. Десислава Апостолова. 28 May 2010. Новинар Медиа АД. 7 May 2011 http://novinar.bg/news/bezdomnite-kucheta-v-sofiia-sa-mezhdu-9000-i-9500_MzI4MDs0Ng==.html

"Над 300 бездомни кучета са кастрирани в Бургас през миналата година." Burgas24.bg. 11 Jan. 2010. Media Group 24. 6 May 2011 <http://news.burgas24.bg/130719.html>

"Общинска програма за овладяване на популацията на безстопанствените кучета 2008-2011 г." varna.bg. 21 Apr. Община Варна. 2009. 30 May 2011 http://www.varna.bg/adm/prog/prog_zh.htm

"Общинска програма за овладяване на популацията на безстопанствените кучета 2008-2011 г." sofiaCouncil.bg. 22 May 2008. Столична община. 6 May 2011 <http://sofiacouncil.bg/index.php?page=news&id=119>

"Общински приют за бездомни кучета." kazanlak.bg. 2010. Община Казанлък. 6 May 2011 [http://www.kazanlak.bg/index.php?p=view&r\[page\]=574](http://www.kazanlak.bg/index.php?p=view&r[page]=574)

"Общо 1715 кучета са кастрирани в Плевен от 2008 до 2010 г." Posredniknews.com. Ред. Иванка Ватева. 28 Jan. 2011 г. Фортуна прес ООД. 2 May 2011 http://www.posredniknews.com/site/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=13875&Itemid=354

Петрова, Тонка. "Община Русе заделя 135 000 лв. годишно за уличните кучета." Grada.bg. Ред. Йордан Йорданов. 27 Oct. 2010. Шуменска заря. 6 May 2011 <http://grada.bg/40638/%D0%BE%D0%B1%D1%89%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D0%B5-%D0%B7%D0%B0%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BB%D1%8F-135-000-%D0%BB%D0%B2-%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B8%D1%88%D0%BD%D0%BE-%D0%B7%D0%B0-%D1%83%D0%BB%D0%B8/>

Петрова, Тонка. "Съгласувани действия между общини, НПО и държава ще решат кучешкия проблем." Grada.bg. Ред. Йордан Йорданов. 30 Apr. 2010. Шуменска заря. 6 May 2011 <http://grada.bg/19597/%D1%81%D1%8A%D0%B3%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%81%D1%83%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B8-%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%B9%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%B8%D1%8F-%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%B6%D0%B4%D1%83-%D0%BE%D0%B1%D1%89%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B8-%D0%BD%D0%BF/>

Попова, Жени. "Годишен отчет за 2010 г. за дейността на общински приют за безстопанствени животни по изпълнение на дейностите по програма за овладяване популацията на бездомните кучета на територията на Община Русе." ruse-bg.eu. 2011. Община Русе. 7 May 2011 <http://www.ruse-bg.eu/priut/2011/01/годишен-отчет-за-2010-r/>

Първанова, Снежана. "1643 кастрирани кучата за две години." Radiovelikotarnovo.com. Ред. Мария Христова. 30 Mar. 2010. Общинско радио Велико Търново. 6 May 2011 <http://www.radiovelikotarnovo.com/news/142>

Русенова, Виолета. "8 538 бездомни кучета в София." Delta News. 19 May 2009. 7 May 2011 <http://www.novinitednes.bg/index.php?id=19080#>

"С 250 хил. лв. община Варна ще прави нов приют за кучета." Dnevnik.bg. Ред. Анна Христова. 17 Фев. 2011. Економедия. 6 Май 2011
[http://www.dnevnik.bg/bulgaria/2011/02/10/1040696_s_250_hil_lv_obshtina_varna_shte_pravi_nov_prijut_zal/](http://www.dnevnik.bg/bulgaria/2011/02/10/1040696_s_250_hil_lv_obshtina_varna_shte_pravi_nov_prijut_zal)

Станчев, Стефан. "Годишен отчет за 2009 г. за работата на общински приют за безстопанствени животни гр. Русе." ruse-bg.eu. 2010. Община Русе. 7 Май 2011 <http://www.ruse-bg.eu/priut/2010/01/годишен-отчет-2009г/>

