"Exploring the role of faith in British society and politics…"

THE FAITH COLLECTION

Edited by Jonathan Birdwell
with Stephen Timms MP

DEMOS

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Acknowledgements

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As always, all errors and omissions remain my own.

Jonathan Birdwell
September 2013

The Demos Inquiry into Faith, Community and Society

This collection is the final instalment of a larger project led by Stephen Timms MP and Demos exploring the role of faith in UK society and politics.

The first report explored the connection between faith and civic and political engagement in the UK. The second report examined the role of faith groups in delivering public services. This report brings together all the research so far, and includes an essay by Stephen Timms MP and Paul Bickley on the role of faith in politics.

In order to advise on the direction and content of the research we have convened an advisory committee of faith leaders, academics and politicians who are knowledgeable about the issues covered by our research. This advisory committee is chaired by Stephen Timms MP and includes the following members:

· Stephen Timms MP (chair)
· Akeela Ahmed (Muslim Youth Helpline)
· Rosie Bairwal (Catholic Association for Racial Justice)
· Hazel Blears MP (Labour MP, Salford)
· Steve Bonnick
· Sir Trevor Chinn
· Alison Coutts (Bill Hill Trust)
· Unmesh Desai (Labour Councillor, Newham)
· Mustafa Field (Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board, MINAB)
· Andy Flanagan (Christian Socialist Movement)
· Lord Maurice Glasman (Labour Peer, Stoke Newington and Stamford Hill)
· James Kidner (The Coexist Foundation)
· Siobhan McAndrew (University of Manchester, British Religion in Numbers programme)

- Mark Oliver (youth worker)
- Jasbir Panesar (University of East London)
- Vikas Pota (Sewa Day)
- Nick Spencer (Theos)
- Rev Lucy Winkett (vicar, St Jame's Piccadilly)

Faithful Politics

by Stephen Timms MP and Paul Bickley

The research in this collection supports the argument that members of faith groups, and faith-based organisations, have a strong contribution to make to progressive politics. The writers of this introductory essay are particularly interested in the application of these arguments by the Labour party. Research presented later in this volume suggests that religious voters will be vital in securing an electoral mandate in Britain for a progressive programme. We argue also that their ideas will be invaluable in building a successful political programme, and that their energy will be needed to put key parts of that programme into effect.

These conclusions are drawn from the two impressive Demos reports which are bound into this volume. *Faithful Citizens* points out that – contrary to the assumptions of many – religious people in the UK are more likely to place themselves on the left of the political spectrum than on the right. They are more likely to be compassionate to immigrants and to value equality over freedom, positions traditionally associated with the left. The research, from the European Values Survey and the UK Citizenship Survey, suggests they are more likely than their secular counterparts to express their political convictions through voluntary action.

The second Demos report bound into this volume, *Faithful Providers*, looks at the contribution of 20 faith-based and faith-motivated organisations as providers of public services, both voluntarily and through commissioning, working in areas such as welfare to work, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, and youth services. While not extensive enough to be representative of all faith-based providers, the research does suggest that:

· faith-based providers are highly motivated and particularly effective in some areas, and there is no evidence of aggressive proselytising or of discrimination on grounds of faith
· faith is an effective motivator for community service, underpinning an ethos of public service
· while aggressive proselytising should be severely discouraged, there should be no objection to providers of public services discussing their faith with service users who express an interest.

Faithful Providers proposes that local authorities should encourage collaborations between service providers with different faith backgrounds, and undertake a 'faith service' audit of their local communities to identify further areas for collaboration between groups.

This research is particularly relevant in view of the rise of church-led foodbanks. In the last three years, austerity policies have led to a dramatic increase in the number of households unable to afford sufficient food. Churches and faith-based groups have been the most willing to step in and help those in need. Church-led foodbanks supported by the Trussell Trust fed 350,000 households last year, a tenfold increase since the year before the general election. At present, one new foodbank is opening every day. Coalition ministers are deeply discomfited by this phenomenon. They welcome it as evidence of their 'Big Society' in practice, but cannot accept the reality apparent to everyone who volunteers at a foodbank that it is government policies which are creating the hardship driving their growth.

The growth of foodbanks is only the most dramatic example of faith groups grappling with the challenges that concern progressive politicians. At a time when the number of active faith group participants in Britain far exceeds the number of members of all the political parties put together, here is a vital constituency with which progressive politicians need to make common cause.

The purpose of this essay is to outline a basis for the collaboration. The advisory group for this project has involved people with a wide variety of faith backgrounds. It has been an

exploration of the extent to which people from distinct faith backgrounds can collaborate on progressive political endeavours. The things they believe are different, but the values they hold jointly are a sound basis for political collaboration.

Religion in public life

One of the most contentious questions of the twenty-first century is the proper place of religion in public life. Progressives in the UK have not yet offered a definitive or convincing answer.

We are suffering, perhaps, from a peculiarly Western European blindspot. We think that living in a modern society means living in a society where religion has retreated – and is continuing to retreat – from public life. But as Jürgen Habermas has noted, we have witnessed a global 'switchover' when it comes to religion and belief: 'what has been the supposedly "normal" model for the future of all other cultures suddenly changes into a special-case scenario'.[1] Europe is pretty much alone in insisting that public life can rumble on, to quote the Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius, as if God did not exist.

Religious belief, practice and community are not going to simply 'go away'. We must describe what kind of a place religion should have in our society. Some would limit it to the private lives of individuals, as if it were a hobby or pastime, but this will not work. Religion is always personal, but never private. For good or ill, religion is usually public in nature. Being religious is not just about holding to a particular set of religious ideas or following a spiritual ideology. It also means to be given over to a particular way of life. The question is not *if* it will have a profound effect on public life, but *what* that effect will be and how we – those of faith and those without – respond.

This question has a particular significance for progressive politics in the UK. Christianity – faith if you prefer – was one of the early foundations of the labour movement – and not just as a special interest version of progressive politics. Trace the genealogy back far enough, someone like Habermas would argue, and a Judaic and Christian heritage is the primary source of 'universalistic egalitarianism' – the belief in the innate dignity

of each human being. This is the single belief that marks Labour at its core.[2]

That said, Labour has always been 'a broad movement on behalf of the bottom dog', as GDH Cole put it. It has incorporated the religious and the secular, the Catholic and the Protestant, the working and the middle class, the progressive and the conservative. This paradoxical ability to combine diverse movements into a single cause has been a great historical achievement of the labour movement. It may now be at risk.

In the US, a 40-year culture war has resulted in hard lines being drawn between religiosity, social conservatism, economic libertarianism and the Republican party on one side and irreligiosity, social liberalism, economic interventionism and the Democratic party on the other. This politics of ideological purity, where two nations exist within one, means that little progress can be made on some of the most pressing political issues of our day, be that climate change or avoiding fiscal cliffs. To be sure, the 'God problem' is just one part of America's political malaise and many of the factors which gave rise to it simply do not hold in the UK, but we will rue the day when such a divisive political mood crystallises around politics and religion here.

We argue below that, as Labour continues the process of rebuilding, it is vital not only that it 'does God', but that it frames the political discourse around faith and family, responsibility and relationship. Too often, we have allowed these themes to be owned by the Conservatives. These ideas could belong to the progressive left, though how we choose to define the word 'progressive' will be key.

The two reports in this volume should shake a popular narrative about religious faith in the UK, which is generally a superficial story about insular congregations, complacent conservatism and a general unfeeling dogma. As we will argue, there is just enough which is true about that narrative to make it plausible, but not nearly enough to make it actually true.

But the reports do more than simply rebut unwarranted negativity about the place of faith in our society. They also hint at a newly acquired confidence on the part of religious institutions which, far from being locked in the past, are

responding positively and creatively to the problems facing our communities in the second decade of the twenty-first century. We have all witnessed the rapt attention paid to the early pronouncements of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the new Pope, both of whom have already been willing to speak up for the poor, and have managed to convey also that what they are going to do will be consistent with what they have been saying. We need to ask ourselves again why religious traditions are not at the centre of – or even just a little nearer to – mainstream progressive politics, as they once were.

In this essay, we want to push the argument further beyond ground which has been thoroughly turned over. *Faithful Citizens* and *Faithful Providers* have furnished us with some of the relevant facts, but they raise many questions that research reports cannot answer. How can we as progressives frame the debate around faith in public life?

If Europe adopts an approach to religion in public life which is different from other parts of the world, isn't there good reason? It is possible too for religion to be undergoing a global and political resurgence while also experiencing a deep European recession. Just as the realist will acknowledge the ongoing place of faith, she will also concede that its public role is being reshaped.

In his first presidential address to General Synod, Justin Welby spoke of 'the overwhelming change of cultural hinterland', and of an increasing gulf between public attitudes and those of the Church.[3] There is no doubt that there is something of Matthew Arnold's 'long, withdrawing roar' to be heard. Some of the smaller Christian denominations are in near terminal decline nationally. In the UK, the number willing to identify as Christian fell from 71.7 per cent in the 2001 census to 59.3 per cent in 2011. Between these two national censuses, there has been an increase in those reporting no religion (from 14.8 per cent to 25.1 per cent).

But these figures do not tell the whole story. There has been an increase in the other main religious group categories, with the number of Muslims increasing the most (from 3.0 per cent to 4.8 per cent). At the same time, we have seen the influx of

energetic African Pentecostal Christianity, an Eastern European Catholic resurgence, and the maturation of many of the new churches.

There is substantial growth in church attendance in London. The number of people on the electoral roll of the Church of England in the Diocese of London fell sharply from 1972 to 1992, but since then it has risen equally sharply. Today, the number is back up where it was at the start of the 1970s. And very large numbers of Londoners attend churches, mosques and temples that did not exist in 1972.

It would be difficult to claim now – as it has been for some time – that Britain is a 'Christian country'. But it is not a secular country either. Rather, it is a plural community. Religion is not 'going away'. Its public significance will persist. And politicians need to recognise that, and embrace it, not hide from it or behave as though religion does not matter any more.

Others may disagree with this analysis. However, any politicians arguing that religious belief has declined to the extent that politicians should now ignore it are probably guilty of missing the proverbial plank in their own eye. You might find 'only' less than 10 per cent of Britain's population in a church on any given Sunday but there are after all less than 1 per cent of the population who are members of political parties. In fact, in London alone three times as many people will be in church on Sunday than are members of the Labour party nationally.[4]

Politics in public life

This assessment may be unsettling to atheists and agnostics. However, this is not about progressive politicians looking or sounding 'more religious' (which in any case might be inauthentic, kitsch or both) but about modelling a better and more attractive twenty-first century politics all round. That is the prize – of great value for all, irrespective of faith background, if any – which we want to see achieved.

The changes in the place of religion in public life, and of politics in public life, reflect wider cultural trends, which pose questions against all the institutions of modern Britain. The

sense of 'us' – a society bonded together with a shared past and future – seems more at risk than at any time in history. We have lost the habits of membership. There is a growing propensity to adopt the role of passive consumers rather than active producers, and an increasing antipathy towards the welfare state, which depends on a sense of commonality.

In the 1950s, the Labour party had a membership of over 1 million people. That was 1 million people who identified with Labour's agenda strongly enough not only to express support, but also to put their money where their mouth was. Many put time into the party, delivered leaflets, attended meetings. Joining a political party was not something an average person did. But 1 in every 10 people did it. That was a significant reserve of people getting involved in our democratic life.

The number in the party has fallen dramatically. Labour now has 190,000 members – an average per constituency of under 300, with huge variation around that. It is not just the Labour party. Andrew Rawnsley's recent observation that more people adhere to the Jedi religion than are members of the Conservative party made the point with cruel clarity.[5] The academic James Graham suggests that around 10–24 per cent of local Labour party members were active during the 2005 general election campaign.[6] If one transfers this figure to all political parties, then the core work of ordinary parliamentary democracy – campaigning during a general election – is carried out by around 250 activists in each constituency.

These trends have broad implications. Political parties are the cartilage in the joint between the state and people, between the public at large and the processes of governance. Flawed as they always have been, they are one of the most important elements of a parliamentary democracy. The mere act of voting is not enough. People need other avenues through which power can be built and exercised, but increasingly they have not seen political parties as attractive ways to do that.

In other words, the cartilage is damaged, and the joint no longer works as it should. Too often, political parties have been diverted from being broad movements formed around shared understandings of the common good. A negative feedback loop

has developed. More and more people conclude that politics is self-serving, irrelevant and dishonest – and when you are trying to 'get the vote out' out as a party activist on a battered council estate or an economically emasculated neighbourhood it is not hard to see why. It is not surprising that people want to disrupt what they see as a complacent system that takes them for granted.

There's an interesting parallel to be drawn with faith institutions. As we have already seen, it is true that fewer people formally identify with a religious faith than did so in the past. However, as recent research by Theos has shown, there are many who retain a strong sense of the spiritual but increasingly think that formal religious institutions are not the place to explore or discover it.[7] So, people retain a sense of the spiritual but explore it in different kinds of ways, or leave it unexplored altogether. Could it be that people retain a strong sense of the significance of politics, but do not see political parties as the place to realise it? Evidence suggests that this might be the case.[8]

Part of the explanation for these trends lays in what Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor calls the 'massive subjective turn of modern culture'.[9] People seem to be rejecting forms of association based around external roles, duties or obligations. Instead, they crave the unique experiences of selves-in-relation. Consumer capitalism trains us to expect the world to be fine-tuned to our expectations. It has also intensified the romanticism and individualism which were already part of our cultural psyche.

Technological change has also altered the way we experience reality. Political parties rely on people who are prepared to 'do their bit', even if it is deeply psychologically unsatisfying. No wonder we are less likely to join any kind of organisation than our forebears.

We cannot return to the kind of society where political parties just 'made sense' as mass membership organisations. They have to evolve, bringing politics closer to how people really think and live. We need to allow more freedom to people in the way they find, articulate and fulfil left-of-centre politics.

One of the reasons that religious citizens are so engaged by community organising is that it allows them to act politically without conforming to ways of working that are alien to them. Too often, party involvement requires people to learn a new jargon or understand an unfamiliar bureaucracy. Civic engagement through religious institutions does not require them to leave their values, inspiration and community traditions at the door. All they need to do is commit to working for the common good – its not the content of progressive politics that alienates the religious, but the form.

The most cited reasons people give for avoiding becoming a member of a political party are lack of time, lack of trust and lack of the knowledge, skills and confidence to make politics work for them.[10] And there is no doubt that perceived hostility to faith provides an extra cultural barrier to party activism for some who willingly volunteer for progressive causes. Alistair Campbell's famous comment that 'we don't do God' was a sound piece of communication advice, but unfortunately it neatly summarised periodic clashes between the last government and faith institutions over a series of issues, and continues to sum up the reason for why some decline to become involved.

In short, we need to make sure we do not unwittingly make it harder for people of faith to get involved with progressive politics. This fits with Labour's history. Many of its most significant politicians have been people of faith. Keir Hardie is the most obvious example, but think also of Arthur Henderson, Stafford Cripps, Tom Mann, George Lansbury, Richard Tawney, John Smith and Tony Blair. Many of those who were not of faith were inspired by the values of faith – remember Clement Atlee's backhanded compliment: he 'believed in the ethics of Christianity', but 'not the mumbo jumbo'.

The need not unwittingly make it harder for people of faith to get involved with progressive politics also fits with its future. Labour is not just a political party, it is a movement – and the movement is a part of a broad constellation of organisations working within and without Westminster that can contribute, inform and articulate its agenda. The price of a party that adopts programmatic secularism as its creed would be the alienation of

sources of support and energy that Labour can not afford to lose, not to mention the vital practical connection, through churches and other faith communities, with the lived experience of people in an increasingly unequal and unjust society.

In the aftermath of the mutually bruising contest over the same Sex Marriage Bill, this might sound to some like a fond illusion. How can a progressive movement make common cause with those who might oppose such a move? It depends on the nature of the common cause. Anthony Crosland's highly influential book, *The Future of Socialism*, sought to redefine Labour politics.[11] He argued for a move away from the solidaristic, collectivist, group-centred themes centred around achieving material equality towards an individualist and aesthetic approach – the job was to 'improve an already improved society'.

Whatever the merits of Crosland's argument in 1956, it now seems complacent. Crosland thought that the task of securing broad material equality was essentially done, but we have learnt over the past five years that it is never done. GK Chesterton once said that the risk of progressive politics is that instead of changing society to fit the ideal, we alter the ideal. In the contemporary context, Labour must surely revisit its older objectives – not to become 'old Labour', but to remember that progressive politics is not about achieving greater recognition for some, but about changing unjust systems for all.

Demos' finding in *Faithful Citizens* will have surprised many who assumed that because people of faith can be socially conservative they would – as in the US – naturally align themselves with an economically liberal approach. In fact, the religious have not replaced older solidaristic positions with social liberalism. In the present context, progressive politics might change back somewhat, offering possibilities of new connection around prospects of basic equality in health, access to education and so on. We might still clash over issues like same sex marriage, but it is vital that we do not divide or condemn, as if these issues were the sole substance of progressive politics.

In his book *Don't Think of an Elephant*, George Lakoff describes six kinds of progressives: socioeconomic, environmental, identity-based, civil libertarian, spiritual and anti-

authoritarian. He argues that one of the problems for progressive politics is:

Many of the people who have one of these modes of thought do not recognize that theirs is just one special case of something more general, and do not see the unity in all the types of progressives. They often think that theirs is the only way to be a true progressive. That is sad. It keeps people who share progressive values from coming together.[12]

The Crosland moment resulted in the ascendance of identity progressivism above all, while other themes became marginal. While it is undeniable that these different themes will sometimes come into conflict, it is vital that they are all given space in a diverse and modern party, which is facing the challenges not of the 1990s, but of the 2010s.

Faith and the renewal of politics

Some will not enjoy the prospect of the religious playing a large part in the renewal of politics. If religion is about inflexible principle and unchanging revelation, and politics is about compromise and negotiation, how can they ever be joined? If fewer and fewer people identify themselves as having any faith, how can faith be a platform on which people engage in the public work of politics? Is there not a real danger of making religion a shortcut to sectarianism, where everybody baptises their own political opinion, and fights for it with all the fervour of a righteous cause?

More often than not, these fears are less about religion and more to do with a lack of confidence in dealing with deep difference. It is ironic that the more liberal we believe we have become, the harder we find it to reconcile ourselves to real diversity. We tend to lurch for enforced sameness, be that through an adoption of programmatic secularism or around some other organising concept, which can often leave us looking not broad but tribal. But as the former Chief Rabbi, Lord Sacks of Aldgate, said in his book, *The Dignity of Difference*,

There is no road to human solidarity that does not begin with moral particularity – by coming to know what it means to be a child, a parent, a neighbour, a friend. We learn to love humanity by loving specific human beings… The unity of God is to be found in the diversity of creation.[13]

The lesson of Labour's history is that real progress is achieved when people come together to improve their own lives. For too long, politics has been stuck in an iron cage. It has been about 'what works'. It is easier to put targets on police numbers, hospital waiting times or exam results on an election leaflet than it is to talk about how we should devolve power and develop resilient communities.[14]

Faith: a great starting point

The challenge is to inspire the virtues required to make progressive politics work. One conclusion from Demos' work is that faith is a great starting point for politics, and for progressive politics in particular, because faith inspires, on a large scale, exactly the values we need to make politics work: responsibility, solidarity, patience, compassion, tolerance and truthfulness. We will address each of these in turn.

First, responsibility means recognising that a better future will not emerge from nowhere. It only comes when people take ownership of the task of improving their own lives. A group of Muslim young people discussing this drew attention to the Qu'ranic assertion: 'God will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves.'[15] That is what is so impressive about community organising. It is highly political in the best sense, a way of developing, realising and releasing leadership even building power. It is deeply ethical, yet not utopian or naïve. It acknowledges that we all have visions of the way the world should be – indeed it draws on them in all their moral particularity, but tackles the world as it is, looking for tangible change to improve peoples lives. The language of rights is notable by its absence.

Second, solidarity is the essence of the Labour movement. However, it is more than just a feeling, more than ideological

agreement and certainly more than a retweet. Solidarity takes practice. Being part of religious institutions is one of the ways people gather, get to know each other, sympathise and support one another. This is where the old canard about Labour, Methodism and Marx comes in. The political historian William Greenleaf recalls that even Beatrice Webb, during a period of time living in Bacup in Lancashire, remarked on the way in which the chapel and its forms prepared the community for democracy and self-government.[16] It was not Methodism's theology that flowed into the Labour party, but the 'fluency of its social life, plain common sense, the obstinate vitality of older community traditions'.[17]

In an essay on the potential for social media to instigate political change in the *New Yorker*, Malcolm Gladwell told the story of the emerging civil rights movement. The strength of the movement, he argued, was not in its ideological clarity but the quality of its ordinary, everyday relationships. What mattered more than ideological commitment was an applicant's degree of personal connection – in short, the number of friends they had in the civil rights movement. He concluded that high-risk activism is a 'strong-tie' phenomenon.[18]

Thankfully, we are not in the position of civil rights campaigners in the American South, but the lesson holds. Individualism and progressive change are poor bedfellows. Progressive wins will be the result of strong ties.

Third, progressive politics requires patience and persistence, and the willingness to plug away even when the prospects do not seem too bright. That requires hope, but it must be a hope grounded in reality. We must be careful – progressive politics can sometimes be seen as almost millenarian: we think that we are working towards a 'New Jerusalem'. This sounds almost theological – but it is bad theology. It is a mistake to invest politics with ultimacy. Politics is penultimate. The state is not our saviour. Hope in God is much more sustainable in the long term than hope merely in politics. The present age, as political theorist and theologian Luke Bretherton has put it, is a place where people of faith work for a limited but meaningful 'peacefulness', whereas full peace belongs to the City of God.[19]

In other words, expecting (or promising) too much of progressive politics is often the quickest route to deep disappointment. To stick at politics, you need to know what it is not capable of achieving as well. As Matthew Flinders argues at length in his recent book *Defending Politics*, it will never make every sad heart glad.[20] That does not mean we have to settle for some make do and mend pragmatism which accommodates every injustice. Rather, it recasts politics as a realistic *and* moral endeavour. This is the only viable ground on which progressives can stand in the era of austerity. If the cloud of the deficit has a silver lining, it is that we must think very hard about priorities, and focus energy and attention in the places where the state can make the most difference, and then empower civil society to work in the places the state cannot – and just because the state cannot act, that does not mean that nothing can be done.

Fourth, progressive politics is grounded in compassion. It was the moral imagination and energy of the churches, deployed in Jubilee 2000 and Make Poverty History, which provided the crucial support for Labour's successful renewal of Britain's international aid policy. And those origins have helped ensure that the key commitments signed up to by Labour in government, like the target that 0.7 per cent of our GDP should be given in international aid, have been maintained by the current government.

Again, though, we should not be complacent. If compassion is to 'suffer alongside', then we need to make sure we really do share space and time with those that do suffer, or in some way capture their experience. Faith institutions are almost wholly unique in bonding people across social and class cleavages, and we need to take advantage of that. They see things from the ground up. Social democratic movements across Europe are suffering from a split base – the employed, well educated, public servants versus the classic blue collar constituency. We would be lying to ourselves if we did not admit we are at least at risk of this.

