



# ANNUAL REPORT 2019

# EURODIACONIA 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

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# CHAIRPERSON AND SECRETARY GENERAL'S MESSAGE



**Sindre Skeie**  
*Chairperson*



**Heather Roy**  
*Secretary General*

***“Hope is being able to see that  
there is light despite all of the  
darkness”***

***Desmond Tutu***

Poverty and inequality are still a tragic reality. They do not only affect the needs and the aspirations of millions of young and elderly people across Europe but it is now clear that they also threaten the very survival of our democracies.

While poverty levels in the EU have begun to fall from the 2008 economic crisis, many indicators registered significant worsening of equality across education, health, and socioeconomic position in almost every European country. If we then correlate this data to the current changes in our liberal democracies it won't take long to figure out how the growth of nationalism and the shrinkage of democratic space often correspond to growing inequality.

As the primary European advocate for diaconia, we are proud to continue building strategic alliances and promoting policy actions to break the chains of poverty and inequality and thereby promoting the inner value of each person and our democracies. We do that driven by our faith and inspired by the unceasing work of our members' employees and volunteers, in the certainty that inclusive growth is key to ensuring the wellbeing of people and relaunching the European project.

Against this context, in 2019, we played a pivotal role in guiding the discussion on the Economy of Wellbeing, which has proved that the European leadership seems to have understood that ignoring inequalities and the social risk was no longer a viable political strategy for the EU. After 10 years of blind austerity measures, the EU finally seems to have recognised that investing in social policies is not only sensible for its own sake, but it is good economic sense too.

We cannot ignore that while writing this message, our continent has been particularly badly hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is quite probably the worst crisis we have faced since World War II.

The crisis has brought national egoism and borders back, but it has also shown us how community solidarity and investments in social services, healthcare and wellbeing are the only feasible ways to face the most pressing challenges of a globalised world. The social and health care services sector, that has been for years undervalued and under-resourced, has now become a central tenet in Europe's efforts to overcome one of its darkest hours.

Our members are once again showing a great sense of responsibility, cooperating with national governments to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable in our society. While we "telework", thousands of social workers and volunteers continue providing essential social services putting their lives at risk and making the response of churches and diaconia one of the strongest and most effective in Europe. This cannot be forgotten and their request for funds to pay for additional staff, for additional equipment and to increase capacity must not be ignored by the European Union.

We like to think of this crisis as an opportunity for Europe to acknowledge our members' *know-how* when it comes to the delivery of quality and accessible social and healthcare services, and for it to be placed at the very heart of its future economic and political thinking.

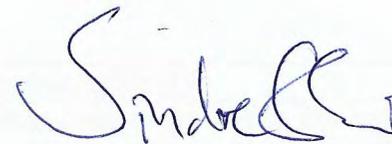
When this pandemic is over, the European project will need to be relaunched. We will continue working by our

members' side to shift the paradigm economic growth vs social wellbeing and prove that one can reinforce the other to make our societies prosper.

Thank you to all of you who are working throughout hard times. Today, more than ever, diaconia is proving to be increasingly essential, pursuing community and solidarity rather than egoism and isolation. Each one of you is proving that diaconia is an essential part of Europe and it needs to be at the heart of our future development as a society.

**Sindre Skeie**

*Chairperson*

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sindre Skeie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Heather Roy**

*Secretary General*

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heather Roy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

## WHO WE ARE

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

Eurodiaconia is a network of more than 50 churches and Christian organisations

Diaconal organisations are not only committed to helping the most vulnerable but also to tackling the structural causes of social exclusion and building a fairer and more inclusive society.



## *Our mission*

Eurodiaconia is a network of more than 50 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, leaving no one behind.

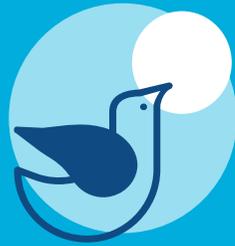


## *Our vision*

Driven by our Christian faith, our vision is of a Europe where each person is valued for their inherent God-given worth and dignity and where our societies guarantee social justice for all people, including the most vulnerable and marginalised.

## **Hope**

We believe there is light amid darkness

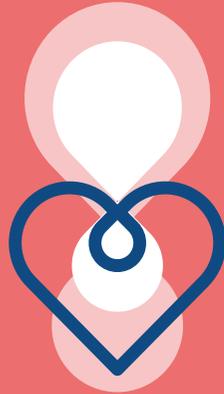


## **OUR VALUES**

Our work as a network is underpinned and driven by the values and attitudes that come from our shared Christian faith

## **Love**

We show God's unconditional love for each person



## **Courage**



We speak out where we see injustice

## **Mutuality**

We bear responsibility for the wellbeing of each other



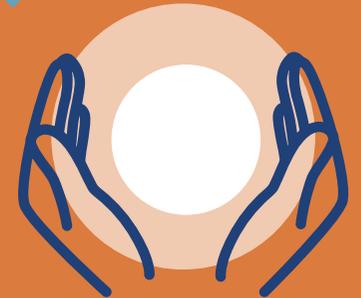
## **Dignity**

We believe that each person has equal worth and value

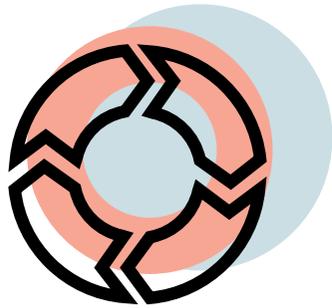


## **Care**

We provide services for all God's children

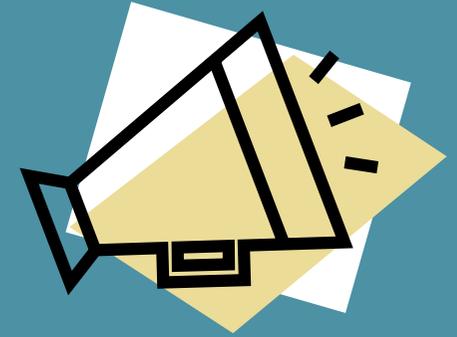


## HOW WE WORK



### ***Strengthen diaconal social services***

Strengthen diaconal service provision so as many people as possible have access to affordable, high quality and accessible social and healthcare services



