



TRUST IN CRISIS: The Emergence of the Quiet Citizen

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01

Preface

'Without trust we cannot stand' – Confucius.

Confucius told his disciple Tze-kung that three things are needed for government: weapons, food and trust. If a ruler can't hold on to all three, he should give up the weapons first and the food next. Trust should be guarded to the end, as without trust we cannot stand.

European politicians, policymakers and economists have, in recent years, commented on the decline of trust. But although trust is widely used in economics and politics, it is not primarily an economic or political term – it is first and foremost about relations, human relations. Trust is relational; it cannot be commanded but needs to be given, freely. To understand trust, we have to understand human nature.

Francis Fukayama, in his book *Trust: The Social Virtues and The Creation of Prosperity*, defines trust as 'the expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest and cooperative behaviour, based on commonly shared norms on the part of other members of that community'.¹

Trust is even more significant in a crisis situation and today, Europeans are regularly informed by the media and political leaders that they are facing a number of crises such as the 'migration crisis' because of an influx of refugees and the consequences of austerity – a 'social crisis' – in the wake of the 'financial' and 'euro crisis'.

It is for this reason that the Woolf Institute undertook the **Trust in Crisis Project** so as to better understand how the experience of crises affected relations among communities – particularly those of faith and other minority groups – and the formation of trust. A team of researchers examined the impact of perceptions of crisis on community-based initiatives, cooperative action and local solidarity in Berlin, London, Paris and Rome from 2014–17.

I would like to thank the Templeton World Charitable Foundation as well as an anonymous donor for their support. I would also like to express my appreciation to the authors of this report, Dr Jan-Jonathan Bock and Dr Sami Everett and the three editors, Dr Julian Hargreaves, Asher Kessler and Austin Tiffany. The Co-Principal Investigator for much of the project was Dr Shana Cohen and the research team included Dr Christina Fuhr. I am grateful to them all.

I have been encouraged by the extent of interest the research has generated, particularly the finding that trust in the ability of local initiatives to respond to needs remains strong, indeed stronger, than in the state. Although each city differs in its levels of historical welcome and integration of ethnic and religious diversity, a trend emerged: *local* initiatives responded to crisis in ways the centralised state could not, and often doing so across religious and ethnic lines. This research has shown that trust *can* develop – and grow – at the grassroots, even during times of crisis.

Indeed, as the sub-title of this report suggests, our research indicates that the significant challenges faced by communities across Europe are resulting in new forms of citizenship mobilised through publicly-minded activism and capable of uniting seemingly disparate social groups across religious and ethnic divides. The authors identified and wish to celebrate the role of the 'quiet citizen' – an individual who contributes positively to her or his neighbourhood and community, often without recognition or attention, through the completion of 'quiet work' – local acts of kindness and generosity borne out of a shared sense of social responsibility. This was recently demonstrated in the UK after the London and Manchester attacks and the Grenfell Tower fire when individuals from local communities opened their homes to one another, provided help in a time of need and trust prevailed.

This 'quiet work' strengthens bonds of interdependency and friendship between citizens and social groups and, on a more practical level, is capable of addressing local needs more immediately and more effectively than national institutions. Indeed, without the contribution of the 'quiet citizen', many of us might find it hard to trust one another and to live peaceably together.

I believe this is an important report and ask that its findings be widely considered across the political spectrum by policy makers, government officials, religious leaders and the wider public. I commend this report to you.



Dr Edward Kessler MBE

Founder Director, Woolf Institute

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Executive Summary

'Crisis' is a word used frequently to describe the social and economic challenges faced by communities across Europe. Diverse scenarios ranging from financial uncertainty, the influx of refugees, and the integration of minority communities have been increasingly discussed and debated by politicians, commentators and members of the public using terms borrowed from the lexicon of crises and crisis-management. This report examines how the notion and perception of crisis, and the underlying conditions categorised by the term, affect relations among communities in the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Italy.

The so-called financial crisis of 2008 preceded a range of economic strategies and interventions across Europe, the use of which generated widespread debate around the legitimacy, credibility, and viability of the continent's financial institutions. Against this backdrop of financial challenges, the intervening decade witnessed a sharp rise in the numbers of refugees arriving at Europe's eastern and southern borders (among others, Italy); many of whom continued their journeys westwards and northwards towards France, Germany and the United Kingdom. The so-called refugee crisis stoked long-standing debates around minority communities, levels of integration and wider social cohesion (referred to in the British context as a crisis of both migration and immigration). Particular grievances around economics and immigration conflated as public administrations and services strained to meet increasing public demands with decreasing public resources. Often related to migration and minority communities, security concerns around terrorist violence offered opportunities to apply the 'crisis' label within other contexts: whether in relation to individual acts of terrorism or the state responses to them, or to the underlying social conditions and political factors underpinning both.

In the UK, political and media debates around Brexit reflected, and perhaps crystallised, public anxieties across several distinct registers: dissatisfaction with centralised government and the institutions of the European Union; fears around the actual and perceived consequences of current patterns of migration to Europe; and concerns around the disparities between those at

the top and bottom of society. Use of the term 'crisis' within this context transcended political boundaries. For some, 'crisis' described the perceived failings of the mainstream political system (both British and European-wide): a failure to represent the electorate, to control immigration, and to protect provisions for work and welfare. For others, the term described uneasiness at the prospects of leaving the EU, the apparent rise of populist and nationalist politics, and the predicted economic consequences. As the UK now prepares to leave the European Union, some suggest that trust itself is in crisis: with public fears and anger channelled nationally at governments and financial institutions, and more locally at those with perceived differences.²

However, this report suggests that trust within communities can be strengthened in times of apparent crisis. Despite the diversity and prolonged state of the crises detailed above, each crisis has energised trust within local communities. These local forms of trust can be found in faith communities working side-by-side, supplying food banks and confronting the needs associated with refugee resettlement and cohesion. In other settings, civic authorities cooperate with religious organisations to provide necessary support. Overall, trust in local initiatives to confront crisis has grown. It is in the context of this critical moment that the Trust in Crisis Project came to fruition.

The aim of the Trust in Crisis Project was to understand how the experience of crises affected relations among communities. . .

The aim of the Trust in Crisis Project was to understand how the experience of crises affected relations among communities – particularly those of faith and other minority groups – and the formation of trust. The team of researchers examined community-based initiatives engaged in interreligious and intercultural encounter, and explored how cooperative action and local solidarity were hindered or supported by the perceptions of crisis.

As nations continue to address these intertwined challenges, the notion of trust – and its absence – is central to both economic and social stability. This report summarises ethnographic research conducted in Berlin, London, Paris, and Rome. It shows how the mobilisation of grassroots initiatives to address the needs created by crisis has, at times, led to reinvigorated practices of citizenship. This is a result of the state's incapacity to effectively manage and respond to these unstable times, notably through the provision of goods and services. In response to crisis scenarios, the role of the citizen has evolved to become more actively involved in local projects that aim to produce solidarity. This type of citizenship places more trust in the ability of local initiatives to respond to needs than in the state-driven promise of equality and provision. Each city differs in its levels of historical welcome and integration of ethnic and religious diversity, political challenges and levels of economic growth. Despite this, a trend emerged whereby local initiatives responded to crisis in ways the centralised

state could not, and often doing so across religious and ethnic lines. This research has shown that trust can develop – and grow – at the grassroots, even during times of crisis.

The cities selected for this study, while not exhaustive and representative of all of western Europe, carry regional, national, and even global significance. More importantly, each unique context has been challenged differently by the severe crises emerging over the past ten years and, in turn, has responded in different ways. This makes the findings that demonstrate similarities and particularities across the four cities both striking and significant.

LONDON

In London, justification for the continued application of so-called austerity measures (in essence, a suite of measures designed to reduce the structural deficit) focused, in part, on the financial crisis that began in 2008 (critics argue that the measures also reflected an ideological preference for a smaller state). This produced immediate consequences for public spending. The effects were felt by services supporting the vulnerable and economically disadvantaged, and by an overstretched police force addressing perceived insecurity and real danger in the light of the 2017 terrorist attacks in Westminster and London Bridge. Longer-term consequences included generating, directly or indirectly, some of the discontent that characterised those voting for Brexit in the EU Referendum of June 2016.

PARIS

A crisis of security continues in Paris, precipitated by the attacks of 2015: first in January at the offices of Charlie Hebdo and a kosher supermarket, then in November at the Stade de France and Bataclan theatre. The attacks and subsequent police and security investigations in France and Belgium renewed a focus on community segregation, and the lack of opportunity among minority populations, particularly amongst North African Muslim communities. Scholars and commentators have connected the security crisis in Paris with wider issues of *laïcité*, the separation of church and state, and the political and legal grounding this affords the ongoing restrictions to religiously symbolic dress.

BERLIN

In Berlin, the refugee crisis and its effects have dominated the news and public debate since 2015, producing a wide range of civil society initiatives and engagement to support struggling state authorities. However, following a major terrorist attack carried out by Anis Amri on Berlin's large Christmas Markets in 2016, if not before, discussions about self-styled Islamists and the state's struggle to provide security revealed processes of social polarisation. This has redesigned the relationship between citizens, local volunteer groups, faith-based civil society actors, and state institutions at local, regional, and federal levels.