Fifth, a broad party will rest on tolerance of the other – for the person drawn to the party for very different reasons. Here people of faith face a stern challenge – one does not have to be

an expert in religious history to see that the religious have not accepted, and sometimes actively persecuted, those on the wrong side of this or that theological or moral line.

Yet tolerance is in part a Christian gift to society. Locke's concept of adiaphora – 'things indifferent' – derived primarily from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians and referring to the conviction that some matters, such as eating meat sacrificed to idols, was not essential to faith.[21] There is a distinction to be made between sin and crime – things which are wrong, and those things which should be made illegal. It would be wrong to pretend that this would reflect the thinking of all those with faith, but there are good theological reasons for allowing space for, and freely cooperating with, people of different religious of ideological persuasions.

Finally, trust in politics is at an all-time low ebb – we have already seen that it is one of the barriers to becoming a member of political parties. But is the deficit one of trust or trustworthiness? When speaking in Parliament a couple of years ago, the American theologian Stanley Hauerwas was asked by one of his audience what practical piece of advice he would offer to someone working in politics. His simple but disarming answer was that they should tell the truth. For someone seeking election, this will not always be easy, but members of faith groups have reasons others do not have to try and practise truthfulness. Having faith entails acknowledging accountability.

Building the good society

Neal Lawson of Compass wrote

Aggressive secularism on the left is bizarre given that religious leaders are now among the few ready to speak out against injustice… For me, as an atheist and a full time politico, this is unsettling… But in words and deeds, in the world I see around me, the positive role faith plays far outweighs the negatives.[22]

London Citizens, founded as The East London Community Organisation in 1997, is based on a lively coalition of churches,

mosques and the Bevis Marks synagogue. Drawing on reflections on the experiences of members of its congregations, it has developed important policy ideas – such as the living wage – which have been adopted by politicians, and which are proving particularly influential on Labour. Their contribution highlights the value of faith communities as sources of new, progressive policy ideas.

In *Faithful Citizens*[23] (not to be confused with the later section of this volume having the same name!), Austen Ivereigh points out that Catholic parishes and schools make up more than a third of the member organisations of London Citizens, and sets out how Catholic social teaching has influenced its thinking. He describes Catholic social teaching as 'a set of values for all humanity, inspired by and enlightened by faith, that act as the cement of society' and asserts that it 'identifies the common values which enable people to live together – people of all faiths and none – in peace and justice'.

It has become commonplace to suggest that churches and other religious institutions are a vital part of civil society. As both *Faithful Citizens* and *Faithful Providers* have shown, they are important places of association. They are not simply organisations that work for local people. They are organisations *of* local people. They motivate people to volunteer, support charitable causes and get involved in politics.

We have also become used to hearing about the scale of the challenge facing the social democratic model that the Labour party pursued in office. The Cabinet Secretary, Sir Jeremy Heywood, recently said we are 25 per cent through fiscal adjustment, and that spending cuts could last until 2020. As councillors on today's front line will attest, we are witnessing unprecedented cut backs in services at a time when people need them more than ever.

Meanwhile, there are a series of social policy challenges which will require real imagination and creativity – adult social care, housing and the increasing burden on the NHS. Jon Cruddas MP, chairman of Labour's policy review, has argued for a One Nation approach to government: more power to local people to determine the shape of services, investing in

prevention, and encouraging greater collaboration between public bodies to avoid the cost of duplication. Austerity will shape what government can do for some years to come.

Progressives should make a virtue out of this necessity. The Labour tradition has long recognised that an over-powerful state could demean and de-humanise as much as an unfettered market. 'However the socialist ideal may be expressed', wrote Richard Tawney, 'few things could be more remote from it than a herd of tame animals with wise rulers in command.'[24] A future Labour Government simply cannot hitch its social justice agenda to the train of state intervention at every level of social life. It will have to work more organically, understanding what people value – work, family, association and place. Strengthening these will help people in ways the state can not.

It is easy to say that progressives should adopt an agenda which helps local communities become more robust, but less easy to know what that politics would look like. There is, in our view, a strong case for greater commissioning of services from faith groups. Faith communities are already seen as having the cultural, moral and social resources vital for effecting change.[25] In areas of real deprivation, the local church might constitute a large part of the remaining civic core. If the state, acting more strategically in light of its own limited capacity, wants to help communities flourish and become more resilient, then it cannot ignore faith organisations. Its fair to say that faith groups must think in similar terms – in the same way that the state is limited, so are the faith groups. Where commissioning of faith groups works well, it does so not as a result of grabbing a larger slice of funding or becoming a more powerful organisation, but because it strengthens people, and wants to see them flourish, whether or not they are part of their own worshipping congregations or not.

To achieve the kind of politics that we are now pointing towards – a politics that values relationships and wellbeing – progressives may need to unlearn some bad habits. On the positive side, Labour in government presided over a revolution in the delivery of public services, which embraced the strength of the voluntary and community – or 'third' – sector, of which faith-based organisations are a part. Some commentators have

been led to speak of a new multi-faith establishment, by which they mean a series of mature and well-developed institutional relationships with the whole plethora of faith-based organisations.[26]

The Coalition Government seemed to recognise the value of all this in the discourse around the Big Society. Their flagship Work Programme was supposed to harness the third sector in getting unemployed people back to work, but in practice the third sector has made a much smaller contribution to the Work Programme than in the programmes which preceded it. According to the *Financial Times*, out of 40 contracts for the £5bn welfare to Work Programme, only two went to voluntary or not-for-profit providers.[27] Capita's CEO revealed that Francis Maude told him not to overestimate the significance of charities when it came to public sector contracts.[28] Whatever efficiencies and improvements a greater diversity of providers portends, it is not much to do with the space between market and state.

Particularly in light of present circumstances, we need to recognise the danger of contributing to the instrumentalisation of religious organisations. Even the terminology – 'faith-based organisation' – could be indicative of failure to take the particularities of different religious traditions into account, as if an Anglican parish church were the same as a Pentecostal project working with gangs, and this the same as a Muslim international development organisation.

This is one problem among others. What may look like a hollowing out of the state and a growth in the reach and influence of civil society could just as well be seen as its extension: an

enhancing of the state's capacity to secure political objectives by sharing power with a range of actors, drawing them into the policy process. From the perspective of voluntary and community sectors, partnership may represent 'dangerous liaisons', implying a process of incorporation into the values of the dominant partner.[29]

Contestability was a large part of the last Labour Government's public service agenda. Charitable income has grown considerably, but in 2009/10 the single most important

funding stream was government funding (£13.1bn), with a significant proportion attached to contracts (£10bn). The charitable sector is increasingly dominated by the small handful of large charities which have the capacity to chase contracts. According to the Charities Commission, 833 of 160,515 charities (0.5 per cent) generate 54 per cent of the sector's income.[30] Many of even these largest charities feel that their activity is distorted in order the fulfil contract requirements. One of the problems with the Big Society is that by inviting charities to engage in a pseudo-market – even inviting them to compete against private providers – there is a failure to recognise what they are.

There is a parallel problem with the role of faith-based organisations. When engaged by the state, what are the terms? What does a local church or mosque have to forgo in order to secure 'partnership' with a local authority or government department? *Faithful Providers* argues that 'faith-motivated providers – and their financial supporters – should prioritise the maintenance of their underlying ethos and motivation at the expense of increasing the size and scale of their service provision'. The censorious language around 'proselytism' identified in *Faithful Providers*, for example, gives faith-based organisations the impression that there is something offensive about their deep moral commitments, which after all have moved them to action in the first place.

We have the opportunity and the motive to push for authentic engagement – not just more, but better. *Faithful Providers* points out that some groups are wary of being asked to do too much, as if they fill the vacuum left by the retreat of statutory services. Similarly, we cannot simply ignore concerns about the potential dangers of turning to faith-based organisations.

A future Labour Government should seek to overcome reluctance by local authorities and others to commission services from faith-based providers, but also to respect that – with other third sector providers – they will not necessarily always want to undertake public service contracts, and, if they do, they will want to maintain their ethos and their autonomy. Government should

look to develop ways in which faith-based organisations can be properly engaged.

The All Party Group on Faith and Society proposes to draft a covenant that could act as the basis for a fresh conversation between local authorities, and public authorities more generally, on the one hand, and faith communities on the other. Faith-based organisations that sign up to it would have to commit to playing their part in addressing some of the pressing community needs and to meeting a set of very high standards, including providing assurances that they would not do the things that sometimes people suspect they might do, while also permitting them to be faithful to the convictions that are the reason for what they do.

In a sense, this would be a confidence building measure. There is, for instance, vanishingly little evidence of discrimination between service users on the basis of their faith, or of proselytism. Dr Sarah Johnsen's in-depth 2009 study at York University into the role of faith-based organisations in the provision of services for homeless people found that 'faith-based services fo3r homeless people do not "Bible bash"'. In fact secular provision often comes with more 'strings attached' than religious provision. She concluded:

The common distrust of FBOs [faith-based organisations] which endures in the sector is misplaced and founded on outdated views of faith-based provision. There was no evidence that FBOs used such funds to propagate religion, or excluded potential users on grounds such as religious belief or sexual orientation. These findings should allay concerns about the propriety of using public funds to support faith-based services.[31]

All parties will rightly seek to be discriminating about the partnerships they enter into.[32] Churches and other faith institutions should not allow themselves to be forced to mimic the practices of the market or the state. Demos is right, then, to suggest that faith-motivated providers should look to maintain their ethos, even if that comes at the expense of increasing the scale of the service they provide. Commissioning faith groups in ways that force them to behave like just another private or third

sector organisation is as bad a mistake as failing to commission them at all.

Conclusion: an election winning programme

With Ed Miliband's leadership, Labour is embarked on a process which amounts to the renewal of progressive politics, the shaping of a political party capable of meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The argument of this report is that faith groups need to be involved in this work. The argument that they are too small to make an impact is simply untrue – they engage far more people than all the political parties put together. It is also untrue that they are more likely to support the right than the left. This view may be justified in the US but it is not in the UK. And we have seen that faith groups can be the source of progressive policy ideas, and of services which do an excellent job of supporting disadvantaged people – for example helping unemployed people into jobs.

No party can co-opt a faith group as its supporter, and none should attempt to. But a progressive party in Britain, like Labour, looking for new supporters, new ideas and new energy needs to include faith groups in its work. It needs to be respectful, and careful to avoid needlessly alienating them, as has sometimes happened in the past. Working with faith groups can make a vital contribution to developing an effective programme, and to building support for it, between now and 2015.

Notes

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2   For example, 'Universalistic egalitarianism, from which sprang the ideals of freedom and a collective life in solidarity, the autonomous conduct of life and emancipation, the individual morality of conscience, human rights and democracy, is the direct legacy of the Judaic ethic of justice and the Christian ethic of love.' See J Habermas, *Time of Transitions*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006.

3   J Welby, 'There is a revolution', presidential address to the General Synod, 5 Jul 2013, www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5098/archbishop-justins-presidential-address-at-general-synod (accessed 6 Aug 2013).

4   See C Field, 'London churchgoing and other news', *British Religion in Numbers*, 14 Jun 2013, www.brin.ac.uk/news/2013/london-churchgoing-and-other-news/ (accessed 6 Aug 2013).

5   A Rawnsley, 'The numbers that add up to trouble for all political parties', *Observer*, 13 Jul 2013, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jul/13/political-party-membership-coalition-labour (accessed 11 Sep 2013).

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8   House of Commons, *Speaker's Conference (on Parliamentary Representation): Final report*, HC 239-I, 11 Jan 2010, www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/spconf/239/239i.pdf (accessed 6 Aug 2013).

9   P Heelas and L Woodhead et al applied this argument to religious change in *The Spiritual Revolution: Why religion is giving way to spirituality*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2005.

10 House of Commons, *Speaker's Conference (on Parliamentary Representation)*.

11 A Crosland, *The Future of Socialism*, London: Constable, 2006.

12 G Lakoff, *Don't Think of an Elephant: Know your values and frame the debate*, White River Junction VT: Chelsea Green, 2004.

13 J Sacks, *The Dignity of Difference: How to avoid the clash of civilisations*, London: Continuum, 2002.

14 See J Wilson, *Letting Go: How Labour can learn to stop worrying and trust the people*, London: Fabian Society, 2012.

15 Qu'ran, Chapter 13, Verse 11.

16 WH Greenleaf, *The British Political Tradition*, vol 2: The Ideological Heritage, London: Routledge, 1983.

17 EP Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, London: Penguin, 1991.

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19 L Bretherton, *Christianity and Contemporary Politics*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

20 M Flinders, *Defending Politics: Why democracy matters in the twenty-first century*, Oxford: OUP, 2012.

21 See N Spencer, *Freedom and Order: History, politics and the English Bible*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2011.

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FAITHFUL CITIZENS

Jonathan Birdwell
Mark Littler

Summary

People of faith are likely to be a vital base of support for any future election-winning progressive coalition. Our research suggests that religious citizens in the UK are more likely to be civically engaged and politically active than their non-religious counterparts. They are also more likely to hold progressive political values on a number of important political and economic questions at the heart of twenty-first-century policy. Despite the trend of decreasing religiosity in the UK, religion remains important to a broad range of active and engaged citizens – and so it must to politicians.

Research has been produced in recent years exploring the relationship between religion and civic activism. Much of it posits a correlation between the two phenomena, with religious practice correlated with higher levels of volunteering and participation in civic society. Faithful citizens, it is argued, are better, more active citizens, volunteering more of their time than others to improve their communities.

However, most of this research has focused on the USA. Given the USA's distinct social, political and religious context, these findings cannot be assumed to apply in the UK. Fresh empirical research is necessary to determine whether there is a relationship between faith and civic engagement in the UK. This report aims to accomplish this.

It is also commonly assumed that religious groups and individuals tend to be more active in support of conservative causes, for example, being against homosexuality and abortion. This report explores the link between religion and more 'progressive' modes of social and civic activism, including involvement with women's rights groups, international development and trade unions. It also tests the relationship between religion and progressive values through an examination

of religious adherents' attitudes to immigration, equality and other issues relevant to twenty-first-century political debates.

Research findings

The findings presented in this report are based on analysis conducted using two datasets: the UK Citizenship Survey and the European Values Study (EVS).

Over the years, the Citizenship Survey has provided evidence of there being a correlation between religion, civic engagement and a sense of belonging in the UK. Based on previous analyses, as well as original analysis conducted by Demos using the latest 2010/11 wave of the Citizenship Survey, we draw the following conclusions:

· Religious people in the UK are more likely than non-religious people to volunteer regularly in their local community, to feel a greater sense of belonging to their local community and Britain, and to have higher levels of trust in other people and social institutions. They are also more likely to feel they can influence decisions locally and nationally.
· Religious people are more likely than non-religious people to engage in volunteering in their local community, and to take decision-making roles in committees and through local leadership forums, such as being a councillor, school governor or magistrate.
· Religious people who said that their religion was very important to their sense of identity were more likely than those who said it was not important to their identity to be civically engaged and to give to charity via their place of worship.

To supplement the analyses using the Citizenship Survey, we conducted an original analysis of the latest wave of the EVS. We selected eight western European countries to comprise a western European sample, and used this western European average to make comparisons with the UK. Our findings are therefore presented for western Europe as a whole as well as the UK in particular.

We ran two analyses based on three separate religious indicators from the EVS survey. We then examined how civic engagement, political activism and political values vary across different religious 'types'.

Belonging to a religious organisation

For the first analysis, we divided respondents who said that they belonged to a 'church or religious organisation' from those who did not. More than one in ten (13 per cent) of Britons from the EVS sample reported belonging to a 'church or religious organisation', which is just above the average of 12 per cent across our European sample as a whole. This group represents the more active religious practitioners rather than citizens who would affiliate themselves with a religion or religious heritage.[2]

We found that those who belonged to a religious organisation both in the UK and across Europe were more likely to be civically engaged, to be politically active and to prioritise social democratic values on a range of indicators. While our analysis cannot demonstrate causation – in other words, that being religious *causes* someone to be more engaged – the correlation between the two phenomena is itself of interest.

Across our western European sample, those belonging to a religious organisation were more likely to volunteer for or be committed to:

· political parties
· local community action
· development and human rights issues
· environmental issues
· women's issues
· youth work

Those who belonged to a religious organisation were also more likely than those who did not to say that they are very interested in politics, to have signed a petition and participated in a demonstration.

In the UK, while the numbers are too small in some instances to draw conclusions (for example with regard to volunteering for trade unions or political parties), those who belonged to a religious organisation were similarly more likely than non-religious respondents to volunteer for local community action, youth work, development and human rights issues, women's issues and the environment. While there was no difference between categories in the percentage of respondents who had joined a boycott, signed a petition or said they were very interested in politics, those who belonged to a religious organisation in the UK were more likely to have attended a lawful demonstration.

We also analysed responses to a range of value-based questions that often serve to distinguish the political left from the right in Europe. We found that those who belonged to a religious organisation in the UK were:

· more likely to place themselves on the left side of the political spectrum
· more likely to value equality over freedom
· less likely to have a negative association towards living next door to immigrants
· slightly more likely to say that those on benefits should have to take a job (rather than be able to refuse)

Exclusivists, pluralists and seculars

For the second analysis, we divided respondents on the basis of their response to two questions, from which we produced three categories of respondents: religious 'exclusivists', religious 'pluralists' and non-religious 'seculars'. A full explanation of these categories and the methodology we used, including the total numbers for each group in each country, is provided in the appendices. In short:

· Exclusivists self-identified as religious and believed that there is only one true religion.

- Pluralists self-identified as religious and believed that there is one true religion, but other religions have some basic truths, or that no one religion has a monopoly on the truth.
- Seculars did not identify as religious.

We distinguished respondents in this way to investigate how respondents' views towards other religions impact on civic engagement norms and social capital.

Across Europe, 63 per cent of respondents self-identified as religious, with 13 per cent in the exclusivist category and 50 per cent in the pluralist category. In the UK, 52 per cent identified themselves as religious, with 10 per cent in the exclusivist category and 42 per cent in the pluralist category. Thus, this group is much larger than the previous (those who 'belong to a religious organisation') and includes both active and non-active practitioners of religion.

Across western Europe, religious pluralists are the most likely group to volunteer on issues such as women's rights and youth work. In the UK, pluralists were the most likely group to volunteer on these two issues, as well as development and human rights, and the environment. UK pluralists were also the most likely group to have signed a petition and participated in a lawful demonstration.

We also found that in the UK:

- Pluralists were the group most likely to say they are very interested in politics.
- A majority of both exclusivists and pluralists placed themselves on the left side of the political spectrum.
- Pluralists were the most likely to express a positive association towards immigrants and foreign workers, and the most likely group to prioritise equality over freedom (although this latter finding did not achieve statistical significance).
- Exclusivists were the most likely group to prioritise equalising incomes over providing work incentives.

Implications

These findings underline the extent to which campaigners for social democratic political causes should be able to find support in faith communities, along with greater stocks of enthusiasm and greater willingness to participate and be involved. Too often, political parties on the left view faith groups – and those of faith in general – with suspicion, characterising them as inherently conservative. In the UK, new movements on the left have sought to reconnect faith groups with mainstream politics by taking a more positive view of the role of religion in British society. Our research provides further support for those who argue that this engagement could go further, and we argue that faith groups can play an important role in setting and upholding a progressive policy agenda. We recommend the following:

· Progressive politicians in the UK should seek to work with faith groups on the issues where our research suggests they are particularly interested and engaged, for example immigration, women's rights, international development, the environment and youth work.
· Although religious people may be more likely to volunteer, they are less likely to have meaningful interactions with people from different backgrounds to their own. Efforts to encourage greater mixing between people from different backgrounds in pursuit of common goals should be highlighted and championed by politicians.
· This report provides additional support for the Demos recommendation made in *A Place for Pride* of replacing the current pen-and-paper UK citizenship test with a requirement to complete at least 16 hours of local volunteering.[3]

1 Background: are faithful citizens better citizens?

In the USA, God is alive and well. At no time is this more obvious than at election time. And while Republicans are more likely to invoke God and religion (and appeal to religious evangelicals), the obligation to faith extends across the political aisle.

In the UK, things are clearly very different. The popular example of Alastair Campbell's quip to then Prime Minister Tony Blair ('we don't do God') highlights that faith is not worn so publicly among politicians in the UK. Yet, it is still very important to many both personally and politically, and just as in the USA, this extends to politicians of all political persuasions. Despite the common perception that religion is more commonly found on the Conservative side of the Commons benches, it is important to remember that a number of those on the political left first gained experience of public service through churches and faith groups like the Christian Socialist Movement.

However, analyses of national survey data highlight the significant differences between Britons and Americans when it comes to religion. In *American Grace*, Harvard social scientist Robert Putnam and Notre Dame political scientist David Campbell highlight the findings of their Faith Matters surveys, conducted in 2006 and 2007, which represent a rich source of data on religion, politics and society. Their findings suggest that US citizens who are religious are more likely to volunteer in their local community, give to charity, be more compassionate and be more politically active and involved. However, greater numbers of religious people in the USA are more fervent, active and literal in their beliefs than in the UK. For example, over half of Britons (54 per cent) report never praying compared with just 18 per cent of Americans. Moreover, a third of Americans believe scripture is the actual word of God compared with just 9 per cent of Britons,

and Americans are almost twice as likely to attend weekly religious services.[4]

In this report we ask if the link between religious and civic engagement that exists in the USA also exists in the UK, bearing in mind the different religious landscape in the USA and greater religiosity of Americans compared with Britons. This chapter briefly highlights why this question is important and summarises some of the academic research that explores the relationship between being religious and being a good citizen.

The rise and fall of religion in 21st-century UK

Britons in general are becoming less and less religious. According to the 28th report of the *British Social Attitudes Survey* 50 per cent of Britons do not regard themselves as belonging to any religion. This compares with 31 per cent who claimed to have no religion in 1983.[5] According to the 2001 UK Census, just under a quarter of Britons (23.2 per cent) either claimed to have no religion or failed to answer the question. While a fuller reflection of the state of British religiosity will be available, when the results of the 2011 Census are published, in the meantime it suffices to say that the active practice of religion continues to decline, with responses from younger Britons suggesting a significant generational shift. According to the 2009 *British Social Attitudes Survey*, nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) of 18–24-year-old Britons report not belonging to a religion, compared with 28 per cent of Britons aged 65 and older.[6] While it is true that individuals may tend to become more religious the more they age, Putnam and Campbell's research confirms that a generational change is also afoot in the USA – which, given it is starting from a position of greater religiosity, can allow us to assume that the same is probably occurring in the UK.

And yet, despite religion's apparent decline, its visibility in the media and public discourse remains high. Part of this is perhaps due to its seemingly inexorable decline; however, no single event did more to bring religion to the forefront of public life than the attacks of September 11, 2001. In the wake of these

attacks (and the further attacks and counterattacks they engendered) the debate about the incompatibility of Islam with Western societies came to dominate the airwaves and newspapers. At the same time, more Western Muslims (particularly younger generations) began to identify and practise their religion in more visible ways – driven by the attacks on Islam that followed 9/11 and the 'War against Terror', as well as broader generational adjustment to historical immigration (for example, research suggests that second and third generation immigrants, standing at a crossroads between their parents' culture and that of their adopted country, increasingly looked to Islam as an alternative identity).[7]

Many Britons continue to see faith as a moral refuge from the otherwise nihilistic, dog-eat-dog values of consumerist, capitalist democracies. The arguments of Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens only seemed to retrench people's religious views, with many recoiling at the perceived arrogance and dogmatism of this so-called 'militant' atheism. The debate about the necessity of religion's moral underpinning of society continues to rage.

