


Putting our faith into social action

Annual Report 2016



Eurodiaconia 

Eurodiaconia  is a federation of 45 social and health care organisations founded in the Christian faith and promoting social justice.



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Chairperson and Secretary General's message

Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy. Proverbs 31:8-9

Welcome to our 2016 Annual Report. This publication aims to provide you with a summary of the work and accomplishments of Eurodiaconia over the past year.

2016 marked a very important year for Eurodiaconia as it was the 20th anniversary of our organisation following the merger of the European Federation for Diaconia and the then Eurodiaconia in 1996. This was not only meant to be a reminder of a long journey made together but also a good chance for us to consider the opportunities and challenges we are yet to encounter.

The anniversary celebrations underscored the fact that Eurodiaconia remains the leading diaconal network in Europe, with more than 40 members providing social services and advocacy that have become indispensable in millions of people's everyday lives. Constant dedication, quality services, impactful advocacy and compassionate love have helped to improve people's quality of life, and have helped make our societies a fairer and better place to live in. We are aware that this great tradition we are so proud of also comes as a big responsibility for the future, and we will continue working to find new ways to professionally meet the social needs of all people.

The recent tumultuous circumstances in politics and society across Europe and its neighbouring countries present many challenges. Terrorist attacks in Brussels, Nice and Berlin, and the earthquake in Italy are only a few examples of the tragic circumstances we all have been forced to face.

Our political institutions have also faced a tumultuous year with Brexit, the rise of the far right in the political structures in many countries, confrontations on our Eastern borders and increasing threats to the stability of the Eurozone. The growing number of people seeking sanctuary in Europe from other parts of the world is both a social and political reality which needs compassionate and sustainable responses. Although poverty and social exclusion has started to slowly decrease from post 2008 levels there are still 119 million people in Europe who face that indignity, many of whom are children and many of whom are invisible to those who make decisions about their lives. It might be easy to see everything as gloomy right now but there is so much more that gives us hope for a better future – the thousands of people spending their spare time helping the most vulnerable, the projects run by our members at local and national level to develop fairer and greener communities, the actions carried out to assist refugees, elderly people, people with disabilities and excluded youth all over the continent. These are all signs that a better society is not only possible but is already under construction.

In line with these efforts, Eurodiaconia's 2016 Annual General Meeting called on the major European actors in the social field to develop a spirit and practice of hospitality; to accept, understand and support each other.

However, these efforts alone are not enough and need to be complemented by a strengthened institutional commitment. Throughout the year we

have been speaking out to share how structural changes are needed to avoid poverty, destitution, isolation, indignity and exclusion. We have worked with other NGO's, with our colleagues in the ecumenical movement, with social partners, with politicians and civil servants to ensure our knowledge and experience is included in debate and decision. We have advocated for social rights, for social investment, for quality care, for youth inclusion, for Roma inclusion, for child well-being, for fair economic policies, for ambitious policies

that address extreme destitution, for greater funding, for more research and data and for increased space for participatory democracy. We have advocated for signs of hope, hope that beats terror, hurt and exclusion, hope that brings light in the darkness, that brings a voice to those who need to be heard and justice for all.

Thank you to all who have supported us since 1996 and helped us pave the way for a fairer, more social Europe.



Carla Van der Vlist
Chairperson



Heather Roy
Secretary General

The dynamo of diaconia

The word diaconia is Ancient Greek *διακονία* (*diakonia*) for service and in the biblical sense, this means love for one's neighbour.

Diaconia takes the Christian view of the human being as its starting point. That means that diaconal organisations' work is characterised by serving as custodians of God's house, placing diaconal love in sharp contrast with a selfish and power-oriented world. It is a call to solidarity, where individuals are summoned to serve God, others, and the common good of society.

Diaconal work has a very long history and has traditionally been organised by churches. However,

recent years have seen the emergence of independent or church-related NGOs working in the same tradition.

Diaconal organisations are not only committed to helping those members of society who are most vulnerable but also to giving them the opportunity to be active and valuable members in society. In doing so, diaconia works on a daily basis to tackle the structural causes of social exclusion and to build a fairer and more inclusive society.



Who we are

Eurodiaconia is a European federation of social and health care organisations founded in the Christian faith and promoting social justice. Our membership represents the needs and unique experiences of 45 national and regional organisations in 32 countries. As the leading diaconal network in Europe, Eurodiaconia links its member organisations to examine social needs, develop ideas and influence policies impacting poverty and social exclusion, social and health care services and the future of social Europe.

We work for positive change in three ways:

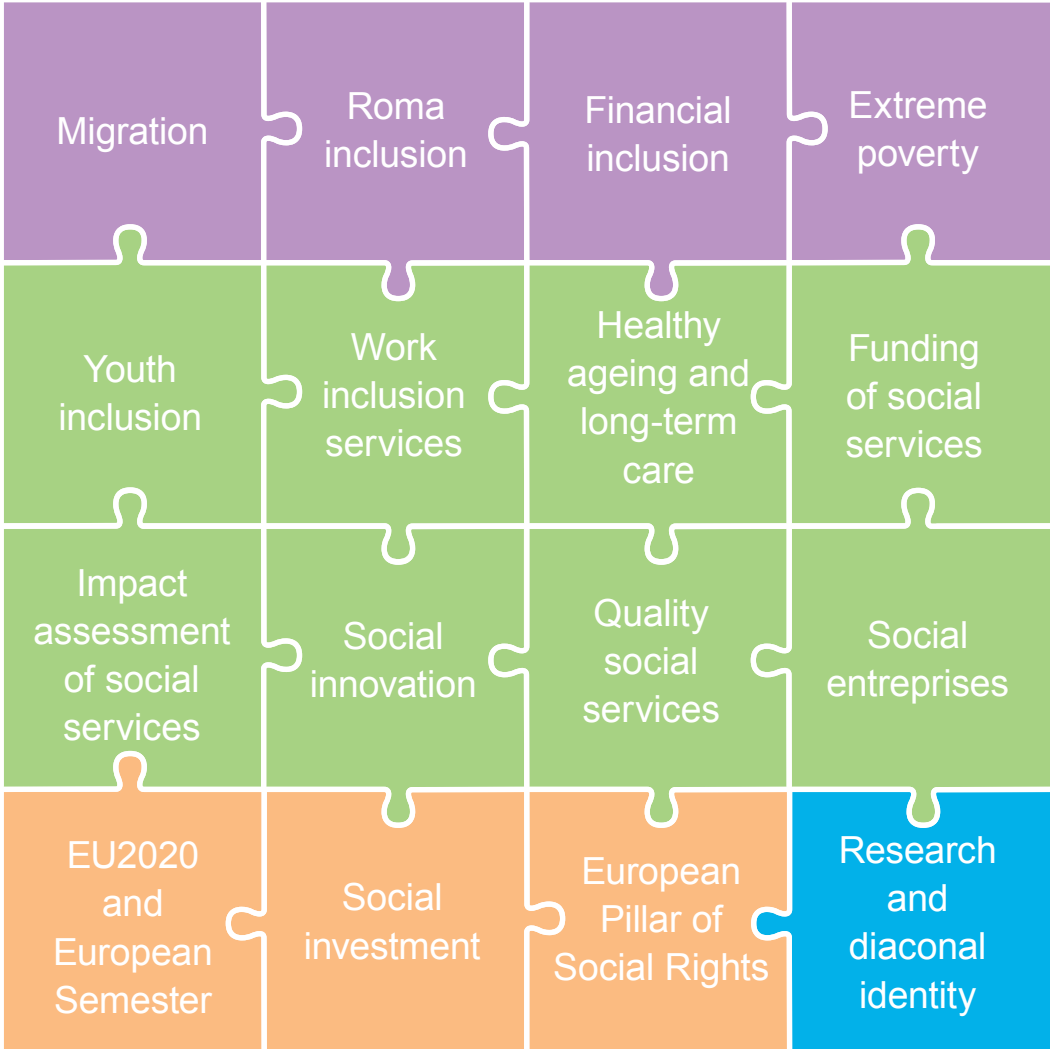
Advocacy Through networking with partners, giving voice to the perspectives of our membership throughout Europe, and engaging with decision makers in the European institutions, Eurodiaconia aims to advocate for inclusion, care, and empowerment of the most vulnerable and excluded and ensure dignity for all.


Praxis Eurodiaconia encourages members to engage with other organisations across Europe by facilitating networks, meetings, member partnerships, and best practice sharing. Members are also provided with the tools they need to better understand and engage with social policy at the European level and support their work at national level.


Identity and Values Eurodiaconia develops thematic meetings for members in person (network meetings), as well as an online presence through webinars, social media and online toolkits. Both facets of our work bring together experts on European Diaconia from all over the continent, whose shared goals are the further development of practical approaches, identity, and community in Christian social care today.


To be able to work in these three directions, network meetings for members are one of our main tools. Through our networks, we bring together the expertise of our members, partners and external experts, equipping our members so they can impact social policies and develop their services. Our networks cover different policy areas, such as marginalisation and social exclusion, healthy ageing and elderly care, Roma inclusion, etc. We also provide opportunities for reflection on the role of diaconia and christian social practice in Europe today.

Areas of Work



 Poverty and social exclusion

 Social and health care services

 Rebalancing social and economic policies

2016 in figures

1525
people
received our
newsletter



6
press
releases
sent



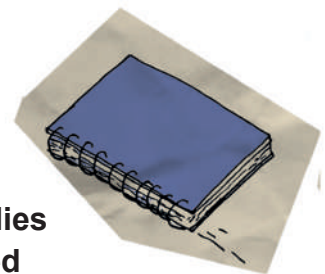
1100
Twitter
followers



700
Likes on
Facebook



40
reports,
surveys
and studies
published



2
events
held in the
European
Parliament



19
Eurodiaconia
events held

17
study visits
organised



421
participants
at
Eurodiaconia
events

Membership in 2016



47 members active in 32 countries, regions and territories.

Organisation	Country	Contact
Armenia Inter-Church Charitable Round Table Foundation	Republic of Armenia	www.roundtable-act.am
Diakonie Österreich	Austria	www.diakonie.at
Diakonie Českobratrská církev evangelická	Czech Republic	www.diakonie.cz
Slezska Diakonie	Czech Republic	www.slezskadiakonie.cz
Dansk Diakoniråd	Denmark	www.danskdiaconi.dk
Kofoeds Skole	Denmark	www.kofoedsskole.dk
The Free Churches Group	England and Wales	www.freechurches.org.uk
Kirkkopalvelut	Finland	www.kirkkopalvelut.fi
Kirkon Diakonia	Finland	www.evl.fi/EVLen.nsf
Helsingin Diakonissalaitos	Finland	www.hdl.fi
Oulun Diakonissalaitos	Finland	www.odl.fi
Fédération de l'Entraide Protestante	France	www.fep.asso.fr
Evangelisches Werk für Diakonie und Entwicklung eV	Germany	www.evfdiakonie.org
Diakonie Deutschland	Germany	www.diakonie.de
Kaiserswerther Generalkonferenz	Europe/World Wide	www.kaiserswerther-generalkonferenz.org
Verband Evangelischer Diakonen - Diakoninnen und Diakonatsgemeinschaften in Deutschland e.V. (VEDD)	Germany	www.vedd.de
Diakonie Düsseldorf	Germany	www.diakonie-duesseldorf.de
Diakonie Michaelshoven	Germany	www.diakonie-michaelshoven.de
Johanniter GmbH	Germany	www.johanniter.de
Magyarországi Evangélikus Egyház	Hungary	www.evangelikus.hu
Magyarországi Református Egyház	Hungary	www.reformatus.hu
Ökumenikus Segélyszervezet	Hungary	www.hia.hu
Hin evangélikus lúterska kirkja	Iceland	www.kirkjan.is