ROME

A deep economic crisis in Rome has been exacerbated by a political one in the wake of the success of the anti-establishment Five Star Movement during 2016 local elections in Rome and Turin and the instability of the current coalition government. The unprecedented arrival of large numbers of African migrants in Italy added further pressure, compounded by the unwillingness of other EU countries to support relocation schemes and demonstrate European-wide solidarity.

There is no doubting the impact of crisis in each of the cities described above, yet ongoing challenges relating to the crisis – and urban life more broadly – will remain. The Trust in Crisis Project is concerned with responses to these ongoing challenges, revealing possible solutions to the questions of state responsibility, as well as the persistent issue of religious and ethnic coexistence. The findings here do not provide exhaustive solutions for handling crises, the challenges of urban life, or the continual development of trust. Rather, out of this research comes a set of proposals to be utilised and implemented by communities and policy-makers alike, especially in a crisis situation. It emphasises the relevance of religion in public life, as well as highlights approaches to integration and inter-cultural and religious solidarity. Nonetheless, the present context of crisis makes this all the more urgent and timely. Whether that crisis is financial, concerns the arrival of refugees (many, but not all, of whom are Muslim), or involves the integration of minority communities, it will certainly shape Europe for decades to come.

KEY FINDINGS

Whilst this executive summary cannot hope to capture the depth and nuance of extensive ethnographic work undertaken by the authors, a number of key findings emerged from the fieldwork and are presented below. For the purpose of this report, they are summarised under three headings: **Citizenship**, **Locality** and **Language**. We recommend reading the Full Report for those interested in more detail.

CITIZENSHIP

Key finding 1: The emergence of the ‘quiet citizen’

Our research revealed that the social and economic challenges faced by communities across Europe are breeding new forms of citizenship, based on shared social purposes and more active involvement in public affairs.

New forms of citizenship mobilised through publicly-minded activism are capable of uniting seemingly disparate social groups across political, religious, and ethnic divides. The research revealed shifting patterns of social, civic and political engagement, and positive tangible change for

communities predicated on the collective acceptance of the challenge to provide social support for the vulnerable and disadvantaged. Through insights offered by the fieldwork, the authors identified the role of the 'quiet citizen' – an individual who contributes positively to her or his neighbourhood and community, often without recognition or reward, through the completion of 'quiet work' – local acts of kindness and generosity borne out of a shared sense of social responsibility. Through these acts, the 'quiet citizen' refashions productive citizenship to a greater extent, and more concretely, than more vocal forms of political protest (whether conducted in a march or in a voting booth). This dedicated, and often uncelebrated, 'quiet work' strengthens bonds of interdependency and friendship between citizens and social groups and, on a more practical level, is capable of addressing local needs more immediately and more effectively than national institutions.

Key finding 2: Increased social and political engagement by local faith communities

Our research has revealed that the challenges faced across Europe have galvanised groups within faith communities, with the effect that many are now increasingly engaged within social and political spheres.

In the wake of these crises, faith-based groups are becoming more energetic and engaged in public life, whether as providers of emergency services (such as foodbanks, drop-in centres and credit lending), or as voices speaking out against policies deemed unfair and unjust. Faith-based groups have strengthened their support for migrants and the socially and economically disadvantaged; outspoken and active, for example, with regard to refugee integration in the UK, France, Italy and Germany.

Key finding 3: New communities shaped by shared social values

Our findings suggest that social bonds of trust and solidarity among the local groups we met are shaping new forms of community based on shared social values that transcend identity, ideology and belief.

Individuals across Europe have responded to the political, security, and migration crises by engaging in grassroots initiatives to tackle challenges at local levels. This has created new forms of community and inclusion during times of crisis, where trustworthiness is based on shared *social* values, rather than simply on ethnic or religious identities, and is sustained through narratives of transparency, solidarity, and inclusion. These new narratives counter shrill nationalistic rhetoric and its promise of patriotic rebirth, especially at the grassroots where trust matters throughout the year, not only during political campaigns. Trust in such communities and narratives can generate new kinds of solidarity in the face of need. This will encourage new forms of citizenship at the local level, where feelings of belonging and cooperation are cultivated. Respect for individual dignity and the moral necessity of social support and positive social relations have become principles for social solidarity at a local level across the sites and contexts we studied.

LOCALITY

Key finding 4: The greater impact of local structures

Our findings revealed that investment in local structures has a greater impact on the management of crisis. Local governments and volunteer organisations administer provision, confronting direct and immediate needs in times of crisis, particularly where state institutions are unable to provide.

Local groups are often more in tune with realities on the ground and deliver services that have been reduced or eliminated during times of austerity. These organisations cannot continue to cope without proper investment, and many providers and users are frustrated by the ongoing lack of state resources. When public administrations manage and address new challenges, such as multi-faith landscapes or the integration of migrants, evidence shows these are more likely to be achieved at local and regional levels. Coordination and communication between faith communities, civil society actors and civic authorities benefits the larger community while providing a tangible form of support to minority groups. The Berlin city government, for example, created a full-time position responsible for the Dialogue of Religions, coordinating activities among local faith groups and providing them with platforms for dialogue and exchange. London has a history of consulting and providing space to faith communities, such as the Inter-Faith Network and Faiths Forum for London. These initiatives are perceived as tangible forms of support for faith groups, and they have allowed better communication among faith groups and civic authorities, which could, for example, be harnessed to better tackle issues related to violence and discrimination.

Trends in local activism and social action are consistent across the four fieldwork sites. Further, they have intensified and become vital mechanisms in the response to crisis. Despite the differences in each context, manifestations of local activism are present in each of the locations, signifying its broader relevance. Increasingly, groups engaged in social activism are connected with one another, using social media to discover alternative resources and share methods of best practice.

LANGUAGE

Key finding 5: The negative effects produced by overuse of the term 'crisis'

Although widely-used, and whilst it provides a framework and the departure point for this study, the term's overuse creates an overall narrative that can be problematic.

As shown throughout this report, the term 'crisis' has been used by politicians, journalists, and ordinary people to describe a number of scenarios. However, the term implies an image of chaos, emergency, and danger. This alarmist rhetoric creates unattainable political expectations that can give way to nationalistic and strong-arm politics, and it can undermine trust in democracy's virtues – compromise, negotiation, and the balancing of interests. This 'crisis' narrative is at odds with the

reality on the ground, where de-centralised local and regional structures respond to economic uncertainties, migratory issues, or the integration of religious minorities in a more measured manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Trust in Crisis Report makes the following policy recommendations in line with the themes of Citizenship, Locality and Language. As for the key findings, this section offers a summary of the recommendations. For a more detailed discussion, please refer to the full report.

Recommendation 1: Celebrate the ‘quiet citizen’

We recommend an award for ‘everyday’ individuals who excel in their support for others facing social and economic hardship. The award could be given following nominations by relevant local groups or community organisations. The award will applaud those who give selflessly to others, especially where doing so involves stretching out across social, religious and cultural divides.

Recommendation 2: Support dialogue

We recommend the creation of full-time positions to coordinate or support dialogue among religions and other minorities in major urban centres of plurality and diversity following the model set by the Berlin city government. This is needed particularly in Paris and Rome. The role could provide a neutral space for local faith and cultural groups, establishing platforms for positive dialogue and exchange. This is not simply a practical solution to allow exchange, but the role could create an important institutional point of contact and illustrates recognition for the presence and role of religious or cultural identities in urban life.

Recommendation 3: Strengthen local resources

We recommend an increased investment in local government and the strengthening of civil society organisations, especially in times of crisis. Both can fill the void of resources and care that centralised structures are not always able or willing to fill. Recognising the strengths of the German federal model, we welcome greater devolution of state powers as represented by the introduction of directly elected mayors across the United Kingdom, and argue that greater devolution is favourable in France.

Recommendation 4: Acknowledge new forms of religious citizenship

We recommend the acknowledgement of new forms of religious citizenship built in times of crisis. Religions and religious identities remain important to many in society. Further, our research shows that religiosity and dedication to civic life do not exclude each other; therefore, such emergent forms of religious citizenship should be acknowledged and supported. Further, it is recommended

that the changing nature of local faith groups is more often recognised as a source of trust and social cohesion during times of social and economic challenges. Cooperation between state authorities and faith groups, as well as with other representatives of minority communities, should be strengthened to show official support for changing practices of civic life.

Recommendation 5: Encourage public bodies to foster greater social cohesion

We recommend that European governments continue to develop the establishment, and empowerment, of ministries responsible for social cohesion. This move would not simply address the factual need for greater state involvement in the management of pluralism in diverse societies, but would also communicate to the public that governments take seriously concerns from both majority populations regarding the direction and velocity of social change and those from minority groups challenging social norms. Such bodies must necessarily involve minority community representatives at the highest levels.

Recommendation 6: Limit the negative effects of social media

We recommend developing more responses to tackle and reduce online abuse of minority groups. Social media play an increasingly important role in public perception, including the experience of crises. Social media platforms are also used frequently to promote hatred and division by spreading false information (such as so-called fake news) and conspiracy theories that seek only to complicate and frustrate coexistence and understanding. A failure within European administrations to monitor and control virtual spaces has exacerbated the insecurities felt especially by minority groups. Authorities should cooperate with grassroots actors and others to guarantee debate in safe virtual spaces. Further, rules governing social exchange in the offline world should be applied with equal vigour in the online world without any undue restrictions of freedoms.

