



## PRESS RELEASE

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# WORKING ACROSS POLITICAL DIVISIONS TO TACKLE POVERTY IN EUROPE

To mark the beginning of the new parliament mandate, Eurodiaconia invited MEPs from the six main political groups to discuss the role of the European Parliament in combatting poverty and social exclusion in Europe today.

Tackling poverty in Europe must remain a priority on the political agenda of the new European Parliament. In a cross-party breakfast meeting on 9 September organised by Eurodiaconia and co-hosted by Dennis de Jong MEP (GUE - NL), Jean Lambert MEP (Green - UK), Sylvie Goulard MEP (ALDE - FR), Jutta Steinruck MEP (S&D - DE), Arne Gericke MEP (ECR - DE) and Danuta Jazłowiecka MEP (EPP - PL), more than 60 participants coming from NGOs and Christian organisations emphasized the necessity to maintain the poverty reduction target within the EU 2020 strategy, improve governance of the European Semester including an increased role for the European Parliament. According to Jean Lambert MEP, *“one of the core struggles in the next five years is how to tackle poverty to ensure a more inclusive Europe”*. Another co-host, Sylvie Goulard MEP, emphasized that *“the European Parliament needs to be a house for all Europeans and it is crucial to give disadvantaged people a voice [...] We have to make sure that people realise that we have a common future in Europe across all borders”*.

Dennis de Jong MEP proposed to introduce a ‘solidarity check’ to EU policies: *“The effects on the regulatory burden and the main economic and social impacts of legislative proposals have full attention. However the impact that the commodification of our public services has on the cohesion of our society, is not considered. A solidarity check might change this”*.

As a result of this meeting, the immediate challenge is to ensure support from the various political groups for the *poverty and social exclusion Intergroup*, bringing together MEPs from different political backgrounds. This Intergroup would facilitate the continuation of the discussions started in the breakfast meeting organised by Eurodiaconia.

In her closing remarks, Heather Roy, Secretary General of Eurodiaconia, emphasized that *“it is about working together to address poverty and social exclusion. However with that comes accountability, which is why we will continue pushing the European Parliament towards this in the next five years”*.

Eurodiaconia is a dynamic, Europe wide community of organisations founded in the Christian faith and working in the tradition of Diaconia, who are committed to a Europe of solidarity, equality and justice. Eurodiaconia is based in Brussels and currently has 43 members in 32 countries and territories, representing over 29'000 organisations, parishes and service providers.

## End of press release

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