Organisation

Diaconia Valdese
Diakonie Kosova
Diakonija Latvijā
Liuteronu diakonija
Kerk in Actie
Kirkens Bymisjon i Oslo
Diakonhjemmet
Den Norske Kirke
Diakonia Kosciola Ewangelicko-
Augsburgskiego w RP
Episcopia Reformata Din Ardeal
Church of Scotland
Ekumenska humanitarna organizacija
Evanjelicka diakonia ECAV na
Slovensku
Iglesia Evangélica Española
Diaconía España
Svenska Kyrkan
Diakonistiftelsen Samariterhemmet
Ekumeniska EU-kontoret
Sveriges Stadsmissioner
Europäischer Verband Freikirchlicher
Diakoniewerke
The Salvation Army Europe Region
Diakonie.ch
Stiftung Diakoniewerk Neumünster –
Schweizerische Pflegerinnenschule

Country

Italy
Kosovo
Latvia
Lithuania
Netherlands
Norway
Norway
Norway
Poland

Romania
Scotland
Serbia
Slovakia

Spain
Spain
Sweden
Sweden
Europe/International
Sweden
Europe/International

Europe
Switzerland
Switzerland

Contact

www.diaconiavaldese.org
www.diakoniekosova.org
www.diakonija.lv
www.lidiakonija.puslapiai.lt
www.kerkinactie.nl
www.bymisjon.no
www.diakonhjemmet.no
www.kirken.no
www.diakonia.org.pl

www.reformatus.ro
www.crossreach.org.uk
www.ehons.org
www.diakonia.sk

www.iee-es.org
www.diaconia.es
www.svenskakyrkan.se
www.samariterhemmet.se
www.ekumeniskaeukontoret.se
www.sverigesstadsmissioner.se
www.evfdiakonie.org

www.salvationarmy.org/ihq/europe
www.punkt diakonie.ch
www.diakoniewerk-neumuenster.ch

Our Team

Supervisory Board in 2016



Carla van der Vlist (*Chairperson*)
Kerk in Actie, Netherlands



Maria Loheide (*Vice-Chairperson*)
Diakonie Deutschland, Germany



Romana Bělová
Slezska Diakonie, Czech Republic



Victoria Munsey
Diaconia Valdese, Italy



Anna Österberg
Association of Diaconal Institutions in Sweden,
Sweden



Helle Christiansen
Dansk Diakoniråd, Denmark



Damir Krkobabić (*until June*)
Ekumenska Humanitarna Organizacija, Serbia



Ramona Petrika (*from June*)
Diakonija Latvija, Latvia

Eurodiaconia Secretariat in 2016



Heather Roy
Secretary General



Clotilde Clark-Foulquier
*Policy and Membership
Development Officer*



Stephan Burger
*Policy and Membership
Development Officer*



Alexander Elu
*Policy and Membership
Development Officer*



Nicolas Derobert
(until September)
*Communications and
Membership Officer*



Antonio La Mantia
(from October)
*Communications and
Membership Officer
Acting Communications and
Membership Officer (from
January to October)*



Patricia Willems
(until February)
Administration Officer



Keziah Cooper
(until October)
Administration Officer



Sharon Levrez
(from November)
Administration Officer



Lea Schumacher
Junior Policy Officer



Giacomo Manca
Policy Assistant

Governance

The highest decision-making body of Eurodiaconia is the Annual General Meeting (AGM). This is hosted by alternate member organisations across Europe, and in 2016 it was hosted by Kerk in Actie (Church in Action) in Utrecht, The Netherlands. Each year our members decide on the strategy and work plan for the coming year and discuss any other pressing issues. This year the meeting focused on the nature and experience of hospitality in diaconia and Europe.

In particular, the 90 delegates analysed how we support vulnerable individuals in their communities and the most effective strategies to help them to rebuild their lives and homes. Participants had the opportunity to explore different notions of hospitality and how they challenge or complement their diaconal actions.

In 2016, the Annual General Meeting elected [Ramona Petrika](#) from Diakonija, Latvia, as a new member of our Supervisory Board and said goodbye to Damir Krkobabic who had been on our Board for 4 years. It was an emotional moment to say goodbye but also a moment to congratulate Anna Österberg from the Association of Diaconal Institutions in Sweden who was re-elected as a board member.

Finances

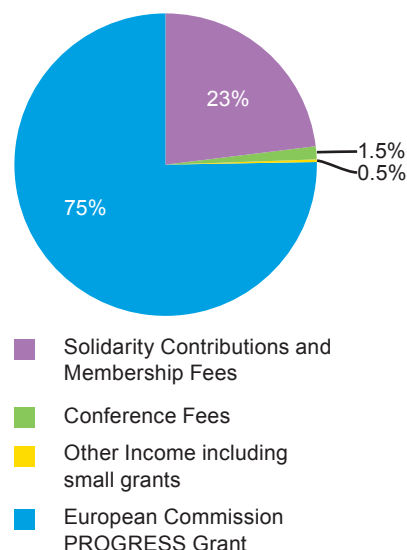
Our finances remain at the same level and stability as in 2015. Our main sources of income are Membership Fees and Contributions and an operating grant from the European Commission. Miscellaneous income comes from balance payments on grants and activity reimbursements. The operating grant from the European Commission comes from the PROGRESS axis of the EaSI programme which supports Employment and Social Innovation. Eurodiaconia has a four year framework partnership which covers the years 2014 – 2017. A new call for framework partnerships is expected in 2017. In 2016 we spent less than the total grant awarded and so the final grant payment is reduced accordingly. In 2016 we had anticipated carrying out a further project in South America funded by the Otto Per Mille Funds from the Waldensian Church in Italy. Due to work priorities we agreed with the funder to postpone the project to 2017 and carry the funds over. Membership fees and member contributions are essential to co-fund our European funding and to fund activities that are not eligible for European Union support. We are hugely grateful to all our members for the continued financial support which is both generous and sustained.

