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Abstract for individual paper

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(In)equality and (vulner)ability in mission? An analysis and discussion of power-relations between majority churches and migrant churches in the Norwegian church landscape.

This paper addresses the relationship between majority churches and migrant churches and discusses dimensions of positions and power related to mission in Western and global contexts. The paper takes a critical approach to the notions of power, (in)equality and (vulner)ability and discusses ecumenical, theological and missiological implications for mission taking departure in selected case studies from the broader Norwegian church landscape. On a descriptive level, the paper seeks to describe a contextual sociology of mission, while at the same time asking more normative and theological questions how the analysis of these contexts speak to challenges and opportunities for mission today. Drawing upon sociological, leadership and theological resources, the paper uses critical discourse analysis to discuss dimensions of inequality and vulnerability emerging from the ecclesial case studies, while also discussing how these dimensions may be understood in terms of mutual empowerment and common engagement. The paper looks at how recent mission paradigms emphasizing mutuality and equality in mission can provide useful frames to discuss socioeconomic, denominational, organizational, cultural, and theological points of divergence. From this, the paper asks questions in what ways these represent unsurmountable challenges or may – by means of mutual vulnerability – be approached as new opportunities for partnership, empowerment and shared strategies for mission. The paper argues that critical theological reflection may provide new resources for introspection as well as interaction in relation to issues such as ecclesial positions, power relations, missional challenges and strategies in the given contexts, both in Western society as well beyond.