### ***Social Justice***

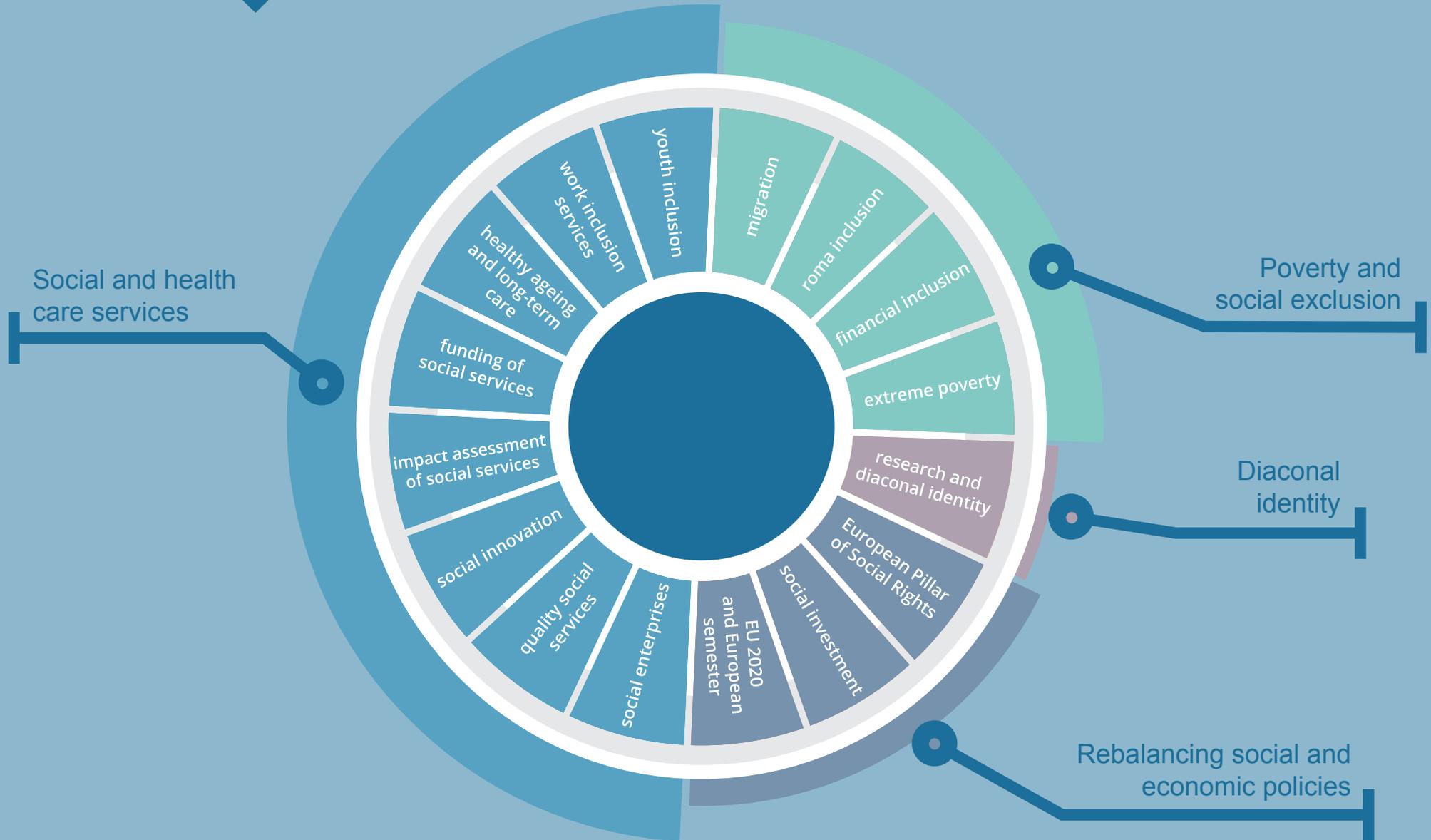
Fight for social justice by addressing the root causes of inequalities, poverty and exclusion



### ***Network identity***

Building a strong network with a clear identity

# AREAS OF WORK



## WE VALUE DIVERSITY

At Eurodiaconia, we believe that a multicultural workplace creates excellence and makes a positive difference. Therefore, we are committed to ensuring every day a safe, diverse, and inclusive place that gives people the opportunity to express themselves and develop their careers.

## WE SPEAK

As Eurodiaconia has grown and embraced diversity, English is our working language and the language spoken in team and Board communication but at Eurodiaconia we speak more than 15 languages we use to communicate with members and partners across Europe on a daily basis.



English



Bulgarian



Korean



Dutch



Finnish



French



German



Greek



Italian



Lamnsó



Latvian



Norwegian



Polish



Portuguese



Spanish



Swedish

# OUR SUPERVISORY BOARD



**Sindre Skeie**  
*Chairperson*

Diakonhjemmet  
Norway



**Victoria Munsey**  
*Vice-Chairperson*

Diaconia Valdese  
Italy



**Olli Holmstrom**

Diakonissalaitos  
Finland



**Iwona Baraniec**

Diakonia Polska  
Poland



**Stephanie Scholz**

Diakonie Deutschland  
Germany



**Ramona Petrika**

Diakonija  
Latvia



**Vasileios Meichanetsidis**

Apostoli  
Greece



# EURODIACONIA SECRETARIAT

**Heather Roy**  
*Secretary General*

Inverness  
United Kingdom



**Gabriela Agatiello**  
*Policy and Membership  
Development Officer*

Buenos Aires  
Argentina



**Vera Nygard**  
*Policy, Projects and Research Officer*

Jakobstad  
Finland



**Kenia Guimaraes**  
*Senior Policy Coordinator*

Rio de Janeiro  
Brazil



**Stefan Kitzmann**  
*Policy and Membership  
Development Officer*

Konstanz  
Germany



**Laura Rayner**  
*Policy and  
Membership Development Officer*

London  
United Kingdom



**Antonio La Mantia**  
*Senior Communications and  
Membership Officer*

Palermo  
Italy



**Virginia Demoulin**  
*Office Manager*

Sydney  
Australia



**Yana Stancheva**  
*Communications and Projects  
Assistant*

Sofia  
Bulgaria



**Kewan Mildred**  
*Policy Assistant*

Douala  
Cameroon



**STAFF THAT  
HAVE LEFT  
EURODIACONIA  
SINCE APRIL 2019**

**Florian Tuder**  
*Policy, Projects and Research Officer*  
(until March 2020)

**Sekelile Mkhabela**  
*Policy Assistant*  
(until March 2020)

**Jonathan Ambrogi**  
*Communications and Projects Assistant*  
(until December 2019)

**Paige McMillin-Goodwin**  
*Policy Assistant*  
(until December 2019)

**Lukas Humer**  
*Policy and Membership Development Officer*  
(until October 2019)

**Anne-Sophie Wislocki**  
*Policy and Membership Development Officer*  
(until August 2019)

**Augustin Diaz Herrero**  
*Policy Assistant*  
(until June 2019)

# OUR GROWTH IN 2019

2,102 Subscribers to our newsletters + 11%

584 Social media followers + 21%

770 People participated in our events + 113

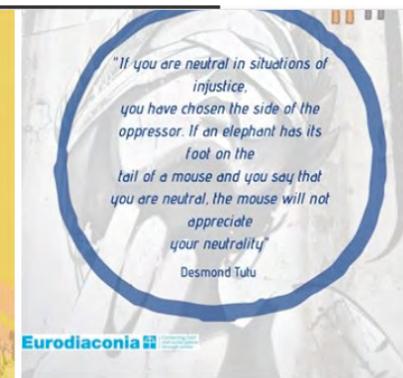
44,437 Hits on our website + 11,157

10 EU events invitations + 150%

Eurodiaconia organised 32 events

65% of our staff is now made up of women + 5%

Eurodiaconia has + 3 new members



# EURODIACONIA MEMBERS IN 2019

## Armenia

- *WCC Armenia Round Table*

## Austria

- *Diakonie Österreich*

## Czech Republic

- *Diakonie ČCE*
- *Slezska Diakonie*

## Denmark

- *Dansk Diakoniråd*
- *Kofoeds Skole*
- *Kirkens Korshaer*

## Europe

- *Salvation Army*
- *Europäischer Vb Freikirchlicher*
- *Diakoniewerke*
- *Kaiserswerther General Conferenz*