Our expenditure was aligned to our budget with the exception of agreed overspends in Administration and Services towards the end of the year when we could observe underspends in other areas such as staff costs and travel. In particular, we had an increased investment in staff training in 2016 and in carrying out a full human resources review with an external consultant. Nevertheless, we ended the year with a higher than planned surplus. This has been added to our reserves to contribute to our ongoing financial stability.

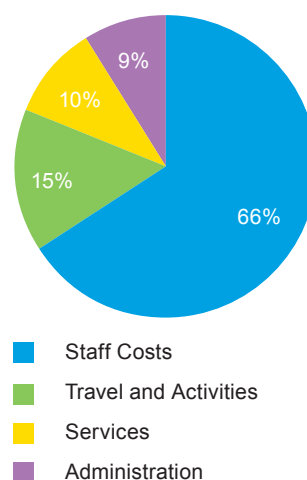
Eurodiaconia accounts for 2016

The 2016 accounts were successfully audited by DGSR and partners, Reviseurs d'entreprise of Brussels, Belgium. Our auditors were appointed at the 2014 AGM for the period 2014 -2017. Copies of the audit report and full accounts can be requested from the Eurodiaconia secretariat.

INCOME	2016			2015
	Budget	Actual at Year End	Variance	Actual
<i>Solidarity Contributions and membership fees</i>	148,706 €	153,710 €	-5,004 €	152,460 €
Sub total	148,706 €	153,710 €	-5,004 €	152,460 €
<i>Conference Fees</i>	9,000 €	9,570 €	570 €	12,000 €
<i>Other Income including small grant income</i>	40,000 €	3,255 €	-36,745 €	18,921 €
Sub total	49,000 €	12,825 €	-36,175 €	30,921 €
<i>European Commission PROGRESS Grant</i>	516,350 €	499,939 €	-16,411 €	483,471 €
Sub total	516,350 €	499,939 €	-16,411 €	483,471 €
Total	714,056 €	666,474 €	-57,589 €	666,852 €



EXPENDITURE	2016			2015
	Budget	Actual at Year End	Variance	Actual
<i>Staff Costs</i>	447,707 €	429,589 €	-18,118 €	424,740 €
Sub total	447,707 €	429,589 €	-18,118 €	424,740 €
<i>Travel, Accommodation and Activities</i>	152,220 €	98,928 €	-53,292 €	97,086 €
Sub total	152,220 €	98,928 €	-53,292 €	97,086 €
<i>Services</i>	56,160 €	66,197 €	10,037 €	61,083 €
Sub total	56,160 €	66,197 €	10,037 €	61,083 €
<i>Administration</i>	54,113 €	56,573 €	2,460 €	47,173 €
Subtotal	54,113 €	56,573 €	2,460 €	47,173 €
Total	710,200 €	651,287 €	-58,913 €	630,082 €



Surplus / Deficit	3,856 €	15,187 €		36,770 €
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Armenia Round Table (Armenia)

Improving the livelihood of Syrian refugees in Armenia

"I had basic knowledge of sewing. I already make clothes for my family members and relatives. I will stay in Armenia and will accept orders for service delivery. If I manage to find a job, I will not leave the country."

Tamar

© Armenia Round Table

Kerk in Actie (Netherlands)

Working with migrants and refugees

© Anne Paul Roukema



Sankt Lukas Stiftelsen/ Dansk Diakonirad (Denmark)

New Fellowship Project

"The vision of The Luke Fellowship is for new and existing members to continue and renew the legacy of diaconia within the premises and in society."

© Rune Hansen

Fédération Entraide Protestante (France)

Spreading our message across the country

© Fédération Entraide Protestante





Diakonhjemmet (Norway)

Ageing well in the social community and at home

© Marte Garmann

Slezska diakonie (Czech Republic)

EFFATHA (Nový Jičín) social-therapeutic workshops for people with mental disability

"I can live my life on my own and I like it very much!"

Martin

© Slezska diakonie



Kirkenskorshaer (Denmark)

Providing a meal for the most deprived

© Helga Theilgaard

Salvation army (EU)

Bridges Drop-in

"Without The Salvation Army - many of us here would be dead." Andrew

© Salvation Army International





© Hin Evangelíska Lúterska Kirkja

Strengthening social policies

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Fighting extreme poverty and social exclusion

The EU's new food aid programme was launched in 2014. This programme, called the "Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived" (FEAD), seeks not only to provide immediate material assistance to those in need throughout Europe through food aid, but also to foster social inclusion. Eurodiaconia has been working on the establishment of this new fund from the start. In 2016 Eurodiaconia continued to provide regular information about the FEAD to its members for them to be involved at national level, and kept informing the European Commission with feedback from members on the implementation of the programme at local level.

Since its launch in September 2016, Eurodiaconia and several of its members have been taking part in the FEAD Network Meetings. The FEAD network is an open community for people providing assistance to the most deprived in Europe. This includes the EU institutions, organisations interested in or delivering FEAD-funded activities and national Managing Authorities.

In May 2016, following the launch of the *Written Declaration on an EU Homelessness strategy* by the European Parliament, Eurodiaconia supported FEANTSA (the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless) in its efforts to ensure its approval.

On the 14th of June 2016, Eurodiaconia held a discussion on the role of social innovation and investment on the topic of homelessness in the European Parliament. The debate, hosted by Enrique Calvet Chambon MEP, gathered key stakeholders from the Eurodiaconia membership, civil society and EU policy-makers in order to discuss how homelessness can be addressed more ef-

fectively through innovation and investment, and what the EU can do to support these efforts.

