

Third Sector Impact. The EU project and main findings from Spain

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Abstract

Purpose The aim of this research is to present, first, the European Project Research 'Third Sector Impact', its major objectives, methodology and results. And second, to present the main findings for one of the partners: Spain.

Focusing on the second part, the objectives were to analyze the main trends and challenges the Spanish Third Sector is facing nowadays and during the crisis, the impact of these challenges in the Third Sector, identifying the main barriers the Third Sector have to face.

Design/methodology/approach – The study combines deep studying of the recent literature on the field, an online survey and interview with qualified persons belonging to three main policy fields: the Social Third Sector –the traditionally more studied-, the Cultural Third Sector and the Sport Third Sector.

Findings – In Spain, Third Sector had to face four major crisis, the economic crisis, the crisis of the saving banks, the quantitative austerity crisis and the qualitative austerity crisis. These crisis have been a deep impact in the Third Sector, but an uneven impact: near 30% of the entities have disappeared when the bigger and better positioned NGO have maintained their positions or increased their budget – volunteers. Tendencies towards an isomorphism are highly present.

Research limitations/implications – The study has theoretical implications in terms of understanding the changing fields and organizations, both internally and in relation to external changes.

Keywords: Third Sector, Spain, Changing environment, Economic crisis, Austerity policies