The continuing importance of religion to UK politicians

Despite its decline, religion remains important to a smaller but active subset of citizens, so politicians of all parties need to be comfortable engaging with faith groups, not just as voters but also as community organisations helping to achieve socially beneficial outcomes.

Following the attacks of 7 July 2005, Prime Minister Tony Blair convened leaders from all faiths to unite and counter the rising tide of religious extremism and terrorism. Interfaith dialogue organisations across the country were established or bolstered, and local religious leaders were 'empowered' as gatekeepers to their communities. One criticism levelled at the Blair Government during this time was that these relationships (particularly with the Muslim community) needed to be forged from scratch because they did not exist previously.[8]

Fast-forward to 2012 and we find the Coalition Government similarly dependent on the active involvement of faith groups in the implementation of policy. Some faith groups are still very much involved in areas of countering extremism and fostering cohesion, but the current Government sees the role of faith groups and organisations as a deliverer of other services as integral to the realisation of the vision of a Big Society. This will not be without controversy, which is why the second phase of this project will look specifically at this issue.

Do faithful citizens make better citizens?

Sociologists and philosophers have long been interested in the role of religion in society: the identity it provides, its power to shape individual behaviour through shared moral codes, and its relationship with politics. While Marx famously referred to its soporific effect on 'the masses', others have taken a more positive view of its function, proclaiming it the only necessary and sufficient basis for a moral framework through which collaboration, mutual empathy and good relations are possible. Many argue that without religion's ultimate sanction, social mores would break down and amoral chaos would reign.

Over the past two decades a substantial body of empirical research has been devoted to demonstrating the connection between religion and good citizenship. This has been aided by large scale, longitudinal surveys such as national censuses, the General Social Survey in the USA, the World Values Survey and the European Values Survey (EVS), the UK Citizenship Survey (UKCS), and more recently the US Faith Matters Survey as well as the work of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life. These resources provide a snapshot of which religions predominate in modern society as well as the levels and evolution of religiosity and religious practice more generally. Combining questions on religion with background questions on gender, age, education and income level – as well as other attitudinal and behavioural questions on political activism (voting, running for office, campaigning), civic engagement (giving to charity, volunteering) and moral and political values (views on homosexuality,

abortion, pre-marital sex, capitalism and economic inequality) – has allowed researchers to infer relationships between religiosity and these other factors.

Most of this research demonstrates that there is a correlation between religion and various measures associated with being a good and compassionate citizen. According to Putnam and Campbell, religious citizens are more generous than their secular counterparts with both their money and their time in volunteering (for both religious and secular causes), being more likely to take part in local civic and political life (through community organisations and committees) and to advocate for social and political reform in their local communities. Moreover, they argue that these findings hold when controlling for a range of other factors that might have an impact, including gender, age, education, race, location, income, home ownership, length of residence, marital and parental status and ideology.[9]

The point about ideology is significant. Putnam and Campbell's research suggests that faithful citizens are not simply the more visible conservative, evangelicals who are active in their crusades against abortion and gay marriage. In fact, of those more likely to be active in political and social reform, the majority do so for liberal or progressive causes. Moreover, although religiosity is correlated with being conservative, and the more religious tend to be the most active, once levels of religiosity are controlled for, faithful citizens on the left are no less generous than conservatives once their religiosity is controlled for, and in many cases they are more generous and active (for example, they are more likely to cooperate to solve community problems and volunteer more to help the sick and needy).[10] One example of a progressively active faith group is the organisation London Citizens – a short description of which is provided in box 1.

Box 1 **Portrait of faithful citizens in action: London Citizens**
London Citizens is an alliance of community organisations that advocates for progressive and social justice causes. Founded in 1996, it is now part of a larger national organisation called Citizens UK.[11] *The group primarily*

campaigns for progressive social issues such as a 'living wage' and against poor working conditions.

Based on the model of community organising espoused by the legendary American organiser Saul Alinsky, Citizens UK works through alliances of community organisations and individuals to bring social justice issues to political attention and apply the necessary levers to ensure that change happens. In doing so, community organisers rely heavily on creating and galvanising networks of supporting organisations, including schools, unions, residents' associations – and faith groups and institutions such as churches, mosques and synagogues.

Their most high-profile and successful campaign was the fight to establish a London living wage of £8.30 an hour, and an outside London wage of £7.20 per hour. According to the Citizens UK website, the Living Wage campaign has won over £70 million of living wages and has verified over 100 companies as providers of living wages, including KPMG, Barclays and the Greater London Authority.[12] It also succeeded as getting the living wage accepted as the minimum standard for workers who will be recruited for many 2012 Olympics-related projects.

Other research suggests religiously active citizens are also more likely to enjoy a range of pro-social benefits, ranging from lower rates of criminality,[13] greater levels of trust in other people, higher levels of life satisfaction, lower levels of depression and increased life expectancy.[14]

Why are faithful citizens better citizens?

While research suggests that faithful citizens tend to be more active, generous and engaged than other citizens, it is much less clear why this is the case. A body of research suggests that what matters is not the fervency of individual belief, or particular theological interpretations, but rather the social context and networks that create and reinforce expectations.[15] Those who are involved in religious practice – frequently attending a religious

service or institution, and thus being more often around other like-minded religious people – appear to be more likely to be better citizens on the measures mentioned above.

Social capital theorists of all persuasions accept that there is a fundamental relationship between trust and civic engagement: willingness to trust other people in general serves as the essential 'glue'[16] necessary to facilitate interpersonal interactions. Religious groups foster norms of reciprocity, which are prerequisites for interpersonal trust, and thus religious involvement enhances trust. In so doing it helps to provide the framework in which successful civic engagement can take place. Based on this analysis, the growing 'civic gap' in western societies may not be due to individualistic capitalism or a growing general apathy, but may instead be the result of declining levels of religious participation.[17]

However, the extent to which other scholars accept such a causal argument between religion and civic engagement varies significantly, with many arguing that the relationship is subject to mediation and influence by a range of other variables. Professor Eric Uslaner of the University of Maryland has long argued that religious adherence may, in some circumstances, decrease trust in those outside the religious group[18] while Daniels and von de Ruhr suggest that the level of religious 'fundamentalism' inherent in a group significantly influences its adherents' willingness to trust non-members.[19] In other words, religious citizens may be more civically engaged, but it is only in support of their own communities.

Religion, political identity and engagement

A parallel stream of literature has sought to consider the relationship between religion and political engagement, which is defined as membership of a political group, support of its aims, and activity on its behalf. Much research links involvement in organised religion with social conservatism and activism on the political right.[20]

Such a picture seems logical, particularly given that the moral and ideological precepts of most religions are established

by texts that pre-date modernity and the coming of liberalism. Therefore religions often find themselves in opposition to society's changing values. On the other hand, Putnam and Campbell argue that the alignment of religions with political viewpoints (namely, evangelicals and right-wing Republicans) is a relatively recent phenomenon – a backlash against the perceived moral laxity of the 1960s.

Indeed, despite religion's adherence to fundamental core values that tend to be considered conservative, religion has also been the impetus for revolutionary social change, including the abolition of slavery and civil rights movement.[21] In Europe, religious groups have been among the most strident critics of the *status quo*, with the leaders of many religious groups frequently speaking out against government policy in defence of the socially marginal and economically excluded.[22]

Furthermore, with the emergence of so-called 'new religious movements' and the importation of less morally prescriptive Eastern religions,[23] the inviolate assumption of an ideological gap between secular society and religious communities can no longer be sustained. To declare religion's followers exclusively conservative is to paint a misleading picture.

The next chapter presents the findings from our efforts to investigate the relationship between religious faith and civic engagement in the UK. Based on new analysis of the UKCS as well as the most recent wave of the EVS, we explored the role of religion in shaping civic and political engagement in the UK and Europe, to identify the differences between 'conservative' and 'progressive' religious adherents. As we argue, despite the many differences between the UK and the USA, faithful citizens in both countries appear to be better citizens.

2 Findings: faith and civic engagement in the UK

In this chapter we present findings from the UK Citizenship Survey and the European Values Study (EVS) on the question of faith and civic engagement in the UK and eight countries in western Europe. Details about these surveys and our methods of analysis are provided in the appendices. Our findings provide further confirmation of the view that faithful citizens appear to be more active citizens on a number of measures involving progressive political values, civic engagement and political activism. Faithful citizens represent a valuable source of social and human capital for policy-makers.

The UK Citizenship Survey

The Citizenship Survey was a government-run social research tool, produced for seven years with the final wave completed in 2010/11, tasked with investigating the drivers of community cohesion and civic engagement. The survey consisted of a nationally representative sample of the adult population of England and Wales, and comprised data from 10,000 interviews conducted over the course of a year. Additionally, there were 5,000 boost interviews with ethnic minorities, including 3,000 with Muslim respondents.[24] It allows us to investigate whether there is a positive link between religion and civic engagement, social capital and a sense of people belonging to their local community.

There are two key religious indicators used in the Citizenship Survey: religious affiliation ('how would you describe your religious affiliation?') and religious practice ('do you actively practice your religion?'). There are invariably more respondents who describe themselves as having a religious affiliation than there are of those who actively practise their

religion. According to the UK Citizenship survey, 78 per cent describe themselves as having a religious affiliation while 37 per cent describe themselves as actively practising their religion. Both measures indicate that religiosity correlates with a number of indicators of civic engagement. For ease of reading, percentages do not accompany the findings in the body of the text but can be located in the figures and charts. Where the findings are not represented in the figures, percentages are mentioned in the body of the text.

Local influence, trust and civic engagement

The 2007–08 and 2008–09 Citizenship Surveys suggest that religious people are more likely to feel a greater sense of collective efficacy and have greater stocks of social capital than non-religious people. People who actively practised a religion were more likely than those who reported not actively practising their religion (as well as those with no religious affiliation) to feel they could influence local decisions and national decisions. The fact that this effect includes decisions taken at a national level suggests that religious people experience greater levels than non-religious people of 'bridging' social capital and not just 'bonding' social capital. In other words, these respondents had access to a variety of social networks of different people and different contexts, not just those of people who are identical (for example in ethnicity or religion).

Participation in civic engagement activities also tended to be more common among those actively practising their religion (figure 1). According to the most recent analysis of the *2009–10 Citizenship Survey*, those who actively practise their religion as well as those who said that religion was important in shaping their identity were significantly more likely to participate in regular formal volunteering.[26] Interestingly, the same was true for young people aged between 16 and 25: young people who practised their religion actively were more likely to participate regularly in formal volunteering.[27]

Various analyses of Citizenship Survey data also reveal interesting differences based on ethnicity. According to the most

Figure 1 **Extent to which religious and non-religious people feel they have local influence and engage in civic activities**
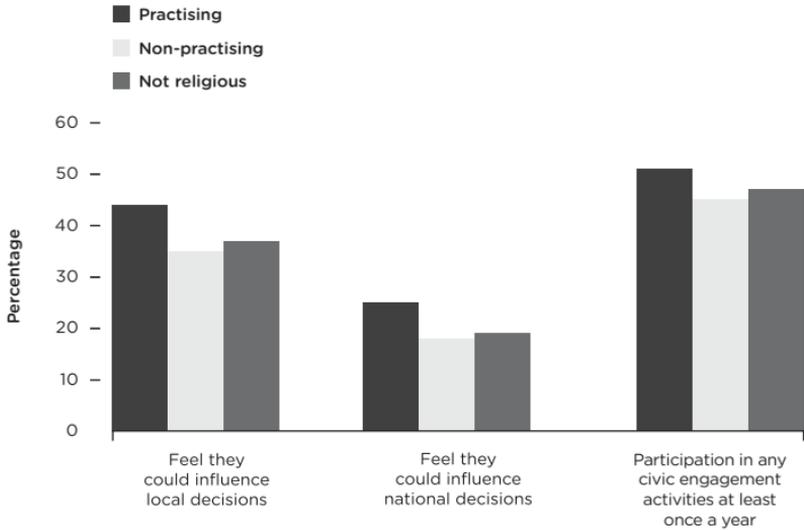
Source: *2007–08 Citizenship Survey: Empowered communities topic report* [25]

recent analysis, the *2009–10 Citizenship Survey*, people from Asian and Chinese backgrounds reported a lower level of volunteering than those from white backgrounds, particularly for those for whom English is not their main language. This finding is relevant in light of a recent Demos report into patriotism entitled *A Place for Pride*, which suggests that volunteering is related to pride in one's local area, which in turn is related to greater feelings of national pride. The report recommends that, instead of a UK citizenship test based on 'mundane and ethereal' knowledge of British history and culture, would-be citizens should instead have to commit to at least 16 hours of voluntary community work through an accredited scheme.[28] We will return to this point in the final chapter of this report.

Another difference important to note is that while those from ethnic minority groups are less likely to participate in

regular formal volunteering overall, when they do volunteer, they are more likely to do so through the medium of religious groups (56 per cent of ethnic minorities compared with 31 per cent of white ethnicity),[29] and to do so specifically because they were motivated by their religious belief (32 per cent ethnic minority compared with 15 per cent white ethnicity). Indeed, religious institutions play a significant role in the process of integration and support for newly arrived migrants – which can entail encouraging volunteering as a way to get to know people and their new community. Some examples of this role for religious institutions will be discussed in the second phase of the Demos' Inquiry into Faith, Community and Society.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, trust in other people as well as social institutions, is linked with higher levels of social capital and participation in volunteering. As in the USA, data from the UK Citizenship Survey suggest that religious people tend to be more trusting of other people and social institutions than non-religious people (figure 2). People with a religious affiliation were more likely to say that people in general could be trusted than those with no religion. The religious practice indicator for trust in institutions was correlated with higher levels of trust in parliament, local councils and the police, as shown in figure 2.

Cohesion and belonging

In addition to civic engagement and social capital, the Citizenship Survey aims to measure community cohesion and perceptions of pride and belonging to Britain as well as one's local area. On these measures, we can also find evidence that religion is correlated with positive outcomes.

Those respondents citing a religious affiliation were more likely to feel a greater sense of belonging to their neighbourhood, local community and Britain as a whole (figure 3). They were also more likely (albeit only slightly) to have a positive view on respecting ethnic differences. People with a religion were also more likely than people with no religion to agree that their local area was cohesive.

Figure 2 **Extent to which religious and non-religious people believe others can be trusted and have trust in institutions**

■ Religious (affiliation)
■ Religious (actively practising)
□ Not religious
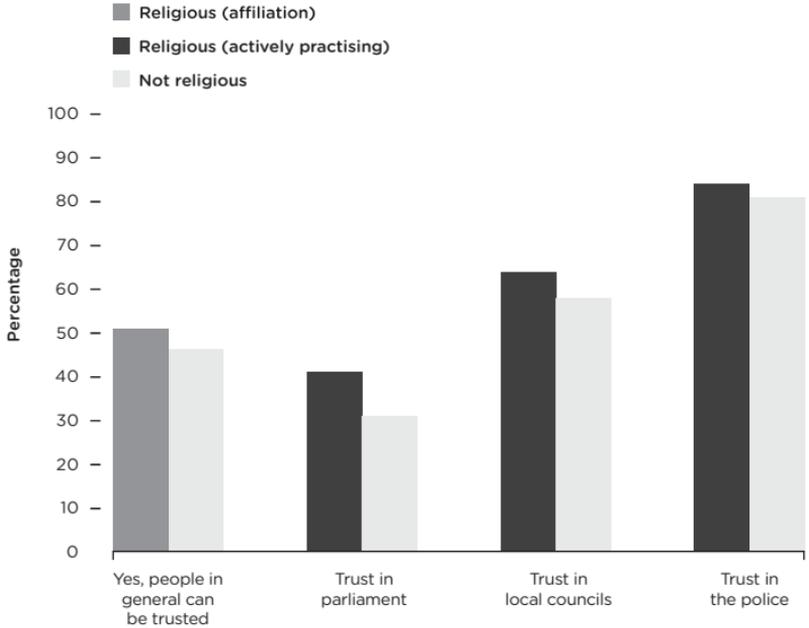
Source: *2008–09 Citizenship Survey: Community cohesion topic report* and *2007–08 Citizenship Survey: Empowered communities topic report* [30]

Interestingly, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh people tended to have more positive views about their local area than Christian people. This finding might be related to the fact that these religions are predominantly associated with ethnic minorities, many of whom are relatively recent immigrants and thus are more likely to live in local areas that they strongly identify with (for example Tower Hamlets in east London).

Meaningful interactions

Having meaningful interactions with people from different backgrounds can (in most instances) help increase acceptance of

Figure 3   **Comparing responses of people with a religious affiliation and non-religious people on community cohesion and belonging measures**

■ Religious affiliation

▢ Not religious

A   Sense of belonging to the neighbourhood

B   Sense of belonging to local area

C   Sense of belonging to Britain

D   Positive view on respecting ethnic differences

E   Agree that their local area is cohesive

F   Have meaningful interactions with people from different backgrounds
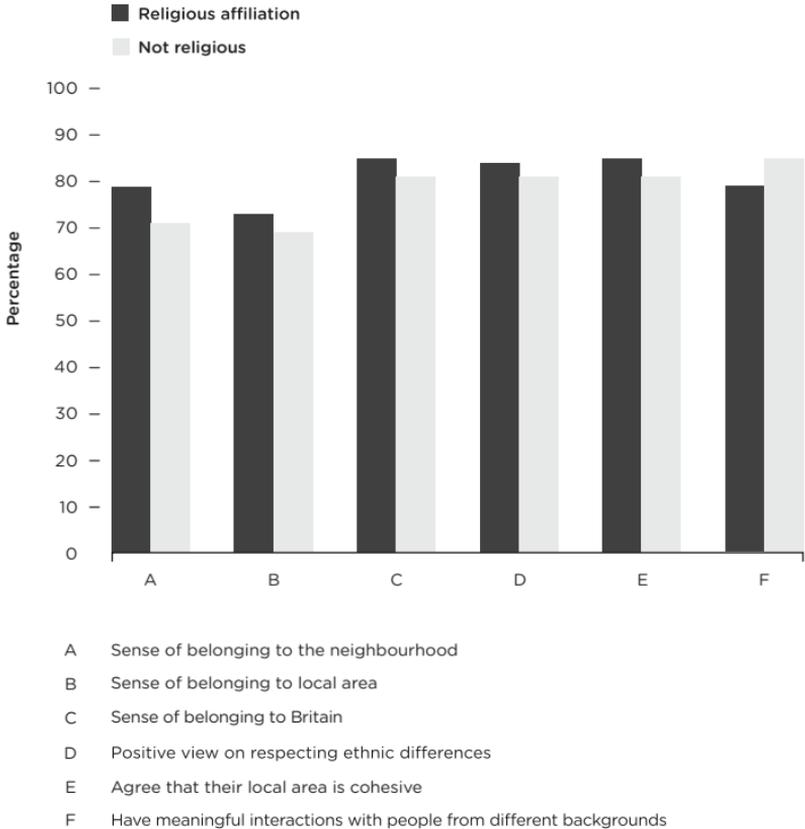
Source: 2008–09 Citizenship Survey: Community cohesion topic repor*t* [31]

diversity and lead to more integrated societies. However, importantly, people with no religious affiliation were more likely than those with a religion affiliation to have regular meaningful interactions with people from different backgrounds (figure 3). Part of this is due to age effects: young people are more likely to mix with people from different backgrounds, and are also less

likely to be religious.[32] This has important implications for community cohesion in the UK, and interfaith understanding and dialogue. It also appears to have an impact on participation in formal volunteering: according to analysis of the *2009–10 Citizenship Survey*, mixing with people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds in private places (such as in the home) is correlated with being more likely to participate in regular formal volunteering.[33]

While not directly comparable (because of methodological issues), this difference appears to contrast with the American context where research suggests that religious Americans are more likely to have meaningful contact with people from different religious traditions. Putnam and Campbell suggest that this is the reason why religious polarisation and pluralism can coincide with religious tolerance in the USA – through demystification by contact.[34]

Muslims and Hindus were less likely than Christians to have meaningful interactions with people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds. This is perhaps not surprising considering the process of immigration in any country initially encourages geographical segregation, and groups with these religions are more likely to be relatively recent immigrants.[35] Drawing on lessons from the history of American immigration and religion, ensuring that people have meaningful interactions with people from different religious backgrounds is integral to fostering greater cohesion between different communities and religions. It may also encourage more active citizenship.[36]

Involvement in local leadership and decision-making roles

In addition to the above findings from previous analyses of the Citizenship Survey, we conducted original analysis to explore a possible connection between an indicator of religiosity not covered in most previous analyses ('how important is religion to your sense of who you are?') and two further indicators of civic engagement that relate to formal involvement in local leadership or decision-making roles. The first indicator includes

Table 1 **Extent of civic engagement by those practising and not practising a religious faith**

	Religious practice	
	Actively practising	Not actively practising
Have volunteered to serve as a councillor or school governor, special constable or magistrate in the past 12 months	3%	1%
Have been involved in local decision-making groups on issues such as crime, education, regeneration or local health, among others	12%	7%
Have given to charity in the last 4 months	79%	70%

Source: Demos analysis of *2010–11 Citizenship Survey*

volunteering as a councillor, school governor, special constable or magistrate, and the second, involvement in local decision-making groups on issues related to crime, education, regeneration and health.

As can be seen in the breakdown provided in table 1, and similar to findings cited above, there is a relationship between a person's active religious practice and their greater involvement in local positions of leadership – such as being a councillor or school governor*** – and involvement in committees or groups engaging in decisions that affect the local area***. Those actively practising their religion were also more likely to have recently given to charity***.

Findings with a single asterisk (*) are statistically significant to the 10 per cent level; findings with a double asterisk (**) are statistically significant to a 5 per cent level; and findings with a triple asterisk (***) are statistically significant to 1 per cent. See appendix A for details.

Figure 4 **How the importance of religious views to people's identity relates to civic engagement and charitable givin**

■ Religion is very or quite important to my sense of identity

□ Religion is not very or at all important to my sense of identity

A   Volunteering or serving as a councillor, school governor, special constable or magistrate in the last 12 months

B   Involvement in local decision making groups on issues such as crime, education, regeneration, or local health, among others

C   Given to charity in the last 4 months: overall

D   Given to charity in the last 4 months: at place of worship

Source: Demos analysis of *2010–11 Citizenship Survey*

The extent to which someone feels that religion is important to their sense of identity does not appear to have a positive impact on their civic engagement (figure 4). In fact, the group whose religious identity is not very or at all important is the most likely to volunteer as a councillor, school governor, special constable or magistrate**.

Those who say religion is important to their sense of identity are only very slightly more likely to volunteer to take

part in local decision-making compared to those who said that religion was not important to their sense of identity***. Moreover, while reporting that religion is important to one's identity is associated with giving to charity via one's place of worship***, it does not appear to have an impact on them giving to charity overall.[37] In fact, those for whom religion is not important (combining 'not important at all' and 'not very important' categories) are more likely to have given to charity overall (which may be because they are more likely to be economically better off).