## Finland

- *Kirkkopalvelut*
- *Kirkon Diakonia*
- *Diakonissalaitos*
- *ODL*
- *Caritaslaiset*

## France

- *Fédération de l'Entraide Protestante*

## Germany

- *Diakonie Deutschland*
- *Diakonie Dusseldorf*
- *Diakonie Michaelshofen*

## Greece

- *Apostoli*
- *Greek Evangelical Church*

## Hungary

- *Magyarorszagi*
- *Reformatus Egyház*
- *Okumenikus Segélyszervezet*

## Iceland

- *Den Evangeliska Lutherska Kyrkan i Island*

## Italy

- *Diaconia Valdese*

## Kosovo

- *Diakonie Kosova*

## Latvia

- *Diakonija Latvijā*

## Lithuania

- *Evangelikų Liuteronų Diakonija*

## Netherlands

- *Kerk in Actie*

## Norway

- *Kirkens Bymisjon i Oslo*
- *Diakonhjemmet*
- *Haroldsplass*

## Poland

- *Diakonia Polska*

## Romania

- *Episcopia Reformata Din Ardeal*
- *Fundația Filantropia Timișoara*

## Serbia

- *EHO*
- *Covekoljublje*

## Slovakia

- *ECAV na Slovensku*
- *Szlovákiai Református Keresztény Egyhá*

## Spain

- *Nueva Vida*
- *Iglesia Evangélica Española*
- *Diaconia España*

## Sweden

- *Svenska Kyrkan*
- *Hela Människan*
- *ADIS*
- *Sveriges Stadsmissioner*

## Switzerland

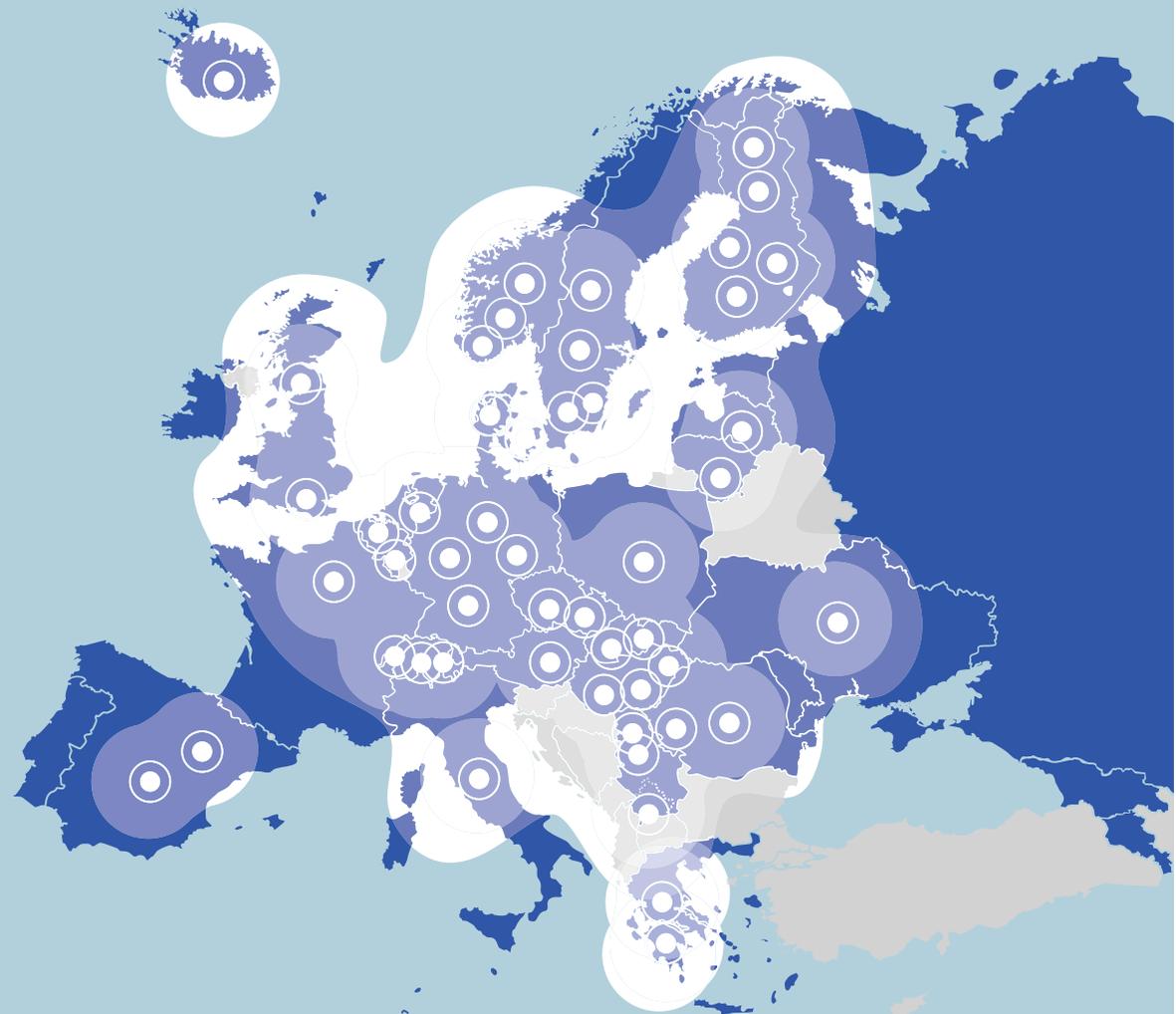
- *Diakoniewerk Neumünster*
- *Diakonie.ch*

## Ukraine

- *Living Hope*

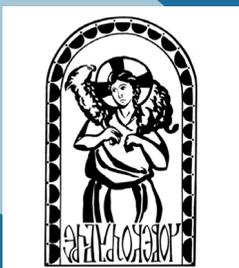
## United Kingdom

- *The Free Churches Group*
- *Church of Scotland*



## Covekoljublje Serbia

[www.covekoljublje.org](http://www.covekoljublje.org)



Covekoljublje is a Serbian not-for-profit charity organisation based in Belgrade and founded in the Christian faith in 1991 by the Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Covekoljublje is active in Serbia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina and Montenegro in the fields of humanitarian assistance and emergency response, health care, agriculture development, education and international development. It currently employs 6 full-time staff, approximately 30 external associates and 150 permanent volunteers.