On the 16th September 2016, Eurodiaconia released policy recommendations in the fields of homelessness and social innovation. The recommendations aimed at drawing attention to the situation of homelessness within the European Union. The publication also contained a letter of policy recommendations based on experiences from Eurodiaconia members working with homeless people, as well as a Eurodiaconia report on the role of social innovation and investment on the topics of homelessness.

On the 18th of October 2016, Eurodiaconia was invited to present successful projects from the Church of Sweden (Digniti Omnia – A worthier life for all) and Kirkens Koshær (Kompasset – The Compass) funded through the FEAD. The meeting focused on the implementation of OP II FEAD program (the FEAD's social inclusion program), and in particular on "outreach and identification of beneficiaries."

Following these examples of advocacy; showcasing member's work and partnering with other organisations to combat extreme poverty, Eurodiaconia has reinforced the visibility of its member's work, particularly in the area of food and material support. It has also succeeded in presenting diaconal organisation's innovative projects to foster social inclusion of the most excluded. In doing so, Eurodiaconia is contributing to keeping the issue of extreme poverty on the EU political agenda, and continuing to work for a renewed political commitment that seriously addresses extreme deprivation at national and EU level.

Keeping child poverty on the European agenda

In 2016, Eurodiaconia and its members continued working on promoting child well-being across Europe, doing their best to advocate for more child-friendly policies.

In February 2016, Eurodiaconia published a concept note aimed at examining how our members see child well-being from a diaconal perspective, and how both Eurodiaconia and its members can be engaged in the discussion at European level. The concept note outlined the context of child well-being in the EU, the work of Eurodiaconia and its members on the topic, the added value of a diaconal approach, as well as the next potential steps to be pursued.

In September 2016, Eurodiaconia, as part of the EU Alliance for Investing in Children, co-signed a statement on the European Pillar of Social Rights.

The statement welcomes the initiative to develop a European Pillar of Social Rights, but also calls on the European Commission to further include children's concerns by mainstreaming children's rights in the Pillar, prioritising investments in children, strengthening the voice of children and being inclusive of all children.

On the occasion of Universal Children's Day on 20th November, Eurodiaconia sent out a press release to draw attention to the situation of child well-being on the continent. The press release pointed out how in contemporary Europe, many children still suffer from poverty, exclusion, and a lack of opportunities and hope for the future. In the press release Eurodiaconia also insisted on the potential of the Recommendation for "Investing in Children" to change the situation and the need for its active implementation at national level.

Facilitating member contributions to the European Semester and EU2020

In 2016, Eurodiaconia continued monitoring and engaging in the political framework of the Europe 2020 strategy and the European Semester; striving to make social policies a cornerstone of the EU political agenda. In order to do so, Eurodiaconia developed various tools to support members wishing to engage with the European Semester, facilitating their contribution to the consultation process.

In April 2016, Eurodiaconia launched its first edition of the European Semester Quarterly Journal. The Semester Quarterly features analyses of key documents related to the Semester, institutional updates as well as interviews with member organisations who are involved in the process. It is a new capacity-building tool providing both background information and concrete tips and tricks for achieving greater advocacy impact, in complement to Eurodiaconia's existing online European Semester Toolkit. The new Journal is aimed at supporting members who are already engaged,

but also those who are interested in becoming involved.

On the 18th of October 2016, Eurodiaconia sent a letter to Valdis Dombrovskis, Vice-President of the European Commission for the Euro and Social Dialogue, urging the Commission to work more actively toward a rebalancing of social and economic priorities. The letter recognised efforts undertaken such as the consultation on a European Pillar of Social Rights, and called for a stronger emphasis on the fight against poverty, social exclusion and inequality.

Throughout the year, Eurodiaconia has continued its active involvement in the European Semester Alliance, a cross-sectoral coalition of Brussels-based NGOs and trade unions. Through the Alliance, Eurodiaconia has successfully reached out to new contacts within the European Commission's cabinet for economic and financial affairs, broadening the scope of its institutional advocacy.

Addressing the consequences and opportunities of labour mobility

On the 18th of February 2016, Eurodiaconia in cooperation with the European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions (CESI) held a European Parliament breakfast meeting on labour mobility, discussing the social risks and opportunities of seeking jobs abroad. The meeting was hosted in the European Parliament by Jean Lambert MEP (Greens/EFA), and gave NGOs, MEPs and social service providers the chance to discuss the growing barriers EU mobile citizens face on a daily basis to access social and public services in some EU member states. The meeting also assessed the strategies employed to facilitate the engagement of NGOs and trade unions.

The breakfast meeting saw a record number of participants for such an event, and gave the opportunity to have a lively debate on this issue, as well as to present the different points of view of the political groups within the European Parliament.

Eurodiaconia stressed the fundamental role of cross-border cooperation, providing people about to move to another EU state with complete and transparent information about their rights and the differences between the social service systems. Concrete examples of how diaconal organisations are providing support, services and advocacy were also given.



Seeking sustainable approaches to integrate migrants and refugees

Most of the people arriving in Europe after arduous and dangerous journeys to Europe face great uncertainties as to what the future holds. Many of our members have been engaged in both short term and long term support, providing people with material assistance (such as clothing and food) and support for sustainable social inclusion and integration through participation and access to community activities, vocational training and the labour market.

In January 2016, Eurodiaconia organised its first network meeting on migration, which was an opportunity for members to discuss the current situation of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Europe. The meeting also addressed the need for short and long-term services and advocacy approaches, and determined where the focus should be for Eurodiaconia on this topic in the coming year.

The meeting came as a first chance among Eurodiaconia members to share their experience, present questions and discuss what common actions could be taken across the European network. The two-day meeting also focused on what Eurodiaconia could do practically to support its members' work, and what could be done in terms of advocacy work towards the European Union.

