Handbook on Third Sector Policy in Europe
Multi-level Processes and Organized Civil Society

Edited by Jeremy Kendall, Senior Lecturer, School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research (SSPSSR), University of Kent, Canterbury, UK

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 the 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.

‘The book is an excellent example of the usefulness of comparative research. . . This is an excellent book which ought to be of widespread interest to the third sector research community, and not just those undertaking comparative national or EU level research. The quality of its policy analysis should also make it of interest to political scientists interested in the third sector but also more broadly to those interested in social policy making in Europe.’
– Peter Wells, Voluntary Sector Review

‘Take the European dimension of third sector policy seriously in the new millennium – that is the content and message of this important Handbook. It contains rich material, framed with a very useful and interesting conceptual framework. The case studies give a strong sense of what emerges from connections between EU-initiated multi-level programs and national contexts, the interaction of broad categories of drivers for third sector policy, and shapers of the associated policy environment. Inter alia, the Handbook shows convincingly that third sector European policy is not simply pre-determined by “Brussels” – but can develop productively from inside and outside EU structures.’
– Adalbert Evers, Justus-Liebig-Universität Giessen, Germany

‘This book will be a major resource for all those interested in the third sector policy environment in Europe. It is the product of extensive research collaboration, and Kendall has done an excellent job in bringing together the talents and knowledge of key researchers across the EU. There are detailed country based chapters and others exploring cross-cutting policy issues. Kendall brings these different perspectives together in overview chapters which explore, and explain, the developing European third sector policy landscape.’
– Peter Alcock, University of Birmingham, UK