## EURODIACONIA NEW MEMBERS IN 2019

### Federatia Filantropia Romania

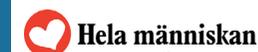
[www.fft.ro](http://www.fft.ro)



Fundatia Filantropia Timisoara is a Romanian not-for-profit charity organisation based in Timisoara, West Romania, and founded in the Christian faith in January 2006 under the patronage of the Timisoara Orthodox Diocese. Fundatia Filantropia Timisoara is active in West Romania in the field of elderly care, extreme poverty, support for victims of human trafficking, long term care, and people with disabilities. It currently employs 35 social workers and about 12 volunteers.

### Hela Människan Sweden

[www.helamanniskan.se](http://www.helamanniskan.se)



Hela Människan is a Swedish not-for-profit charity organisation based in Stockholm and founded in the Christian faith in 1920 by representatives from different religious denominations and the Swedish Missionary Union. Hela Människan is active in Sweden in the fields of alcohol and drug addiction, homelessness, food and clothing banks, and anti-trafficking. It currently employs 450 full-time staff and approximately 3000 permanent volunteers.

# OUR PARTNERS



**European  
Parliament**



**European  
Commission**



**SDG  
Watch Europe**



**Social Platform**



**Civil Society Europe**



**ReDi**



**CCME**



**CEC**



**European Christian  
Convention**



**EAPN**



**Social Services Europe**



**EU Alliance**

# OUR FINANCES

As in previous years we are grateful to members for their continued support through membership fees and solidarity contributions. We are also fortunate to receive a large operating grant under the E@SI/PROGRESS programme of the European Commission. Together, both form the majority of our income. We continue to try and diversify our income through projects and a number of projects have contributed to our 2019 work and finances.

Expenditure is monitored closely each year. 2019 saw a slight reduction in staff costs due to internal changes and restructuring.

However, this surplus was used to increase member engagement in events and networks and shows as an increase in activity costs. Service costs were higher than originally planned for similar reasons and we were able to reduce some administrative costs during the year. We are pleased to have ended the year with a small surplus.

The 2019 accounts were successfully audited by DGST and partners, Reviseurs d'entreprise, of Brussels, Belgium. Our auditors were appointed at the 2018 AGM for the period 2018 – 2021. Copies of the full accounts and audit report can be requested from the Eurodiaconia office.

## INCOME 2019

	BUDGET 2019	ACTUAL 2019	VARIANCE 2019	2018
Membership fees and solidarity contributions	144035	149172,5	5138	142578
Conference fees	11000	11046	46	10085
Grants	586630	611296,32	24666	592459
<b>Total</b>	<b>741665</b>	<b>771515</b>	<b>29850</b>	<b>745122</b>

## EXPENDITURE 2019

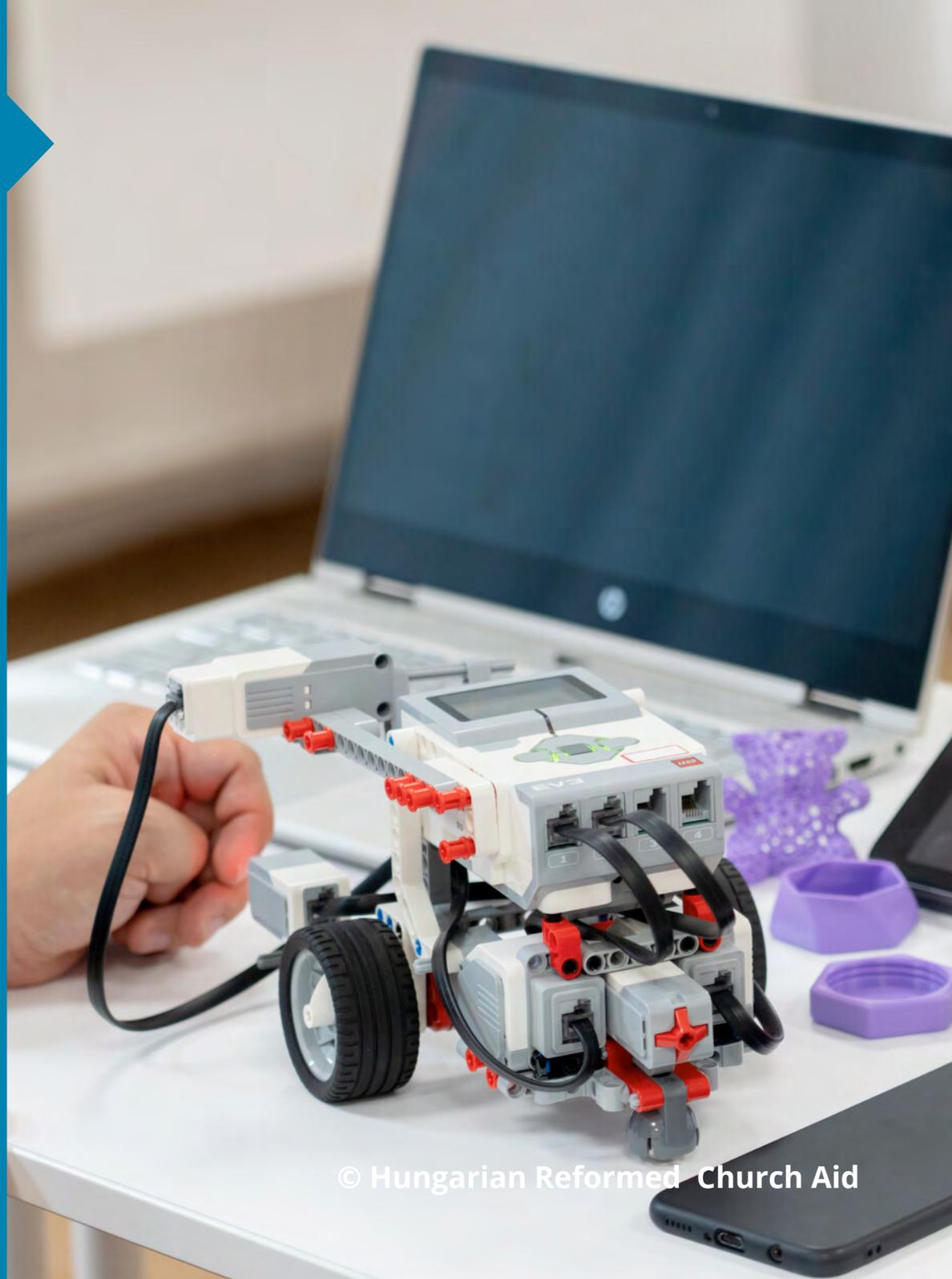
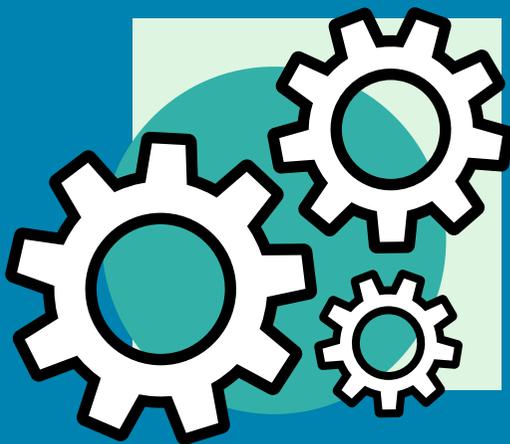
Staffing	530050	496485	- 33565	503283
Travel, accomodation and projects	89830	147554,22	57724	97785
Services	57220	67721	10501	73253
Administration	58980	53071	- 5909	63425
<b>Total</b>	<b>736080</b>	<b>764831</b>	<b>28751</b>	<b>737746</b>
<b>SURPLUS/DEFICIT</b>	<b>5585</b>	<b>6684</b>	<b>1099</b>	<b>7376</b>

