

# Faith-Based Organisations and Exclusion in European Cities

## Results in Brief



## Can faith-based organisations make a difference to the welfare society?

Research on the role of faith-based organisations (FBOs) in combating poverty and other forms of social distress has important implications for this emerging welfare regime.



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FBOs are organisations that refer directly or indirectly to religion or religious values and that function as a welfare provider or political actor. These organisations tend to fill the gap left by any absence of the welfare state in various domains of public life, especially in social welfare and social protection. This emerging welfare regime is characterised by a stronger focus on local policies and strategies, and new interplays between local authorities and civil society organisations (CSOs).

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In this context, the 'Faith-based organisations and exclusion in European cities' (FACIT) project considered the work of FBOs in matters related to poverty and forms of social exclusion such as homelessness or undocumented persons in European cities. Project members highlighted the need for better empirical and comparative data on these issues and ways in which FBOs contribute to alleviating such problems.

Research was conducted in 21 cities in seven countries, and concentrated on FBOs that are active in combating social exclusion. Income inequality and relative poverty have both risen over the last 20 years, offering an opportunity for FBOs to fill in the gap between supply of and demand for welfare provisions.

Research findings covered areas relevant to the 'welfare society', how the faith identity of an FBO influences its work and outlook. An examination of poverty and exclusion highlighted the fact that poverty scenarios have a lot in common given that they are often the result of fairly similar processes. Among other findings, FACIT researchers noted the case of United Kingdom as probably the best illustration of the impact of welfare state retrenchment on poverty and social exclusion and, subsequently, the role of FBOs in combating these social ills. Another finding was that most FBOs focus on community-oriented functions, characterised by a common pattern of working with those 'beyond the fringes of society'.

the participation of many organisations points to the potential for major impact of the project's research efforts. The impact can be described in terms of increased visibility for FBOs and their activities, higher political sensitivity for their position and role and better service provision towards beneficiaries. Knowledge produced by FACIT also points to areas that require attention going forward, such as the economic crisis, elderly migrants, sustainability and country-specific policies.

FACIT researchers noted the need to raise awareness about the transnational dimension of the work of FBOs as part of a social justice agenda in European countries. Also, project outcomes underscore the need for public authorities to pay greater attention to good practices where FBOs are implementing innovative and successful approaches to welfare, care and multi-faith activities.

#### Project Information

FACIT

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 Belgium

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The ININTERESTING consortium (Innovative Future-Proof Testing Methods for Reliable Critical Components in Wind Turbines) is coordinated by the Basque Technology Centre IKERLAN. The project, funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, is focused on the development of new concepts and technologies for larger turbines. This includes disruptive technologies for new pitch bearings and gearboxes, and a third case for significantly extending the lifetime of existing pitch bearings. It will also define a new hybrid methodology to demonstrate the reliability of these systems without the need to and expensive test-benches.

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