



Progress on the Social Dimensions of the **Country-specific Recommendations**

including the complementary
recommendations of our members

Executive Summary
October 2021

An Executive Summary for the Report on the Progress on the Social Dimension of the Country-specific Recommendations and the Complementary Recommendations of our Members in Austria, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece and Italy.

What are the main areas of concern for Eurodiaconia's Members, and which overarching issues have they identified?

When it comes to housing solutions for homeless people, **Finland** is well known for its 'Housing First' approach. But are Finnish housing and homelessness services truly reaching the most vulnerable? Eurodiaconia's Finnish member observes that undocumented third-country nationals and homeless EU citizens are left behind when it comes to the provision of healthcare and social services, including homelessness services, and therefore demands that these are made accessible to all the people in vulnerable situations. Another shortcoming highlighted is that the otherwise advanced housing policy in Finland does not cover the private rental housing market, where significant discrimination is present. In fact, it is documented that Finnish Roma face difficulties when trying to rent an apartment and people with a foreign name share a similar experience.

In **Austria**, persons with disabilities face major discrimination both in schools and on the labour market. In fact, there is a general lack of early childhood education concepts for children with disabilities, and the compulsory last year in kindergarten excludes them. Therefore, our Austrian member advocates for an inclusive education and care system. When it comes to accessing the labour market, persons with disabilities in Austria are often employed in facilities where their work is not considered as employment, and therefore does not provide them wages and social insurance. Our Austrian member thus demands that discriminative labour market structures for persons with disabilities are dismantled.

Eurodiaconia's member from **Italy** reports the challenge of brain drain taking the form of masses of young, educated people leaving the country. Thus, our member demands an improvement of the labour market relevance of education, investment into research and innovation, and the launch of active labour market policies towards the young.



So what's the aim?

The aim of this report is to assess the CSRs based on how much progress our members can see relating to the fields and topics from 2019, and what further shortcomings they have experienced. In fact, due to the "exceptional cycle" of the European Semester, as the Commission calls it, in 2021 there have been no new structural country-specific recommendations produced, and the CSRs addressing medium-to long-term structural challenges, which were adopted by the Council on 9 July 2019, remain relevant and will be monitored by the Commission this year.

Contributing Members:

The qualitative data at the core of this report was collected between March and June 2021, mainly in the form of interviews. The contributing member organisations are:

-  Austria - **Diakonie Österreich**
-  Czechia - **Diakonie ČCE**/ Diakonie of the Church of the Czech Bretheran
-  Denmark - **Kirkens Korshaer**
-  Finland - **Diakonissalaitos**/ Deaconess Foundation
-  Germany - **Diakonie Deutschland**
-  Greece - **Ελληνική Ευαγγελική Εκκλησία**/ Evangelical Church of Greece
-  Italy - **Diaconia Valdese**

The report begins with a short presentation of the goal and method of preparing it, and it continues with an analysis of four main areas of general concern identified by Eurodiaconia's members. Then, the report examines how much progress they can see relating to the fields and topics of the 2019 CSRs, and what further shortcomings they have experienced, which are missing from the official CSRs. Each country-specific summary concludes with Eurodiaconia's own country-specific recommendations complementing those of the European Commission.

Want to find out more? Read our full Report! You can also contact our Policy Office at Policy@eurodiaconia.org.