Тавание, Яна Бюрер. Михалев, Иван. "Продънената куче-касичка." Capital.bg. Ред. Люба Йорданова. 15 Ян. 2005. Економедия. 7 Май 2011 <http://www.capital.bg/>

"Фирма построи модерен кучкарник." БГ Север. Ред. Иван Дачев. 30 Май 2011
http://www.bgsever.info/br-35_2007/stranici/str-2.htm

Форум. Ред. Венелин Терзиев. 30 Май 2011 <http://www.forum-bg.net/forum/site/news.php?nid=636>

"Шумен осигурява 72 хил. лв за приют за кучета." iNews. 21 Фев. 2011. 6 Май 2011
<http://inews.bg/%D0%91%D1%8A%D0%BB%D0%B3%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%8F/%D0%A8%D1%83%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%BD-%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%B8%D0%B3%D1%83%D1%80%D1%8F%D0%B2%D0%B0-72-%D1%85%D0%B8%D0%BB-%D0%BB%D0%B2-%D0%B7%D0%B0-%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%8E%D1%82-%D0%B7%D0%B0-%D0%BA%D1%83%D1%87%D0%B5%D1%82%D0%B0> I.a c.327 i.27887.html

"2006 Statistics - Animal Control Facilities." Illinois Animal Shelter Stats. 7 Май 2011
http://www.animalshelterstats.com/uploads/2006_ILAnimalControlStats.pdf

"2006 Statistics - Animal Shelters." Illinois Animal Shelter Stats. 7 Май 2011
http://www.animalshelterstats.com/uploads/2006_ILAnimalShelterStats.pdf

"2008 Statistics." Franklin County Dog Shelter. Franklin County Government. 31 Май 2011
<http://www.franklincountydogs.com/programs/2008Statistics.cfm>

"2010: All/Statewide." Online Animal Reporting. 2011. Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. 22 June 2011 http://www.virginia.gov/vdacs_ar/cgi-bin/Vdacs_search.cgi

"2010: Roanoke City Animal Control." Online Animal Reporting. 2011. Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. 22 June 2011 http://www.virginia.gov/vdacs_ar/cgi-bin/Vdacs_search.cgi?link_select=facility&form=fac_select&fac_num=186&year=2010

"2010: Roanoke County Animal Control." Online Animal Reporting. 2011. Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. 22 June 2011 http://www.virginia.gov/vdacs_ar/cgi-bin/Vdacs_search.cgi?link_select=facility&form=fac_select&fac_num=280&year=2010

"2010: Roanoke Valley Regional Center for Animal Control." Online Animal Reporting. 2011. Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. 22 June 2011
http://www.virginia.gov/vdacs_ar/cgi-bin/Vdacs_search.cgi?link_select=facility&form=fac_select&fac_num=19&year=2010

"2010: Roanoke Valley SPCA." Online Animal Reporting. 2011. Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. 22 June 2011 http://www.virginia.gov/vdacs_ar/cgi-bin/Vdacs_search.cgi?link_select=facility&form=fac_select&fac_num=109&year=2010

"2010: Salem City Animal Control and Pound Facility." Online Animal Reporting. 2011. Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. 22 June 2011
http://www.virginia.gov/vdacs_ar/cgi-bin/Vdacs_search.cgi?link_select=facility&form=fac_select&fac_num=187&year=2010

"Allen County, IN Coalition." Asilomar Accords. 7 May 2011
<http://www.asilomaraccords.org/organizational-data/fort-wayne-acc-allen-county-sPCA-community-summary-2008.pdf>

"Berkeley Alliance for Homeless Animals Coalition." Asilomar Accords. 7 May 2011
<http://www.asilomaraccords.org/organizational-data/berkeley-coalition-summary-2008.pdf>

"City of Albuquerque Animal Care and Control - 2006." Asilomar Accords. 7 May 2011
<http://www.asilomaraccords.org/organizational-data/city-of-albuquerque-animal-care-and-control-2006.pdf>

"City of Mobile Coalition Summary 2008." Asilomar Accords. 31 May 2011
<http://www.asilomaraccords.org/organizational-data/city-of-mobile-coalition-summary-2008.pdf>

Clifton, Merritt. "Latest U.S. data shows shelter killing down to 4.2 million/year. From Animal People, July/August 2003." SPAY/USA. North Shore Animal League America. 7 May 2011
http://www.spayusa.org/media/pdfs/companion_animals/article01.pdf