On 27-28 October 2016, the Eurodiaconia Marginalisation and Inclusion Network Meeting met in Vienna, bringing together 25 participants to discuss the role of diaconia as a bedrock for the integration of migrants and the fostering of social cohesion. The meeting provided a forum for members to discuss the major challenges and best practices in the area of service provision for migrants,

refugees and asylum seekers. The meeting also featured an external speaker from the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency, who presented the overall EU framework for the integration of migrants, as well as a study visit to the community-focused integration office run by Diakonie Österreich (Diaconia Austria).

Eurodiaconia continued its active involvement in the informal coalition of Christian organisations working on migration. The "Christian Group on Migration" gathers major players in the area of migration, such as the Church Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME), Caritas Europa, Don Bosco international, and many more. These organisations work together on specific issues relating to the inclusion of migrants in Europe, as well as on the broader legislative framework relating to migration – such as Dublin II. Working together, Christian organisations have been able to raise a strong voice to recall that European values of solidarity must be kept as the basis for action of the European Union and its Member States in facing together the changing situation on migration.

In 2016, the Eurodiaconia Secretariat responded to its members' increasing interest in the topic of migration. Through meeting members and discovering more of their work in supporting and empowering third country nationals, Eurodiaconia laid down the foundation for a new thematic network that will focus exclusively on migration. Meanwhile, Eurodiaconia also started to develop relationships with key institutional partners and NGOs working on migration, in order to facilitate the widespread sharing of Eurodiaconia's member's projects and experience.

Promoting Roma integration

Roma inclusion remained a key area of work for Eurodiaconia in 2016. In light of the prejudice and violence Roma people continue to face, Eurodiaconia and its members continued to play their role in tackling discrimination and safeguarding equal opportunities for Roma people in Europe through material aid, education and social and health services.

On the 8th of April 2016, on the occasion of International Roma Day, Eurodiaconia called for European action to address the marginal position which many Roma girls and women continue to have both within the Roma community and broader society. Eurodiaconia called on the European Commission to collect more gender-disaggregated data on the barriers faced by Roma women, to mainstream gender into its EU Framework on National Roma Integration Strategies, and to introduce a gender category into its yearly NRIS assessments.

On 13-14 October 2016, Eurodiaconia held its annual Roma network meeting in Uppsala, Sweden.

The meeting, co-organised by Svenska Kyrkan (Church of Sweden) focused on the role diaconal actors can play in tackling Anti-Gypsyism, which is increasingly recognised as a core obstacle to achieving social inclusion for Roma. Over the course of two days, participants from all parts of Europe had a chance to explore the meaning of the term 'Anti-Gypsyism', along with the role of different categories of actors and concrete projects uniting service provision with anti-discrimination actions.

On 29-30 November 2016, Eurodiaconia, and its Serbian member EHO participated in the 10th European Platform for Roma Inclusion. Eurodiaconia co-signed a letter condemning the growing levels of anti-Gypsyism in the public sphere and the lack of effective responses both at EU and national level, which decreases the impact of all pro-Roma inclusion measures, legislation, policies, funding, and practices. The objective of the Platform is to bring together all the stakeholders involved in the Roma integration process at European, national and regional or local level.



Shaping the European Pillar of Social Rights

In 2016, Eurodiaconia played an important part in the discussion about the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Pillar is intended as a key response to the aftermath of the financial crisis and as an update of the European social model in light of a changing labour market. It aims at the reform of social protection systems across Europe in order to reduce national differences by allowing all national welfare systems to reach similarly high standards across Europe.

We wanted to ensure that the European Pillar of Social Rights delivers on its commitment to upward social convergence. Eurodiaconia's work on the topic focused on the need for the Pillar to clarify the relationship between the adequacy and sustainability of social protection. This would outline clear targets and indicators and ensure adequate space for meaningful civil society involvement, in order to ensure that the Pillar would effectively meet the needs of vulnerable groups.

On the 27th of September 2016, Eurodiaconia organised an event on the European Pillar of Social rights, in collaboration with Dennis de Jong, MEP. The aim was to discuss the third axis of the proposed Pillar, which focuses on 'adequate and sustainable social protection', and its potential to address existing gaps in social protection sys-

tems across Europe, by combining perspectives from the local, regional, national and EU level, as well as Eurodiaconia members Diakonie Niedersachsen and Church of Finland.

In September 2016, Eurodiaconia released two policy papers entitled "*Promoting upward social convergence*" and "*The role of social services in fighting inequalities in Europe*" to explore the role which diaconal service providers can play in tackling inequality, and key strategies to ensure 'upward social convergence' through the Pillar.

The first publication outlines key recommendations for boosting the social and employment performance of Member States through social investment, active inclusion and civil dialogue. The second outlines key recommendations for fostering quality social services to fight inequalities in Europe.

On the 17th of October, Eurodiaconia wrote to the European Commission urging them to work more actively toward a rebalancing of social and economic priorities. The letter recognised efforts being undertaken such as the consultation on a European Pillar of Social Rights, and called for a stronger emphasis on the fight against poverty, social exclusion and inequality.



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Promoting quality integrated care systems

In 2016, Eurodiaconia continued promoting the need for quality services in the context of rapidly ageing populations in Europe. The promotion of accessible, affordable and adequate long-term care (LTC) for all constitutes a major challenge for the actors involved, especially in light of tighter public budgets in almost all the EU countries.

On the 23rd of February, Eurodiaconia launched its set of Guidelines on Homecare Services to emphasize some key messages which are necessary to render homecare better and more accessible to users of diaconal social services. In this context, homecare represents a promising way to provide health and social services to a large number of individuals who wish to retain their independence within their home settings.

On the 11th of March 2016, Eurodiaconia released a joint call for policy change on LTC with a focus on integrated care. The call, supported and co-signed by a coalition of organisations working in the field of long-term care, aimed to encourage EU institutions and Member States to support comprehensive policies for quality improvement processes in all forms of care settings and services.

