



Eurodiaconia  | *Connecting faith
and social justice
through action*

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON AND SECRETARY GENERAL

2023 continued to be a year of diversity and polarity.

The cost of living crisis meant that for many a sense of worry and fear about being able to provide for families and loved ones increased. Impact of the COVID crisis is still being seen with increasing negative mental health challenges, especially among younger people and the continued victimisation of people who experience poverty or have a migrant background.

We have also seen challenges in our democratic institutions with confidence due to scandal or remoteness at an all time low as well as the increasing presence of political actors who hold radical positions.

The war in Ukraine continues with no real end in sight. People in Ukraine are left in limbo, unable to make decisions on their future as long as the war continues. In Armenia refugees and internally displaced persons try to find a new normal after much loss and conflict over land and identity, yet often silenced in the political debate.

Networks such as Eurodiaconia remain essential in bringing these experiences to the attention of decision makers but also in building networks across the diaconal landscape to develop new approaches and services that will seek to improve the situation for many across our continent. It can seem overwhelming but our faith is in a God that cares and strengthens:

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:9

Please enjoy our 2023 Annual Report

Olli Holmström
Chairperson

Heather Roy
Secretary General



WHO ARE WE?

MISSION

Eurodiaconia is a network of churches and Christian organisations that provide social and health care services and advocate for social justice. Together we work for just and transformative social change across Europe.

BREAKTHROUGH GOAL 1

An increasing and retained membership with 80% of members actively participating in the work of the network through open and tailored opportunities for engagement

BREAKTHROUGH GOAL 2

Be recognised campaigners and advocates for social justice and not for profit social service providers, providing opportunities for a common diaconal voice in the European public sphere.

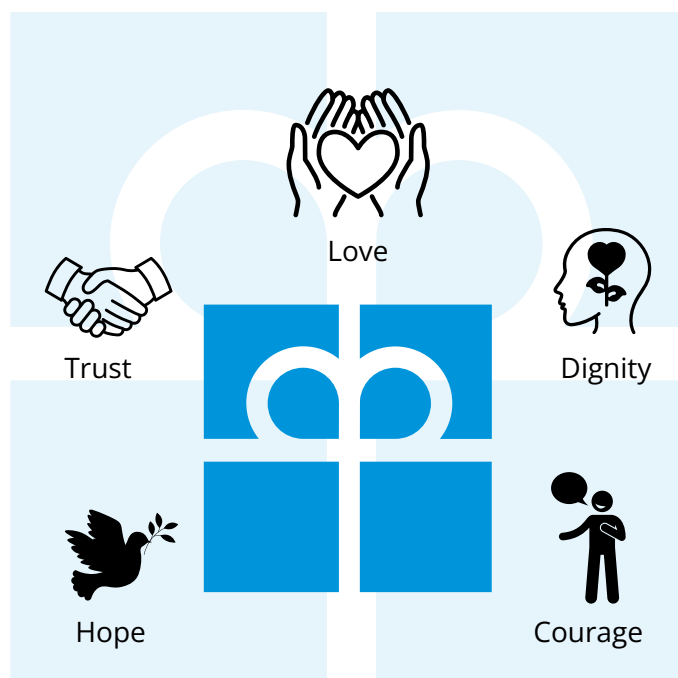
BREAKTHROUGH GOAL 3

Be a sustainable network with a diversity of funding, building project capacity and shared resources among and with members.

VISION

Inspired by our Christian faith, our vision is of a Europe where social injustice is eradicated and that each person is valued, included and empowered to reach their fullest potential, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalized.

VALUES





HOW WE WORK

Eurodiaconia's work has a multifaceted approach, encompassing capacity building, advocacy, and collaborative partnerships that have shown tangible outcomes.

Across 2023, with our members, we have highlighted and addressed high levels of poverty and social exclusion among a variety of vulnerable groups. In doing so, it has enabled awareness raising amongst EU decision makers on the social state of the EU, as well as key actions to be taken to address poverty and support non-for-profit social service providers.

Our network meeting opportunities among members have enabled best-practice exchange, contributing to inspiring innovation and problem-solving amongst Eurodiaconia members and therefore increasing social impact.

Our capacity building work equips members to engage in advocacy at home and at European level, bringing increased expertise that contributes to better policy making.

