

# Third Sector Organisations (Impact and Support) Bill

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[AS INTRODUCED]

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[AS INTRODUCED]

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Establish a body to assess the benefits and effectiveness of third sector organisations and provide support to such organisations; and for connected purposes.

**B**E IT ENACTED by the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

## 1 The Civil Society Empowerment Agency

- (1) *There is to be a Civil Society Empowerment Agency (“the Agency”).*
- (2) The functions of the Agency are—
  - (a) to enable the assessment of the benefits and effectiveness of third sector organisations in accordance with section 2; and 5
  - (b) to provide support to third sector organisations in accordance with section 3.
- (3) In this Act, a “third sector organisation” means an organisation which a person might reasonably consider to exist wholly or mainly to provide benefits for society (but does not include a body established under an enactment). 10
- (4) The Minister for the Cabinet Office must, by regulations made by statutory instrument, make provision about—
  - (a) the establishment of the Agency;
  - (b) its governance;
  - (c) its exercise of its functions; 15
  - (d) its staffing; and
  - (e) its expenses.

## 2 Benefits and effectiveness assessment framework function

- (1) The Agency must establish a framework and associated mechanisms to enable the assessment of third sector organisations. 20
- (2) The framework must include a public register of third sector organisations providing access to—
  - (a) available data about their benefits and effectiveness, and

- (b) tools to enable such assessments to be made.
- (3) The mechanisms must enable a user to assess the proven and potential benefits and effectiveness of individual third sector organisations, including their –
  - (a) economic and social contribution; and
  - (b) value for money to the taxpayer in providing goods and services to the public sector, and in the outcomes from that provision. 5
- (4) The Agency must, from time to time, review the framework and associated mechanisms to ensure they remain appropriate.

### 3 Support to third sector organisations function

- (1) The Agency must provide advice, support and training to third sector organisations, including in – 10
  - (a) participating in public sector commissioning processes; and
  - (b) producing standardised performance and outcome management data.
- (2) The Agency must maintain a bank of good practice in accordance with subsection (1). 15
- (3) The Agency must seek to facilitate participation by third sector organisations in public sector commissioning processes by seeking to ensure that those processes are as open and accessible as possible to those organisations, including small such organisations.
- (4) As part of its duties under subsection (3), the Agency – 20
  - (a) may require public bodies to promote commissioning opportunities using certain methods or channels;
  - (b) must provide a platform to assist third sector bodies in participating in public sector commissioning processes.
- (5) The Agency must seek to ensure that public sector data and associated application programming interfaces meet the requirements of third sector organisations. 25
- (6) As part of its duties under subsection (5), the Agency –
  - (a) must facilitate dialogue with third sector organisations about what data they require to accurately measure and determine their impact; 30
  - (b) must seek to ensure such organisations have timely access and updates to that data.

### 4 Reports on third sector organisations

- (1) The Agency must prepare and publish annual reports on –
  - (a) the aggregate economic and social contribution of third sector organisations; 35
  - (b) the aggregate benefits, including to the taxpayer, from the public sector commissioning goods and services from third sector organisations;
  - (c) its exercise of its functions; and
  - (d) the steps it intends to take in exercising its functions. 40

- (2) The first report under this section must be published no later than one year after this section comes into force.
- (3) A further report under this section must be published in each calendar year after the year in which the first report under this section is published.

**5 Regulations**

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- (1) Regulations under this Act may not be made unless a draft of a statutory instrument containing them has been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, each House of Parliament.
- (2) The first regulations under section 1 must be laid before Parliament no later than the end of the period of 90 days beginning with the day on which this section comes into force.

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**6 Extent, commencement and short title**

- (1) This Act extends to England and Wales only.
- (2) This Act comes into force on the day on which it is passed.
- (3) This Act may be cited as the Third Sector Organisations (Impact and Support) Act 2020.

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*Presented by Simon Fell*

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