



PRESS RELEASE

ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS TO COUNTERACT RISING SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

Brussels,
15 October 2015

On the occasion of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on 17 October, Eurodiaconia calls on the European Union and its Member States to address homelessness, which remains one of the most extreme examples of poverty and social exclusion in society today.

Article 34 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union asserts: *"In order to combat social exclusion and poverty, the Union recognises and respects the right to social and housing assistance so as to ensure a decent existence for all those who lack sufficient resources."*

However, over the past few years, Eurodiaconia, as a European network of organisations fighting against poverty, has witnessed that a growing number of people have been excluded from housing across Europe. Amongst its 45 member organisations, many advocate for the fundamental rights of homeless people and provide them with accommodation and social assistance.

What are the roots of homelessness in Europe?

The economic and financial crisis has had two major consequences: rising poverty and the downscaling of public support schemes. Higher unemployment rates, precarious jobs, the deterioration of welfare policies to prevent destitution and homelessness including affordable, accessible and quality social services, have resulted in expanding poverty and exclusion and at its worst, increasing extreme deprivation. Despite repeated calls from Civil Society and political partners, there is still a lack of an integrated EU response to homelessness which would reverse this trend.

Eurodiaconia Secretary General Heather Roy states that *"homelessness undermines the human dignity of affected individuals, limiting their capacity to develop their potential and to participate fully in society. Furthermore, it damages social cohesion and the potential for inclusive economic growth. Therefore, a coordinated response to homelessness is necessary to counteract rising social inequalities and reinforce the EU's aspiration towards a "Triple A Social Status", which is yet far from the daily reality faced by the growing number of people left in destitution in Europe."*

Eurodiaconia recently updated its policy position on homelessness, you can read it [here](#).

For more information, please contact:

Nicolas Derobert, 0032 (0)483 62 18 88 or nicolas.derobert@eurodiaconia.org

More resources on our work on extreme poverty can be found [here](#).

