

Handbook on Third Sector Policy in Europe

Multi-level Processes and Organised Civil Society

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This *Handbook* is the first attempt to systematically examine, empirically and analytically, the contours of the third sector policy process in the European Union (EU).

While scholarship on the social, economic and political contributions of organisations existing between the market and the state has proliferated in recent years, no sustained attention has previously been paid to how such organisations are collectively treated by, and respond to, public policy. The expert contributors examine the policy environment for, and evolving policy treatment of, the third sector in Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom from a comparative perspective. They also look at how the third sector relates to multi-level European policy processes, including the Open Method of Co-ordination, the Community Method, nationally-led 'partnership' approaches within an overall EU framework and the United Nations International Year of Volunteering (an initiative implemented in the EU but originating externally).

Providing a rich and compelling examination of a crucially important aspect of policymaking, this unique *Handbook* will fill a major gap in the knowledge of both general policy analysts and specialists in third sector studies. Researchers and students in the overlapping fields of organised civil society, voluntary and third sector studies and the non-profit sector will also warmly welcome this important book.

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