Clifton, Merritt. "Pet Populations." 21st Century C.A.R.E.S. 7 May 2011
<http://www.21stcenturycares.org/petpopulation.htm>

Clifton, Merritt. "U.S. shelter killing toll drops to 3.7 million dogs & cats." Animal People Online. Ed. Merritt Clifton. 2007. Animal People, Inc. 7 May 2011
http://www.animalpeoplenews.org/07/7/shelterkillingdrops7_07.html

"Community Health Assessment 2009." <http://www.ci.independence.mo.us/> City of Independence, Missouri. 7 May 2011
<http://www.ci.independence.mo.us/userdocs/health/Community%20Health%20Assessment%202009.pdf>

Ewen, Peter. "Responsible Dog Ownership Update. Appendix 1 - Stray Dog Statistics." Aberdeen City Council. 7 May 2011 <http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=3194>

"Friday 05 November 2010. Written Answers to Questions." Weekly Answers Booklet. Northern Ireland Assembly. 7 May 2011
<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/qanda/2007mandate/writtenans/2010/101105.htm#2>

"From Animal People, July/August 2008: Gains in most regions against cat & dog surplus, but no sudden miracles." Animal People Online. Ed. Merritt Clifton. 2008. Animal People, Inc. 7 May 2011
<http://www.animalpeoplenews.org/ap7808.htm#gains>

"From Animal People, July/August 2008: U.S. shelters killed 2.3 million cats & 1.9 million dogs last year. Nearly half of the dogs were pit bulls." Animal People Online. Ed. Merritt Clifton. 2008. Animal People, Inc. 7 May 2011 <http://www.animalpeoplenews.org/ap7808.htm#usshelters>

"IACC Monthly Statistics by year." No-Kill Library. Indy No-Kill Initiative. 7 May 2011 <http://www.indynokill.org/node/86>

Leeb, David. "Animal Control Facility – No Kill Policy." City of Edmonton. 7 May 2011 <http://webdocs.edmonton.ca/occtopusdocs/Public/Complete/Reports/CS/CSAM/2009-03-16/2009PCS003.doc>

"Lodi Coalition Summary." Asilomar Accords. 7 May 2011 <http://www.asilomaraccords.org/organizational-data/lodi-coalition-2008.pdf>

"Memphis Animal Shelter Kennel Statistics." 7 May 2011 <http://nokillmemphis.org/2009stats.pdf>

"Richmond County, VA Coalition Summary." Asilomar Accords. 7 May 2011 <http://www.asilomaraccords.org/organizational-data/richmond-va-community-summary-2008.pdf>

Stafford, Kevin. "The Welfare of Dogs." Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer, 2007.

"Statistics." Animal Control. City of Vancouver. 7 May 2011 <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/licandinsp/animalcontrol/stats/index.htm>

"Terre Haute Humane Society." Asilomar Accords. 31 May 2011 <http://www.asilomaraccords.org/organizational-data/terre-haute-humane-society-2008.pdf>

"Texas." Asilomar Accords. 31 May 2011 http://www.asilomaraccords.org/participating_organizations.html#Texas

White, Gary. "Euthanizing Thousands of Animals a Year Takes a Toll on Shelter Workers." TheLedger.com. Ed. Barry Friedman. 2 Apr. 2006. Ledger Media Group. 7 May 2011 <http://www.theledger.com/article/20060402/NEWS/604020327>

About the author

Emil D. Kuzmanov is the animal advocate in Bulgaria who conducts research on world's experience and progress in humane companion animal management, particularly as it relates to international integration of Bulgaria. His research interests include pet population dynamics, animal birth control, pet supply & demand interaction, pet theft and pound seizure, euthanasia and legal basis for animal welfare and protection.

Kuzmanov is founder of Sofia-based Animal Programs Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the welfare of animals in Bulgaria. Since 2003, he sent many letters to leading Bulgarian politicians to propose adequate steps in pet population management. Several paragraphs from the Animal Protection Act were proposed by him. Over the past 8 years, Kuzmanov has fostered cooperation with the media to discuss nationally on animal control issues. He is the author of many articles on these topics, and often tries to heighten public awareness concerning dog and cat welfare by provoking internet discussions.