OUR WORK

1. THE SOCIAL EUROPE ACADEMY
2. BUILDING SOCIAL EUROPE
3. COMMUNICATING SOCIAL EUROPE
4. FUNDING SOCIAL EUROPE

Eurodiaconia's comprehensive work in 2023 had the following notable achievements include:

- The roll-out of the first year of the Social Europe Academy
- Stronger communications work including our Mental Health Campaign
- Active engagement in the delivery of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR).
- Tailor made support to members on accessing EU Funds

1. THE SOCIAL EUROPE ACADEMY - CAPACITY BUILDING

All capacity activities under the **Social Europe Academy** are based on two strands: funding and advocacy.

Funding training is delivered through a step-by-step approach, in order for members to gain as much benefit from trainings as possible, through several levels of basic and advanced training cycles and tailor-made trainings. In 2023 Eurodiaconia secretariat provided three levels of basic funding training and two levels of project development training.

2023's Advocacy strand delivered three briefings for members: on adequate minimum income, the EU Care Strategy (strengthening gender equality and social fairness) and updated guidelines for diaconial organisations on Roma participation. In addition, in order to reach as many members as possible, Social Europe Academy sessions were included in every Network Meetings, delivering trainings on energy poverty and the EU (Extreme Destitution Network Meeting) and EU Policy and Funding Updates (at the Migration network meeting, Roma network meeting and Social and Health Care Services Network Meeting). Finally, an online Mental Health inclusion webinar was designed and presented to members in November 2023.

The Social Europe Academy also encompasses an online presence through its online hub regrouping all training documents designed for the SEA, as well as webinars.

High-level groups and network meetings

High-level groups and network meetings facilitate collaboration and members input, while extensive research results in policy papers and reports addressing critical issues such as long-term care, homelessness, and energy poverty. Strengthened collaboration among members, fostering a collective approach to social challenges.

Advocacy and Monitoring of Key Elements of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR)

Main Achievements: Provided policy recommendations influencing EU frameworks like the Child Guarantee, Combatting Homelessness Declaration, and others.

Participants were spread over four network meetings, a mental health training, and EU funding training.

In total, 113* participants attended these trainings:

Network meetings 2023

Extreme Destitution | June | Rome 

Migration | Sept | Paris 

Roma | May | Bratislava 

Social & Health Services | Oct | Timisoara 

Mental Health Training | Online
EU Funding Training | Online



*Note that this figure does not include online training, people who read the briefings or accessed the training material after the event.

2. BUILDING SOCIAL EUROPE - ADVOCACY AND POLICY

Eurodiaconia's advocacy work extends to EU-level events, including conferences and webinars, ensuring the dissemination of valuable insights. Strategic partnerships with organizations like Social Services Europe underscore Eurodiaconia's commitment to collective efforts.

Eurodiaconia's work addresses a number of EU policy priorities, including the European Green Deal, the European Pillar of Social Rights, and the European Semester.

Eurodiaconia remains a key player in influencing EU policies, contributing to the broader vision of a socially and sustainable Europe, driving positive social change, addressing societal challenges.

Policy Paper on Long-term Care

We produced a policy paper reviewing persistent challenges in the long-term care sector. The paper focuses on workforce shortages, increasing demand for care due to a rapid ageing population. It highlights the need for social innovation, digitalisation and a shift to community based care, while showcasing over 10 best practices among Eurodiaconia members.

2nd State of the Social Union Report

This report presents an overview of the 2022-2023 social situation as highlighted by our members: despite a slow-down in inflation, Eurodiaconia members report for instance a 40% increase over a year (2022 to 2023) in people seeking support. The central recommendation is for EU Policies to exhibit greater coherence, empowering member states to more effectively assist individuals experiencing poverty.

Policy paper on energy poverty

This Policy Paper sheds light on energy poverty in the context of the cost-of-living crisis. It shows our members' work and good practices to especially support people in vulnerable situations since they are disproportionately affected by energy poverty. The paper underlines the need for targeted support of households at high risk, better funding of debt and energy counselling programs, and an effective ban on energy disconnections as well as long-term solutions such as socially inclusive renovations of buildings and public investment in renewable energy sources.

Position paper on reserved contracts in public procurement

Given the crucial role public procurement plays in the provision of social services, this position paper explores the use of reserved contracts as a tool for social integration. We called on the EU to continuously promote Socially Responsible Public Procurement by encouraging public authorities to integrate social aspects in their procurement.