How does the UK compare with western European countries?

As mentioned above, we also ran a series of analyses on the EVS in order to see if the same effects as those demonstrated in the Citizenship Survey were present, but also to place the UK in a broader context with respect to the relationship between faith and citizenship.

This section presents the findings from these analyses. A full description of the methodology is presented in appendix A.

In order to conduct the analysis, we constructed a sample of western European countries with broadly similar social, cultural and religious contexts, including: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany (West), Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. We excluded northern European and eastern European countries because they have well-known social and religious differences (eg Scandinavian countries have higher levels of civic engagement on average, which would have skewed the results). We also excluded Switzerland as a non-EU member. Italy was originally included but removed because it threw up anomalous results. The 'western Europe average' in the analysis below is the average of the percentage scores for these countries. As we do not weight the country results per population size, we are using the country as the unit of analysis as opposed to the individual.

We took two approaches to the analysis of the data. First, we divided respondents according to whether they identified as belonging to a 'church or religious organisation', or not. We then

compared these two different groups against a range of questions related to civic and political engagement. These results are presented first.

Second, we divided respondents who self-identified as religious (which is different from self-identifying as belonging to a religious organisation, and includes greater percentages of respondents) one step further, based on their responses to a question about their view on the truth of other religions (see appendix A for the question and different answer options). Thus we created three categories of respondents:

- *religious 'exclusivists'*: those who identify themselves as religious and believe there is only one true religion and no other religions have claims of truth
- *religious 'pluralists'*: those who identify themselves as religious, but believe that other religions have basic truths (even if they believe there is only one true religion)
- *non-religious 'seculars'*: those who do not identify themselves as religious

A full breakdown of the numbers in each European country is provided in appendix B. The rationale behind this approach was to disaggregate religious respondents according to whether they were more fundamentalist or liberal using a relatively straightforward typology. It is also important to note that this measure has more to do with attitudes and interactions towards other religions than it does fervency of belief: Religious pluralists are not necessarily less religious than exclusivists.

One final point: we do not distinguish respondents by the religion they adhere to and thus our sample includes all religions (Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist). It is worth bearing in mind that Christianity continues to represent an overwhelming proportion of religious respondents in western Europe.

Our findings suggest that belonging to a religious organisation and being a religious pluralist are positively correlated with being civically and politically engaged across the range of indicators. However, perhaps surprisingly, religious exclusivists are also likely to hold progressive political views.

Belonging to a religious organisation

Our results further strengthen the argument that faithful citizens are more politically active, engaged and likely to volunteer. Moreover, they suggest that what is important is not fervency of belief or theological interpretation, but rather being embedded in religious communities. We must stress, however, that our findings do not prove causation between these phenomena: in other words, it is not clear that it is religion itself that *causes* someone to be more active civically, as religion could be serving as a proxy for other significant factors – such as age, income and location. Nevertheless, the existence of a consistent correlation between religion and civic engagement is significant on its own. It is worth noting as well that we include all of the findings in the charts below, but note those that achieved a certain significance level in the text and endnotes. Details of this are included in the appendix.

Civic engagement

Across our European sample we found those belonging to a religious organisation are more likely to volunteer for:

· political parties*
· local community action**
· development and human rights issues*
· environmental issues*
· youth work**
· women's issues*

In the UK, while the numbers are too small in some instances to draw conclusions, religious respondents were similarly more likely to volunteer for local community action***, youth work***, development and human rights issues***, women's issues*** and the environment*** (figure 5).

Perhaps worryingly, on all the measures of civic engagement tested we can see that the UK scores for both religious and non-religious respondents tend to be lower than the averages of our European sample. This would suggest that the emphasis on encouraging more active citizenship and

Figure 5 **Extent to which people who belong to religious organisations and those who do not participate in civic activities in western European countries and the UK**
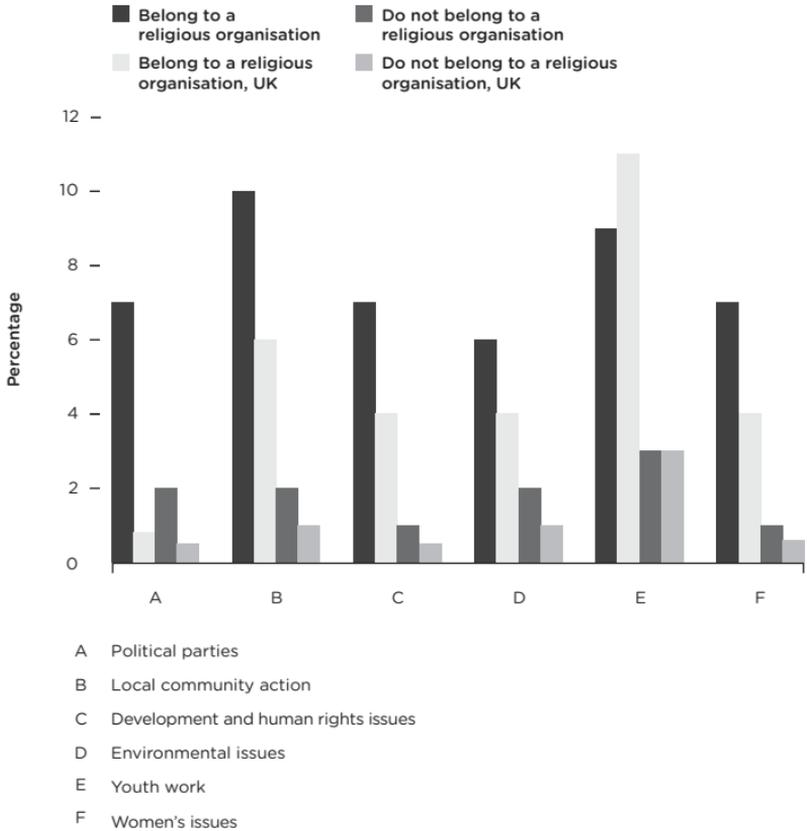
Source: Demos analysis of the *EVS, 4th wave, 2008*

engagement should remain a priority for the UK Government. One notable exception is youth work, where UK religious respondents are much more likely than their European counterparts to volunteer to undertake youth work, and UK non-religious respondents are just as likely as European non-religious respondents.

Figure 6 **Extent to which people who belong to religious organisations and those who do not are politically active and interested in politics, in western European countries and the UK**

- ■ Belong to a religious organisation
- ■ Do not belong to a religious organisation
- ■ Belong to a religious organisation, UK
- ■ Do not belong to a religious organisation, UK

Source: Demos analysis of the *EVS, 4th wave, 2008*

Political activism

Across western Europe, those who belong to religious organisations were more politically active, though in some instances the difference is small (figure 6). Religious respondents were more likely to say that they are very interested in politics***, to have signed a petition, and participated in a demonstration.[38]

In the UK, there were no differences between the religious and unreligious in joining a boycott, signing a petition or being very interested in politics. However, religious respondents were more likely than non-religious respondents to have attended a lawful demonstration***, as seen in figure 6. Compared with the European averages, we can see that Britons in general (both religious and non-religious) were more likely to join boycotts

Figure 7   **The social and political views of people who belong to religious organisations and those who do not, in western European countries and the UK**

- Belong to a religious organisation
- Do not belong to a religious organisation
- Belong to a religious organisation, UK
- Do not belong to a religious organisation, UK

A   Do not want to live next to immigrants

B   Prioritise equality over freedom

C   Place themselves on the left of the political spectrum

D   Prioritise individual over state responsibility

E   Think that those on benefits should have to take a job

F   Think that competition is good

G   Prioritise equalising income over providing incentives to work

Source: Demos analysis of the *EVS, 4th wave, 2008*

and sign petitions, but less keen on demonstrations and less likely to be very interested in politics (particularly so for UK religious respondents).

Figure 8 **Extent of civic engagement of exclusivists, pluralists and seculars, in western Europe and the UK**
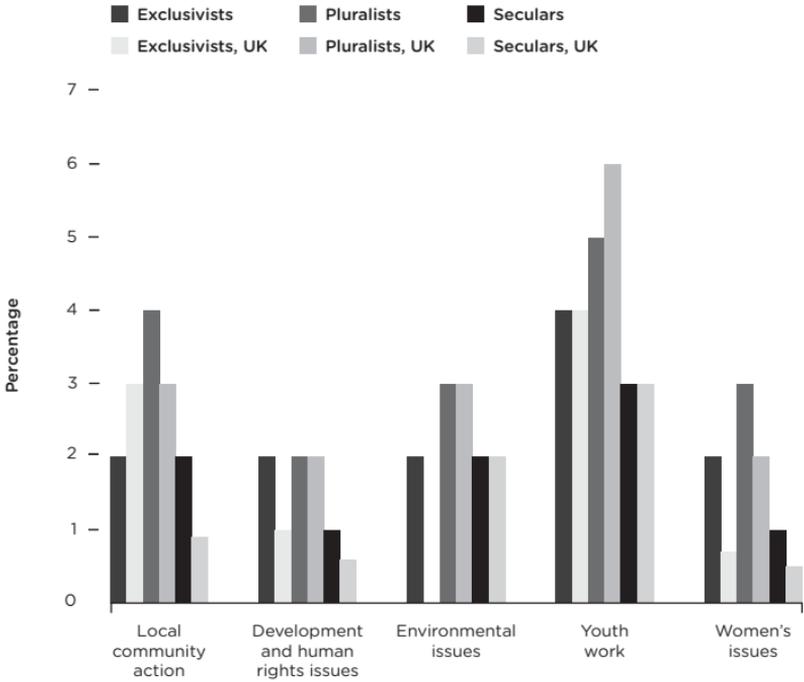
Source: Demos analysis of the *EVS, 4th wave,* 2008

Political values

Additionally, we analysed responses to a range of value-based questions that tap into the heart of the left–right political divide. The results were mixed. On many questions, the overall majority of respondents sided with what might be thought of as the conservative side of the argument. For example, this was true when respondents were asked questions around forcing someone on benefits to take a job, or whether they emphasised individual responsibility versus state responsibility.

However, our findings do not suggest that there is a bias towards conservative causes among religious respondents. In

Figure 9 **Extent of political activism of exclusivists, pluralists and seculars, in western European countries and within the UK**
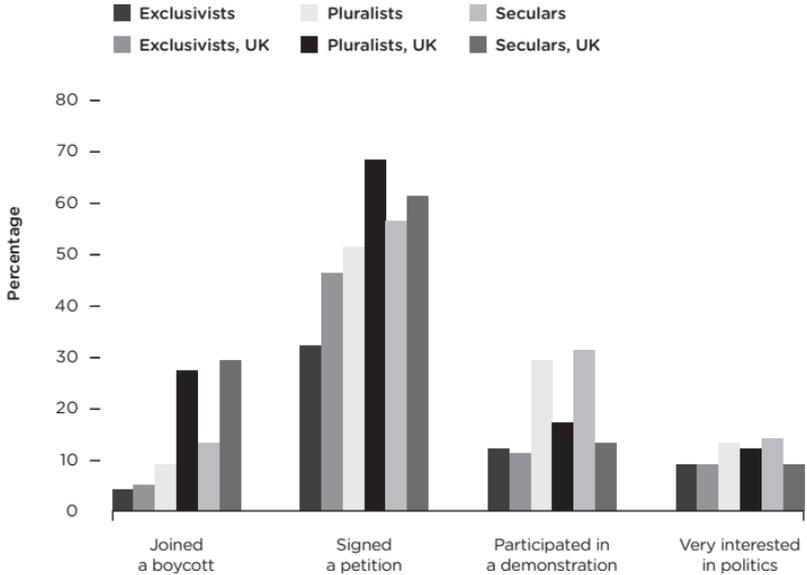
Source: Demos analysis of the *EVS, 4th wave,* 2008

fact, the opposite seems to be true. As seen in figure 7, religious respondents in our western Europe sample were equally as likely to identify themselves as left wing as right wing (49 per cent of religious respondents put themselves on the left side of the political spectrum)**. In the UK, religious respondents were even more likely to describe themselves as left wing, with 55 per cent doing so***.

Across our western Europe sample, those respondents who belong to a religious organisation appeared to be more likely to value equality over freedom compared with those who do not belong to a religious organisation (though we note that these findings did not achieve statistical significance). Interestingly, UK respondents were more freedom-loving than equality-loving when it comes to the average scores of their European peers:

Figure 10 **The views of exclusivists, pluralists or seculars on progressive political values, in western Europe and the U**

A   Do not want to live next to immigrants

B   Place themselves on the left of the political spectrum

C   Prioritise individual over state responsibility

D   Think that those on benefits should have to take a job

E   Think that competition is good

F   Prioritise equalising income over providing incentives to work
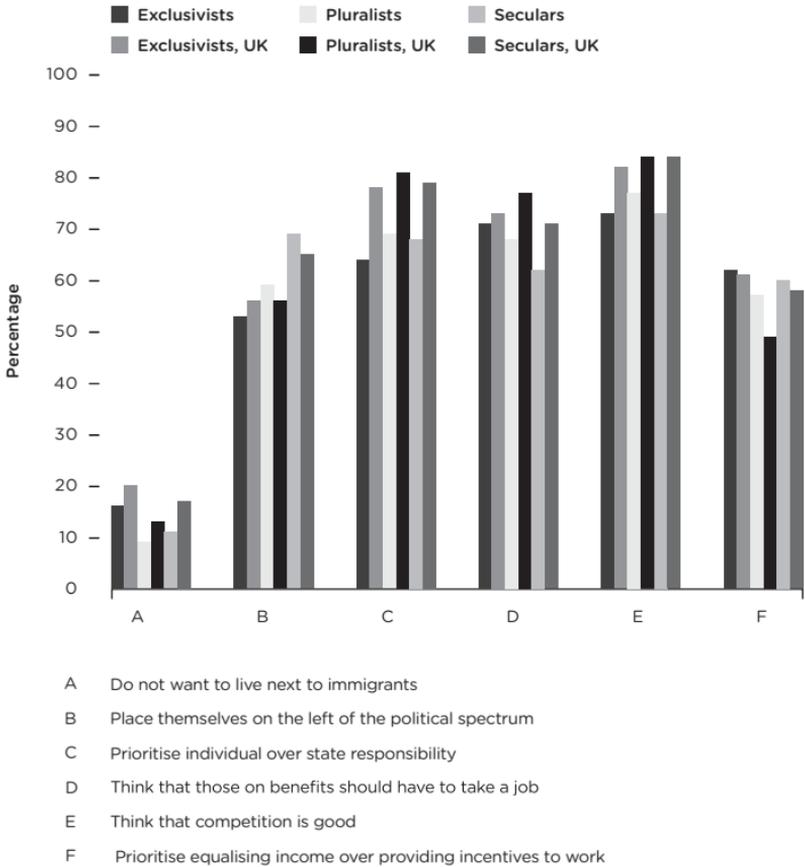
Source: Demos analysis of the *EVS, 4th wave, 2008*

Belgium, France and Portugal were the only countries where both religious and non-religious respondents were more likely to value equality over freedom.

In the UK, those belonging to a religious organisation were less likely to have a negative association towards living next door to immigrants or foreign workers: 11 per cent of religious

respondents reported not wanting immigrants as neighbours compared with 16 per cent of non-religious respondents.

On the other political values we explored, the relationship between a person belonging to a religious organisation and their prioritising social democratic values was less clear. For example, across our western Europe sample and in the UK, those belonging to a religious organisation were more likely to say that those on benefits should have to take a job if offered rather than be able to refuse it*. Moreover, both western Europe and UK religious and non-religious respondents were equally likely to report that competition was good rather than harmful*, and to stress individual responsibility over state responsibility.

Interestingly, it is worth noting that despite valuing equality over freedom, religious respondents are less keen on equalising incomes if it means taking away incentives to work.

Exclusivists, pluralists and seculars

On most measures, across both our European sample and in the UK, pluralists were the most likely group to volunteer and be civically engaged.

Civic engagement

In our western Europe sample of countries, religious pluralists were the most likely group by a slight margin to volunteer on issues such as women's rights** and youth work* (on the other measures of civic engagement our findings were not statistically significant, though they are included in figure 8 and in the tables in appendix B).

In the UK the same was true with respect to these two issues as well as development and human rights*, and the environment** (see figure 8). Again, we can see that UK respondents (particularly religious pluralists) are much more likely to engage in youth work than their continental counterparts in our European sample.

Political activism

Across our European sample, we find that seculars are the group most likely to have joined a boycott*** , signed a petition*** or attended a lawful demonstration*** , with pluralists the second most likely group and exclusivists the least likely group.

The UK context presents a different picture. In the UK, pluralists are the most likely group to have signed a petition*** and to have joined a demonstration*** . Again, UK respondents of all three groups are more likely than our average European respondents to join boycotts and sign petitions (figure 9).

In the UK, pluralists were the group most likely to say that they were very interested in politics*** .

Political values

In both Europe and the UK, seculars are the group most likely to identify as left wing. However, in the UK, it's notable that a majority of both exclusivists and pluralists consider themselves to be on the left or centre left side of the political spectrum*** (see figure 10).

The only measure on which pluralists were most likely to be progressive related to immigration. Across Europe, exclusivists were most likely to *not* want immigrants as neighbours followed by seculars and pluralists** . The same is true in the UK** (figure 10). Our analysis also found a small effect relating to equality versus freedom, whereby pluralists were most likely to prioritise equality – however, this finding did not achieve statistical significance below 10 per cent.

Perhaps surprisingly, exclusivists were the group most likely to prioritise traditionally considered 'progressive' viewpoints on the following issues:

- *Individuals should provide for themselves and not rely on the state*: With the exception of Spain, in all countries a large majority believe that emphasis should be placed on individuals being responsible for providing for themselves (rather than rely on the state). The UK is second only to Germany in its belief that the individual is most responsible, though we note that the findings for the UK on this question did not meet our threshold for

statistical significance. Nevertheless, across western Europe, we find that exclusivists are the group most likely to prioritise state responsibility over individual responsibility**, which would traditionally be considered a 'progressive' political position.

· *Competition is good, not harmful*: Across Europe, exclusivists were more likely than pluralists to take the traditionally left-wing position that competition is harmful**.

· *Incomes should be equalised rather than people be given work incentives*: Across western Europe and the UK, exclusivists are most likely to prioritise equalising incomes over giving work incentives, followed by seculars and pluralists**.

Finally, on the question of whether those on benefits should have to take a job or should be able to refuse a job, it is even less straightforward to draw conclusions. Exclusivists are the most likely group to think they should have to take a job across Europe, while pluralists are the most likely group in the UK. Therefore both religious groups are more inclined to take a traditionally conservative view on this issue. And in doing so they are going with the grain of society, not against it: a clear majority in almost every country believes that someone on benefits should have to take a job if offered one, and the UK is more right wing on this issue than the European average, as illustrated in figure 10.

3   Conclusion and implications

This report should underline the extent to which campaigners for progressive political causes should be able to find support among faith communities as well as their willingness and enthusiasm to get involved. Those citizens who are more active in their faith communities showed greater activism as general citizens, but even those who simply identified themselves as a religious person (and not necessarily an active practitioner) also appeared to more be civically engaged on a range of measures compared with seculars. Our findings also confirm prior research and contradict the common assumption that religious citizens are more inclined towards conservative causes than non-religious citizens.

In the UK, new movements on the left, such as 'Blue Labour', have sought to reconnect faith groups and the left by emphasising the important role that faith groups play in their local communities and society more generally. London Citizens, the group profiled in the first chapter of this report, has shown the effectiveness of mobilising faith groups in pursuit of progressive policy ends – for example, their most notable campaign for a living wage.

We refrain from making detailed policy recommendations based on our findings, but discuss some implications of the research in the sections below.

Galvanising faithful citizens on progressive issues

Progressive politicians in the UK should seek to work with faith groups on the issues where our research suggests they are particularly engaged. This includes issues such as immigration, women's rights, international development, the environment and youth work. Our second report will highlight some specific

organisations working on these issues. It also applies to making an argument for the value of equality – an issue that has become pertinent in light of increasing social inequality highlighted by the Occupy Movement (and their contrasting of the richest 1 per cent and the remaining 99 per cent). Of course, this does not mean that every religious organisation is going to be supportive of movements like Occupy. But to assume that religious institutions are inherently conservative is simply wrong.

Religious figures have always intervened to pass comment and judgement on current political debates, often siding with the 'progressive' argument. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, has made public comments on issues such as the August 2011 riots, poverty and equality, and welfare reform. A few weeks before this report went to print, a coalition of bishops in the House of Lords joined forces to defeat the Government's welfare reform legislation – citing concern over its impact on those in poverty, particularly children.

Importantly, our research suggests that in many instances pluralists and exclusivists are more inclined towards progressive policy positions than seculars. Politicians on the left should be mindful that pluralists are more likely to be amenable on questions regarding equality and immigration. However, they should also realise that exclusivists are inclined towards traditionally left-wing positions on issues such as welfare provision ('state vs individual responsibility' and 'those on benefits should be allowed to refuse a job rather than be forced to take one') and income redistribution (prioritising 'equalising incomes over providing incentives to work'). It should not be assumed that religious citizens – whether pluralist or exclusivist – are conservative in their political outlook. They can serve as useful allies in the fight for progressive and social democratic policies.

Encouraging meaningful interactions

As noted from the UK Citizenship Survey, while religious people may be more likely to volunteer, they are less likely to have meaningful interactions with people from different backgrounds

to their own. This is worrying from the standpoint of community cohesion and interfaith understanding.

Clearly, the more you get to know people who may be different from you, the more you begin to see them as fellow human beings, and less as stereotypes or misconceptions perpetuated by media and popular culture. This has been cited as the reason for increasing acceptance of homosexuality in society, as well as religious tolerance and pluralism that exists in the USA.[39]

The fact that religious people are less likely to have meaningful interactions is something politicians should take note of. Efforts to encourage greater mixing between people from different backgrounds – both in everyday spaces and through initiatives such as the Three Faiths Forum[40] – should be highlighted and championed by politicians. However, research suggests that the most effective interactions take place in pursuit of a common goal, for example a local community issue that affects every member of every community. These types of interactions are more important and effective than conscious 'interfaith' mixing, whereby the stated goal is to interact with people from different backgrounds.[41]

Moreover, as argued in the Demos pamphlet *A Place for Pride*, having a strong religious or ethnic identity is actually positively correlated with having a strong sense of national pride for the UK.[42] Common discourse around patriotism assumes that strong ethnic or religious identities compete with a sense of Britishness, but Demos' research suggests that they are mutually reinforcing. Interfaith initiatives like the Three Faiths Forum can help to bolster someone's religious identity, while at the same time encouraging them to mix with young people from different faiths – and thus by extension, bolster national pride and community cohesion.