Recommendation 7: Promote contact across social divides

We recommend that European governments promote initiatives that increase interaction across religious and cultural divides. Contact is inevitable for the development of bonds of intercultural trust. Targeted social policy, for example, complemented by strong local institutions, can reduce problematic ghettos, large-scale marginalisation, and distrust among communities.

Recommendation 8: Use the term 'crisis' more carefully

We recommend caution around use of the term 'crisis'. Whilst it provided a useful lens through which to undertake the research reported here, sensationalist and inflationary use of the term is dangerous and leads to the depreciation of democratic compromise and negotiation. Wherever possible, we recommend the use of alternative terms to describe social and economic challenges. We recommend that governments follow the lead offered by the work of the 'quiet citizen': in most cases, scenarios and challenges described using the terms 'crisis' and 'crises' are manageable rather than hopeless.

03

Introduction

Background and initial aims

The project, initially named *Intelligent Trust*, began in 2013 to examine how the European-wide recession was affecting relations between Jews, Christians, and Muslims; specifically, it sought to study how and when individuals at a local level decided to trust one another and the consequences that this may have for community relations and for the ways in which individual and groups relate to state institutions. The study focused on relations within community-based initiatives engaged in interfaith and intercultural understanding, social action, or economic development in Berlin, London, Paris, and Rome. By comparing initiatives across the four cities – which differ in their histories relating to ethno-religious diversity, political challenges, and levels of economic growth – the study analysed how solidarity and trustworthiness are assessed in different contexts and manifested within particular types of initiatives.

By focusing on community-based initiatives, the study began to explore the practical implications of individuals placing trust in organisations based on their effectiveness, as well as a broader change in behaviour and attitudes among those acting as both staff and service users. We used ethnographic research to examine changes in the experience of giving or receiving trust, and the organisational effectiveness of state authorities and community-based social action projects responding to times described as crises or critical transformations. Specially, our research used semi-structured interviews with staff, volunteers, and clients, and long-term participant-observation in each context. This allows the report to compare the conceptualisation and practice of trust across contexts and initiatives.

As a result of developments since 2015 – a wave of terrorist attacks in France, then in Germany and the UK; the arrival of more than one million refugees in Germany; Brexit and its consequences in the UK and Europe; political, economic, and migration crises in Italy; and the rapidly growing popularity of polarising political movements dissatisfied with mainstream political parties and politicians – the Trust in Crisis research project explored meanings and experiences of crisis.

Researchers analysed the implications of crisis experiences for intercultural community life, trust in the state and in other public institutions, and the role of (faith-based) civil society actors – including those concerned with migration, diversity, religious identity, and difference. The research investigated crucial dimensions of contemporary crises and their implications for citizenship, solidarity, intercultural life, inter-ethnic and interreligious relations, and the development of trust in institutions and new community forms, including the role of faith-based civil society actors. The experience of trust among communities, which is central to both economic and social stability, emerged as a key component of the research as well, of course, as its absence. The complexity, experience, and development of trust has rarely been recognised or analysed in such a comparative framework. The aim of the research is to understand the complexities of trust during these times of great change, notably through the crises of struggling economies, the influx of refugees, dissatisfaction with political realities, and the integration of minorities.

In **London**, the justification for continued austerity measures has been based on the financial crisis that began in 2008. This has had severe consequences for public services, specifically welfare and general support for vulnerable, low-income populations, which played an important part in the public's decision in June 2016 to leave the EU. A crisis of security continues in **Paris**, precipitated by the attacks of 2015: first in January at the offices of Charlie Hebdo and a kosher supermarket, then in November at the Stade de France and Bataclan theatre. Vehicle attacks similar to that of Nice then occurred in December 2016 in Berlin and in March and June 2017 in London, creating a pan-European discussion that often conflated questions on security and the lives of Muslim communities. In Paris this situation can be related to inequality, community segregation, and lack of opportunity among minority populations, mainly (young) French Muslims of North and West African descent. The crisis is shaped by the rigid separation of church and state, *laïcité*, and subsequent restrictions on wearing religiously symbolic dress in public. The refugee crisis and its effects have dominated the news and public debate in **Berlin** since 2015, producing a wide range of civil society initiatives and engagement to support struggling state authorities. This has redesigned the relationship between citizens, local volunteer groups, faith-based civil society actors, and state institutions at local, regional, and federal levels. In **Rome**, a deep economic crisis has been exacerbated by a political one in the wake of the success of the anti-establishment Five Star Movement during 2016 local elections in Rome and Turin, and the instability of the current coalition government. The unprecedented arrival of large numbers of African migrants in Italy has added further pressure, compounded by the unwillingness of other EU countries to support relocation schemes and demonstrate European-wide solidarity.

The management of diversity and the effects of 'crisis' shape how trust among citizens, changing forms of community life, and struggling state authorities are transforming European societies today. In light of this, the report set out to answer the following inter-connected questions:

1. What is the meaning of trust in inter- and intra-community relations under austerity?
2. How do individuals of different faith, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds or identities decide to trust or mistrust each other, or, more specifically, how do they define criteria to determine trustworthiness?
3. What does the giving of trust mean in terms of behaviour towards perceived others?
4. What impact do trust and mistrust in local interfaith relations have on the capacity to organise effectively, to address shared concerns or differences, and more broadly, on notions and practices of citizenship?
5. How does the experience of crisis shape ideas of citizenship and solidarity?

The significant political developments described above induced a natural shift in the project, from a focus on austerity and community relationships to trust, statehood, and grassroots responses to the experiences of crisis caused by migration, inter-ethnic tensions, and resurgent populism. Each of the contexts studied is different, providing a unique understanding of crisis and its effects on community life, and of the effectiveness of grassroots responses in forming new kinds of solidary relations while fostering innovative ideas of citizenship. While diverse, these cases are not meant to stand alone – instead, the findings from each have implications for the wider European context, affected by uncertainty and the threat of resurgent anti-establishment sentiment and anti-democratic populism.

Each of the contexts studied is different, providing a unique understanding of crisis and its effects on community life...

04

Evaluation of the Individual Sites

LONDON

London was the site of the pilot study for this project. The findings reflect the changing socio-economic conditions under austerity more than concerns with migration or integration, which dominated the subsequent research in Berlin, Paris and Rome. Since 2010, there has been an ongoing national discussion about the effects of austerity measures on social cohesion, coexistence, and solidarity, increasingly also with a view to the role of cultural minorities and the importance of an active state in the management of multiculturalism and the provision of opportunities. The politics of austerity has a narrow focus on the reduction of government deficit and has led to cuts to social services. This occurred at a time when the effects of the economic crisis were creating uncertainty and precariousness. While the outsourcing of welfare and service provision from the state to the private sector also created new forms of engagement and cooperation, which we examined, alienation and discontent ensued as well, which contributed to the vote to leave the European Union in June 2016 – at least partly attributable to a desire to alert a supposedly remote and uncaring establishment.³

From the outset, research in London explored projects combatting the effects of welfare and labour market reforms. One focus lay on the emergence of foodbanks as crucial providers of basic needs across neighbourhoods in the UK's capital – and beyond – testifying to the ways in which the combination of economic crisis and austerity forced a growing share of the population to rely on the organised generosity of private initiatives. The research examined the work of the UK's largest foodbank network, the Trussell Trust.⁴ Researchers found that foodbanks became important actors in Britain, expanding their relevance from the provision of food to cooperation with other community actors and politicians. The Trussell Trust, for example, provides advice to parliamentary groups examining poverty and hunger. We found that the Christian ethics inspiring volunteers and staff working at the Trussell Trust can help establish solidarity networks, but that stigma and a sense of shame attached to poverty and the use of voluntary support nonetheless

complicate social relations. Under austerity, foodbanks and similar initiatives reveal the importance of local organisations, striving to tackle social problems. Furthermore, the research revealed the increasing relevance of advocacy work undertaken by social initiatives, in addition to community support, which connects the experience of local hardship and need with organised politics.

As previous research at the Woolf Institute – exploring the impact of the Church Urban Fund’s Near Neighbours initiative – has shown, the importance of local institutions and collaboration grew in the face of austerity and social cuts. In Near Neighbours projects, funding from the church was used for a wide range of social and community projects that reached out beyond the Christian faith, and established new kinds of relations across perceived divisions. In East London, for example, a local church organised a Peace Garden project in its grounds, which had become the scene of a crime. Garden cultivation involved members from a range of religious groups, illustrating the importance of appropriating community spaces collectively and inscribing new meanings and practices in ways that other non-local actors would struggle to achieve. Researchers therefore re-examined a range of Near Neighbours initiatives and found that strong local leadership and a combination of paid staff with volunteers are needed to address needs. The research also highlighted the importance of shared spaces for grassroots activism. While virtual communities can be important to address everyday isolation, social action prospers when specific locations can be used by volunteers, staff, and supporters to develop initiatives and strategies, and to pursue shared goals. Interest in, and understanding of, the religious lives and identities of other people can be created through shared engagement, with repercussions for cohesion and coexistence that stretch beyond any single initiative.⁵

Towards the end of our research, the sense of crisis induced by austerity was exacerbated by tensions around pluralism and religious diversity. The Leave campaigns for the EU referendum instrumentalised fears about immigration and cultural difference. Subsequent terrorist attacks further complicated the situation of Muslim minority groups, increasingly expected by the public to defend their religion and religious practices. Inter-religious as well as intra-religious tensions in the UK and other Western countries are often connected to global geopolitical realities, such as the conflicts and tense relations between Israelis and Palestinians, Sunni and Shia as well as India and Pakistan.⁶ Therefore, local solidarity initiatives do not simply address social needs, but also aid in recognising the value of coexistence and understanding for cohesion in neighbourhoods and quarters that are often sites where transnational tensions can otherwise shape the experience of collective life. Cooperation in the face of socio-economic pressure confronts global conflict narratives and their impact on communities by emphasising the importance of local belonging. Community activism can instigate new debates about the value of local public life and the importance of participation.