Report on food poverty


Together with the Red Cross EU Office, we organized a roundtable discussion on 'Food Aid and the Cost of Living Crisis across Europe'. The debate underlined our members' experience that the profile of people in need of food aid is widening and the demand has nearly doubled in recent years. Therefore, we concluded and recommended better supporting non-for-profit organizations, simplifying the access to funding, and protecting the existing social inclusion priorities immediately. Also, we must keep pushing for systemic change and tackle the root causes of poverty.


3. COMMUNICATING SOCIAL EUROPE- COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION


Social media and website performance


In December 2023, we carried out a comprehensive analysis of the organisation's social media (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn) and website metrics. The results provided an up-to-date view of our current standing in the digital realm. It is evident from the data that our content has found resonance with a dedicated audience, as illustrated by the consistent engagement rates and the marked increases in reach and interactions across platforms.

Below are some of the high-level metrics:

 X (formerly Twitter) saw an overall improvement on previous year despite impressions being down 77%, engagement rate (+48%), link click (+568.8%), and likes (+363.2%) all increased.

 Meta apps (Facebook and Instagram) also showed positive results with visits to Facebook +240% and Instagram +33%.

 LinkedIn engagement showed a modest growth rate of 8.7%

 Finally, visits to our website totalled 38,647 with over half (60.15%) of the sessions showing active engagement in the content.

Mental Health Inclusion Campaign

During European Mental Health Week, in May 2023, the "Mental Health Inclusion" campaign rallied communities across Europe to prioritize mental well-being and combat stigma.

The campaign highlighted our members' work in this space from ground-breaking courses like Kirk in Action's "Freedom Focus," offering migrant women tools to heal from trauma, to Slezská Diakonie's innovative projects promoting social inclusion for those with mental health challenges. The campaign also showcased initiatives like VAMOS in Finland provide individual coaching and peer support, empowering marginalized youth to overcome obstacles and Diaconia España's Zoé Project which leads the charge in suicide prevention, advocating for sensitization, training, and support for the vulnerable.

The campaign successfully epitomized the collective commitment of Eurodiaconia members to creating caring communities where every individual's mental health is prioritized and illustrated Eurodiaconia's vision for a Europe where each person is valued, included and empowered to reach their full potential.



4. FUNDING SOCIAL EUROPE - EU FINANCING, INVESTMENT, AND ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE BUILDING

Funding Newsletters and Updates

Our members' primary focus lies on the provision and innovation of social and healthcare services and as such, the question of social funding is a key concern. Likewise, important developments in economic and financial policies have implications for the sustainability of our members' work and the political challenges that they have to face. In 2023, through our monthly Funding Newsletters and our timely Funding Updates, we have provided our members curated calls for proposals released by the EU institutions and other facilities, among others, such as

- Horizon Europe
- ESF+
- Erasmus+
- CERV
- AMIF,
- the Justice Programme
- EU4Health
- Pilot Projects (PP)
- Preparatory Actions (PA)
- the European Solidarity Corps.

Funding News

Through Funding News the members were informed about policy developments related to social funding such as the EU budget, the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the Multiannual Financial Framework, and the EU budget.

Finally, we ensured that members and subscribers have an avenue to meet potential project partners or co-applicants and collaborate by publishing a "Looking for" section. The robust performance metrics of the newsletters and members' feedback underscore the meaningful contribution of the newsletters in connecting stakeholders and opening doors for opportunities.

Members' Report

This year, we also published a members' report on the use of EU funds at the national and transnational levels, which delved into the challenges and good practices of our members and reflected on the lessons that they have learned in the course of leveraging EU funding for a broader scope of social service delivery or for increasing the capacity of providers.

From their experiences, our members identified recommendations to the European Commission on improving timeframe and administrative processes, building capacities of both national agencies and social organisations, flexibility and adaptability, alternative financing models, communication and information, and, periodic review and stakeholder feedback.

Helpdesk Project

Lastly, in the Helpdesk Project we worked together with other European organisations in promoting awareness and capacity-building on EU programmes and funds for social services and facilitating exchange and cooperation among managing authorities, social service providers and the European Commission.