Faithful volunteers

Finally, this report provides additional support for the Demos recommendation in *A Place for Pride* of replacing the current pen-and-paper UK citizenship test with a requirement instead to

complete at least 16 hours of local volunteering. As we saw from the Citizenship Survey, people from ethnic minority backgrounds, especially those who don't speak English well, are less likely to engage in formal volunteering. A new society can be intimidating for many newly arrived immigrants, and the natural tendency is to withdraw into what is known and comfortable. Requiring newly arrived immigrants to engage in local volunteering can be an effective way of encouraging them to get to know aspects of their local community they wouldn't naturally come to interact with. This can help to build language skills (assuming they volunteer outside homogenous communities) as well as confidence and a sense of local pride and cohesion. Places of worship and faith groups can act as effective places for supporting and integrating new immigrants, and as suggested by the Citizenship Survey, ethnic minorities are more likely to volunteer because of their religion and through the medium of faith groups. A citizenship test that encourages this can help to ensure that new immigrants become active UK citizens with a strong sense of British pride.

In sum, progressive politicians must consider faith groups as an essential part of their vision of a good society because many are already there, volunteering for their local community and taking part in political activism to make society and their local community better.

Appendix A Methodology

The original research presented in this report is based on Demos' analyses of two data sets: the UK Citizenship Survey and the European Values Study (EVS). We identified these two data sets as the best for our purposes of investigating the relationship between religion and civic and political engagement in the UK, and western Europe.

For this paper we conducted bivariate analyses to investigate how religiosity affected civic engagement, political activism and political values. This allowed us to highlight interesting relationships between these indicators, although it did not allow us to draw firm conclusions in respect of causation. This is acknowledged, though it is noted that this is a shortcoming of all single-point survey analysis. As such, while the relationships identified in this paper may well be causal, for our purposes it suffices to show that an association exists.

The UK Citizenship Survey

The UK Citizenship Survey was a government-run social research tool, produced for seven years with the final wave completed in 2010/11. The survey drew on a nationally representative sample of the adult population of England and Wales, and included data from in excess of 10,000 interviews conducted over the course of a year. Additionally, there were 5,000 boost interviews with ethnic minorities, including 3,000 with Muslim respondents.[43] The anonymised data are publicly available from the UK Data Archive[44] or the Economic and Social Data Service,[45] while quarterly statistical releases using the data are available through the website of the Department for Communities and Local Government.[46]

In this report we analysed the most relevant findings regarding faith and civic engagement from previous in-depth

reports based on older iterations of the Citizenship Survey – those completed in 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10. Additionally, we supplemented these findings by conducting original analysis on the 2010/11 wave of the survey to explore relationships not discussed by previous analyses.

The Citizenship Survey questions pertaining to religion that we used included:

· What is your religion even if you are not currently practising?
· Do you consider that you are actively practising your religion?
· How important is your religion to your sense of who you are?

However, for the additional analysis that we conducted on the latest 2010/11 wave of the survey we focused on the religious indicator *RelImp*, asking respondents how important their religion was to their sense of identity. We used this variable to research relationships with the following questions about civic engagement:

· *GGroup*: In the past 4 weeks, have you given any money to charity in any of the ways shown on this card or through any other method:
  · overall?
  · in a collection at your place of worship?
· *CivAct1*: In the last 12 months, have you been (a) a local councillor, (b) a school governor, (c) a volunteer special constable, (d) a magistrate?
· *CivAct2*: In the last 12 months, have you been involved in a group making decisions on (a) local health services, (b) regenerating the local area, (c) tackling local crime problems, (d) tenants groups, (e) local education services, (f) local services for young people, (g) any other services in the local community?

We undertook bivariate analyses using the responses to these questions to determine if any relationships existed between a person's religion and their level of charitable giving or engagement in the civic activities listed.

The European Values Study

The EVS is a 'large-scale, cross-national and longitudinal survey' that was started in 1981 as a research project investigating how Europeans think about life, family, work, religion, politics and society. It claims to be the 'most comprehensive research project on human values in Europe'.[47] We analysed the latest wave of the survey (2008), which covered over 70,000 people across 47 European countries and regions. The EVS is also the source of a larger, global survey known as the World Values Survey, whose network of social scientists has carried out nationally representative surveys of over 97 societies constituting 90 per cent of the world's population.[48]

Like the Citizenship Survey, the EVS includes a range of questions on faith, religious practice, and civic or political engagement. Our analysis focused on two primary religious indicators, derived from the responses to the questions:

· Do you belong to a religious organisation or church?
· Independently of whether you go to church or not, do you consider yourself a religious person?

We also employed another religious indicator, which is discussed below.

For our first analysis, we compared the first religious indicator (identifying those who said they belonged to a religious organisation or church versus those who did not) to a range of items relating to respondents' level of civic engagement, their extent of political activism, and their political and moral values. It is worth noting that there is a potentially problematic issue with wording for this question: some respondents – particularly those of non-Christian faiths – may have failed to translate this question into belonging to a mosque, temple or synagogue. Nonetheless, we chose this indicator over that of 'attendance at a religious institution', which does not take into account the variance in practice habits and traditions between different religions, particularly in respect of frequency of attendance at a place of worship (e.g. actively practicing Muslims may attend mosque more frequently on average – through prayer five times a day – than active Christian practitioners attend church, or Hindus attend temple).

For the second analysis, we took those who has answered yes to the second religious indicator – whether they consider themselves a religious person – and further sub-divided them depending on their views about the extent to which there is only one true religion. In the EVS, respondents were asked to choose the statement that best described their view from the following options:

1 There is only one true religion.
2 Although there is only one true religion, other religions have some basic truths as well.
3 All religions have some basic truths: there is no one true religion.
4 None of the great religions have any truths to offer.

Respondents who described themselves as religious and did not agree that other religions have some truths (those who answered 1 to the above) were classified as religious exclusivists. Those who describe themselves as religious but were willing to admit that no one religion has a monopoly on the truth (those who answered 2 or 3 to the above) are classified as religious pluralists. Those who did not consider themselves religious are classified as seculars. We stress that these terms are indicative, and do not mean to imply that exclusivists are more fervent in their beliefs or traditional in their views. In fact, it is perfectly possible that a pluralist is very passionate and fervent in their beliefs, and would still describe him or herself as traditional.

We use this second analysis as a means of further disaggregating religious respondents according to their outlook. Creating a more sophisticated index of religiosity would be of interest in future research, but for our purposes the use of a threefold typology to distinguish the religious from the unreligious and the religious by outlook was sufficient.

Pan-western European sampling

As mentioned above, the EVS covers up to 47 European countries. For this project, we selected nine western European countries in order to construct a pan-western European sample.

The countries selected comprise Austria, Belgium, France, Germany (West), Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the UK. We originally included Denmark and Italy but the findings on those two countries were consistently anomalous and so we decided to exclude them. We decided to exclude Eastern European and Northern European countries based on well-known differences of social and religious context. For example, research consistently shows significantly higher levels of civic engagement among Scandinavian countries, which would have skewed our results. We also excluded Switzerland because of concerns over its diversity (it is the only country for which the survey is provided in three languages) and because it is not a member of the European Union.

We conducted bivariate analyses employing religious indicators alongside indicators of civic engagement, political activism and political values for each country, before averaging the country-specific percentages to produce a single 'western European' mean score. This approach employs the country as the unit of analysis rather than the individual.

We treated those crossing the 10 per cent threshold as statistically significant reportable results. This threshold was chosen as a commonly employed standard in policy research and applied social psychology. As the existing literature gave us a strong indication as to the directionality of the relationship between religion and civic and political engagement, we felt justified in halving significance scores to reflect the one-tailed nature of our hypotheses.[49] Full information on each analysis, including standard deviations and Chi-square test p-value significance scores for each country on each question, are provided in tables in appendix B.

Appendix B Results tables

Breakdown for the EVS survey

Table 2 **Number of respondents who belong to a religious organisation, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	Total
Austria	200	13	1,296	1,496
Belgium	94	6	1,412	1,506
France	60	4	1,438	1,498
Germany (West)	169	8	1,903	2,072
Ireland	170	31	380	550
Netherlands	522	34	1,021	1,543
Portugal	84	5	1,453	1,537
Spain	66	4	1,428	1,494
UK	205	13	1,353	1,558
Western Europe sample totals (incl UK)	1,570	12	11,684	13,254

Note: Respondents were asked 'Do you belong to a church or religious organisation?' (Q5aB).

Table 3   **Number of respondents who were exclusivist, pluralist or secular, by country**

		Exclusivist	Pluralist	Secular	Total
Austria	Count	125	791	518	1,434
	%	8.7	55.2	36.1	100.0
Belgium	Count	82	782	631	1,495
	%	5.5	52.3	42.2	100.0
France	Count	81	559	844	1,484
	%	5.5	37.7	56.9	100.0
Germany (West)	Count	126	432	435	993
	%	12.7	43.5	43.8	100.0
Ireland	Count	188	472	302	962
	%	19.5	49.1	31.4	100.0
Netherlands	Count	140	847	537	1,524
	%	9.2	55.6	35.2	100.0
Portugal	Count	468	798	257	1,523
	%	30.7	52.4	16.9	100.0
Spain	Count	325	491	644	1,460
	%	22.3	33.6	44.1	100.0
UK	Count	197	838	952	1,987
	%	9.9	42.2	47.9	100.0
Western Europe average (incl. UK)	Count	2,122	7,905	5,738	15,765
	%	13.5	50.1	36.4	100.0

Country scores for EVS analyses
Volunteering to work for a trade union

Table 4a **Number of respondents who have volunteered to work for a trade union, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value[50]
Austria	3	2	24	2	0.369
Belgium	3	3	23	2	0.1355
France	2	4	22	2	0.116
Germany (West)	3	2	7	0.8	0.044
Ireland	3	6	5	2	0.0685
Netherlands	20	4	27	3	0.040
Portugal	8	12	33	2	0.000
Spain	0	0	11	0.8	0.242
Western Europe average		4		2	0.127
Standard deviation (SD)		4		1	
UK	3	1	1	0.1	0.0005

Table 4b **Number of respondents who have volunteered to work for a trade union, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

	Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	1	0.7	18	2	8	2	0.197
Belgium	3	3	10	1	13	2	0.122
France	1	1	12	2	11	1	0.1905
Germany (West)	1	0.7	5	1	4	1	0.4425
Ireland	2	4	4	4	2	2	0.347
Netherlands	1	0.7	24	3	20	3	0.124
Portugal	6	2	18	2	17	5	0.0175
Spain	1	0.3	1	0.2	9	1	0.029
Western Europe average		2		2		2	0.1835
SD		1		1		1	
UK	0	0	3	0.4	1	0.1	0.151

Volunteering to work for a political party

Table 5a **Number of respondents who have volunteered to work for a political party, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	12	6	28	2	0.001
Belgium	4	4	22	2	0.028
France	3	5	13	0.9	0.0005
Germany (West)	3	2	9	1	0.0905
Ireland	6	13	6	3	0.0015
Netherlands	23	5	17	2	0.000
Portugal	13	19	21	1	0.000
Spain	0	0	18	1	0.1845
Western Europe average		7		2	0.0385
SD		6		1	
UK	2	0.8	7	0.5	0.2505

Table 5b **Number of respondents who have volunteered to work for a political party, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

	Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	3	2	25	3	12	2	0.3135
Belgium	0	0	14	2	12	2	0.2015
France	0	0	9	2	7	1	0.1025
Germany	1	0.7	6	1	5	1	0.408
Ireland	8	15	7	6	3	3	0.011
Netherlands	3	2	21	3	17	3	0.454
Portugal	2	0.6	16	2	12	3	0.0225
Spain	4	1	3	0.6	11	2	0.1595
Western Europe average		3		2		2	0.209
SD		5		2		1	
UK	2	1	3	0.5	5	0.6	0.211

Volunteering to take part in local community action

Table 6a **Number of respondents who have volunteered to take part in local community action, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	7	4	10	0.8	0.0005
Belgium	12	13	21	1	0.000
France	4	7	28	2	0.0045
Germany (West)	1	0.8	2	0.2	0.1345
Ireland	9	18	11	5	0.0005
Netherlands	38	8	27	3	0.000
Portugal	17	25	30	2	0.000
Spain	2	3	5	0.4	0.0005
Western Europe average		10		2	0.0175
SD		8		2	
UK	15	6	15	1	0.000

Table 6b **Number of respondents who have volunteered to take part in local community action, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

	Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	4	3	11	1	1	0.2	0.0055
Belgium	0	0	24	3	9	1	0.0235
France	1	1	14	3	17	2	0.319
Germany (West)	1	0.7	2	0.5	0	0	0.1405
Ireland	1	2	14	13	7	7	0.0245
Netherlands	6	4	38	5	21	3	0.215
Portugal	8	2	25	3	12	3	0.4015
Spain	1	0.3	4	0.8	2	0.3	0.188
Western Europe average		2		4		2	0.1645
SD		1		4		2	
UK	5	3	18	3	8	0.9	0.0035

Volunteering to work on development and human rights issues

Table 7a   **Number of respondents who have volunteered to work on development and human rights issues, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	6	3	10	0.8	0.002
Belgium	6	6	16	1	0.000
France	5	9	12	0.8	0.000
Germany (West)	1	0.8	7	0.8	0.4945
Ireland	1	2	3	1	0.332
Netherlands	40	8	25	2	0.000
Portugal	13	19	14	1	0.000
Spain	6	9	10	0.7	0.000
Western Europe average		7		1	0.1035
SD		6		0	
UK	11	4	7	0.5	0.000

Table 7b **Number of respondents who have volunteered to work on development and human rights issues, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

	Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	1	0.8	9	1	7	1	0.4225
Belgium	0	0	16	2	6	1	0.066
France	0	0	10	2	7	0.8	0.0635
Germany (West)	3	2	2	0.5	2	0.5	0.0405
Ireland	1	2	1	1	2	2	0.414
Netherlands	9	6	39	5	17	3	0.0285
Portugal	7	2	11	1	8	2	0.2425
Spain	4	1	6	1	4	0.6	0.207
Western Europe average		2		2		1	0.1855
SD		2		1		1	
UK	2	1	10	2	5	0.6	0.065

Volunteering to work on environmental issues

Table 8a **Number of respondents who have volunteered to work on environmental issues, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	9	5	31	2	0.0405
Belgium	6	6	23	2	0.0005
France	3	5	15	1	0.002
Germany (West)	1	0.8	13	1	0.278
Ireland	5	11	5	2	0.003
Netherlands	27	6	53	5	0.286
Portugal	10	14	24	2	0.000
Spain	0	0	9	0.6	0.2635
Western Europe average		6		2	0.109
SD		5		1	
UK	9	4	22	1	0.009

Table 8b **Number of respondents who have volunteered to work on environmental issues, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

	Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	1	0.8	29	4	11	2	0.0415
Belgium	0	0	15	2	13	2	0.186
France	0	0	7	1	10	1	0.3035
Germany (West)	2	1	4	1	8	2	0.2585
Ireland	3	6	8	8	3	3	0.16
Netherlands	4	3	48	6	27	4	0.0755
Portugal	5	2	18	2	10	3	0.279
Spain	1	0.3	2	0.4	6	0.9	0.2305
Western Europe average		2		3		2	0.192
SD		2		3		1	
UK	0	0	17	3	16	2	0.05

Volunteering to take part in youth work

Table 9a **Number of respondents who have volunteered to take part in youth work, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	11	6	18	1	0.000
Belgium	9	10	63	4	0.0125
France	1	2	10	0.7	0.174
Germany (West)	8	6	26	3	0.021
Ireland	6	13	9	4	0.009
Netherlands	63	13	58	5	0.000
Portugal	12	17	32	2	0.000
Spain	1	2	10	0.7	0.211
Western Europe average		9		3	0.0535
SD		6		2	
UK	28	11	42	3	0.000

Table 9b **Number of respondents who have volunteered to take part in youth work, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

	Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	3	2	22	3	4	0.8	0.0205
Belgium	0	0	44	6	28	5	0.0285
France	1	1	6	1	4	0.5	0.1635
Germany (West)	5	4	19	5	7	2	0.0275
Ireland	4	8	12	11	6	6	0.2125
Netherlands	16	11	71	9	27	5	0.0005
Portugal	7	2	23	3	13	4	0.2715
Spain	0	0	3	0.6	7	1	0.091
Western Europe average		4		5		3	0.102
SD		4		4		2	
UK	6	4	39	6	25	3	0.003

Volunteering to take part in women's issues

Table 10a **Number of participants who have volunteered to take part in women's issues, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	15	8	23	2	0.000
Belgium	2	2	19	1	0.267
France	2	4	3	0.2	0.000
Germany (West)	4	3	20	2	0.2535
Ireland	5	11	3	1	0.0005
Netherlands	24	5	11	1	0.000
Portugal	11	16	19	1	0.000
Spain	2	3	11	0.8	0.024
Western Europe average		7		1	0.068
SD		5		1	
UK	10	4	9	0.6	0.000

Table 10b **Number of respondents who have volunteered to take part in women's issues, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

	Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	7	5	25	3	6	1	0.0055
Belgium	1	1	16	2	4	0.6	0.047
France	1	1	4	0.7	0	0	0.011
Germany (West)	4	3	14	3	5	1	0.052
Ireland	1	2	10	9	2	2	0.0155
Netherlands	6	4	17	2	10	2	0.0805
Portugal	4	1	16	2	11	3	0.1275
Spain	3	1	8	2	2	0.3	0.023
Western Europe average		2		3		1	0.0455
SD		2		3		1	
UK	1	0.7	14	2	4	0.5	0.003

Joining boycotts

Table 11a **Number of respondents who have joined a boycott, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	24	13	109	9	0.015
Belgium	17	18	138	10	0.0055
France	10	18	226	16	0.179
Germany (West)	14	12	112	13	0.099
Ireland	15	10	38	10	0.0005
Netherlands	45	10	137	13	0.0025
Portugal	5	7	92	6	0.025
Spain	2	4	98	8	0.235
Western Europe average		12		11	0.07
SD		5		3	
UK	45	14	205	14	0.169

Table 11b **Number of respondents who have joined a boycott, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

	Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	6	5	68	9	53	11	0.000
Belgium	3	3	75	9	74	12	0.000
France	4	5	63	12	163	19	0.000
Germany (West)	7	5	43	11	71	18	0.000
Ireland	6	4	47	11	34	11	0.000
Netherlands	8	6	81	11	88	15	0.000
Portugal	8	3	54	7	29	8	0.000
Spain	11	4	17	4	71	12	0.000
Western Europe average		4		9		13	0.000
SD		1		3		4	
UK	9	5	103	27	141	29	0.001

Signing petitions

Table 12a **Number of respondents who have signed a petition, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	119	61	587	47	0.0005
Belgium	62	66	828	59	0.159
France	45	80	970	67	0.0205
Germany (West)	83	68	489	55	0.002
Ireland	84	56	208	55	0.044
Netherlands	249	53	562	53	0.307
Portugal	17	25	395	27	0.381
Spain	39	64	509	40	0.001
Western Europe average	698	57	4,548	50	0.115
SD		16		12	
UK	212	63	959	63	0.000

Table 12b **Number of respondents who have signed a petition, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

	Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	46	38	416	54	219	45	0.000
Belgium	26	29	442	56	416	68	0.000
France	38	49	355	66	610	70	0.000
Germany (West)	58	45	244	60	228	56	0.000
Ireland	64	41	250	58	167	55	0.000
Netherlands	55	39	397	52	345	58	0.000
Portugal	52	16	220	27	129	35	0.000
Spain	77	29	172	40	292	47	0.000
Western Europe average	416	32	2,496	51	2,406	56	0.000
SD		10		12		12	
UK	82	46	516	68	602	61	0.000

Participating in lawful demonstrations

Table 13a **Number of respondents who have participated in a lawful demonstration, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	35	18	195	16	0.279
Belgium	36	38	398	28	0.054
France	32	57	651	45	0.0725
Germany (West)	29	24	230	26	0.3
Ireland	21	14	56	15	0.1685
Netherlands	80	17	255	24	0.0005
Portugal	9	14	216	15	0.037
Spain	30	48	521	38	0.0835
Western Europe average		29		26	0.1245
SD		17		11	
UK	66	20	204	14	0.0065

Table 13b **Number of respondents who have participated in a lawful demonstration, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

	Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	10	8	107	14	104	21	0.000
Belgium	9	10	217	27	205	34	0.000
France	15	19	223	42	437	51	0.000
Germany (West)	13	10	97	61	130	32	0.000
Ireland	12	8	80	19	46	15	0.000
Netherlands	12	9	166	22	155	26	0.000
Portugal	30	9	113	14	76	21	0.000
Spain	60	21	158	35	318	49	0.000
Western Europe average		12		29		31	0.000
SD		5		16		13	
UK	20	11	126	17	130	13	0.002

Being interested in politics

Table 14a **Number of respondents who are very interested in politics, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	52	26	250	19	0.024
Belgium	23	24	98	7	0.000
France	11	19	176	12	0.008
Germany (West)	35	27	204	22	0.0765
Ireland	24	16	33	9	0.000
Netherlands	66	14	186	17	0.0195
Portugal	7	10	86	6	0.01
Spain	6	9	108	8	0.036
Western Europe average	224	18	1,141	12	0.022
SD		7		6	
UK	41	12	165	11	0.000

Table 14b **Number of respondents who are very interested in politics, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

	Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	19	15	175	22	104	20	0.000
Belgium	5	5	71	9	45	7	0.000
France	10	13	63	12	112	13	0.000
Germany (West)	31	23	98	23	94	22	0.000
Ireland	22	13	52	12	26	8	0.002
Netherlands	9	6	114	15	125	21	0.000
Portugal	15	5	51	6	27	7	0.000
Spain	13	4	27	6	71	11	0.000
Western Europe average	124	9	651	13	604	14	0.000
SD		7		7		6	
UK	17	9	91	12	91	9	0.000

Having a negative association towards immigrants

Table 15a **Number of respondents who would not want to have immigrants or migrant workers as neighbours, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	31	16	304	24	0.0065
Belgium	4	4	92	7	0.189
France	1	2	61	4	0.185
Germany (West)	6	6	71	9	0.161
Ireland	13	11	45	12	0.3695
Netherlands	67	14	146	14	0.4545
Portugal	9	13	110	8	0.049
Spain	3	5	61	4	0.456
Western Europe average		9		10	0.234
SD		5		7	
UK	36	11	246	16	0.009

Table 15b **Number of respondents who would not want to have immigrants or migrant workers as neighbours, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

	Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	34	27	136	18	155	31	0.000
Belgium	9	10	54	7	33	5	0.113
France	14	18	20	4	27	3	0.000
Germany (West)	21	16	25	7	29	8	0.0015
Ireland	36	26	39	11	32	11	0.000
Netherlands	23	17	119	16	65	11	0.0125
Portugal	22	7	46	6	47	13	0.000
Spain	27	9	16	3	20	3	0.000
Western Europe average		16		9		11	0.016
SD		7		6		9	
UK	36	20	100	13	165	17	0.013

Comparing value placed on freedom and equality

Table 16a **Whether respondents place more value on freedom or on equality, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

		Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	Freedom	111	58	612	49	0.0105
	Equality	69	36	496	40	
Belgium	Freedom	38	41	615	44	0.3915
	Equality	53	57	749	53	
France	Freedom	20	36	590	41	0.3055
	Equality	33	60	813	57	
Germany (West)	Freedom	55	44	506	58	0.0035
	Equality	53	43	311	35	
Ireland	Freedom	55	41	190	55	0.0065
	Equality	69	51	136	40	
Netherlands	Freedom	242	51	707	67	
	Equality	229	48	334	32	
Portugal	Freedom	15	23	547	39	0.019
	Equality	43	66	734	52	
Spain	Freedom	26	41	713	52	0.059
	Equality	33	52	607	44	
Western Europe average	Equality	52		44		0.0091
	Freedom	42		51		
SD			11		10	
UK	Freedom	182	57	866	58	0.0255
	Equality	131	41	534	36	

