

Conference Seek the peace of the city – Diaconia as active agent in Europe's social change

Some remarks to Christian social activities in Slovakia

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The effort to analyze and solve problems of Visegrad platform faces big problems. If we want to define what is common for these four countries we have to say that it is geographical position and post totalitarian heritage. But Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland are very different in their historical development, culture and religion situation.

Social activities motivated through religion we can see from the point of view of mutual problems and needs of Slovak society. There are many social institutions and activities founded and run by Slovak churches, Catholic, Evangelical, Baptist, Reform, and others including Jewish, that provide social and health services, most of whose are not offered by any other institutions, especially not by state social services. Social activities provided by churches and their social institutions are motivated not only as an expression of strong humanity and mature civil sensitivity, but also as a real Christianity transformed to a service for others, for our sisters and brothers who are in need.

Diakonia, Slovak Catholic Charity, Philanthropy and many other social institutions of Christian churches work in the frame of other socially oriented non-profit organizations in Slovakia. The quality of democratic process displays just in the acceptance and the support of non-profit sector and volunteering. More of influence of some aspects of totalitarian heritage exists in new regimes, the less space the voluntary organizations have. Does not matter that voluntary organizations including church ones are more effective, more flexible than state social services that are branded by hardly limited byrocracy.

So that the relationship between non-profit citizen and church social services and the state is a key question. To recognize of church and citizen social services as equal, important and irreplaceable in the system of social help is the challenge to contemporary state.

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