Under growing pressure, new communities are emerging in response to pragmatic concerns about the welfare of neighbours and co-citizens. However, our research found that it would be misleading to characterise such initiatives, even when they do cross cultural or religious barriers, as simply inter-religious or multicultural.⁷ Rather, they often seek to promote and practise new modes of social belonging and solidarity first of all. Shared values and common visions of social life are emphasised – not religious or ethnic categories – countering notions of community as reliant on supposedly clear cultural boundaries. The active communities that emerge during austerity and other critical times in the UK have objectives in social projects. The Quaker Social Action (QSA) in London, for example, unites Christian denominations that share a desire to tackle injustice. Its community of supporters does not rely on a stable and common faith identity – rather, members are connected by their desire to allow others to live dignified lives, combating discrimination and exclusion. We found that local clergy are increasingly identifying themselves as both religious and community leaders. Parochial structures encourage a community-oriented focus, which means that leaders express concern for all within the parish boundaries, regardless of religious identification. Clergy often address living conditions, poverty, and hunger, as well as other concerns, in joint action with other faith communities or civil society actors, often expanding into political activities through the grassroots group Citizens UK. This work of what we call ‘quiet citizens’, who seek to improve social relations and do good in times of austerity and hardship, is not given as much public attention and coverage as populist anger, with negative consequences.⁸ Politicians and state authorities ought to recognise such contributions and support them actively. The Mayor of London’s new citizenship initiative is a promising step in this direction – particularly also in the wake of insecurity resulting from terrorist attacks and a dangerous rhetoric to divide communities on faith lines.

In London, ‘quiet citizens’ seek to improve social relations and do good in times of austerity and hardship...

PARIS

In Paris, a crisis of security has existed since the January and November terrorist attacks of 2015. The research found that the state of emergency and splintering of the major political movements in France, on the left and right, enabled a narrow, nationalistic political focus to prevail, fuelled by a perceived ‘Muslim problem’. The omnipresent question of Islam and Muslims in the public square has its historical roots in the French colonial experience and is now set against a backdrop of urban inequality and division. Rhetorically, it is underpinned by a supposed Judeo-Christian/Muslim divide. Muslim integration is often unfairly compared with the integration of Jewish communities articulating a specifically Muslim inability to integrate based in part on intolerance towards others. The research therefore included various Jewish and Muslim community

engagement initiatives, specifically at the city's edges, where social problems and economic despair are more in evidence.

The impact of the official 'greater Paris' (*grand Paris*) scheme⁹ to open up the Parisian periphery by President Sarkozy and taken up by subsequent administrations is yet to be felt across the poorest northern Parisian periphery. Researchers therefore studied and spent time in this part of greater Paris. Here, the Muslim organisations *Secours Islamique* (French version of Islamic Relief) and AMA (*Association de la Mosquée d'Aubervilliers*) that runs the *Mosquée de la Fraternité* were studied, as were Jewish community structures operating across greater Paris, such as the Jewish Social Action body CASIP-COJASOR.¹⁰ Established in 1992, *Secours Islamique* (SI) has traditionally operated between St Ouen and Aubervilliers, directly north of inner Paris. Whereas St Ouen has considerably improved its social indicators of poverty – such as transportation access, social housing, and education – over the last decade, Aubervilliers, which is currently undergoing major redevelopment, continues to experience serious socio-urban problems, including a visible subclass suffering from joblessness, homelessness, and drug addiction, particularly in the high-rise post-war quarters. We studied the interaction between local state social services and SI, particularly the day-to-day distribution of food and provision of information and empathy.

Perhaps because of its name, *Secours Islamique* is more easily welcomed in certain neighbourhoods of Aubervilliers, where social services, seen as agents of the state, have struggled to establish their presence. Here a dual phenomenon unfolds: as communities demonstrate a preference for religious NGOs to provide services, long-term grassroots organisations such as SI earn the trust of the state to deliver services to the local community. Such an operation mirrors the ways in which the organised Jewish community works with the public. CASIP-COJASOR, for example, has developed strong enough levels of trust that some users feel that the organisation has become 'part of their family'. It has taken more than a quarter of a century for a trusted Islamic public sphere to emerge in France led by initiatives such as SI. Importantly, this differs from French public discourse about the strict separation of church and state (*laïcité*).

In parallel to the work on religious involvement in local communities – and in line with the French administration's investment in cross-faith community initiatives since the Charlie Hebdo and kosher store killings – the research examined ways of 'doing interfaith' in and around Paris. We studied, and became involved in, mosque interfaith initiatives to the north of Paris, and different community attempts at outreach to neighbouring Christian and Jewish religious communities. The Liberal Jewish Movement in France (MJLF) was included in the research, since it has been making efforts to collaborate both locally and nationwide with Muslim actors and institutions. We examined MJLF synagogues that seek to establish cooperation with Muslim partners – one established synagogue in the west of the city and a more recent one in the east of the city. We

found that, in addition to the geopolitical tensions between Jewish and Muslim communities around the Israel-Palestine conflict, and in spite of goodwill and volunteer time, platforms to conduct interfaith work in Paris are lacking. Intercultural expertise and available spaces to meet and discuss, particularly at grassroots levels, are too often absent.

Finally, the Parisian trust research, particularly in 2017, concentrated on the arrival of a large and vulnerable mobile migrant population formerly based in the camp commonly referred to as the Calais Jungle. The makeshift settlement in northern France was dismantled in late 2016. The arrival of groups from Calais and elsewhere, and their congregation in northern Paris, reflected the national incapacity to deal with integrating such supposedly transient groups, who may yet settle in France. State indecision has placed responsibility on civil society initiatives as well as on regional, in this case Parisian, government to administer shelters, sanitation, and education. Simultaneously, national state involvement is reduced to the security forces displacing large migrant camps. In light of the post-Calais refugee dispersion in France, the response of Parisian civil society is an interesting comparison, especially given the focus on welcoming refugees in Berlin and interreligious initiatives in London to support migrants and refugees. In Paris, faith-based civic actors 'dispatched' formally registered migrants to various parts of the country. The Paris-based process of refugee selection, re-housing, and, in some cases, repatriation, has been carried out by local government in the Paris mayoral authority, church or faith-based groups (providing shelter and education), and 'secular' civil society. The latter in particular pertains to French language teaching and the distribution of clothing and the accompanying of minors.

...the Paris research highlighted that faith communities have shown resilience and solidarity.

In terms of trust, and in spite of the lack of support, the Paris research highlighted that faith communities have shown resilience and solidarity. Examples of this include the twofold interfaith 'push' by both established interfaith actors and relatively new grassroots initiatives. Established interfaith structures, embodied by the work of the MJLF synagogue in the west of the city, have mobilised local Parisian authorities, academics, and the media in order to bring religious figureheads together at civic events and diffuse such meetings by radio and television.¹¹ Emerging interfaith initiatives at the grassroots include *Secours Islamique* and other local religious communities, such as a joint interfaith forum in Aubervilliers that started in November 2015, and which consists of AMA, Ohel Yaacov (Aubervilliers' Synagogue), and a local Protestant church. This kind of grassroots engagement has produced important individual relationships, as well as community and institutional ones, thereby illustrating avenues for trust even in difficult times and regarding challenging topics.

The reality described above has been shaped by a scenario in which *laïcité* – which is increasingly conceived of as a political value rather than a legal norm – does not allow extensive leeway for the demonstration of religious identity at times therefore occluding the ethical concerns that accompany it. This has perpetuated a narrative that stigmatises people who practice any religion but in particular Muslim communities (in Aubervilliers for example). Other religious communities, despite their efforts of interfaith action, solidarity, and social action, tend not to criticise the norm-turned-value of *laïcité*, despite the stigma it places on practising a religion. Even though Muslim communities display resilience when addressing the crisis in Paris by seizing opportunities to work alongside other faith groups and civic authorities, a policy of *laïcité* is increasingly traversed by a desire for insularity as minority communities continue to be seen as problematic to national cohesion in national surveys on the question of racism.¹²

BERLIN

Before the refugee crisis came to dominate public life in Germany, research had been conducted with foodbanks and homeless shelters in Berlin.¹³ Foodbanks are often viewed as social solidarity organisations that distribute donated food among people in need. Considering that Germany and the UK have both seen a considerable expansion of foodbanks in recent years, the researchers examined how, and to what extent, foodbanks in the two countries acted as a conduit for social solidarity under austerity. While foodbanks create a public image of solidarity, they also reproduce social stratification and segregation on the ground. In other words, foodbanks can seem to illustrate solidarity across economic lines at a macro-level – on the level of society – but may struggle to do so on the micro-level, specifically regarding interactions between those who provide and those who use the service. The report found that foodbanks in Berlin can reproduce problematic dynamics and hierarchies: middle-class staff and volunteers exercise authority over customers. More symbiotic forms of cooperation and solidarity, which characterised refugee-support initiatives, were not as prevalent among the foodbanks that we studied.