## EUROPEAN SEMESTER

EU employment rate in  
Q3 of 2019 reached  
**241.5 million\***

\*Eurostat

Highest level ever reached

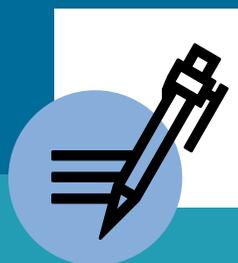


Eurodiaconia participated in all **3 strategic dialogues** organised by the European Commission on the **Semester** in 2019



Eurodiaconia influenced the priorities of the **Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy (ASGS)**

**5 priority areas** included in the ASGS



[November 2019]

## **Roundtable on the Economy of Wellbeing**

Hosted by EVL.FI and Diakonissalaitos, Helsinki (FI)

**24 participants**

**8 member organisations**

[December 2019]

## **Hela Manniskan study visit to Brussels**

**9 meetings with European Commission officials, partner NGOs and organisations**

## **4 Webinars for members on the European Semester**

**Over 50 views on our website**



[April 2019]

## **Position Paper**

Eurodiaconia Assessment of the 2019 Winter Package

[July 2019]

## **Position Paper**

Boosting Sustainable and Inclusive Growth

[October 2019]

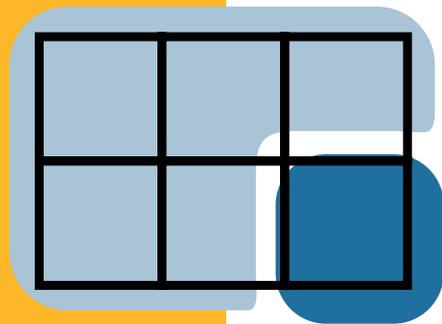
## **Report**

Promoting Shared Prosperity in the European Semester

## EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS

In 2016, the 20% richest households earned over 5 times more than the poorest 20%\*

\*Eurostat



© Hungarian Reformed Church Aid

Eurodiaconia worked with partners in the **SDG Alliance** to bring the Social Pillar and the SDGs closer together in the future EU policy framework



Eurodiaconia and its Secretary General were invited to present and co-chair a workshop at the **2019 Annual Convention for Inclusive Growth** on how social services will contribute to building up a strong European Pillar of Social Rights. Eurodiaconia members from Greece presented their work on access to social rights by migrants

## 2 Webinars for members on the Social Pillar

Over 30 views on our website



[3 October 2019]

**Parliament Breakfast Meeting** on investing in quality social services and on how an action plan on the Pillar can be developed to be most effective

Nicolas Schmit, Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, attended the event

50 participants



[January 2019]

### Report

on the State of Implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights

[December 2019]

### Report

on the State of Implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights

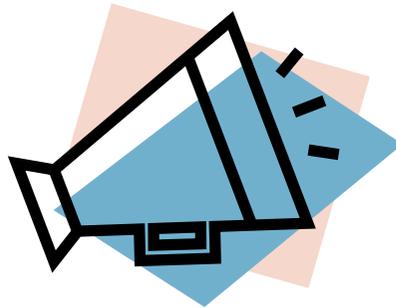
## ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The proportion of people  
aged 80 or over in the EU-28  
population is expected to  
more than double by 2050\*

\*Eurostat



Eurodiaconia signed joint letter to European Commission Vice President-Designate Věra Jourová **on civil dialogue**



Eurodiaconia was invited to speak at **the Social Innovation for Social Services Conference** organised by the European Commission

Eurodiaconia assumed **Social Services Europe's** rotating Presidency

[November 2019]

## **Social and Health Care Services Network Meeting**

Hosted by Caritaslaiset and ODL, Oulu (FI)

First ever Eurodiaconia live streamed event

15 participants

7 member organisations

50 views on our website



[October 2019]

## **Parliament Breakfast Meeting on Investing in Quality Social Services**

European Parliament, Brussels (BE)

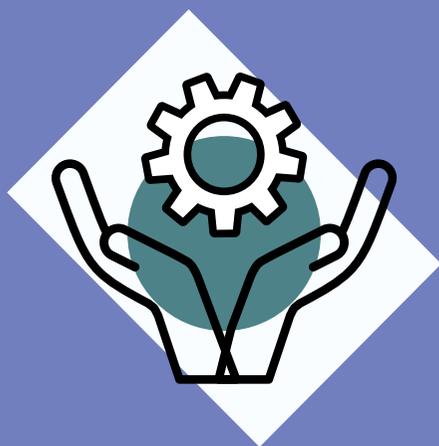
Nicolas Schmit, Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, attended the event

50 participants

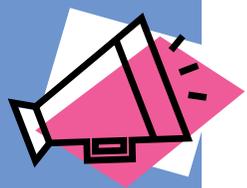
## ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

Some 27% of long-term unemployed are not registered with employment services, thus reducing their access to support\*

\*European Commission



Eurodiaconia co-organised an event in light of the **Finnish Presidency** with its Finnish members in Helsinki and signed a joint statement on the *“Economy of Wellbeing”*



Eurodiaconia was invited by the European Commission to present on a panel discussion during its Conference on **Long-Term Unemployment**

[September 2019]

## **Access to Employment Network Meeting**

Hosted by Diaconia España, Madrid (ES)

19 participants

8 member organisations

[April 2019]

**Roundtable** to discuss how policy initiatives against long-term unemployment can better help profiles with ‘lower employability’

30 participants, 8 speakers, 2 hosts

## **Webinar on Active Support to Employment & the Social Pillar**

30 views on our website



[April 2019]

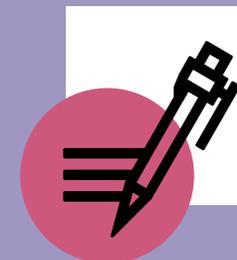
## **Policy paper**

Strategies to Promote Access to Employment for all People

[December 2019]