On the 26th of August 2016, Eurodiaconia published a new piece of research on *“The education, training and qualifications of nursing and care assistants across Europe”*. The publication aimed to improve understanding among providers of social services on the curricula and skills obtained by healthcare, nursing and care assistants across Europe in order to be better prepared to receive foreign care professionals and assess further training needs. The research has shown in particular how significant differences still exist in Europe between the definitions of curricula for health and care assistants, the duration of training and the entry requirements.

On 5-6 October 2016, Eurodiaconia held its annual Healthy Aging and Long Term Care (HALTC) Network Meeting in Torre Pellice, Italy. The meeting saw fifteen members gathering together to talk about how to provide health and social care services in an integrated manner within their local communities. Eurodiaconia members' interest on the topic mainly responded to their need to address the demand for care from a comprehensive and holistic approach which meets the growing complexity and comprehensiveness of users' needs.

Funding of social services

The profound changes in Europe in the wake of the recent economic and social policy decisions have dramatically increased the challenges for social service providers. If, on the one hand, social actors have taken a more central role in helping vulnerable people, alternative sources of financing have had to be explored due to tighter public budgets on the other.

From January to June 2016, Eurodiaconia assumed the rotating Social Services Europe presidency. Social Services Europe brings together eight European networks of not-for-profit providers of social and health care services. The network aims to strengthen the profile and position of social services, and promote the role of not-for-profit social service providers in Europe. It seeks to ensure that the specificity of not-for-profit social and healthcare service providers be recognised and that economic, social and legal conditions exist for quality social and healthcare services. As President of SSE, Eurodiaconia chaired the meetings of the Board and General Working Group. It also supported the different task forces in delivering outcomes and continued to build up a close cooperation with EU Institutions, social stakeholders and other relevant partners working in the social services sector.

On the 22nd of February Eurodiaconia published an updated briefing on the EU rules on state aid applicable to Member States. The briefing stressed the specific nature of social services in state aid rules and clarified in which cases public subsidies constitute state aid, when state aid needs to be made public and when state aid is altogether incompatible with EU rules.

On 13th October 2016, Eurodiaconia, along with Diakonie Deutschland organised an expert round table on the measurement of social impact. The round table was aimed at enriching the German debate on this topic by including a European perspective regarding not-for-profit social service providers to effectively measure the impact of their services.

On 27-28 October 2016, Eurodiaconia, Diakonie Deutschland (Diaconia Germany) along with Helsingin Diakonissalaitos (Helsinki Deaconess Institute) organised a conference in Berlin to discuss issues related to financing social services as experienced by the not-for-profit sector. The conference saw the participation of more than 20 members and focused on different national frameworks for financing social services. The meeting also explored new initiatives at EU and national levels which could boost social services provided on a not-for-profit basis, and looked at partnership opportunities with other stakeholders.

Inclusive labour markets

Unemployment in Europe still represents one of the worst effects of the 2008 financial and economic crisis and about a half of current job seekers are long-term unemployed, i.e. struggling to find a job for more than a year. Many Eurodiaconia members are engaged on a daily basis in helping people experiencing long term unemployment find their way back to work.

At the end of 2016, Eurodiaconia released a publication on long term unemployment and our members' good practices. The study provided an overview of effective and/or innovative projects run by members relating to services that help people facing (long-term) unemployment get back to work and reintegrate in society. It also provided insightful case studies on job market-integration from the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy and Sweden. These practices may provide inspiration for Eurodiaconia members to develop existing services further or to set up new ones.

On the 21st of March 2016, Eurodiaconia held, along with Eurocities and the European Social Network, a side event on long-term unemployment at the Annual Convention for Inclusive Growth organised by the European Commission. The focus of the side event lay on how multi-stakeholder co-operation should be promoted in order

to boost integrated approaches to the inclusion of long-term unemployed persons.

On the 20th of April 2016, Eurodiaconia held a breakfast meeting to discuss the challenges faced by long-term unemployed persons and the potential role of EU policy makers and services providers in addressing them. The meeting brought together civil society organisations, key political actors and social partners in an effort to boost the implementation of the December 2015 Council recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market and explore its way ahead.

On the 2nd of September 2016, Eurodiaconia produced a response to the European Commission's New Skills Agenda for Europe. The Agenda was adopted on the 10th of June 2016 and aims to boost human capital, employability and competitiveness in the EU through a series of key actions to be developed between 2016 and 2017. The response brought several points to the attention of decision-makers in the EU and Member States; in particular on the proposed creation of a "*Skills Profile Tool for third country nationals*" and the Agenda's role in the inclusion of long-term unemployed persons into labour markets.

Stimulating research and innovation for Diaconia

Eurodiaconia believes research and development play a critical role in the innovation process of diaconia. In 2016, research was a fundamental part of the organisation's annual activities, providing an important basis for the development of new solutions and perspectives with which to analyse our complex societies.

On June 8 2016, a meeting of the Eurodiaconia discussion group on Research and Practice took place in Utrecht, the Netherlands. The meeting brought together Eurodiaconia members and researchers to discuss the future of Eurodiaconia's research goals for the upcoming year.

On 14-17 September 2016, Eurodiaconia co-organised the 6th Biennial Conference for Research in Diaconia and Christian Social Practice under the theme of "Diaconia in Dialogue. The Challenges of Diversifying Contexts" at DIAK (Diaconia University of Applied Sciences) in Helsinki, Finland. This year the core topic focussed on the need for faith communities and churches to

re-evaluate their practice in order to operate in multi-faith societies. In the face of increasing diversity, there is an urgent need to revisit the basic understanding of Diaconia as a field which explicitly involves interdisciplinary dialogue. Changes in politics and culture as well as the impact of mass migration in many areas bring new challenges, as does the re-emerging profile of religion in public life. The conference was organised by *ReDi (The International Society for the Research and Study of Diaconia and Christian social practice)* in collaboration with DIAK.