In the wake of this crisis, the lack of government resources, official preparedness, and the orderly processes expected by German citizens created new spaces for civil society engagement.

As the so-called national refugee crisis unfolded, beginning in September 2015, researchers worked with several levels of government (from national to district authorities) to examine the official response to transformative developments routinely depicted as a challenge of religious and cultural difference. It covered one of the most pivotal periods of recent German history, when 890,000 asylum seekers reached the country in less than twelve months and overwhelmed public institutions, suffering from years of budget cuts. In the wake of this crisis, the lack of government

resources, official preparedness, and the orderly processes expected by German citizens created new spaces for civil society engagement.

The Berlin research examined the districts of Neukölln and Kreuzberg, both multicultural neighbourhoods, to understand how local forms of government and civil society interpreted and reacted to the arrival of newcomers and the apparent struggle of state authorities to manage their presence. The research included various other community leaders and their reactions to increasing diversity and depictions that described the changes as a major national crisis. The research focused especially on minority-led associations and groups that organised activities in response to the arrival of asylum seekers, predominantly from the Middle East. We found that the authorities' insufficient response permitted civic groups to expand their work and position themselves as trustworthy partners in the coordination of public affairs, particularly with a view to religious and cultural diversity. Germany's long-term minority populations, Turks and Arabs in particular, seized the opportunity to present themselves as trustworthy and responsible citizens that supported the authorities with German-language classes, translation services, accommodation, and the use of mosques for intercultural understanding and integration efforts. What appeared as a crisis of state management, was also an opportunity for often neglected social actors to seek exposure for their contributions to society and some of the most pressing issues: living with difference and cultural pluralism.

At the same time as these new actors emerged, traditional groups used the exceptional situation to raise their public profiles. The research analysed the work of the Sehlik mosque in Berlin Neukölln and the new refugee church, or Flüchtlingskirche, in Berlin Kreuzberg. The refugee church project was launched by Berlin's Protestant Church (EKBO) as a place for encounter and understanding, converting an existing church into a multi-faith initiative, used to advance the church's position as an important political actor that could comment authoritatively on public affairs. Beyond Christian-based organisations, grassroots projects such as the Salaam Schalom initiative also addressed the crisis. Saalam Schalom is a Jewish-Muslim group lobbying for greater religious freedom for minorities, bringing Muslims and Jews together to contest assumptions of Arab antisemitism and highlighting the growing presence of its increasingly active minorities in German society. The group opposes Berlin's neutrality law that prohibits regional state employees from displaying religious symbols, as activists seek to advance awareness of religious diversities and sensibilities.

The Germany-based research grew to include sites outside Berlin. One of them was the anti-Islam Pegida movement in Dresden. We studied protests to understand the particularly East German lack of trust in governance and pluralism. The other site was an emergency refugee shelter in a small German village in the Harz Mountains, whose population of 1,500 doubled overnight when asylum seekers found accommodation in a disused hospital. The village illuminated how

local volunteers cooperated with the state and other institutions to produce solidarity and networks of trust against the background of cultural difference in a rural site, far from multicultural urban centres.

The refugee issue polarised German society. As new relations of trust were built across religious and ethnic difference in the pursuit of inclusion, others reported distrust in the government's capacity to protect ordinary Germans already struggling with unemployment and despair. Lone-wolf attacks by recent asylum seekers in Würzburg, Ansbach, and later Berlin contributed to a discussion on how government decisions were supposedly putting the country at risk, rather than protecting its population. In declining areas of rural East Germany and the Harz Mountains, trust in the state and in pluralism as a model of society that protects local identity remains weaker. Populations suffering from economic decline and state withdrawal found themselves polarised by the arrival of asylum seekers: some who distrusted the government anyway sought greater distance to state authorities, on the one hand, while others seized on the opportunity to organise civic action and address needs, on the other.

The authorities in Germany responded to the challenge of rising numbers of newcomers by hosting public assemblies to inform local citizens about the conversion of hospitals, public buildings, department stores and so forth into asylum seeker reception centres. Such meetings took place across the country, particularly in late 2015 and early 2016, and brought citizens in contact with state institutions. Even though scepticism remained strong among some local residents, constant communication and the willingness to involve local citizens, paired with the offer of a platform to voice concerns and address their institutions, provided the necessary transparency that could protect relations of trust despite the chaotic situation. As 1.5 million asylum seekers entered Germany over the space of two years, this institutional contact, transparency, and recognition were important for citizens, but also vital for the integration of refugees into communities. This happened without the same rise of populist discontent seen elsewhere in Europe. Although there are areas of Germany where populist parties have emerged, noticeably in the East, there is no cross-national trend. The Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, which opposes offering protection for asylum seekers, polls nationally between 6 and 10 percent. It does not constitute a serious challenge to the popularity of centrist politics. We found that the role played by open, honest, and proactive state authorities was very important in maintaining levels of trust during challenging times, and also helped to establish new forms of collaboration between civil society and state actors.

ROME

In Rome, the difficult economic situation, political uncertainty, and the seemingly uncontrollable arrival of migrants on Italian islands and their often chaotic onward journeys – which usually

cross through Italy's capital – constitute a particularly challenging scenario for state authorities and civil society actors. In June 2016, the Five Star Movement (M5S) – a civic protest platform that promotes transparency, participation, and accountability, but also seeks to address popular discontent through populist rhetoric – won Rome's municipal elections. The Movement is poised to win a majority in the next elections and might even form the country's next government, so the experiment with local politics in Rome was an important opportunity to demonstrate the ability to govern. Hence, the M5S sought to turn protest politics and discontent into a responsible political force in the face of ubiquitous crisis rhetoric and experiences of economic decline. In Rome, M5S has striven to improve state bureaucracy and urban life, particularly regarding public transport and other everyday concerns in a city that exhibits stark contrasts between its tourist centre and the multicultural and marginalised eastern quarters. M5S is an experiment in rebuilding trust in governance and public institutions that reconnects citizens with state authorities. Its key leaders propose a radical shift in Italy's political culture, away from clientelism and corruption to grassroots participation and transparency.

...in Rome, civil society engagement did not reach the same levels, and advocacy power, as in the other cities.

The research examined the Movement's aspiration to produce engaged and active citizenship, reversing apathy towards the state and institutions through transparency and accountability, offering citizens ways of shaping policy by participating and blurring the distinction between citizenry and state. It remains to be seen whether M5S can change Italian politics and the attitude citizens have towards their state institutions, or whether this experiment in grassroots participatory democracy will fail and further undermine trust in the state and Italy's particular type of democratic governance. In any case, the Movement has provided an unparalleled opportunity to observe a concrete form of grassroots activism becoming an institutional political force with the explicit aim of remaking trust in public administration during critical times. M5S activists are not the quiet citizens found in other sites, and in other initiatives in Rome. However, many M5S supporters share similar aspirations. In Italy, crisis experiences are shaped by economic decline, apathy towards democratic representation, and the challenges associated with growing cultural and religious diversity, particularly in the wake of the chaotic arrival of migrants and asylum seekers.

In addition to our work with the Five Star Movement, which focused on the Fifth District in Rome's east – where housing problems, unemployment, urban decay, and migration present relevant urban challenges – we explored civil society actors and their response to growing pluralism. In a city dominated by the presence and engagement of the Catholic Church, Christian-faith-based

initiatives were most prominent, but other, secular, groups also made efforts to highlight their contribution – even though we found that civil society engagement did not reach the same levels, and advocacy power, as in the other cities.

In 2016, 180,000 asylum seekers arrived in Italy.¹⁴ We compared grassroots initiatives addressing their plight with M5S attempts to formulate a coherent policy regarding migration, integration, and asylum. We found that the city authorities remain underprepared for growing cultural difference and multi-faith realities. In Italy, there exists only a niche debate about what it means to become a country or society that relies on work migration to sustain a growing population of elderly people in the face of declining birth rates, but the main debate, fuelled by (social) media, continues to depict migration in terms of emergency and chaos, using negative terms, such as wave or deluge, to describe the situation. Unlike the other national contexts studied in the research – in which refugees are given protection as well as accommodation and pocket money – the Italian state, following a short period of *accoglienza* (reception/welcome), issues most asylum seekers with residency permits and expects them to survive on their own. With little knowledge of Italian, virtually no access to the official housing market, and in the face of racial prejudice and discrimination, many refugees end up squatting or sleeping rough, begging outside supermarkets and selling bracelets and selfie sticks to tourists. Since migration to Italy only really began in the 1990s, experiences with growing cultural difference are recent and contested. In the eyes of many, the uncontrollable arrival on the country's shores, which are exposed to trafficking more than other parts of Europe, constitutes a significant crisis, exacerbating already difficult circumstances.