## **Policy paper**

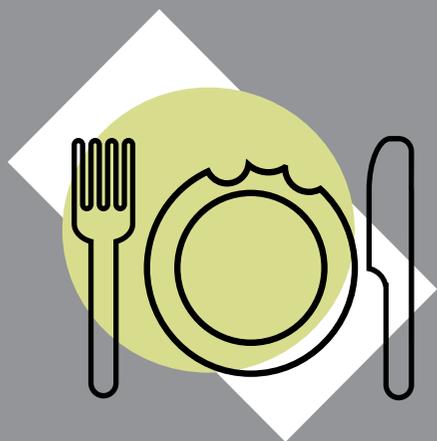
on Promoting Access to Employment for Migrants and Refugees



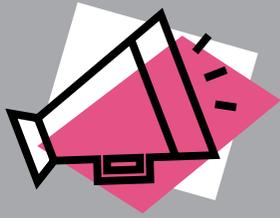
## EXTREME POVERTY

34.3% of people aged 18+ and with at most lower secondary education are at risk of poverty and social exclusion\*

\*Eurostat



© Hungarian Reformed Church Aid



Eurodiaconia **released a statement** to call on the new Commission and the EU member states to fully commit to the eradication of child poverty

Eurodiaconia participated in the ***“Child Guarantee Expert Workshop - Children living in precarious family situations”*** in Rome

Eurodiaconia co-signed the **EAPN letter** to the newly elected MEPs to ensure that the eradication of poverty stays at the top of the political agenda in the next five years

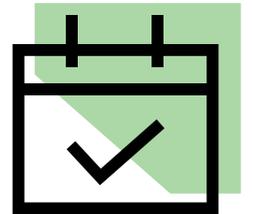
[November 2019]

## **Extreme Destitution Network Meeting**

Hosted by Kerk in Actie, Utrecht (NL)

14 participants

8 member organisations



[July 2019]

## **Policy Paper Revised**

Homelessness and Housing Exclusion

[October 2019]

## **Updated Policy Paper**

on Child Poverty and Social Exclusion



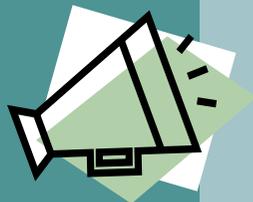
## MIGRATION

Children made up a quarter of the 120,560 refugees and migrants arriving in Europe through Mediterranean migration routes in 2019\*

\*UNICEF



Eurodiaconia signed a **statement on the future of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund**



Eurodiaconia released a **press release** to promote its report on **the integration of migrants**

Sent to more than 400 journalists

[June 2019]

**Report**

Fostering Cooperation Between Local Authorities and Civil Society Actors in the Integration and Social Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees

Published on the European Commission's Website on Integration

Included in the Recommendations of the European Migration Forum



[February 2019]

**Webinar on the integration of migrant women**

First Eurodiaconia webinar on the topic

[October 2019]

**Nueva Vida study visit to Brussels**

9 meetings with European Commission officials, MEPs and partner NGOs

[December 2019]

**Migration Network Meeting**

Hosted by Apostoli, Athens (EL)  
24 participants  
10 member organisations



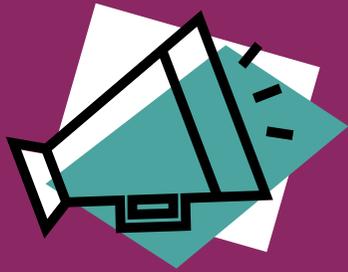
# ROMA

Almost a quarter of Roma people in the EU have no national health insurance\*

\*European Commission



© Hungarian Reformed Church Aid

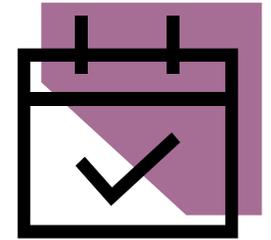


Eurodiaconia released a  
**Statement on Addressing EU  
mobile Roma**

Published on the European  
Commission's website on  
Preparing a Post-2020 Initiative  
on Roma Equality and Inclusion

Eurodiaconia sent a press release  
on the new recommendations  
on how to **include EU mobile  
Roma in a post-2020 EU  
Framework**

Sent to more than 400 journalists



[September 2019]

## **Roma Network Meeting**

Co-organised with HEKS and ELCA, Novi Sad (RS)

56 participants

14 different countries

[June 2019]

## **Hearing on the future EU Roma inclusion strategy**

Hosted by EESC, Brussels (BE)

43 participants

[March 2019]

## **First Expert Meeting on EU mobile Roma**

Eurodiaconia, Brussels (BE)

4 member organisations involved

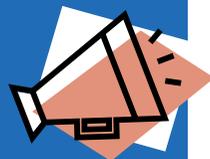
## YOUTH & CHILDREN

In 2019, participation in voluntary activities has increased by 25% compared to 2011\*

\*Eurostat



Eurodiaconia signed a joint **Call for Action** for more EU investment in children



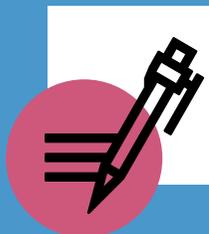
Eurodiaconia released a Public Statement on the **eradication of child poverty**

Eurodiaconia participated in the European Commission's **EU Youth Conference** in Romania

[December 2019]

### **Research Paper**

Fighting Youth Unemployment, Marginalisation and Radicalisation through Social Inclusion in Europe



[October 2019]

### **Urban Areas Network Meeting**

Hosted by Bymisjon, Oslo (NO)

13 participants

7 member organisations



[June 2019]

### **Webinar on the social inclusion of migrant children**

First Eurodiaconia webinar on the topic

5 member organisations

[November 2019]

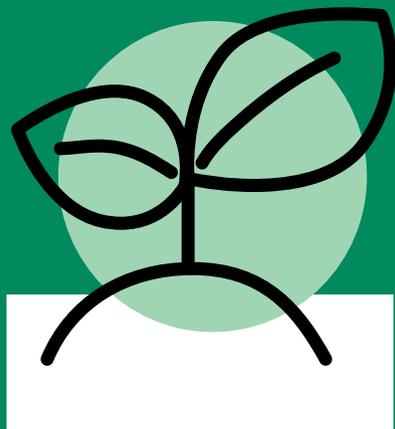
**Research paper** on Diaconal Youth presented during the 4th Bavarian Day for Youth in Europe

Hosted by the Representation of Bavaria to the EU, Brussels (BE)

## FUNDING

For 2014-20, the EU allocated over € 460 billion to regional spending. This should result in better healthcare for 44 million Europeans and over 420,000 new jobs in companies\*

\*European Commission





Eurodiaconia and 3 members participated in the **ESF Transnational Platform** and shared views on how the transnational element of this fund can be strengthened and used more effectively

Eurodiaconia engaged in the discussions with the European Parliament and the European Commission on the next **Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)** presenting recommendations and amendments

### 3 EU Funding Trainings

Hosted by ECAV, Diakonie Österreich, Eurodiaconia in Bratislava, Vienna, Brussels