- EU funding updates, newsletter.
- Paper on social investment
- Scorecard on use of funds for EPSR

FINANCES

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

INCOME		GLOBAL BUDGET	ACTUAL END 2023	VARIANCE TO BUDGET
<i>Member Income</i>	Membership fees and solidarity contributions	161.000,0	168.530,2	7.530,1
	Conference fees	15.000,0	20.925,0	5.925,0
<i>subtotal</i>		176.000,0	189.455,2	13.455,2
<i>Project Income</i>				0,0
	ESF+ SPARE	816.170,0	816.170,0	0,0
	Social Services Helpdesk	18.650,0	27.099,0	8.449,0
<i>sub total</i>		834.820,0	843.269,0	0,0
				0,0
Total Income		1.010.820,0	1.032.724,2	21.904,2
				0,0
EXPENDITURE		GLOBAL BUDGET		
<i>Staff</i>				0,0
	Staff Costs	721.271,0	677.307,0	43.964,0
<i>sub total</i>		721.271,0	677.307,0	43.964,0
				0,0
<i>Travel and Subsistence</i>		149.320,0	146.897,0	2.423,0
<i>sub total</i>		149.320,0	146.897,0	2.423,0
<i>Administation and services</i>		121.430,0	171.152,0	-49.722,0
<i>sub total</i>		121.430,0	171.152,0	
Total Expenditure surplus/deficit		992.021,0	995.356,0	-3.335,0
		18.799,0	37.368,2	-18.569,2

FINANCES

BALANCE SHEET

ITEM	2023	2022
	€	€
Furniture and Equipment	3.886,0	5.873,0
Sub total	3.886,0	5.873,0
Cash at Bank	687.049,0	745.014,0
Debtors	599.660,0	529.251,0
Prepayments and accrued incomes	606,0	483,0
Sub total	1.287.315,0	1.274.748,0
Creditors	39.115,0	34.321,0
Accrued Charges and deferred income (income carried forward)	926.265,0	863.634,0
Accrual for holiday pay and taxes/social security/VAT	86.939,0	117.888,0
Other creditors	0,0	63.265,0
Sub Total	1.052.319,0	1.079.107,0
NET ASSETS		
Represented by		
Association funds – equity	85.000,0	85.000,0
Restricted funds	15.187,0	15.187,0
Accumulated Surplus	101.327,0	67.671,0
Surplus (deficit) for year to date	37.368,0	33.656,0
Reserves	238.883,0	201.514,0



MEMBERSHIP

ANNUAL SURVEY FINDINGS

Through our annual survey, our members provided us with useful feedback and insightful information on their work. The results showed once more the diversity of services delivered by our members, from early childhood education to palliative care, from the integration of migrants to projects focusing on the green and just transition. The survey clearly showed **our members' interest in EU policies**, underlined the importance of our network to **share best practices** amongst each other and highlighted the possibility for them to **influence EU social policies** through Eurodiaconia's collective and strong voice.

OUR PARTNERS

Eurodiaconia's strategic partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders have been reinforced and new partnerships established.

Each partner provides a broad range of expertise and resources, affording us to network and influence much more broadly.



MEET THE TEAM

SUPERVISORY BOARD



Olli Holmström
Diakonissalaitos,
Finland



Cristian Pavel
Filantropia
Timișoara, Romania



Rollaug Waaler
Haroldsplass
Foundation, Norway



Alfredo Abad
Iglesia Evangélica
España,
Spain



Agnieszka Jelinek
Diaconia Poland,
Poland



Alessandro Esposito
Diaconia Valdese,
Italy



Malte Lindenthal
Diakonie
Deutschland,
Germany

SECRETARIAT TEAM 2023

Heather Roy
Secretary General

Henriette Umutesi
Office Manager

Andrea Witt
Head of Operations

Ženja Eremić
Policy Assistant

Gisela Guari Cañada
Policy and
Membership
Development Officer

**Magdalena
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Abriel Schieffeiers
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Donata Cagnato
Communications
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Engagement Officer

Vera Nygard
Head of Membership
Services, Projects &
Engagement

Vasiliki Raftopoulou
Communications
Assistant

**Clotilde Clark-
Foulquier**
Head of Policy and
Deputy Secretary
General

Annika Sparrer
Membership Officer

Andrea Sánchez
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Membership
Development Officer

**Anne-Sophie
Wislocki**
Head of Advocacy

Girogia Signoretto
Projects and EU
Funding Officer