With a traditionally ineffective and patchy state, Roman Catholic initiatives remained key civil society actors to manage growing diversity and pluralism in Rome. One case study we pursued was the Casa Scalabrini project, run by the Missionaries of St Charles Borromeo, or Scalabrinian Missionaries, who have a long experience with migration and integration questions.¹⁵ The integration initiative offers 35 refugees with residency permits an environment in which to develop autonomy and self-sufficiency, while also seeking to educate settled Romans about the lives of the newcomers. At the Casa, local school classes can experience 'being a migrant for a day' through various activities, with inhabitants offering testimony about their experiences of conflict and flight. We studied how Casa Scalabrini supervises refugees' transition from state assistance to autonomy, and to what extent staff and volunteers succeed in creating more solidarity and trust between Italians and migrants.

Another group we studied was the secular Baobab Experience grassroots initiative, which supports so-called *transitanti*, i.e., asylum seekers and migrants who have disembarked in Italy but desire to continue their journey to northern European countries, notably France, Germany, Sweden, and the UK. The Italian authorities were content to let these migrants pass through, so

as to avoid having to register and accommodate them, and so they turned a blind eye to their presence in Italy's major cities. In Rome, in the summer of 2016, hundreds of such *transitanti* slept on streets and squares every night, relying on voluntary support and waiting for the next morning and bank transfers from friends or relatives to continue their journey. Baobab volunteers organised tours for the migrants and asylum seekers, set up language classes and sports activities, and sought to step in for an absent state, therefore confronting the association of migration with emergency, and to normalise the experience of cultural difference.

Consequently, we found that comparatively little cooperation between state and other actors exists with regard to migration and integration projects. At a time marked by severe economic difficulties, exacerbated by the absence of state management regarding migration and a changing religious landscape, trust in state authorities is difficult to establish and maintain. The Catholic Church has been one of the few important actors – with important access to advocacy channels – that addresses pressing scenarios and seeks to facilitate relations across ethnic, cultural, or religious boundaries, particularly under Pope Francis and his emphasis on social action as inter-religious dialogue. Despite such efforts, it is nonetheless problematic that the state delegates crucial tasks for social cohesion to civil society actors with their own particular agendas. Roman and Italian authorities have handled migration as an emergency for many years, resulting in a lack of transparency, communication, and organisation, especially regarding resettlement and integration. The crisis discourse of chaos surrounding the arrival of migrants and asylum seekers in Italy renders the development of new social relations and the normalisation of diversity difficult.

05

Key Findings

CITIZENSHIP

Key finding 1: The emergence of the 'quiet citizen'

Our research revealed that the severe social and economic challenges faced by communities across Europe are breeding new forms of citizenship, based on shared social purposes and active involvement in public affairs.

The 'quiet citizen' is an individual who positively contributes to his or her neighbourhood and community, often without recognition or attention...

New forms of citizenship mobilised through publicly-minded activism are capable of uniting seemingly disparate social groups across political, religious, and ethnic divides. The research revealed shifting patterns of social, civic and political engagement, and positive tangible change for communities predicated on the collective acceptance of the challenge to provide social support for the vulnerable and disadvantaged. Indeed, new supportive engagements are made possible under pressure and crisis, involving cross-sections of society and even those minorities that are usually located on the fringes of active civil society. This new manifestation of active citizenship, expressed in the grassroots effort to address crisis, has been coined the 'quiet citizen'. The 'quiet citizen' is an individual who positively contributes to his or her neighbourhood and community, often without recognition or attention, through 'quiet work'. By doing so, individuals refashion citizenship in productive ways and challenge the primacy of the angry protest citizen, prevalent in media coverage. This dedicated, and often uncelebrated, 'quiet work' strengthens bonds of interdependency and friendship between citizens and social groups and, on a more practical level, is capable of addressing local needs immediately and effectively, often outperforming national institutions.

Key finding 2: Increased social and political engagement by local faith communities

Our research has revealed that the severe challenges faced across Europe have galvanised groups within faith communities, with the effect that many are now increasingly engaged within social and political spheres.

Religion and religious groups are transforming in these crisis scenarios by becoming more energetic and politicised. In some grassroots initiatives, values and faith can transcend specific beliefs and histories by collectively addressing current problems to generate a different future and shape society. Although these aspirations are shared, the report found that the roles of churches and faith groups differ significantly across sites. Under Pope Francis, the Roman Catholic Church's public role shifted from what appeared to be prioritising concerns with theology, which prevailed under Benedict XVI, towards community action. Francis has supported this shift with symbolic acts, such as offering protection to a family of Syrian refugees in the Vatican and providing shower and bathroom facilities for homeless people next to St Peter's Square. The Pope has also been an outspoken critic of capitalism, closed borders, and lack of empathy.¹⁶ The dominance of the Roman Catholic Church in Italy has allowed a wealth of Catholic faith-based initiatives to prosper – well funded and with relevant experience. However, we also found that the Vatican's dominance can forestall the development of new forms of engagement by minority groups.

In Germany, the Catholic and Protestant churches have been important partners in the provision of welfare and other social services for the German state for decades. During the refugee crisis, between 800,000 and one million Germans joined volunteer initiatives, many of which were organised around faith-based groups. Volunteers reinvigorated church communities in Berlin, which had previously struggled to attract support among a largely atheist population.¹⁷ The refugee situation illustrated the importance of organised religion for social work. In London, austerity has also produced new forms of interfaith collaboration through social action that provides health and social care services, and various faith groups have been able to use these developments to expand involvement. Community initiatives have emerged in the UK to bring together individuals and groups from different faith backgrounds – as well as ages, education, and income – that share similar concerns for the welfare of their communities. This has been seen through the Church of England's Near Neighbours Programme. In France, terror and racism have dominated the situation, and in Paris, churches have focused on post-crisis dialogue and interreligious prejudice, rather than collective social action – which reflects the particular circumstances of a country struggling with divided communities and the lack of intercultural know-how to further understanding and solidarity. At the same time, faith-based and secular responses to challenges around integration reflect limitations on the cooperation between state and civil secular society to work effectively with religious institutions and actors within a politically neutral environment (*laïcité*). The religious changes we traced in Germany, the UK, and Italy differ from France, where efforts are hampered by the specific approach to public religiosity.

Key finding 3: New communities shaped by shared social values

Our findings suggest that social bonds of trust and solidarity among the local groups we met are shaping new forms of community based on shared social values that transcend ideology and belief.

The developments discussed in this report alter concepts of citizenship, at least during critical times. Across all sites, the research found a marked shift towards more active involvement in public affairs, often bringing together majority and minority groups for shared purposes, bridging some gaps while nonetheless opening others, particularly with regard to migration and diversity. In developing these new forms of local active citizenship, trustworthiness is a central objective as well as an important tool. This can create new forms of community and inclusion during difficult times, with trustworthiness based on shared social values, rather than on shared ethnic or religious identities, and is sustained through narratives of solidarity and inclusion. Particular values – such as cooperation, honesty, and transparency – have emerged as especially important in a period dominated by anti-establishment and divisive rhetoric, marked by a challenge to trust in state institutions. These new narratives counter shrill nationalistic rhetoric and its promise of patriotic rebirth, especially at the grassroots level.

Future research should examine to what extent such citizen-driven initiatives can cooperate with state and other institutions to tackle the challenges of an increasingly complex and interconnected world. What the research found is that emergent forms and practices of citizenship focus on local-level concerns: neighbourhoods, voluntary groups, or faith communities. It will be important to explore how these new types will be able to shape national discourses and policy, and whether they will replace or complement traditional interpretations and practices of citizenship. For example, the Five Star Movement in Rome has produced new relations between citizens and municipal institutions, marked by higher levels of trust between grassroots activists and district and city administration levels. Since trust plays an important role in emergent citizenship practices, it remains to be seen whether this can be scaled up from the grassroots to the level of the nation-state.

LOCALITY

Key finding 4: The greater impact of local structures

Our research reveals that investment in local structures has a greater impact on the management of crisis. Local governments and volunteer organisations administer provisions, confronting direct and immediate needs in times of crisis, particularly where state institutions are unable to provide.

Investment in local structures has a greater impact on the management of difficult situations. The struggle experienced by austerity-affected public institutions to manage rapidly changing levels of diversity in the wake of large-scale refugee migration has created new spaces for civil society

engagement and forms of collaboration. Local governments and volunteer organisations provide direct and immediate support in challenging environments, particularly where centralised state institutions are slower to respond. They are more in tune with realities on the ground and deliver services affected by austerity. These organisations struggle to cope without proper investment, and many providers and users are frustrated by the lack of state resources. Local communities perceive greater state investment in grassroots or local government efforts, particularly concerning social security or continuing education programmes, as positive support. Indeed, all of the four sites exhibit strong desires for more state involvement to counter fears and to make sense of dramatic changes that affect both local experience and representations of national or global levels. This will enable local governments and volunteer organisations to address new challenges, such as multi-faith landscapes, precariousness, disillusionment, or migrant integration.

Indeed, coordination and communication between faith communities and civic authorities benefit the larger community, while providing a concrete form of support to faith groups. For instance, in London, austerity has also produced new forms of interfaith collaboration through social action that provides health and social care services, and various faith groups have been able to expand involvement. Community initiatives have emerged in the UK to bring together individuals and groups from different faith backgrounds – as well as ages, education, and income – that share similar concerns for the welfare of their communities, such as the Church of England’s Near Neighbours Programme. In Berlin, the pressure from the refugee crisis has arguably helped facilitate interfaith engagement and made charitable work more politically minded and active. When the numbers of refugees surged, Germany’s long-term Muslim minorities seized the opportunity to support the authorities and presented themselves as responsible, trustworthy, and reliable citizens. Thus, a situation described by the media as a ‘refugee crisis’, also created new spaces of engagement for active citizens that could demonstrate their contribution to the common good.

