



Eurodiaconia Calls for “Europe 2020” to Work for Inclusive Societies

Brussels, 19 February 2010

Dear Sir, dear Madam,

The European Union’s 2020 strategy will set the course for economic and social development in the coming years. It must balance the needs for sustainable growth and inclusive societies. To do so, we call on the European Commission to take the lead in elaborating the current pillar of ‘Inclusive Growth’ to reflect the need for sustainable growth to invest in social inclusion. Growth should be a tool for society rather than an aim in itself. Therefore, as the EU 2020 strategy is developed in the coming weeks Eurodiaconia would like to highlight issues we consider necessary for an EU 2020 that will bring about both social inclusion and sustainable growth.

Inclusive societies through Active Inclusion

Social inclusion is much more than equipping people to take up employment, it is about equipping all people to take part in society. The labour market in itself is not the solution to social exclusion and entering the labour market will never be possible for some people.

Eurodiaconia welcomed the Recommendation and principles on Active Inclusion and its integrated approach to tackling social exclusion and facilitating labour market integration, as it stressed the importance of access to quality social services and minimum income to ensure inclusion for all, not just those able to work. We therefore insist that

- Active Inclusion is promoted as a key element of the EU 2020 strategy
- There is adequate monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the principles, through the European Employment Strategy and Social OMC

Inclusive societies through a reinforced social inclusion process

The Social Open Method of Communication has not delivered as it could in the fight against poverty and social exclusion. We therefore ask that for the process to be reinforced, as well as for a stronger political commitment. A strengthened Social OMC for Eurodiaconia means

- Publishing country-specific recommendations,
- A quantified EU target for reducing poverty and national targets for Member States
- A stronger cooperation of Member States with civil society

Inclusive societies through supporting Services of General Interest

The Commission EU 2020 consultation document talked of “making markets work for people”. We believe for this to happen it must be ensured EU internal market and competition rules must not have a negative impact

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on users of SGI, particularly on the quality of social services. The importance of SGI, especially SSGI, for European society must be recognised and policies to support such services pursued. Social services have also contributed strongly to job creation and will continue to create jobs. Therefore Eurodiaconia proposes

- A coherent strategy and coordination of SGI policy and processes
- The contribution to society of social services and their growth potential to be recognised and supported in the EU 2020 strategy
- The impact of EU rules on social services and non-profit providers to be monitored and action taken to amend rules or improve understanding where necessary
- Initiatives to promote quality in SSGI to be pursued

For more information you can consult our response to the EU 2020 public consultation, also attached. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Heather Roy
Eurodiaconia Secretary General