Helping people in need
to be part of the community

Easy to read

Who we are

We are **Eurodiaconia**.
We are a group of 51 Christian organisations and churches.
This is our symbol:

We believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God and we follow his words.
With our work, we try to:

- Stand close to people in need and people who are left out.

- Make sure that all people have the same chances in life.

- Make things fairer in the world.

Most of our organisations work to help people
who are very poor or left out of the community.
For example, people who live on the streets
because they do not have a home.
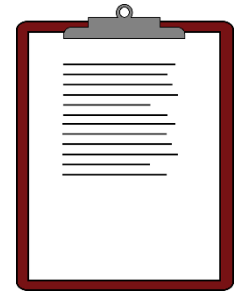Or people who do not have a job for a very long time.

What this booklet is about

We wrote this booklet to show examples of the work
our organisations do in different countries
to help people in need.
To do that, our organisations:

- Listen to people in need
  and try to understand their needs.

- Work together with people in need to make things better for them.

Example from Denmark

An organisation in Denmark runs a shop that sells second-hand things.
That means things that were used before by other people.
There are not new.
The people who work in this shop
are people who are left out of the community.
They may:

- Be very poor.
- Live on the streets and do not have a home.
- Have just got out of prison.
- Have problems with alcohol or drugs.

Working in this shop helps these people to:

- Have a purpose in their life.
- Grow their skills and find a job later on.
- Believe in themselves.
- Be in contact with other people and be part of the community.

Thanks to this shop,
some of these people are able to find a job afterwards
and live a better life.
Sadly, some other people
may still have serious problems with alcohol and drugs
and may need more time and help.

Examples from France

An organisation in France made a project
to help young people 18 to 25 years old
who do not have a home and live on the streets
to have a place to stay and be part of the community.

Also, they can choose to take part in different activities,
like sports and arts.
In return, they must give their help to other people.
For example, they can choose to work to give food
to other people who live on the streets.

This project helps these young people to:

- Have a home.

- Believe more in themselves.

- Make friends and be part of the community.

- Grow their skills.

- Help other people in need.

Other organisations in France made a mini market
that sells food and other things in lower prices
to people who are poor.
The shop is also a place that they can meet,
talk and learn from each other.
If they want, they can also help at the shop
by working there for some hours.

Example from Germany

An organisation in Germany made a 'Centre for Health and Culture'.
This is a place that helps people who are left out of the community
to take part in fun activities.
For example, they can learn to play music, sing, paint,
make things from wood, fix bicycles, do yoga and exercises to relax.

Also they can cook, shower or meet a doctor.
Everyone can share their ideas and help to make them happen.

Example from the Netherlands

An organisation in the Netherlands works with people
who do not have a home and live on the streets.

- It listens to them and their stories.

- It understands their needs.

- It helps them to take part in activities they like.

- It helps them to be part of the community.

For example, these people meet every week
and talk about things that interest them.

These activities help people who do not have a home
and live on the streets to:

- Feel stronger and believe in themselves.

- Be heard and feel respected.

- Make friends.

- Have a purpose and a programme in their lives.

Example from Spain

Several organisations and churches in Spain run projects
to help people who are left out of the community.
They may give them food, clothes
or other things they need.
Or they may give them other kind of help.
For example, they may help them
grow their skills to be able to get a job.
In return, these people can offer their help
to other people in need.
For example,
they can help preparing packages of food
and giving them to other people in need.

Example from Italy

Our organisation in Italy takes part in a project
that helps people with dementia.
Dementia is a disease that makes a person
lose part or all of their memory and other skills.
Dementia is more common among older people.
If a person has dementia, they may not be able to remember important
things about their life, like who they are or where they live.
They may not be able to cook, go shopping
or do other everyday things independently.

Many people with dementia live in care homes
away from the community.
They may be left out or other people may look down at them
because they have dementia.

Our organisation in Italy takes part in a project
that tries to help people with dementia to be part of the community.
It tries to listen to the needs of people with dementia
and help them do fun activities like going on trips, going to a museum
or eating at a restaurant.
It also tries to make things and services in the community
easier for people with dementia.

Thanks to this project, now more and more people:

- Get to know about dementia.

- Understand the needs of people with dementia.

- See that people with dementia can still take part in the community if they get the right help.

Why these projects are important

All these projects are important because they give people in need
and people who are left out of the community
the chance to:

- Have an active role in the projects
  and take decisions for themselves.

- Express themselves
  and talk about their needs.

- Grow their skills
  and learn new things.

- Be part of the community.
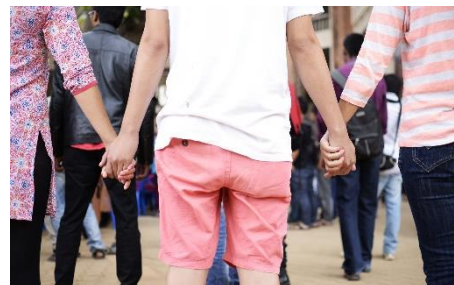
This work is not easy and it takes time to happen.
It is important that countries in Europe give money
to the organisations that run these projects
so they can continue doing this important work.

More information

If you want to find more information about Eurodiaconia and our work,
you can visit our website at www.eurodiaconia.org.
You can also send us an email at office@eurodiaconia.org.