Table 16b **Whether respondents place more value on freedom or on equality, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

		Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	Freedom	60	48	378	50	245	50	0.000
	Equality	50	40	336	44	172	35	
Belgium	Freedom	47	52	327	42	275	45	0.172
	Equality	41	45	436	56	320	52	
France	Freedom	31	41	229	43	344	40	0.4285
	Equality	43	57	299	56	498	58	
Germany (West)	Freedom	82	63	220	55	228	56	0.279
	Equality	42	32	149	37	150	37	
Ireland	Freedom	84	59	201	50	132	48	0.132
	Equality	51	36	173	43	125	45	
Netherlands	Freedom	72	52	462	60	399	66	0.008
	Equality	65	47	294	38	196	33	
Portugal	Freedom	125	41	264	34	159	44	
	Equality	154	51	454	58	153	43	
Spain	Freedom	143	49	234	51	344	53	0.374
	Equality	134	46	207	45	286	44	
Western Europe average	Freedom average		51		48		50	0.174
average	Equality average		44		47		43	
SD			9		8		9	
UK	Freedom	99	60	425	57	564	59	0.3865
	Equality	60	36	287	38	344	36	

Being on the left side of the political spectrum

Table 17a **Number of respondents who put themselves on the centre left or left side of the political spectrum, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	95	60	723	67	0.007
Belgium	48	54	879	66	0.01
France	29	54	899	68	0.004
Germany (West)	44	40	504	64	0.000
Ireland	30	24	120	43	0.000
Netherlands	192	43	566	57	0.000
Portugal	19	43	739	70	0.000
Spain	38	70	920	76	0.136
Western Europe average	495	49	5,350	64	0.0195
SD		14		10	
UK	156	55	751	62	0.0125

Table 17b **Number of respondents who put themselves on the centre left or left side of the political spectrum, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

		Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	Left	51	57	440	65	299	70	0.000
	Right	38	43	232	35	131	30	
Belgium	Left	56	69	452	61	412	70	0.000
	Right	25	31	290	39	174	30	
France	Left	43	66	275	55	602	75	0.000
	Right	22	34	226	45	204	25	
Germany (West)	Left	41	37	220	61	252	68	0.000
	Right	70	63	139	39	119	32	
Ireland	Left	40	34	141	42	108	49	0.000
	Right	78	66	192	58	114	51	
Netherlands	Left	50	40	360	50	336	59	0.000
	Right	76	60	365	50	235	41	
Portugal	Left	148	65	393	68	203	75	0.002
	Right	80	35	186	32	67	25	
Spain	Left	134	55	293	73	507	87	0.000
	Right	109	45	107	27	78	13	
Western Europe average	Left	563	53	2,574	59	2,719	69	0.0005
	Right	498	47	1,737	41	1,122	31	
SD			14		10		10	
UK	Left	78	56	348	56	499	65	0.001
	Right	61	44	276	44	269	35	

Believing in individual rather than state responsibility

Table 18a **Number of respondents who believe that people should take individual responsibility and not rely on the state, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	148	74	929	73	0.028
Belgium	58	61	880	63	0.451
France	46	84	970	68	0.056
Germany (West)	108	82	744	82	0.41
Ireland	107	69	280	73	0.002
Netherlands	270	56	695	66	0.0005
Portugal	42	66	1,054	73	0.152
Spain	31	49	700	52	0.227
Western Europe average	810	68	6,252	69	0.148
SD		12		9	
UK	278	81	1,232	80	0.005

Table 18b **Number of respondents who believe that people should take individual responsibility and not rely on the state, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

		Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	Individual	86	66	569	73	377	75	0.000
	State	44	34	213	27	127	25	
Belgium	Individual	51	56	478	60	406	66	0.0005
	State	40	44	313	40	206	34	
France	Individual	46	61	386	72	576	67	0.003
	State	30	39	149	28	288	33	
Germany (West)	Individual	116	88	338	81	331	79	0.0005
	State	16	12	81	19	89	21	
Ireland	Individual	121	73	322	73	235	74	0.008
	State	45	27	117	27	83	26	
Netherlands	Individual	70	51	493	64	383	63	0.027
	State	68	49	281	36	221	37	
Portugal	Individual	200	63	610	76	266	73	
	State	115	37	190	24	98	27	
Spain	Individual	148	52	248	55	322	50	0.223
	State	138	48	203	45	327	50	
Western Europe average	Individual	838	64	3,444	69	2,896	68	0.033
	State	496	36	1,547	31	1,439	32	
SD				12		9		9
UK	Individual	145	78	629	81	790	79	0.107
	State	40	22	145	19	208	21	

Believing someone on benefits should be forced to take a job if offered one

Table 19a **Number of respondents who believe someone on benefits should be forced to take a job if offered one, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	151	75	935	73	0.2265
Belgium	70	74	978	69	0.192
France	40	73	703	49	0.0025
Germany (West)	96	74	704	78	0.17
Ireland	113	76	234	63	0.000
Netherlands	323	68	741	70	0.184
Portugal	46	68	785	55	0.0595
Spain	48	77	767	56	0.002
Western Europe average	887	73	5,847	64	0.1045
SD		4		10	
UK	257	76	1,120	73	0.0005

Table 19b **Number of respondents who believe someone on benefits should be forced to take a job if offered one, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

		Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	Take	99	76	593	75	348	68	0.000
	Refuse	32	24	193	25	163	32	
Belgium	Take	70	74	548	69	427	70	0.1085
	Refuse	24	26	241	31	186	30	
France	Take	44	58	304	57	391	45	0.007
	Refuse	32	42	230	43	473	55	
Germany (West)	Take	121	92	322	78	301	72	0.000
	Refuse	11	8	91	22	116	28	
Ireland	Take	105	65	277	64	203	65	0.000
	Refuse	57	35	154	36	108	35	
Netherlands	Take	94	67	535	69	415	69	0.328
	Refuse	46	33	238	31	189	31	
Portugal	Take	242	77	540	67	218	60	0.000
	Refuse	72	23	265	33	143	40	
Spain	Take	179	63	293	64	317	48	0.000
	Refuse	106	37	162	36	338	52	
Western Europe average	Take	954	71	3,412	68	2,620	62	0.0555
	Refuse	380	29	1,574	32	1,716	38	
SD			11		7		10	
UK	Take	134	73	588	77	711	71	0.0795
	Refuse	49	27	179	23	284	29	

Believing competition is good vs harmful

Table 20a **Number of respondents who think competition is good vs harmful, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	156	79	995	79	0.2975
Belgium	77	82	989	71	0.2555
France	42	75	926	65	0.0295
Germany (West)	113	88	791	88	0.0045
Ireland	116	78	274	75	0.023
Netherlands	354	75	808	77	0.1115
Portugal	43	64	1,112	78	0.023
Spain	37	63	872	65	0.0665
Western Europe average	938	76	6,767	75	0.1015
SD		9		8	
UK	288	85	1,298	85	0.065

Table 20b **Number of respondents who think competition is good vs harmful, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

		Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	Good	94	73	629	81	382	77	0.000
	Harmful	34	27	148	19	117	23	
Belgium	Good	61	69	580	74	419	69	0.181
	Harmful	27	31	208	26	188	31	
France	Good	45	60	378	71	535	62	0.0325
	Harmful	30	40	152	29	326	38	
Germany (West)	Good	122	92	363	88	358	86	0.3345
	Harmful	10	8	51	12	57	14	
Ireland	Good	115	74	344	80	239	77	0.009
	Harmful	41	26	88	20	70	23	
Netherlands	Good	98	70	582	76	460	77	0.035
	Harmful	42	30	179	24	141	23	
Portugal	Good	249	80	613	77	275	76	0.001
	Harmful	63	20	181	23	86	24	
Spain	Good	185	68	316	71	391	60	0.0025
	Harmful	88	32	130	29	259	40	
Western Europe average	Good	969	73	3,805	77	3,059	73	0.0745
	Harmful	335	27	1,137	23	1,244	27	
SD			10		6		9	
UK	Good	147	82	646	84	840	84	0.113
	Harmful	32	18	123	16	155	16	

Prioritising equality over work incentives

Table 21a **Number of respondents who prioritise equality over work incentives, by country and whether or not they belong to a religious organisation**

	Belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Do not belong to a religious organisation	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	163	83	1,051	83	0.364
Belgium	34	37	688	49	0.0835
France	24	44	802	56	0.313
Germany (West)	87	69	673	74	0.016
Ireland	78	52	199	53	0.3645
Netherlands	203	42	426	40	0.016
Portugal	34	49	792	55	0.144
Spain	39	62	805	59	0.4725
Western Europe average	662	55	5,436	59	0.2215
SD		15		14	
UK	183	55	819	54	0.07

Table 21b **Number of respondents who prioritise equality over work incentives, by country and whether they are exclusivist, pluralist or secular**

		Exclusivist	% of total	Pluralist	% of total	Secular	% of total	Chi-square test p-value
Austria	Equality	105	85	630	81	428	85	0.000
	Incentives	18	15	146	19	73	15	
Belgium	Equality	53	59	346	44	316	52	0.007
	Incentives	37	41	444	56	296	48	
France	Equality	37	49	287	54	499	58	0.142
	Incentives	38	51	247	46	364	42	
Germany (West)	Equality	113	87	280	68	311	75	0.000
	Incentives	17	13	133	32	104	25	
Ireland	Equality	84	55	249	58	172	55	0.029
	Incentives	70	45	183	42	141	45	
Netherlands	Equality	67	47	300	39	246	41	0.086
	Incentives	75	53	471	61	355	59	
Portugal	Equality	179	56	432	54	203	56	0.000
	Incentives	138	44	373	46	158	44	
Spain	Equality	163	58	254	57	407	62	0.029
	Incentives	118	42	195	43	250	38	
Western Europe average	Equality	801	62	2,778	57	2,582	60	0.0365
	Incentives	511	38	2,192	43	1,741	40	
SD			15		13		14	
UK	Equality	109	61	370	49	570	58	0.018
	Incentives	71	39	391	51	415	42	

Notes

1   J Smith, 'Reclaiming the ground', Tawney lecture, 20 Mar 1993.

2   It is also important to clarify that this group includes those who are formal members of a religious institution, as opposed to those who actively practise their religion but would not describe themselves as belonging to a specific institution or organisation. Thus, we are talking about a small portion of British society and a minority proportion of British citizens who would describe themselves as religious or of a religious tradition.

3   M Wind-Cowie and T Gregory, *A Place for Pride*, London: Demos, 2011.

4   R Putnam and D Campbell, *American Grace: How religion divides and unites us*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010.

5   NatCen, *British Social Attitudes 28*, 28th report, London: National Centre for Social Research, 2011.

6   Ibid.

7   O Roy, *Globalized Islam: The search for a new ummah*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

8   R Briggs, C Fieschi, and H Lownsbrough, *Bringing it Home*, London: Demos, 2006.

9   Putnam and Campbell, *American Grace*.

10 Ibid.

11 See www.citizensuk.org/ (accessed 8 Feb 2012).

12 See www.citizensuk.org/campaigns/living-wage-campaign/ (accessed 7 Feb 2012).

13 M Littler, 'Re-examining religion and crime: a study of the impact of religious practice on adolescent criminality in the United Kingdom', thesis, University of Cambridge, 2011.

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FAITHFUL PROVIDERS

Jonathan Birdwell

Summary

In *Faithful Citizens*, we argued that people of faith are likely to be a vital base of support for any future election-winning progressive coalition.[1] Religious citizens were more likely to volunteer, to be compassionate towards immigrants and to value equality over freedom. This report argues that faith-motivated service providers are committed and passionate advocates for reducing social and economic inequality and protecting the most vulnerable – two key social justice concerns of progressives.

The positive role of voluntarism in civil society, and specifically the involvement of faith groups within it, has been cited by figures across the political spectrum. While some faith groups are keen to receive greater recognition for their community contribution, many are also wary of being expected to do too much at a time when their resources are under strain.

This report explores the role of faith groups in providing services voluntarily and through the receipt of public money across four key policy areas: employment and training, services to young people, integration and cohesion, and drug and alcohol rehabilitation. It is based on a comprehensive review of previous research as well as 20 case studies of faithful providers currently operating in the UK.

We found little evidence to confirm critics' fears about faith group service providers: that their main motivation is proselytising, they are exclusivist and they discriminate. Rather, faithful providers are highly motivated and effective, and often serve as the permanent and persistent pillars of community action within local communities.

The faith service ethos

Faith appears to be an effective motivator for community service providers, akin to the notion of a public sector ethos. Faithful providers are motivated by their desire to 'live their faith' and 'love thy neighbour', which often leads them to volunteer their time, work long hours for less pay, and persevere over the challenges they encounter in working with the most vulnerable.

Effective providers, not proselytisers

Our research found no evidence of aggressive proselytising among faith-based providers, and many provided services to community members of different faiths and no faith. Those who worked with young people and vulnerable groups were acutely aware of the need to be inclusive, keep religion 'in the background' and not abuse the power imbalance between service provider and user. While some organisations spoke about hiring members of their own faith exclusively as employees, we argue that this practice is not discriminatory. The provision in the Equalities Act that allows for such hiring practices – contingent on their adoption being integral to the ethos of the organisation – is the correct approach.

Faithful community pillars

Faith groups and institutions are key to community organising because they provide permanent structures in their communities with significant capital and motivation to address social problems. Faith communities can also provide access to hard-to-reach groups in a way that many other organisations cannot. However, policy areas that seek to engage faith groups are sometimes driven by short-term interests that can leave faithful providers disillusioned and fatigued.

Recommendations: from service to social justice

Our research was not extensive enough to be representative of all faith-based providers, but it does suggest some

recommendations for faith-based organisations receiving public money to provide services:

· Faith-motivated providers – and their financial supporters – should prioritise the maintenance of their underlying ethos and motivation at the expense of increasing the size and scale of their service provision.
· Commissioners of public services should require, or at least strongly encourage, faith-based providers to work with organisations of different faiths to tackle local area problems they share, for example, around unemployment and drugs and alcohol. This could help to achieve policy objectives (eg carrying out youth work or employment training services) while assisting cohesion as a by-product. At the very least, local authorities should aim to provide a coordination function to ensure that organisations from different faiths are not delivering duplicate services, and encourage them to work together to increase effectiveness.
· Local authorities should undertake a 'faith and service audit' of their local communities to identify areas of further collaboration between different faith groups. One example of this is Barnet Council's 'Faithbook'. This local 'mapping' could assist in measuring the value of voluntary faith-based provision, commissioning small-scale service providers that can provide social value and finding areas of synergy in which different faith groups can be encouraged to deliver services in conjunction.
· Government, local authorities and other funders should not be squeamish about the religious aspect of faith-motivated service providers: the majority do not appear to proselytise aggressively in the context of service delivery. Nor should they demand that faith-based providers not proselytise at all. The act of 'proselytising' is highly varied and subtle. Aggressive proselytising – such as making services contingent on attending religious instruction – should be severely discouraged. However, assuming that there is a plurality of service providers, there should be nothing wrong with service providers openly discussing their faith, particularly to those service users who are interested in learning more and/or open to a spiritual element.

· Faith-motivated organisations should be supported in providing services where a 'holistic' approach appears to be particularly effective, for example, in abstinence-based drug and rehabilitation programmes. In this context, we take a 'holistic' approach to entail the involvement of a 'spiritual', 'moral' or 'ethical' element.

· Faith-based providers need to be more fully integrated into the Government's Work Programme and drug and alcohol strategies. These privilege large private companies such as G4S and Serco. While it is expected that these companies will sub-contract work to smaller providers, we saw no evidence that small-scale faith-based providers which were highly effective were being incorporated into these policy initiatives and implementation frameworks.

· Even in an era of fiscal austerity, efficiency should not be the sole measure of which organisations are commissioned or supported to provide services to local communities. Government, local authorities and other funders should consider additional *social* values when commissioning public service providers. These could include:

   · history and longevity of an organisation or institution in a local area
   · quantity and quality of personal relationships between the organisation and the target service users of an area (eg through surveys about preference and name recognition)
   · long-term future plans of the service provider for their continued presence in the local area (similar to the concept of 'legacy' in the Olympics)
   · community activities outside the service provided
   · number of employees in the organisation from the local area
   · local community users' preference
   · cumulative investment in the local area by the organisation, over time, including but not limited to the type of service that is being commissioned.

· While a number of different types of organisations could score well on these additional measures of 'social value', our research suggests that this is also true of many faith-based service providers. The intrinsic and selfless ethos of faith-motivated

providers, the connection they provide with the past and the local area, their cultural and moral framework, and the permanence of faith institutions suggests that faith-based service providers contribute additional social value that should be considered by the Government and local authority commissioners.

· Following the example and work of Citizens UK, progressives should seek to work with social justice-minded faith groups and institutions as community organisers addressing the roots of social justice problems, rather than being mere service providers. One of the most high profile examples in recent years was the London Citizens campaign for the living wage, in which faith groups and faith institutions throughout London demonstrated hugely significant organisational capacities and moral authority.

1 Introduction

Faith groups have a long history of providing services that often the most vulnerable members of the public rely on. In the UK, the Church provided services that we now assume to be the domain of the state, including education, social care and support for those in poverty. William Beveridge wrote in *Voluntary Action*:

The making of a good society depends not on the State but on citizens, acting individually or in free association with one another, acting on motives of various kind – some selfish, others unselfish, some narrow and material, others inspired by love of man and love of God.[2]

Across the UK, faith groups continue to provide valuable services to their local communities through volunteering their time, money and community assets. Examples of such activities include providing support for the vulnerable and homeless, working with young people, relationship counselling, and drugs and alcohol counselling. Some evidence (cited below) suggests that faith groups and institutions can be particularly effective at providing these services.

Very few people can argue or criticise faith groups for doing this work through their own initiative, with their own resources. The problem and potential controversy comes when government and local authorities start providing faith groups with public money to provide these services.

This chapter sets out some context of faith-based service provision in the UK. The first section provides a brief history of government initiatives over the last decade to increase the involvement of faith-based organisations in providing services. We then present some of the criticisms made against faith-based service providers, as well as past evidence about their effectiveness and the costs they save the state.

The Labour years

According to some academics, the personal faith of leading members of the New Labour project – including Tony Blair and Gordon Brown – played an important role in the Labour Government's initiatives to foster greater involvement of faith groups in policy objectives.[3]

In 2004, the report *Working Together*,[4] a summary of a Home Office report on cooperation between government and faith communities, outlined a series of grants to encourage and enable faith communities 'to play a fuller part in civil society and community cohesion'.[5] Several government departments, including the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), focused on this aim in the years that followed.

The most active department was the DCLG, which created the Race, Cohesion and Faith Directorate, which provides funding to the Inter Faith Network and previously sponsored the Faith Communities Consultative Council (successor to the Home Office working group that published *Working Together*; it was discontinued by the Coalition Government). The DCLG commissioned the Community Development Fund (CDF), a non-departmental public body that runs and administers the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund, with the aim of strengthening the capacity of faith and interfaith organisations.[6] The fund distributed £11 million to over 900 groups over two years (2007/08–2008/09) and sponsored faith work that aimed to improve community cohesion in England and Wales.[7] Much of this work and engagement has been spurred by concerns over a lack of community cohesion and the rise of extremism in the UK following the 7 July 2005 bombings. The DCLG also established the Faith and Social Cohesion Unit (situated within the Charity Commission) to work with and support religious charities to strengthen their governance and accountability, and to help them respond to the challenge of tackling extremism.[8]

Two key objectives of these initiatives were to get different faith groups working together, and to strengthen links between faith organisations and other civil society organisations. In 2008, the DCLG published *Face to Face and Side by Side*,[9] announcing a three-year, £7.5 million programme of investment and support

designed to foster greater partnership working across and between faith groups.

Meanwhile, Faith Action, the Church Urban Fund and nine regional faith forums aimed to build faith-based organisations' capacity for delivering public services. In March 2010 the DCLG published 'myth busting' advice to commissioners on working with faith groups, designed to 'ensure that there is a level playing field' and aimed to encourage commissioners to see faith-based groups as potential recipients of public service contracts.[10]

Faith Action was a £4.4 million grant programme for voluntary and community sector groups and organisations in England to carry out interfaith work. The programme, which ran from April 2009 to 31 March 2011, funded 575 projects and continues to operate with the support of the Department of Health.[11] According to one report, the programme contributed to a greater alignment of faith groups and the voluntary charity sector (VCS): 78 per cent of projects were carried out by the VCS or charities, with a further 17 per cent led by faith-based groups.[12] In total, 338 people benefited from each locally funded project and nearly 200,000 people have benefited across the whole grant programme.

The Labour Government also invested £1.9 million over a period of three years to build the capacity of nine regional faith forums. Each forum received up to £70,000 per year for three years (2008/09–2010/11). The programme's aims were to support increased opportunities for dialogue and social action at the regional and local level, and to strengthen relationships and partnerships between the faith sector and civil society. An evaluation by the CDF found that the regional faith forums helped link the faith sector and civil society in a unique way, which enabled wider statutory agency engagement with the faith sector.[13]

Despite these initiatives, some argue that this welcoming tone was not accompanied by an actual increase in the role of faith groups in the delivery of public services under New Labour. A Joseph Rowntree Foundation report in 2003 found that the sense of goodwill towards faith groups in rhetoric was not being matched by policy.[14] The findings of the Charity Commission's

Faith Groups Programme, which aimed to gauge the views of faith groups so as to find the best ways to support and regulate them, supported this view. Of the 800 representatives surveyed, common concerns included discomfort at the secular language and goal-based model of the Commission.[15] A 2008 report by the Communities and Local Government Agency revealed that although 64 per cent of faith groups interviewed found their relationship with government to be positive, there was still a common feeling that the Government was resisting engaging with the faith sector.[16]

Faith and the Coalition Government

The idea of engaging faith groups in the delivery of public services has played a prominent role in the rhetoric of the Conservatives in coalition as a part of the broader goals of the Government's 'Big Society' ambition.

