

MAECENATA FOUNDATION

PRESS RELEASE

28th October, 2020

NEW PUBLICATION:

UNDERSTANDING CIVIL SOCIETY IN EUROPE

Differences in activities, legal frameworks, relationships with the state and the private sector, and trends notwithstanding, there can be no doubt that a European civil society exists and that it is increasingly active in the public sphere.

This is one of the findings of a research project commissioned by *Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen*, Stuttgart, undertaken by the Maecenata Institute for Philanthropy and Civil Society, Berlin, and published today. The authors, Siri Hummel, Laura Pfirter, Johannes Roth and Rupert Graf Strachwitz, also maintain that civil society is not a short-lived fashion, but belongs to European cultural traditions, has well established structures and legitimacy, and will remain a decisive factor and indeed driving force in the development of Europe. Peter Fischer contributes an analysis on the implications of European Community Law for civil society.

The study attempts to give a brief and condensed insight into the composition of civil society in Europe. In particular, it assesses whether there is a European civil society and to what extent it is visible and active in the European public sector. Despite the striking differences with regard to functions, parameters, relationship with the state and the market, and current trends, neither the existence of a European civil society nor its sustainable positioning in the public sphere can be denied. In addition, the issue which movements, organisations and institutions are to be considered part of civil society must be regarded as largely and transnationally settled. Currently, the potential of a dynamic civil society in the defence and further development of an open, cosmopolitan, and democratic society appears to be of particular importance.

Please find the complete publication here:

English: <https://doi.org/10.17901/AKBP1.12.2020>

German: <https://doi.org/10.17901/AKBP1.11.2020>

The Maecenata Foundation is an independent think tank that focusses on civil society, civic engagement, and philanthropy.