Trends in local activism are consistent across the four cities. Indeed, new forms of social action have emerged as important responses to critical developments. Increasingly, groups engaged in social activism are connected with one another, locally as well as nationally and internationally, in order to discover alternative resources and share best-practice ideas. Recent years have seen the intensification of cross-national networks pursuing social action and local activism to demonstrate social solidarity, often deliberately in juxtaposition to national policies that cut public services. In particular, the sites most affected by the refugee influx into Europe – Rome and Berlin, and to a lesser extent Paris – demonstrate how social action can emerge in the face of state inaction to produce local trust as well as novel forms of solidarity. In these three sites, cross-national work is important, since the migration of asylum seekers across the European continent necessitated new forms of collaboration among grassroots groups in different countries, highlighting the fluidity of borders for people fleeing persecution and looking to improve their lives.

LANGUAGE

Key finding 5: The negative effects produced by overuse of the term 'crisis'

Although widely used, and while it provides a framework and the departure point for this study, the term's overuse creates an overall narrative that can be problematic.

As shown throughout this report, the term 'crisis' has been used by politicians, journalists, and ordinary people to describe a number of diverse, complex scenarios of change and transformation. In popular understanding, the concept is associated with chaos, emergency, and danger. The term plays a key role in shaping citizens' experiences and perceptions of social, economic, and political realities. However, the impact of alarmist rhetoric has exceeded an analytical function. The inflationary use of crisis discourses creates unattainable political expectations that can give way to nationalistic and strong-arm politics, and it can undermine trust in what ought to be considered and defended as democracy's virtues – compromise, negotiation, and the balancing of immensely diverse and often even opposing interests. The power of the crisis narrative can destabilise relations of trust and contributes to the rise of populist extremism as a political alternative. This ubiquitous and inflationary 'crisis' rhetoric is at odds with the reality on the ground, where de-centralised local and regional structures respond to economic uncertainties, migratory issues, or the integration of religious minorities in a more measured manner.

06

Policy Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Celebrate the ‘quiet citizen’

The media have focused on protest and resentment as supposedly the most significant responses to crisis experiences, suggesting that the most important emergent political forms at the moment are anti-establishment and anti-migration platforms. Our research has shown, however, that there are countless examples of quietly involved citizens working hard for their neighbourhoods, communities, and areas at the same time. They receive much less media and public attention, even though they are refashioning citizenship productively, much more so than angry protest voters, and illustrate alternative forms of civic responses to challenging times. These quiet citizens ought to feature more prominently in both media coverage and policy considerations, both to acknowledge their work and inspire others to follow suit and address challenges differently and productively – and, ultimately, to scale back the power of crisis and emergency narratives. We recommend an award for ‘everyday’ individuals who excel in their support for others facing severe social and economic hardship. The award could be given following nominations by faith-groups or other community organisations. The award will applaud those who give to others, especially where doing so involves reaching across social, religious, or cultural divides. Moreover, a call for media outlets to encourage stories of good will at the grassroots level, highlighting work done in local communities across ethno-religious lines, would be an appropriate approach in recognizing the contributions of the ‘quiet citizen’.

...quiet citizens ought to feature more prominently in both media coverage and policy considerations...

Recommendation 2: Coordinate and support dialogue

We recommend the establishment of full-time positions to coordinate dialogue among religions and other minorities in major urban centres of plurality and diversity following the model set by the Berlin city government. This is needed in particular in Paris and Rome. Creating this position has officially acknowledged the presence and importance of faith actors and groups in Berlin, while remaining

neutral and open to different views and opinions, and it also provides a vital point of contact for new faiths seeking to establish themselves and reaching out to others for shared activities. Such a 'coordinator of religions' or other types of ethnic community activism can provide a neutral political space for faith and cultural minority groups, a platform for dialogue. This is not simply a practical solution to facilitate exchange across local society – perhaps even more importantly, creating such a role illustrates recognition for the presence of religious, ethnic, and cultural pluralism, and acknowledges the range of contributions made to civic and city life.

Recommendation 3: Strengthen local resources

We recommend an increased investment in local government, including the police and in particular its preventive community work, and the strengthening of civil society organisations, especially in times of crisis. Both can fill the void of resources and care that centralised structures are not always able or willing to fill. Grassroots organisations and volunteers can often better understand the issues they face and consider appropriate means to confront them than central government. In any case, grassroots groups and political realities ought to be empowered to collaborate more closely and effectively with national political bodies. Local organisations in all four sites repeatedly stressed the need for more resources and support from the government. A strengthening of local resources will enable local governments and volunteer organisations to address new challenges. Recognising the strengths of the German federal model, we welcome greater devolution of state powers, such as the introduction of directly elected mayors across the United Kingdom, and argue that greater devolution is favourable in France as well. Importantly, such a move ought not to reduce the central government's responsibility to guarantee equality and living standards.

Recommendation 4: Acknowledge diverse forms of religious citizenship

We recommend the acknowledgement of new forms of religious citizenship. In all four sites, we observed how religious groups respond practically to long-term and emergent needs. Involved individuals shared aspirations to generate a better future through active citizenship. Recognition of the increasingly important role that faith groups or identities can play in a modern society facing critical challenges would be a simple yet positive action that any government could undertake. Religions and religious identities remain important in contemporary society. Further, our research shows that religious identification and values, on the one hand, and commitment to civic engagement and active citizenship, on the other, are not mutually exclusive. Post-secular forms of civic life create new hybrid types of political and religious identities. Therefore, new forms of citizenship that have explicitly religious dimensions, and often even inspirations, should be appreciated and promoted by political bodies, rather than dismissed as incomplete or defective – a risk run particularly in the French context of rigid state-church separation. Furthermore, we recommend greater appreciation of how local faith groups can become lauded sources of trust and social cohesion for people facing social and economic challenges. Cooperation between state

authorities and faith groups, as well as with other representatives of cultural minorities, should be strengthened to show official support for changing practices of civic life.

Recommendation 5: Encourage public bodies to foster greater social cohesion

We recommend that European governments continue to develop the establishment, and empowerment, of ministries or other major political authorities responsible for social cohesion. The growing pluralisation of societies, not just regarding faith or cultural identities, but also reflecting sexual, gender, political, and various hybrid forms of identification, requires political work to support efforts for social cohesion. Establishing government ministries with the explicit aim of studying changing realities of cohesion and seeking to support grassroots and other local initiatives would not simply address the factual need for greater state involvement in the management of pluralism in increasingly diverse societies; more importantly, such a move would also communicate to an increasingly attentive public that governments take seriously concerns regarding the direction and velocity of social change, on the one hand, and care for minority groups and others who challenge expectations and social norms, on the other. Such bodies must necessarily involve minority community representatives at the highest levels in the attempt to support cohesive communities in the face of lifestyle individualisation that nevertheless corresponds with a desire for different kinds of solidarity and connectivity.

Recommendation 6: Limit the negative effects of social media

We recommend developing responses to tackle online abuse of minority groups and other forms of hate speech. Social media play a key role in public discourse and shape the perception of change and social realities, including, importantly, the rhetoric of crisis regarding migration and pluralism. Social media platforms are used frequently to provoke hatred and division by spreading false information ('fake news') and conspiracy theories that are often intentionally aimed at undermining coexistence and understanding in the face of difference. Particularly responses to the so-called refugee crisis in Germany and Italy have illustrated the destructive side of social media, as well as the inability of state authorities to guarantee legislation regarding hate speech when relevant companies are based outside European countries. In many cases, social media coverage and discussions were at odds with the social realities we observed in the face of challenges and transformations. For social cohesion and understanding, virtual connectedness can be a helpful tool. However, the lack of a capacity to monitor and control virtual spaces has exacerbated the insecurities felt especially by minority groups. Authorities should cooperate with grassroots organisations and other relevant civil society actors to guarantee democratic standards for debate online as well as offline. The rules that every community establishes for itself with regard to communication in the non-virtual world must apply online as well. State authorities – in cooperation with other important players with relevant expertise, and by consulting leading companies – ought to establish effective ways of protecting individuals or groups from attacks, discrimination, and intentionally hateful propaganda, but without unduly jeopardising freedom of speech.

Recommendation 7: Promote contact across social divides

We recommend that European governments promote initiatives that increase interaction across religious, ethnic, and cultural divides. We have found that direct contact is inevitable for the development of bonds of trust that can bridge diversity and difference. This does not mean that contact always and necessarily produces greater support for pluralism – in some cases, we also observed that contact can lead to greater awareness of the profundity of different worldviews and cause rejection. However, in order to enable solidarity and trust across increasingly diverse societies, contact is a necessary, albeit not a sufficient, condition. Government policy should identify and outline common goals and shared obligations for faith and other minority communities, such as the criteria set out by the Department of Communities and Local Government's Near Neighbours Project in the UK.¹⁸ Such policy should combine political mobilisation and social action with an approach to social solidarity that reflects the diversity of the country, and the articulations of these goals and obligations should be based on the actions of communities in public. Targeted social policy, for example, complemented by strong local institutions, can reduce the isolating effects of mono-cultural ghettos, large-scale marginalisation on the basis of purported ethnic homogeneity, and distrust as a result of prejudice and stereotyping. Flexible work models that offer more free time to engage with one another or incentivise contact can be supported by social policy. Increasingly diverse societies need active efforts by state and other actors to sustain trust and counter fragmentation and isolation. Contact must be fostered across social and work environments – an active housing policy can be one important component.