Ministers' speeches and statements have continually praised the role of faith groups in areas where they are traditionally deemed important. A 2012 DCLG report on integration specifically highlighted the work of the Church Urban Fund's Near Neighbours programme and the Anne Frank Trust in fighting against stereotypes and prejudice, and fostering integration.[17] According to the Communities Secretary Eric Pickles, the Near Neighbours programme 'will provide up to £5,000 for small-scale, grass-roots projects designed to bring people together from different backgrounds: perhaps through sport, art, or community action – maybe clearing up a local park or estate'.[18]

The Coalition has also promoted the idea of engaging faith groups in the delivery of a broader range of public services. Education remains the policy area where faith-based organisations (faith schools) continue to play a significant role. A freedom of information request from 2010 found that one-third of maintained schools (those receiving public funds) in England are faith schools.[19] The issue of faith schools continues to divide opinion. Some argue that faith schools are inherently divisive and increase social segregation.[20] The Education Secretary

Michael Gove, among others, has strongly defended faith schools – citing their high levels of attainment – and encouraged more faith groups to set up academies.[21]

The Coalition Government has also stressed the importance of interfaith dialogue and social action, as opposed to single faith groups providing services to their followers. In July 2010, the DCLG issued a press release entitled 'Keeping faith in the Big Society' in which Communities Minister Andrew Stunell said:

Faith communities make a vital contribution to national life, guiding the moral outlook of many, inspiring great numbers of people to public service, providing succour to those in need. They are helping to bind together local communities and improve relations at a time when the siren call of extremism has never been louder… Inter faith activity is more important than ever in our work towards the Big Society, so I want to push for more inter faith dialogue and action rather than individual faith groups delivering social projects.[22]

Some faith leaders have expressed reservations about engagement with the so-called Big Society agenda in evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee on Public Administration's report on the Big Society.[23] In one example, the Bishop of Leicester stressed the limits of the Church of England's capacity to deliver public services stating that churches

cannot be an alternative to public service provision…. They cannot deliver the professionalism, they cannot deliver the resources, they cannot deliver the standards, they cannot deliver the consistency, and they should not be expected to. But what they can do is add value, they can mobilise volunteers, they can support initiatives, and in localities they can do things that are small and transformational.[24]

Critics of faith-based providers

Despite the encouraging rhetoric from politicians, there remain vociferous critics and sceptics about the role of faith groups in delivering public services. They range from the cautious to the

downright hostile, and offer an assortment of criticisms and concerns that merit consideration.

First, it is argued that faith-based organisations are at greater risk than secular organisations of being discriminatory towards their employees and service users, or overzealous in their proselytising, at the very worst, making the receipt of services contingent on participation in religious services. Derek McAuley, chief officer of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, told the Public Administration Select Committee that he had concerns: 'Some religious groups… could pursue policies and practices that result in discrimination against marginalised groups, particularly in service provision and the employment of staff.' In particular, he suggested that people who were in an unmarried relationship or divorced, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered could find themselves subject to discrimination.[25]

For example, World Vision, an international Christian charity that focuses on humanitarian work, claims that 'staff commitment to core Christian beliefs… is essential for maintaining our Christian identity'. It defends this by drawing a parallel with other organisations, such as those working for animal rights or climate change, which would be unlikely to hire an avid hunter or climate sceptic.[26]

One of the most well-known debates in this context pertains to the right of faith groups to exempt themselves from the Equalities Act of 2010. The act makes it unlawful in the provision of services to discriminate against people with certain protected characteristics, such as ethnicity and race, or sexual orientation. However, according to Rosie Chapman, Director of Policy at the Charity Commission,

The law recognises that some charities are set up to help particular groups in society because of disadvantage or for clear social objectives. It therefore specifically allows charities in these circumstances to depart from the principle and the Commission's guidance summarises the position for charities.[27]

One of the more high-profile examples of faith groups coming up against the Equalities Act are the continued appeals

from Catholic Care, an adoption charity based in Leeds, to gain permission to discriminate against same-sex couples. While an exemption was denied (because it was deemed as 'not for the public benefit'), others have been upheld in certain circumstances. For instance, in August 2011 two Roman Catholic nurses won the right not to work in an abortion clinic after they accused the NHS of breaching equality laws. Tim Ross, formerly religious affairs editor of the *Telegraph*, has written that this is the first case in 'which the Equality Act has been used successfully to defend a "pro-life" position as a philosophical belief and could have implications for other Christian medical staff'.[28]

At the very least, some in the community who need access to services might be put off by the fact that the local provider of that service is religious or of a religion that they are unfamiliar with and thus feel uncomfortable engaging with.

On its website, the British Humanist Association (BHA) declares:

We believe that the problems associated with having religious organisations as public service suppliers and providers are so varied and so great, that it is our firm view that no publicly-funded, comprehensive and statutory public service, to which all citizens have an entitlement, should be contracted out to a religious organisation until the law has been changed to protect service users and employees from discrimination.[29]

The BHA argues that religious organisations should no longer be exempt from the Equalities Act 2010 and other equality regulations relating to religion, belief or sexual orientation.

Another criticism of faith-based service providers is that they inevitably lose the virtues that make them so valuable in the first place – their volunteers, as well as their religious motivation – as they are forced to conform to a secular commissioning process. For example, John-Paul King cautioned against faith groups taking public money in a recent *Guardian* Comment is Free article, arguing that larger faith-based organisations offer little in the way of extra benefit (compared with their secular counterparts). Instead, he argues, the value of faith-based

organisations comes from them remaining free from the obligations and restrictions of government money, and doing work on a smaller scale with their own social capital of volunteers and motivated paid staff.[30]

A third argument is directed primarily at faith schools, and contends that the state should not be promoting religion and that young people in particular should receive a uniform and balanced education rather than one heavily slanted towards one religion. In 2005, Chief Schools Inspector David Bell said:

I worry that many young people are being educated in faith-based schools, with little appreciation of their wider responsibilities and obligations to British society. This growth in faith schools needs to be carefully but sensitively monitored by government to ensure that pupils receive an understanding of not only their own faith but of other faiths and the wider tenets of British society.[31]

Just how valuable are faith groups in providing services?

One important consideration in light of such criticisms is the question of empirical demonstration of value. Are faith-based organisations particularly good at delivering public services, thus strengthening the argument for their inclusion? For this report, we reviewed the available evidence on this question, much of which is inconclusive. It is clear from a body of research – including our report *Faithful Citizens* – that religious citizens are more likely to volunteer their time and money than their secular counterparts. However, the value of this contribution – and the cost it saves the government – is difficult to quantify. At present there is no national empirical survey of the contribution of volunteer hours to the cost effectiveness of faith groups. This would be difficult to accomplish for several reasons, including the huge number and range of organisations, and the fact that volunteer hours are usually not 'clocked' in the way that employment hours are.

There are a few regional and local studies that have attempted to estimate the worth of faith group volunteer hours.

A 2003 study from the East of England Faiths Council, Faith in the East of England, estimated that the value of faith community volunteer work to the region was around £30 million per annum.[32] In the north west, a 2005 report by the Northwest Regional Development Agency found that volunteers in the region contributed around 8.1 million volunteer hours per annum, the equivalent of 4,815 full time jobs, valued at between £61 million and £65 million a year.[33] A report by Gweini (the Council for the Christian Voluntary Sector in Wales) on the contribution of faith groups in Wales found that 42,000 volunteers provide just under 80,000 volunteer hours a week – equivalent to 2,000 full-time workers – at an estimated value of £43.8 million, assuming that these services are provided at the average hourly wage rate in Wales of £11.57, 48 weeks a year.[34]

However, as pointed out above, some faith-based organisations may lose their ability to recruit volunteers as they become commissioned public service providers. Our review was unable to uncover solid evidence about whether this was in fact the case, though there are a number of anecdotes that suggest that it is. Nor were we able to find evidence about the extra value of large faith-motivated service providers compared with their secular counterparts which have been commissioned by government or local authorities. A report by the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) argued that there has been a tendency to exaggerate how much stored capital faith groups have and can deliver to public services. However, it emphasises the cost effectiveness of faith groups in precluding the need to access such services, and to complement the work of the state rather than act as its instrument.[35]

2   Faithful service providers

In this chapter we present findings from our research on 20 different case studies of faith-motivated service providers across four policy areas: employment and training; work with young people; integration and community cohesion; and drugs and alcohol rehabilitation. These policy areas were chosen because of their current saliency, and claims about the particular effectiveness of faith-based service providers. Before presenting our findings under three broad categories, we first provide some background to the four policy areas we chose.

Policy areas

Employment and training

Almost all religious institutions see providing support for the most vulnerable in society as a key objective, and their work in this area is well known. Most religious institutions also recognise the value of productive work and employment to provide meaning and structure in people's lives – idleness being the devil's plaything, as the saying goes. Vulnerable individuals in society often need the basics (shelter and food), but eventually the path to stability and a meaningful life requires finding employment. The role of faith groups in helping citizens into employment has been less well noted. Given this lack of attention, as well as the Government's ambitious Work Programme, we've chosen to focus on the contribution of faith groups to this policy area.

We interviewed employees at five organisations that currently provide (or at one point provided) some form of employment support broadly conceived. The organisations include Christians Against Poverty, the St Saviour's Community Centre in Folkestone, SPEAR Hammersmith, Faith Regen and

City Gateway. Not all of these organisations are specifically faith-motivated – for example, St Saviour's Community Centre is completely distinct from St Saviour's Church, although it is based in the Church's building and receives other direct and indirect (moral) support. Moreover, not all of these organisations provide standard employment-based services, such as job clubs and CV workshops. For example, Christians Against Poverty focuses on teaching the broader life skills, including debt advice and management – but also the life skills that often act as significant barriers to employment. All of the organisations are connected to faith or a faith institution in one way or another, and are working on initiatives that deal with helping people to move from welfare to work.

Youth work

In the Demos report *Faithful Citizens* we found that those who belonged to a 'church or religious organisation' in the UK were particularly active in volunteering for 'youth work' compared with their secular counterparts and religious and non-religious citizens across Europe. With rising youth unemployment and cuts to youth services, faith groups may be called on increasingly to provide services for young people.

Youth unemployment in the UK has reached nearly 20 per cent – bringing the total of young people out of work to approximately 1 million. At the same time, across England, youth services have been hit by government-imposed public spending cuts. According to the Confederation of Heads of Young People's Services, by April 2011, over £100 million had been cut from local authority youth services, including children's services, libraries and youth clubs.[36] Combined with the trebling of university tuition fees and the cutting of the Educational Maintenance Allowance, these cuts to youth services are creating a difficult climate and short-term future for young people. The extent to which the Big Society – including faith groups – can step in to plug these gaps is up for debate.

For this report we interviewed faith-based groups providing advice and guidance, employment training, education and

mentoring and sports activities. In addition to SPEAR Hammersmith and City Gateway (which work primarily with young people) mentioned above, the organisations we interviewed included the Muslim Youth Helpline, Newham Youth for Christ, World Sports Ministries, Ambassadors in Sport and the East London Mosque. The Muslim Youth Helpline was established in 2004 and aims to provide culturally and religiously sensitive peer support to young British Muslims. World Sports Ministries and Ambassadors in Sport are international 'youth-ministry' organisations that seek to use sport to help disadvantaged young people and expose them to Christian teachings; for this report we focused on their work in the borough of Newham in east London. The East London Mosque is one of the oldest and largest mosques in the UK, and has the largest array of community services. These include primary and secondary schools, as well as mentoring and academic support in addition to other activities.

Integration and community cohesion

The integration of existing immigrant communities and community cohesion between different communities has been important and vexing policy areas in the UK for at least the past 15 years. The 2001 riots in the towns of Bradford, Burnley and Oldham, and the attacks of 7 July 2005, provoked increasing concerns about white and minority ethnic and religious groups (especially Muslims) leading segregated lives and being mutually suspicious of one another. There was also a greatly increased concern that a small minority of young British Muslims could be drawn into supporting the al Qaeda ideology and potentially becoming involved in plotting an attack against their fellow Britons. Owing to the self-expressed religious motivation of many of these home-grown 'terrorists', faith leaders and groups were considered to be particularly well placed to assist with the Government's Prevent agenda, which aimed to prevent radicalisation. While many groups have worked on this policy area, the response in general from community stakeholders was one of resistance to the Government's Prevent Strategy, which

many argued demonised and stigmatised all British Muslims as potential supporters of the al Qaeda ideology.

We interviewed representatives from the Near Neighbours programme, the Christian Muslim Forum, Building Bridges in Pendle, the Gujurat Hindu Society and the London Buddhist Centre in Tower Hamlets. The Near Neighbours Programme was started by the Archbishop's Council and the Church Urban Fund in order to encourage the church to give funding for programmes that benefit communities, and is now supported in part by the DCLG. The Christian Muslim Forum was formally launched in 2006 to create a bilateral forum bringing together various strands and denominations of Christianity and Islam in England. Building Bridges in Pendle was established in the 1980s by local volunteers and focuses on community-based cohesion, integration and education work. The Gujurat Hindu Society in Preston has existed as a religious and community centre for approximately 40–50 years, while the London Buddhist Centre has existed in east London since 1978 and provides meditation classes for those with depression and addiction issues.

Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

Drug and alcohol addiction continues to blight UK communities and damage families and individuals. The National Treatment Agency and the Government estimate that the annual cost to society of drug addiction is £15.4 billion, while the cost of alcohol-related harm is estimated at £21 billion.[37] There are currently an estimated 306,000 crack and heroin users in England.[38] The current Government's Drugs Strategy, published in 2010, has placed greater emphasis on abstinence-based recovery programmes.[39]

Evidence from the USA suggests that faith-based recovery programmes can be particularly effective across diverse populations. There are 23 studies that acknowledge benefits as a result of participation in faith-based programmes, ranging from reducing the homicide rate among youth and the recidivism rate among prisoners, to increasing self-confidence among high-risk youth and enhancing the attitudes, behaviour and lifestyle of

drug addicts.[40] Individuals who attend spiritually-based support programmes, such as the 12-step programmes of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, in addition to receiving treatment, are more likely to maintain sobriety.

We conducted profiles of four faith-based rehab providers in the UK: the Caleb project in Bradford, Kenward Trust, Spacious Places and Yeldall Manor. All of these organisations provide abstinence-based recovery programmes (some community-based and others residential), with the majority operating on a small scale. The Caleb Project, a community-based programme, was part of St John's Bowling Church in Bradford and ran for three years before coming to an end in 2010. They worked with an estimated 60 individuals a year with a success rate of 25 per cent. The Kenward Trust is a residential-based programme in Maidstone, Kent, that services approximately 150 people every year. Spacious Places is the only faith-based, 12-step abstinence programme in Leeds, with capacity to support approximately 30 service users in a year. Yeldall Manor refers to itself as a centre for 'rehabilitation through Christian discipleship'.

Research findings

Based on a review of previous research, and interviews with representatives from the organisations described above, we present our research findings under three broad themes. We argue the following:

- Faith provides a unique underpinning to the commitment and motivation required to provide services to the most vulnerable and difficult to reach in society.
- Faith-based service providers can be highly and uniquely effective in some policy areas, and are mainly motivated by the needs of the community rather than a desire to proselytise.
- Faith groups and institutions provide valuable and important 'permanent structures' within local communities that make them well placed to aid in addressing social problems.

The faith service ethos

One of the most consistent findings to emerge across the case studies was the importance of faith as the personal motivation of employees and volunteers working for faith-based service providers. Many faith groups and religious individuals are motivated to 'live their faith' by making sacrifices and working tirelessly to help those less fortunate in their community. For some, this work is motivated to spread the word of the religion in which they fervently believe. But these organisations appear to be in the minority. The majority, it seems, are motivated simply to help those less fortunate – citing core religious teachings and examples set by Jesus or Muhammad – without concerns or overt efforts at 'converting the masses'.

Therefore, our research suggests that in the context of public service provision, faith can provide a selfless motivation that is akin to the notion of a public sector ethos. Traditionally, it has been understood that factors that motivate workers in the public sector are intrinsically different from those informing private sector workers (see box 1). Public sector reforms over the last 25 years, especially those relating to contracting work, have been viewed as a danger to this shared ethos.[41]

Box 1   *Traditionally, the public sector ethos has been viewed as embodying five key principles:*

- *public interest – concern with serving the 'public good'*
- *motivation – altruistic as opposed to self-interest or profit-based forms of motivation*
- *loyalty – complex levels of loyalty: institutional, departmental, professional and community*
- *bureaucratic behaviour – honesty, integrity, impartiality and objectivity*
- *accountability – accepting the legitimacy of the political structure and standing aside personal views to implement policy*

Source: Hebson, Grimshaw and Marchington, 'PPPs and the changing public sector ethos'[42]

Many employees of faith organisations felt that faith provides a depth of motivation and strength of commitment that is unique. According to Jo Rice, Executive Director of the Resurgo Trust and the SPEAR Hammersmith programme, faith plays an essential role in underpinning the motivation of staff: 'it provides the hope that keeps us going, and the belief that positive change is possible' even in the face of significant obstacles and frustrations. All of SPEAR's employees are Christian, and are motivated by a belief that God's purpose is to make the world better – and that that is their duty as well ('we are loving them into a better place'). The same was specifically said of the employees at Newham Youth for Christ, Christians Against Poverty, Yeldall Manor and Kenward Trust.

Others spoke of their faith motivating them to work long hours for little, and in some cases no, pay. Mark Blythe, the coordinator for Ambassadors in Sport in Newham, was previously paid in his role in the organisation until the funding was cut. Blythe says his faith motivated him to continue doing the job even without payment: 'If I live by my faith – and I think this is what God wants me to do – then He provides for, though it has been a real test of faith... but ultimately it has made it stronger.' Jimmy Dale of Newham Youth for Christ felt that secular organisations often see their job as a nine-to-five one then switch off at the end of the day whereas 'in faith organisations, the guys doing youth work in particular have dedicated themselves to it'. He stresses that statutory, secular organisations play an important role but that 'there [isn't] a lot of time given over to developing young people' in those organisations, contrasting it with his faith-based group. Jo Rice of SPEAR Hammersmith also argued that the faith motivation has allowed the organisation to recruit staff to a highly qualified team, who are spurred by their faith and willing to work for less money – despite the concerns of some funders that a preference for Christian employees would narrow the employee recruitment pool and lead to less well-qualified staff.

In the words of CEO Eddie Stride, City Gateway wants to 'bring hope to the community... and demonstrate God's love in a practical way'. The organisation was started by a group of

workers from the City who were affiliated with a local church, and were concerned about the poverty and lack of skills in the area. The organisation is based on what Stride describes as a Christian ethos – although they do not highlight the underlying faith motivation too prominently. Stride believes that the Christian ethos is essential to the success of the organisation, and the drive and motivation of its employees, although it has a diverse staff of approximately 140 people with various views about faith. But according to Stride, all the employees in some way embody the core idea of the underlying ethos – which is being selfless and passionate about helping those less fortunate than they are. Stride feels that the ethos keeps the organisation focused on doing what's important – providing a high quality service to those who need it most: 'Process is just as important as outcome.' Stride is keen to note that while secular organisations can still be strongly motivated to help those in need, he sees the faith motivation as integral. Stride also contrasts the staff at City Gateway with those in the private sector, whose primary motivation is money. 'There can be really good secular organisations, just as there can be really bad religious organisations... but for us the religious ethos is incredibly important.'

Matt Barlow of Christians Against Poverty thinks there is a risk of diluting the faith commitment when being commissioned to provide public service delivery. Instead, the Government and local authorities need to allow faith-based organisations to recruit within their own ethos and this will actually create stronger and more effective organisations: 'For CAP, retaining the ethos of the organisation is more important than massive numbers of service users and delivery.' The representative we spoke to from Yeldall Manor also noted that the faith ethos was important: 'We believe it to be helpful,' she said.

Effective providers, not proselytisers

Critics argue that faith-based organisations are at greater risk of being discriminatory towards their employees and service users, or overzealous in their proselytising. Among the case studies that we undertook, we did not find any evidence of excessive or

aggressive proselytising among faith-based providers. Many provided services to community members of different faiths and no faith. Those who worked with young and vulnerable people were acutely aware of the need to be inclusive, keep religion 'in the background' and not abuse the power imbalance between service provider and user. Moreover, faith-motivated organisations appeared to be particularly effective service providers in a number of areas.

The overwhelming majority of case study organisations emphasised strict rules about non-proselytising. This was true in organisations that were more up front about their faith motivation and their religion, as well as others that kept their faith in the background and had multi-faith and no-faith employees.

For example, Christians Against Poverty said that faith was only articulated through service delivery if it was appropriate (eg for service users who are Christian). Matt Barlow, CEO of Christians Against Poverty, said that it was important for them that Christianity is mentioned in the name of the organisation for two reasons: so people will know what kind of organisation it is, and because of the importance of Christianity to the organisation's mission. As mentioned above, SPEAR Hammersmith – which works primarily with 16–24-year-olds – is also made up of all Christian staff who are motivated by a firm belief that God's purpose, and their duty as Christians, is to make the world better. But nonetheless, they maintain a strict policy of non-proselytising. Yeldall Manor has clients of other faiths and no faith as well. The representative we spoke to from Yeldall Manor said:

We are very open at the interview stage of what the programme entails. We are open to people of any faith or none; it is up to them whether they take or leave the Christian element of the programme.

According to Mark Blythe, the Newham coordinator of Ambassadors in Sport, religion is not discussed openly with young people because the organisation is sensitive and conscious of the vulnerability of the young people they work with. Blythe said that the only time religion is spoken about more openly is

when the programme is run in the church – then and only then is there more open 'values-led' engagement.

The faith element for the Muslim Youth Helpline is embodied in the commitment of the volunteers and the time they give, not in the religious advice or guidance directly given.

Eddie Stride of City Gateway is not shy about discussing his personal religious story and faith with everyone the organisation works with, from young apprentices to businesses and government ministers. However, Stride emphasises that he would never take or encourage one of the young people to go to church because of what he cites as an unavoidable power imbalance when you're working with young people. Jimmy Dale of Newham Youth for Christ has a similar view on an overt focus on religion:

As far as young people go, it's not massively important. Those that hold Christian faith themselves find the faith side more important but for young people who come from other faiths or none, it's just a lovely youth group and somewhere where they can belong.

In the drugs and alcohol rehabilitation field, it appears as if there has been a shift in recent years away from proselytising and making services contingent on compulsory attendance of religious services. One organisation, Yeldall Manor, maintains a focus on religion, and attendance of collective worship and bible study are part of the programme; however, as noted above, these elements are not compulsory.

According to Audrey Pie, a worker at Kenward Trust, the organisation was 'strongly evangelical' at first and only changed recently in order to abide by rules around inclusivity and be able to appeal to a wider range of people. Now, Pie says that the religious aspect of the work of the trust is available to everyone – and some people are gently encouraged to explore Christianity, but 'it is not forced on them'. For those who are interested, Kenward Trust has a link with the local vicar who offers them a 'kind of intro to Christianity' – but Pie is keen to stress that this is very much separate from the rehab programme. In the past – when the organisation was more evangelical – participants were

required to attend a weekly church service. Pie thinks that all faith-based drugs and alcohol programmes have shifted to being more inclusive, and have dropped attendance of faith services. Part of this shift is down to the requirements of funders. The funding for Kenward Trust generally comes through social services, for whom inclusiveness is a big concern ('it always comes down to inclusiveness…'). According to Pie, 'some staff would probably like to go further in encouraging Christianity, but they have to do what is required and abide by the principle of inclusiveness'.

The same was also true of drug and alcohol providers Spacious Places and the former Caleb Project based in Bradford. According to Graham Fell, Spacious Places is definitely not an 'evangelical charity' whose aim is to convert their service users: 'We are not here to convert or get you to church… our sole goal is recovery.' Similarly, Rev. Howard Astin of the Caleb Project said that despite many of the staff being religious (some of them ex-addicts and newfound Christians), the organisation wasn't overly Christian – but instead faith 'sort of existed in the background'.