In addition, Eurodiaconia continued to be a member of the managing and editorial board of *Diaconia: Journal for the Study of Christian Social Practice*, and contributed to its publication with scientific articles and reports. Diaconia is now an open access journal and available for free at www.v-r.de. Eurodiaconia also hosts the secretariat of *ReDi* and is as treasurer an institutional board member of the society.



Communicating our Message

In 2016, Eurodiaconia continued to spread the word about our efforts in the social field and the development of our network and policy actions. To keep the diaconal message clear and strong both at European and national level, Eurodiaconia continued raising its visibility through press and media exposure, online webinars and social media activity.

On Eurodiaconia's social media channels, a substantial increase was registered both in terms of numbers of followers, and interaction both on Facebook and Twitter. In addition, Eurodiaconia began sharing meaningful images relating to our activities through Instagram.

To reflect Eurodiaconia's ever diversifying network, developments were made to ensure an easier and more accessible experience when using the website for members communicating in additional languages.

The Eurodiaconia 2016 Annual General Meeting in Utrecht achieved visibility at national level by featuring in Dutch newspapers that covered the event with detailed reports and interviews. Over the course of the year, the Eurodiaconia Secretariat has released a total number of 6 press releases, showcasing Eurodiaconia's position on major political and social events in Europe and strengthening our advocacy efforts.

On 2nd of December, Eurodiaconia and Diakonie Deutschland launched their first joint social media campaign named: "Diaconia: Working for a fairer Europe." The campaign was a small step towards promoting a common "European diaconal identity" among Eurodiaconia members' employees to foster cooperation, as well as to highlight Eurodiaconia members' responses to the most pressing social challenges in the eyes of our network's stakeholders.

Visits to and from members

In 2016, Eurodiaconia organised 17 study visits, three of which took place in Brussels and the rest in other European countries.

In July 2016, on the occasion of the start of the Slovak Presidency of the European Council, Eurodiaconia organised a study visit to Brussels for its Slovak member organisations, Evanjelická diakonia ECAV na Slovensku (the Evangelical Lutheran Diaconia in Slovakia) and Reformovanej kresťanskej cirkvi na Slovensku (the Diaconal Center of Reformed Christian Church in Slovakia).

The aim of the study visit was to improve members' knowledge on the European Institutions and on their impacts on Slovak policies. During these two days, the delegation had the chance to meet Employment and Social Services officers from the Permanent Representation of Slovakia to the EU, Slovak members of the European Parliament, and officers from the European Commission explaining the commitment of the Commission directives on Long-Term Care, as well as the use of the European Social Fund in Slovakia.

On the 1st of July, Eurodiaconia organised a study visit to the 'Werkplaats Rotterdam Zuid' (WRZ) in the Netherlands, a joint collaboration by the private and public sector which links those furthest from the labour market to small and medium enterprises in order to provide them with sustainable

employment. The study visit brought together stakeholders operating at different political levels, including representatives from Eurodiaconia's Dutch member Kerk in Actie, small and medium enterprises, the Municipality of Rotterdam and Professor Zdzisław Kraznodębski MEP. A delegate from the office of Emilian Pavel MEP and Dutch MEP Dennis de Jong took part as well.

On 26-27 January 2016, five representatives from our member organisation Kerk in Actie (Church in Action) came to Brussels during the Dutch Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Our Dutch members had the chance to share their observation and recommendations on migrants inclusion and poverty reduction with various Dutch members of the European Parliament and with representatives of other networks working in the social field. Further study visits also took place in Brussels involving the Church of Scotland and the Armenia Round Table Foundation; giving our members the opportunity to gain further understanding of the European Institutions and to discuss topics relevant in their countries with major political actors.

Over the year, our Policy Officers also participated in a series of study visits held by our members across Europe. The visits have taken place in Denmark, Czech Republic, Romania, Italy, Finland, Austria and Sweden.

Our partners

In order to better impact the EU decision-making process in the field of social and health care policies, Eurodiaconia continues to engage in partnerships with other organisations.

The European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)



EAPN brings together national networks and European organisations fighting poverty and social exclusion. As a member, Eurodiaconia contributes to its work in both the Executive Committee and the European Strategies for Inclusion Group.

Social Services Europe



Social Services Europe is a network of not-for-profit social and health care service providers aimed at strengthening the profile and position of social services, and promoting the role of not-for-profit social service providers throughout Europe. Social Services Europe is a key partner organisation for Eurodiaconia, particularly in ensuring that there is an enabling framework at European level for not-for-profit organisations.

The Social Platform



We continued to be active in Social Platform, the largest network of European rights- and value-based civil society organisations working in the social sector.

The EU Semester Alliance



“EU Semester Alliance” is a broad coalition bringing together major European civil-society organisations and trade unions, representing thousands of member organisations on the ground at European, national and local levels. The aim of the alliance is to support progress towards a more social and sustainable European Semester process, and to strengthen civil society engagement at national and EU level. Eurodiaconia was a lead partner in the EU Alliance for a democratic, social and sustainable European Semester.

The EU Alliance for investing in children



In 2016, Eurodiaconia was also an active partner of the EU Alliance for investing in children. The alliance brings together over 20 European networks sharing a commitment to end child poverty and to promote child wellbeing across Europe. Eurodiaconia was an active partner of the alliance.

European Financial Inclusion Network (EFIN)



EFIN is a coalition of European stakeholders (institutions and individuals) involved in financial inclusion. The aim of the EFIN's present project is to create a network of wider scope both in terms of membership (including financial institution and associations, public institutions, government representatives, NGOs trade unions and consumer organisations) and in terms of objectives (promoting all measures and actions favouring financial inclusion in general).



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