38 participants

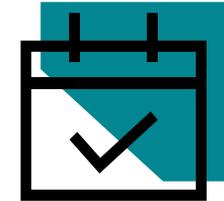
16 member organisations

[July 2019]

### Webinar on EU-funding and post-2020 MFF

9 participants

6 member organisations



[January-December 2019]

### Open Calls

15 calls published on the Eurodiaconia website

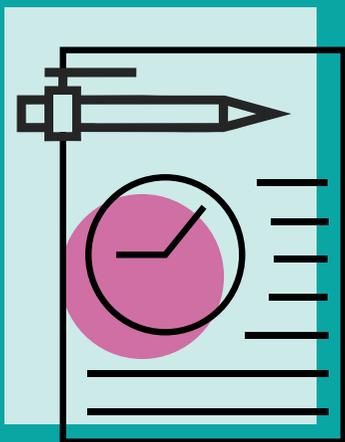
[January-December 2019]

### Funding Alerts

15 alerts listing open calls from the EU and other partner organisations

## PROJECTS

In 2019, Eurodiaconia was actively involved in 3 projects and submitted 6 project applications



[January – December 2019]

## Humanitarian Corridors

Eurodiaconia continued to work with members to demonstrate the success of Humanitarian Corridors as safe passage for migrants that includes social inclusion and integration measures.

Funded under the AMIF programme



[October 2019]

## Q-Europe Rights-based Quality in Long-Term Care

The Q-Europe project resulted in the Q-Europe Handbook, video-trainings to support LTC managers, staff training workshops and four national conferences

Supported by the Erasmus+ programme

Launched in the European Parliament



[June 2019]

## Towards a Diaconia Serving Life Seminar for Young Theologians

Second seminar in Cuba for young theologians in Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe on community-based practice in Diaconia

Supported by Otto Per Mille of the

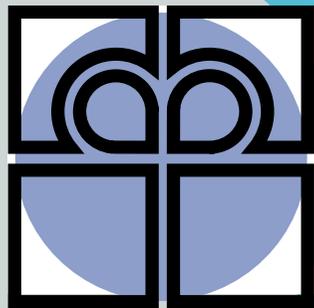
Waldensian Church

35 participants

## IDENTITY

62% of people think that churches and religious communities play an important role in helping the poor and the needy\*

\*PEW Research Center



[March 2019]

## 4 Workshops

held at the Annual General Meeting on how Eurodiaconia can expand its support to members

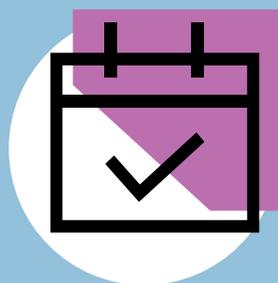
30 participants

[June 2019]

## Training course

for young theologians in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean on Diaconia in the community

30 participants



[March 2019]

## 3 Workshops

held at the Annual General Meeting on how *Diaconia* can help implement the SDGs, *Diaconia* and Brexit and on *Diaconia* and the Environment

26 participants

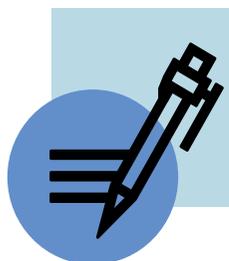
## Monthly Board meetings

of the International Network for Research in Diaconia and Christian Social Practice (REDI)

[2019 Biannual]

## Online Journal

*Diaconia*. Journal for the Study of Christian Social Practice



[March 2019]

## Annual General Meeting Declaration

Telling Truth, Changing Lives

Sent to 1000 journalists and stakeholders

**Anne Filali**  
*Housing Director*  
*Caritaslaiset*



© Diaconia España

Caritas Palvelut has provided services for people with disabilities since 2002. Our objective is to be present in everyone's everyday lives in our society. Our services are located in urban areas or in suburban areas with good transport connections. Our aim is to implement services in a way that allows our customers with disabilities to integrate into the everyday life of the surrounding area. Our residential care activities can be located, for example, in a normal residential building, and neighbours can be any residents. Our aim is to participate in various events and become part of the social fabric. We encourage our customers to study or acquire skills through hobbies.

In Finland, people with disabilities are provided with good opportunities to study. However, employment rates have not improved sufficiently. People with disabilities live on an allowance.

We are now embracing the challenge of employing people with disabilities through Job for Real.

Participation in working life is everyone's right, and that includes people with disabilities. At Caritas, we feel that participating in working life is an important part of everyone's life.

Caritas is involved in promoting awareness among employers on the issue of providing access to employment to people with disabilities. For example, in Finland, companies can apply for an allowance for hiring people with disabilities, but this is currently not widely known among businesses.

Another challenge is the fact that many people with disabilities have been unemployed for a long time, or have never even entered the job market. Finally proving a person's ability to work is considered challenging on both sides.

Federația Filantropia is a dynamic institution of the Romanian Orthodox Church. Since its launch in 2008, it has provided social and medical services to complement the care and assistance services that the church offers to people in need.

Disadvantaged children are a key focus, both as part of our immediate-response actions and as part of our long-term strategy. Since 2010, Fundația Filantropia Timișoara and its partners have run a network of services consisting of day centres that offer disadvantaged youngsters a daily hot meal together with specialist psychotherapy and personal development services with the aim of keeping them in school. Every day, 100 children in various locations around the county benefit from such services. It is clear that, together with the other social services providers in the county, we are offering a real solution for disadvantaged families, where in many cases the parents have gone to work abroad while the children are left in the care of close relatives.

Having realised that a large number of children were living in a state of abandonment, we decided that we, as a church, must do what we could to provide them with a form of continuous education. Sfântul Antim Ivireanul school was opened in 2012 and has now developed into the “Sfântul Antim Ivireanul” Orthodox theological school. The story of this school is a great example of a partnership between the public authorities and the church with the state being keen to enter into the partnership and providing an unused, dilapidated building free of charge. Subsequently, through private investments, the school was equipped with brand-new facilities and with everything needed to provide

an excellent education. To date, more than 800 children have passed through our school's doors and we intend to offer a complete school cycle, from age 6 through to age 19. The reason for having a faith school is to account for the presence of Christians in contemporary society and to build traditional values and respect for society.