Moreover, faith-based organisations appear particularly effective at delivering some services, such as drugs and alcohol rehabilitation. The Compassion Capital Fund, run by the US Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, acknowledged in 2002 that faith-based organisations are uniquely situated to service vulnerable populations such as impoverished families, prisoners in their rehabilitation and reintegration processes, children of prisoners, homeless individuals and high-risk youth.[43]

According to Howard Astin of the Caleb Project, the faith or spiritual element is essential and more effective because 'problems with addiction are usually rooted in deeper problems'. Graham Fell of Spacious Places said that in their feedback service users say that Spacious Places is different from other rehab providers because of the small size and thus the ability to develop a strong bond and relationship between staff and service users – which Fell thinks is integral to recovery.

Liz Carnelly of the Near Neighbours programme sees a number of benefits of faith-based organisations. They:

bring values of hope and compassion, and look at people in a holistic manner – they see the whole person – and are not solely concerned with just doing the job or whatever agenda they are responsible for [as some public service organisations are].

One example of a religious institution providing a holistic approach is the London Buddhist Centre, which runs a course called Breathing Spaces, which employs 'mindfulness' and meditation techniques to help with mental health and addiction issues.

According to Matt Barlow of Christians Against Poverty, critics of faith-based service providers lack

understanding about how positive an influence faith can be in someone's life. There's been a loss of understanding about the richness that faith can bring to society. In Bradford, I recognise the good that comes from my neighbours' Muslim faith, despite it not being the same as what I believe.

Similarly, Jimmy Dale of Newham Youth for Christ has noted that 'some people assume that because you're a Christian organisation, anybody with a negative experience of Christians will tar you with the same brush' and bemoans the view held by some that all Christians hold the same viewpoint, when in reality Christianity is a broad church of differing opinions.

Faithful community pillars

Most faith-led service provision takes place in local communities on a small scale. Every organisation we interviewed – from City Gateway to East London Mosque to Building Bridges in Pendle to a range of organisations in Newham, including Newham Youth for Christ, Ambassadors in Sport and London Citizens – had deep roots in their local communities. The Gujarat Hindu Society in Preston has been operating for approximately 40–50 years, while the East London Mosque is the oldest mosque in the UK. The London Buddhist Centre has been based in the same abandoned fire station in east London since 1978, while Yeldall Manor was founded in 1977. Governments often tend to adopt a

'year zero' approach to policy, creating new organisations and new initiatives without due regard to the importance of longevity and the consistency of local organisations and initiatives.

Almost all the faith-based organisations whose representatives we spoke to grew out of work with a local church or mosque, and often had employees who were from the local area. For example, the Caleb Project in Bradford started out as a 'low key church hall lunch sort of thing' in response to youth work undertaken by St John's Bowling Church. Newham Youth for Christ grew out of a desire of local churches to provide youth work. City Gateway has a strong and passionate connection with the local area: CEO Eddie Stride grew up in the area and still lives there, while approximately 25 per cent of staff members are apprentices from the local area. The East London Mosque has provided services to the local Muslim community for almost 100 years, starting with the first Muslim-sensitive funeral and burial service in London.

According to Emmanuel Gotora of TELCO and London Citizens, who has worked extensively with faith groups in east London and Newham, faith groups and institutions are key to community organising because they provide permanent structures in their communities with significant capital and motivation to address social problems.

Liz Carnelly of the Near Neighbours programme believes that one of the key values of faith-based service providers is that they are embedded in their communities, and 'not just outsiders coming in to tell them what to do'. This makes them particularly effective in reaching so-called 'hard-to-reach' groups in need of services around finding work, addressing debt, community cohesion and integration, and drugs and alcohol rehab. For Faith Regen – a charity that works across different faith communities and primarily with black and minority ethnic communities that share issues around worklessness – it was felt that the role of faith in the organisation was less as an underlying motivator, but instead more practical: faith groups and institutions are particularly effective at providing access to those in need of services.

Faith institutions also provide community assets such as buildings and volunteers. The majority of our case studies

highlight the integral role of both types of assets in local service delivery. For example, the St Saviour Community Centre provides employment services from its office in the local church building and is heavily dependent on an 'excellent' group of 20 volunteers. The Gujurat Hindu Society funds its activities through a social enterprise whereby it lets rooms in its building for local businesses and activities. Faith Regen relies heavily on local faith institutions providing access to buildings and spaces.

Despite this enduring permanence, short-term interests sometimes drive many policy initiatives that seek to engage faith groups, particularly in the area of community cohesion.

According to representatives from the Christian Muslim Forum, the key challenge they face is the number of cuts to services, and the often temporal nature of projects coupled with high expectations to deliver. Moreover, funding is often tied to various agendas that are sporadically supported and changed often – they described this as 'mission drift' – which engenders feelings of fatigue and undercuts motivations of people to engage in these issues.

There was also scepticism and suspicion among those we spoke to as to the true underlying motivation for government and local authorities funding cohesion work – the Government's Prevent counter terrorism strategy. The Muslim Youth Helpline had received funding from Prevent, which led to some criticism and controversy from their service users and others in the community. The helpline no longer receives Prevent funding, but staff argue that while they are opposed to Prevent – and the decision to accept the money was much debated within the organisation – they believed that the service they were providing was extremely valuable and thus it didn't matter where the funding came from.

As Liz Carnelly of Near Neighbours programme and Julian Bond of the Christian Muslim Forum argue, greater attention needs to be paid to developing long-term strategies that involve and engage faith groups in local communities. While some charities come and go depending on needs and policy priorities, faith institutions provide long-term pillars in their communities. According to Bhikhu Patel of the Gujurat Hindu Society in

Preston, there is a building or place of worship for every single major religion within 200 metres of each other. While they all attend local activities and festivals and generally get along OK, there is not much engagement across different faiths.

According to Bob McDonald of Building Bridges, there are often a number of misconceptions within communities about interfaith work, for example, that it requires compromising the integrity of one's faith. Liz Carnelly said that the most difficult thing about interfaith initiatives was getting people to step out of their comfort zone and think that there is a value to engaging with others – and this applies within a single faith let alone across different faith groups. Carnelly notes that the work is often easier in London, because of the high levels of diversity, but is much more difficult in highly segregated communities like in the north west – with some notable suggestions, for example Building Bridges in Burnley.

One successful interfaith operation has been Faithbook, set up and run by Barnet Borough Council. It was established with funding from other groups such as youth-based service provider Connexions. The Local Government Association has referred to Faithbook as a way for support networks to develop and is cited as a positive example of the collaboration between local government and faith groups.[44] The Faithbook website includes a directory of activities going on throughout the borough provided by religious organisations. The motivation behind this aspect of the site came from the fact that 'young people had no one place to go to find out what was available in their area'.[45] The desire to 'build positive opportunities for young people' is considered one of the main motivations for the setting up of the directory.[46] What makes this remarkable is that it is focused on faith-based activities, and this has, at least partially, been motivated by a desire to create positive interaction between communities.

Barnet Council refers to its borough as multicultural and Faithbook provides information on the numerous multi-faith activities that go on in the borough. The recognition that the population is not religiously homogenous and therefore requires a level of education about other faiths is one of the motivations of the current use of Faithbook. Providing this

information, alongside details of faith-based and multi-faith activities, can be seen as a way to ensure positive interaction between communities.

One approach to better harness the fixity and benefits of faith institutions is a shift from interfaith work that is primarily dialogue-based to more social-action type projects. This shift is already occurring, according to Carnelly and Bob McDonald of Building Bridges in Pendle, but it's still in its early days. Near Neighbours makes a distinction between 'social action' on the one hand, and 'social interaction' on the other: while the former is the ultimate goal, 'sometimes you need social interaction before they will come together for social action'. Nonetheless, McDonald sees a significant need for work that attempts to break down the segregation and polarisation that exists between communities in the north west in particular, and believes that the most effective way is to inspire them to tackle local social issues jointly.

While many in faith-based organisations spoke about good relationships with funders, including the Government and local authorities, those in other organisations described funders as wary and hostile about the religious aspect of service organisations. The experience of the Christian Muslim Forum is that funders of all kinds – from Government, local authorities to grant-making trusts (with the exception of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation) are hesitant to fund projects or organisations that involve faith. As a result, the Christian Muslim Forum often treads a line between diluting the religious aspect of their work without losing vision, principles and credibility. Newham Youth for Christ has found that some projects involving schools have been cancelled because of the organisation's Christian affiliation, despite the lack of overt Christianity in the projects.

Moreover, commissioning processes tend to favour big service providers, rather than local faith-motivated providers. According to Graham Fell of Spacious Places, applying for statutory funding is 'very difficult' and generally aimed at big providers ('there [are] myriad application forms to wade through'… but 'you can't franchise the heart'). Nonetheless, he has been working to develop local partnerships in order to

improve chances of receiving statutory funding. In contrast, Carnelly notes that many local authorities are very good at engaging with faith groups, but that there is sometimes the perception that faith groups are cheap, and/or willing to do what is difficult without additional support.

3 From service to social justice

While merely skimming the surface of faith-based provision in the UK, our case studies allow us to draw a number of conclusions about faith-based service provision. Some of these recommendations are meant to provoke debate, and would require further research to substantiate their viability as well as potential unintended consequences.

Our recommendations pertain to the issue of faith-based organisations being provided with public funding to deliver public services, by either government or local authorities. As mentioned in the introduction, nearly all faith-based service provision is voluntary – based on the money, toil and effort of faithful citizens and institutions themselves, without receiving public money. There is little we can say about these activities, except that they are extremely important to local communities, and that faith groups that are especially active should be commended.

It is worth saying, however, that while this is the so-called Big Society at work, resources are just as tight for faith institutions across the country as they are for the Government, which cannot assume that faith institutions will be able to step in where services are cut, even if they are motivated to do so by the needs of the community and their concern for the vulnerable in society. At the same time, government and local authorities should continue to consider commissioning faith groups to provide public services, in line with the recommendations we make below.

Maintain the faith ethos

Our research suggests that faith provides a strong motivating ethos for service providers across a range of policy areas. Yet there appears to be a tension between this ethos and the size and

funding arrangements of faith-based service providers. Faith-motivated providers – and their financial supporters – should prioritise the maintenance of their underlying ethos and motivation at the expense of increasing the size and scale of their service provision. Commissioners should not just assume that if a service is successful and well run, it should inevitably be scaled up. Part of the service's success may be down to the faith ethos, which appears to become diluted the larger and more mainstream a service-providing organisation becomes.

Work together towards shared goals

Different faith groups in the UK are united by the faith service ethos, but also local area social problems around unemployment and drugs and alcohol. In the area of community cohesion, organisations and institutions of different faiths need to be strongly encouraged to work together in the context of local social action projects. Many people in the sector have spoken about a new shift in interfaith work from dialogue to more social-action-based activities. This strategy should underpin all interfaith work in the UK.

There should also be greater consideration as to whether faithful service providers that receive public funding should be required to work in conjunction with other local groups of a different faith. This could help to achieve policy objectives (eg doing youth work or employment training services) while assisting cohesion as a by-product. However, when working on their own is integral to the ethos of a faith group, they should be able to be exempt from this requirement, as they are from the provisions of the Equalities Act and employment law (bearing in mind the right of the commissioner to take this exemption into consideration when awarding a contract). At the very least, local authorities should aim to provide a coordination function to ensure that organisations from different faiths are not providing duplicate services, and encourage them to work together to increase effectiveness.

To facilitate this, local authorities should be encouraged to undertake a 'faith and service audit' of their local communities to identify areas of further collaboration between different faith groups. One example of this is Barnet Council's local Faithbook model, discussed in the previous chapter. There have been some national-level efforts to map the service provision activities of faith-based organisations – most notably the Faith Based Regeneration Network. Local 'mapping' by local authorities could be more effective at measuring the value of voluntary faith-based provision (in order to fill gaps left by public sector cuts), commissioning small-scale service providers that can provide social value and find areas of synergy in which different faith groups can be encouraged to deliver services in conjunction (and thereby achieving community cohesion and interfaith work as a by-product).

Freedom to proselytise

The Government, local authorities and other funders must not be squeamish or anxious about the faith aspect of faith-motivated service providers: it appears that the majority do not proselytise in an aggressive manner in the context of service delivery. Going further, nor should they demand that faith-based providers not proselytise at all. Critics inevitably cite concerns around proselytising as a reason not to support faith-based providers. The reality is that the concept and act of proselytising is highly varied and subtle. Aggressive proselytising – such as making services contingent on attending religious instruction – should be highly discouraged, but assuming that there is a plurality of service providers, there should be nothing wrong with service providers openly discussing their faith, particularly to those service users who are interested in learning more and/or open to a spiritual element. We should welcome and encourage a plurality of service provider types, and that should not exclude faith-based providers that are open about their faith, motivation and desire (to some extent) to spread their beliefs.

The social value of faith providers

Funders should be less squeamish about faith-based providers, and in some instances faith-motivated providers should be strongly considered over private sector providers because of their permanence and importance to local communities. Even in an era of fiscal austerity, efficiency should not be the sole measure of which organisations are commissioned or supported to provide services to local communities. Government, local authorities and other funders should consider additional *social* values when commissioning public service providers. Some examples of social value that could be considered by service commissioners include:

· history and longevity of an organisation or institution in a local area
· quantity and quality of personal relationships between the organisation and the target service users of an area (eg through surveys about preference and name recognition)
· long-term future plans of the service provider for their continued presence in the local area (similar to the concept of 'legacy' in the Olympics)
· community activities outside the service provided
· number of employees in the organisation from the local area
· local community users' preference
· cumulative investment in the local area by the organisation, over time, including but not limited to the type of service that is being commissioned

While a number of different types of organisations could score well on these additional measures of social value, our research suggests that this is also true of many faith-based service providers. The intrinsic and selfless ethos of faith-motivated providers, the connection they provide with the past, their cultural and moral framework, and the permanence of faith institutions suggest that there are additional value-based reasons for supporting faith-based service providers.

At present, public service commissioning heavily favours very large companies and charities. There is a need to redress this imbalance in favour of small-scale locally based communities; progressives and traditional conservatives should support this

principle in the same way they support 'mom and pop' local shops against the likes of big commercial chains like Tesco, Sainsbury and Starbucks, which homogenise communities.

The emphasis on the relationship between service users and providers – which appears to be better within the context of small-scale faith-based provision, rather than large-scale private providers – should be given greater consideration in the commissioning process. Quoting Eddie Stride of City Gateway again, 'Process is just as important as outcome.'

Consider faith-based providers where effective

Faith-motivated organisations should be supported in providing services where a holistic or spiritual approach appears to be particularly effective – for example, in abstinence-based drug and rehabilitation programmes. Government and local authorities should approach supporting faith groups in the context of a long-term strategy, rather than short-term initiatives. Faith-based providers need to be more fully integrated into the Government's Work Programme and drug and alcohol strategies. Our research suggests that small-scale faith-based providers are operating on the edges of these programmes. In the case of the Work Programme, faith-based providers often receive referrals from the big private providers, without accompanying funding, and without being fully linked in with the Government's strategy. Examples of best practice need to be more effectively shared between the larger private sector providers and the smaller faith-based and other charity organisations. Moreover, most people we spoke to had not yet seen a shift to abstinence-based programmes in the commissioning process for drugs and alcohol rehabilitation, despite the Government's rhetoric.

From service to social justice

According to some experts, many faith-based organisations

can be regarded as engaging in a form of resistance to neoliberalism, bringing alternative theo-ethics and geographies of care performatively into being in a society where government has lost touch with the practical and emotional needs of local communities.[47]

Following the example and work of Citizens UK, progressives should seek to work with social-justice-minded faith groups and institutions as community organisers addressing the roots of social justice problems, rather than being mere service providers. There are a number of national faith-based charities that are highly successful and effective as advocates on a wide range of social justice issues. Organisations like Christian Aid, Church Action on Poverty, the Church Urban Fund and Tearfund are incredibly effective advocates on social justice issues. Progressive politicians – secular and religious – should seek to work with and support these organisations, and encourage local faith-based service providers to work in support of advocacy. Successful campaigns – such as Make Poverty History and the Jubilee Campaign – had their origins in faith-based organisations. One of the most high profile examples in recent years was the London Citizens campaign for the living wage, in which faith groups and institutions throughout London demonstrated hugely significant organisational capacities and moral authority.

Appendix: Case study organisations

Ambassadors in Sport (AIS) was founded in 1990 in Bolton, England, to 'partner with churches and Christian groups to develop grass roots football ministry'. Every Friday evening they hold five-a-side football matches with young people to prevent engagement with gangs. AIS provides the kit and referee, and anywhere between 30 and 50 participate every week.

Building Bridges in Pendle began in the 1980s started by local volunteers to focus on community-based cohesion, integration and education work, and has operated as a limited liability company since the 1990s. It tends to receive funding for specific projects, and has received funding from Pendle Borough Council, Lancashire County Council and the Church Urban Fund.

The Caleb Project was a drugs and alcohol rehabilitation programme based in Bradford that ran for 13 years but came to an end in 2010. The Caleb Project adopted the 12-step approach and a community (as opposed to residential) rehab centre with programmes lasting up to a year. The programme was abstinence-based**.**

The Christian Muslim Forum was initiated by the Archbishop of Canterbury (who is the organisation's patron) to create a bilateral forum bringing together various strands and denominations of Christianity and Islam in England. The national organisation was formally launched in 2006 and its aim is to provide a variety of activities for the community and public, family, youth and women, and work on educational, international and media issues.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) provides face-to-face support on issues related to debt and financial management. Staff describe their work as more holistic than this, however, as debt issues often require broader life changes. They help around 500 new families every month, and estimate that a small proportion of service users are Christian (between 10 per cent and 20 per cent), approximately 2–3 per cent are from other faiths and the rest are not religious.

City Gateway is based in Tower Hamlets and provides skills training courses for young people and women in the borough with the goal of moving them into employment. It also provides apprenticeships to young people and runs a number of social enterprises that help provide services and resources to City Gateway and the wider community.

East London Mosque is the oldest and largest mosque in the UK. It has a rich history of providing services to local Muslims, beginning with the provision of a Muslim funeral and burial service. It provides a wide range of services, many of which focus on young people. The mosque also runs a primary and a secondary school, London East Academy.

Faith Regen is a charity based in London that works across different faith communities and primarily with black and minority ethnic communities that share issues around worklessness, poor skills and literacy, and lack of qualifications. It was founded in 2001 and originally funded by the Government with the aim of fostering cohesion while delivering employability training at the same time.

The Gujarat Hindu Society is based in Preston, and has existed for approximately 40–50 years. According to Bhikhu Patel, the main purpose of the society is to 'provide spiritual guidance to their community'. One of the key activities promoting interfaith and community work is visiting schools and holding open days at the centre to explain the Hindu faith and culture. The society also

participates in any local activities that other groups are participating in, for example faith forums, and black and minority ethnic groups.

The *Kenward Trust* is a residential, abstinence-based organisation founded in 1968 and based in Maidstone, Kent. It was founded by a wealthy Christian couple, Ray and Violet Sindon, who sold their farm and moved into the Kenward Estate to provide care for homeless men with drug and alcohol addiction. According to Audrey Pie, a worker at Kenward Trust, the organisation was 'strongly evangelical' at first and only changed its stance recently in order to abide by rules around inclusivity and to be able to appeal to a wider range of people. The Kenward Trust has 50 staff and approximately 150 people attend the rehab each year.

London Buddhist Centre (LBC) has been based in east London since 1978. According to its website (www.lbc.org.uk/about4.htm), 'the LBC teaches meditation and Buddhism in a way that is relevant to contemporary western life'. The LBC offers courses focusing on meditation for beginners to more advanced practitioners. It works in schools to teach about meditation and Buddhism, and offers drop-in evenings and events for young people (under the age of 35) that focus on a Buddhist approach to a number of life issues including sexual relationships, family and enlightenment, work and money.

London Citizens is the London branch of Citizens UK, an organisation that focuses on encouraging and facilitating community organising. The founding chapter was the East London Communities Organisation (TELCO). It has worked extensively with faith groups, institutions and organisations in the borough of Newham on issues such as the living wage.

The Muslim Youth Helpline (MYH) was founded by Mohammed Mamdani in August 2001 when he was 18 to provide a peer-support service to young British Muslims. MYH ran a year-long pilot scheme, and the service received 400 calls in the first six

months. Following the pilot programme, the service was officially launched in December 2002.

The *Near Neighbours Programme* was started by the Archbishop Council and the Church Urban Fund in order to encourage the church to give funding for programmes that benefit communities. Their three key areas of work include faith leader training programmes, providing support to community groups, and a young leader-training programme aimed at 18–30-year-olds. The programme has four locations in the UK: Birmingham, Bradford, east London and Leicester.

Newham Youth for Christ was originally set up through an Anglican Church taking on student youth workers from university to take placement courses and run programmes for local young people. The main aims are to equip and empower local churches to offer provision for young people, to reach out to young people about faith through programmes such as school-based mentoring, to promote joined-up youth work across the borough, and to create a strong support network of Christian youth workers.

Spacious Places is a community day (rather than residential) treatment centre based in Leeds. The organisation has existed for five years, but has only been 'properly off the ground for three and a half years'. According to Graham Fell, Spacious Places is a Christian organisation – all of its trustees and staff are Christians – and the only drug and alcohol service in Leeds based on the 12-step abstinence programme.

SPEAR Hammersmith was founded by Tom Jackson through his work with St Paul's Church in Hammersmith. SPEAR provides a 'free' and 'interactive' six-week course for unemployed young people to help develop interview techniques, confidence and better communication skills among other core skills.

St Saviour's Community Centre (SSCC) is based in Folkestone, Kent, housed in a church building. SSC is described by its sole employee as an 'outreach arm of the church', but is otherwise completely separate. In addition to the one paid staff member, SSCC depends on an 'excellent' group of 20 volunteers at any given time. They see approximately 30 people per week, and have helped 31 people into full-time employment since January 2011.

World Sports Ministries (WSM) was founded by Grant Sheppard in the UK in 1999. Its mission is to use the medium of sport to proselytise and recruit people to Christianity who are often difficult to reach. Specifically, WSM helps churches establish community sports teams. Branches of WSM have been established in countries outside the UK, and in Bristol, Bath and Newham.

Yeldall Manor is a residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre in Reading, which was started in 1977. According to its constitution it provides rehabilitation through 'Christian discipleship', but offers a broad range of programmes that do not include Christian elements. Staff treat approximately 20 individuals at any given time, and about 50–60 per year.

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The Demos Inquiry into Faith, Community and Society set out to explore the role of faith in British society and politics. It investigated the relationship between religious belief, values and political motivation, and looked at the role that faith groups play in delivering public services. This collection brings together the research conducted for the inquiry, and includes a new essay by the inquiry's chair, Stephen Timms MP.

The first report of the inquiry, *Faithful Citizens*, found both that religious people are more active citizens, and that they are more likely to be politically progressive, putting a greater value on equality than the non-religious. The second report, *Faithful Providers*, argued that local authorities stand to benefit both financially and through improved community relations if religious groups were brought into service delivery.

The essay draws on this research base to discover how, at a time when the number of active faith group participants in Britain far exceeds the number of members of all the political parties put together, politicians can make common cause with this vital constituency.

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