Recommendation 8: Use the term 'crisis' more carefully

We recommend caution around the use of the term 'crisis'. While the concept provided a useful lens through which to undertake the research reported here, sensationalist and inflationary use of the term in the media and by politicians is dangerous. The expansion of crisis rhetoric has had a noticeable impact on all the sites we studied, particularly on the ways in which people thought about social relations and future challenges. No term has dominated public and political discourse more over the last decade. We found that the resulting perception of a generalised crisis, supposedly threatening livelihoods with inevitable emergency and chaos, can lead to the depreciation of democratic virtues, such as compromise and the negotiation of divergent interests. Crisis narratives foster the desire for strong leaders and uncompromising hard-line politics that is at odds with the necessity of a careful balancing of values and ideas about the good life in plural and diverse democracies. Wherever possible, we recommend the use of different vocabulary which should be context specific – to rebalance the discourse and focus on the management of difficult times, rather than inflate the language of catastrophe to generate attention. We recommend that governments and responsible media outlets follow their 'quiet citizens': in most cases we studied over the past years, scenarios and challenges described as a 'crisis' turned out to be manageable and often even a useful occasion to reflect on engagement and neighbourhood cohesion, rather than hopeless situations leading to inevitable decline.

07

Further Reading

The researchers have published work throughout the lifespan of the Trust project. Below is a list of publications recently published as well as forthcoming publications.

Edward Kessler, 'The Changing Religious Landscape: Implications for Civil Society and Foreign Affairs.' *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Interfaith Studies, Amman*, The Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies, 2017, volume 14, pp. 19–32.

Edward Kessler, 'Eine jüdische Stellungnahme 50 Jahre nach Nostra Aetate: Reflexionen eines europäischen jüdischen Theologen' in *Nostra Aetate – Christen und Juden*, ed., M Himmelbauer, Herder, 2017 (forthcoming).

Edward Kessler, 'A Muslim and Jewish Perspective on Dialogue between Islam and Judaism' (with Akbar Ahmed), *Handbook of Muslim-Jewish Relations*, Routledge, edited by J Meri, 2016, pp. 253–70.

Austerity, Community Action, and the Future of Citizenship in Europe, co-edited by S Cohen, C Fuhr and J-J Bock, Bristol University Press, publication October 2017, (introduction and conclusion co-written by Drs Bock and Cohen, one further chapter from Dr Fuhr).

Religion, Action Sociale et Politique Urbaine: Londres et Paris Face-à-Face, co-edited by S Everett and P Portier, forthcoming.

Germany's Differences: Newcomers, Nationhood, and Negotiating Belonging, co-edited by J-J Bock and S Macdonald, forthcoming with Berghahn Books, Oxford & New York

International Journal for Politics, Culture and Society – Special Issue, co-edited by S Cohen and P Portier, containing contributions from team members, forthcoming.

Shana Cohen, 'Diversity in Community', in *Germany's Differences: Newcomers, Nationhood, and Negotiating Belonging* (edited by J-J Bock and S Macdonald), Oxford & New York: Berghahn Books, forthcoming.

Christina Fuhr, 'Social Initiatives and Social Solidarity under Austerity', in *Austerity, Community Action, and the Future of Citizenship in Europe* (edited by S Cohen, C Fuhr and JJ Bock), Bristol: Bristol University Press, forthcoming.

Jan-Jonathan Bock, 'State Failure and Political Polarisation in Germany's Refugee Crisis', *International Journal for Politics, Culture and Society*, forthcoming.

Sami Everett, 'Jewish and Muslim Activism in Greater Paris: Unexpected Involvement with the State', *International Journal for Politics, Culture and Society*, forthcoming.

Jan-Jonathan Bock, 'Negotiating Cultural Difference in Berlin's Refugee Church and Dresden's Pegida Movement', in *Germany's Differences: Newcomers, Nationhood, and Negotiating Belonging* (edited by J-J Bock and S Macdonald), Oxford & New York: Berghahn Books, forthcoming.

Sami Everett, Introduction/Linking pages/Conclusion in *Religion, Social action and urban policy: Paris & London face to face* (edited by S Everett and P Portier), forthcoming.

Jan-Jonathan Bock, 'Camps for those that Mustn't Exist: Transitory Migrants and the Absent State in Rome', *Camp Geographies Today: Contemporary Spatialities of a Modern Political Technology* (edited by I Katz, D Martin and C Minca), London: Rowman and Littlefield, forthcoming.

Sami Everett, 'The Many (Im)possibilities of Contemporary Algerian Judaités in France', in *Algeria and France: Nation, Culture and Transnationalism, 1988–2015* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, forthcoming.

Jan-Jonathan Bock, 'Migrants in the Mountains: Shifting Borders and Crisis Experience in a German Refugee Shelter', *Sociology* (under review).

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About the Researchers

Dr Edward Kessler MBE is Principal Investigator and Project Leader of the Trust Project. He is the Founder Director of the Woolf Institute and a Fellow at St Edmund's College, Cambridge.

Dr Shana Cohen is Co-Principal Investigator and Co-Project Leader of the Trust Project. In addition to overseeing the Project, Dr Cohen led the London-based research.

Dr Jan-Jonathan Bock is a Research Fellow at the Woolf Institute and led the research in Berlin and Rome.

Dr Sami Everett is a Junior Research Fellow at the Woolf Institute and led the Paris-based research. He has been appointed Research Associate at University of Cambridge Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities (CRASSH).

Dr Christina Fuhr was a Junior Research Fellow at the Woolf Institute and aided Dr Cohen with the London-based research and also contributed to the Berlin-based research.

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End Notes

1. Francis Fukayama *Trust: the Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* (2006) p 26.
2. See Edelman's 2017 Trust Barometer: <http://www.edelman.com/trust2017/>.
3. An expansion of this argument can be found in: Cohen, Shana and Jan-Jonathan Bock (2017) 'Introduction: social activism, belonging, and citizenship in a period of crisis', in C Cohen, C Fuhr and JJ Bock (eds.) *Austerity, Community Action, and the Future of Citizenship in Europe*, Bristol: Policy Press, pp 1–21.
4. For further information on the research that has informed this section, see: Fuhr, Christina (2017) 'Social initiatives and social solidarity under austerity', In C Cohen, C Fuhr and JJ Bock (eds.) *Austerity, Community Action, and the Future of Citizenship in Europe*, Bristol: Policy Press, pp 171–196.
5. For more information, please consult our Near Neighbours reports. See: <https://www.cuf.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=79ce7610-19ff-4e8a-a2e2-50c0de17f70c>.
6. More information can be found in the *Report of the Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life – 'Living with Difference'* – published by the Woolf Institute in December 2015.
7. The argument in this section is expanded in: Cohen, Shana (forthcoming) 'Diversity in Community', in JJ Bock and S Macdonald (eds) *Germany's Differences: Newcomers, Nationhood, and Negotiating Belonging*, Oxford & New York: Berghahn Books.
8. For further information see: Bock, Jan-Jonathan and Shana Cohen (2017) 'Conclusion: citizenship, community, and solidarity at the end of the welfare state', in C Cohen, C Fuhr and JJ Bock (eds.) *Austerity, Community Action, and the Future of Citizenship in Europe*, Bristol: Policy Press, pp 277–288.

9. For more information on the plan, see: <http://grandparisdeveloppement.com>.
10. CASIP-COJASOR was created in 2000 when two much older Jewish social bodies merged: Social Action Committee of Israelites of Paris (CASIP) and the Jewish Committee for Social Action and Reconstruction (COJASOR). More information can be found at their website: <http://www.casip-cojasor.fr>.
11. Les Voix de la Paix, Rabbi Yann Boissière (major interfaith Mayoral event 2016): <http://lesvoixdelapaix.fr/page/view/Le22Mars>.
12. CNCDH annual human rights reports demonstrate this trend since 2001.
13. For example, see: Fuhr, Christina (2017) 'Social initiatives and social solidarity under austerity', In C Cohen, C Fuhr and JJ Bock (eds.) *Austerity, Community Action, and the Future of Citizenship in Europe*, Bristol: Policy Press, pp 171–196.
14. <http://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/notizie/2017-01-05/migranti-2016-record-sbarchi-e-accoglienza-162035.shtml?uid=ADdVMwQC>.
15. <http://www.scalabrini634.it>.
16. http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html.
17. In some parts of East Germany, up to 80 percent of respondents call themselves atheist; in Berlin, the figure is around 60 percent. For further information, see: Müller, Olaf, Detlef Pollack, and Gert Pickel (2013) 'Religiös-konfessionelle Kultur und individuelle Religiosität: Ein Vergleich zwischen West- und Ostdeutschland', *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 65:123-148; or see: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/apr/26/berlin-germany-religious-education-ethics>.
18. Successful applications for these small grants were geared towards grassroots organisations and required them to 'bring together people of two or more faiths', 'work locally', 'work sustainably', 'work to improve the community', and 'involve diverse people in planning and implementation'. In summary, the goal was to bring people of various faith groups together under the obligation of civil engagement through improving the community.

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