**Father Cristian Pavel**  
*Director Filantropia Timișoara*



© Diakonia Polska

**Mia Nilson**  
*Hela Människan's*  
*Secretary General*



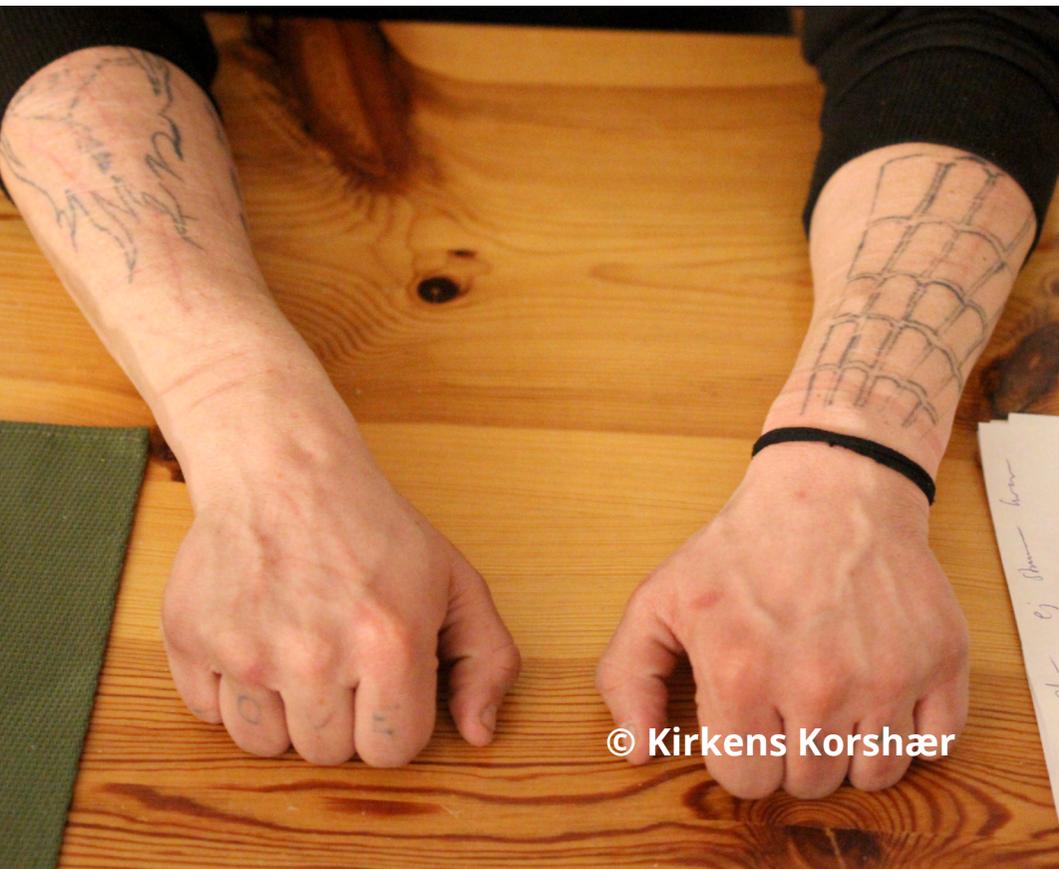
Hela Människan provides a wide variety of services across Sweden: for instance, alcohol and drug addiction treatment programmes, homeless shelters, health care centres, food and clothing banks, labour market integration programmes or anti-trafficking programmes. All services are rooted at the local level.

Our open activity – called RIA Rådgivning I Alkoholfrågor (Advice on Alcohol Issues), is a concept that goes back more than 50 years. At first, these were open counselling offices and now they are – as we call it – living-rooms for anyone who needs to have one. Everyone is welcome, as long as you don't disturb others.

Hela Människan wants to be a bridge between people and the local and national authorities such as the National Enforcement Authority; those institutions have been offering a lot of support for those people and organisations who want to cooperate.

Hela Människan in Malmö runs Noomi, a project for people who have been exploited for sexual purposes. Noomi consists of sheltered housing, advocacy actions, and dissemination of information. We offer support to individuals but also work to improve support for vulnerable people in the long term. We do this in close cooperation with local authorities and partner NGOs. At our shelters we welcome women and children in need of protection and material and moral support. We give women support in different forms and work to ensure that they feel safe and give them the opportunity to make decisions about their future in a peaceful environment. Support is also offered to people who do not live in our shelters. Our goal is to reverse the spiral of exploitation and helplessness many women find themselves in by giving them the tools to believe in themselves and change their living conditions.

In regard to the measures needed at European level, we think that a better and more sustainable victim-centred approach is needed, especially taking into account the reflection and recovery period for victims of trafficking.



ABEJ Solidarite is an organisation which tries to always be present when people with no homes and no hopes need help.

From the beginning, the idea of the Baptist community that started ABEJ was that you can't help homeless people if you don't listen to them and help them take control of their destiny and their social inclusion.

Today, we still firmly believe in this principle, and we try to promote their participation in all our programmes. This is why in all of our centres, we have users' committees which help them be part of the project we want to build for them.

Users' involvement is the real key to social inclusion. For instance, in one of our projects, the Sharing House, everybody is a team member and every team member has a role to play. You start by being a user - you receive help - but then the design of the project means that you can then volunteer to bring your own talents to help others. This way, the person who receives becomes the person who gives, and this is the real start of social inclusion.

Recently, we have decided to take this inclusion to another level by recruiting peer workers. In our Housing First project, we recruited people who had no diploma but who had lived with mental health problems or had the experience of living in the streets. They can relate to our users more closely and, most importantly, they are role models for users who are still struggling with problems too severe to let them become autonomous. ABEJ Solidarité has always had a Housing First strategy in its centres. The idea from the start was that the first step toward social inclusion is to provide people with a place to stay. In 1997, when we opened our shelter, we decided to accept homeless people without conditions. These are good steps and good initiatives.

The problem is that funding is not sufficient to finance what should be done to fight homelessness and social exclusion. Housing First doesn't mean "Housing only".

## Vincent Morival

*Director of Housing First/Abej Solidarité*



© Kirkens Korshær



© Hungarian Reformed Church Aid

**Roland Luzi**  
Coordinator Diakonie Schweiz



In 2016, IG-Werke, an interest group of the Diakonische Werke of the former Diakonieverband Schweiz, together with representatives of organisations, parishes and churches from Zurich, set up a “Round Table on Aid to Refugees”. This gave rise to the idea of providing information and guidance for refugees. In December 2016, a website ([www.i-need.ch](http://www.i-need.ch)) and a corresponding app (“i-need”) were launched, through which refugees can get information in a simple and intuitive way about offers that might be useful to them. Based on the initial question, “What do you need?”, users are provided with up-to-date information on where and at which institution help is offered with basic needs (food, meals, accommodation, medical assistance, general advice, language courses and meeting places).

This app works like a navigation system, helping to quickly and securely find what the user is looking for, such as language courses or legal advice. The content is automatically translated into the display language to which the phone is set, meaning that if a smartphone is set to English, the content will be automatically displayed in English. A map is integrated into the app to guide users from their starting point to the advertised offer. All the information and details they need are integrated into the app. With this technology, we can quickly update offers or add new ones. Offers that are no longer available can be immediately removed. Consequently, there are no flyers lying around in the advice centres of the Diakonische Werke or the parishes that are no longer up-to-date or entirely correct.

We currently have inquiries from institutions dealing with the elderly, the homeless and those in need asking whether we can provide the programming background structure of the app for their needs. We are willing to make our technology available to other institutions and target groups for comparatively little money.



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Eurodiaconia is a federation of 51 social and health care organisations founded in the Christian faith and promoting social justice.

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