

## Diaconia

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## Diaconia News

### Staffing changes and ways of work at the Eurodiaconia office

19 March 2010

Eurodiaconia is pleased to announce that on 8th March, Aisling van Vliet joined the secretariat as Communications and Administration officer. In the letter [here](#), we have outlined some of the additional changes in the secretariat and its implications for our ways of work. In particular, we have restructured the team to give space for more focus on our members – to facilitate communication and engagement and to ensure a good link between our policy work and our members' interests and needs. Please take the time to read the document and do not hesitate to contact us if you would like more information.

### Member consultation on Migration

17 March 2010

Eurodiaconia would like to invite all interested member organisations to a one day consultation on migration in Brussels on 11 May 2010. Eurodiaconia has recognized that migration is a topic which impacts many aspects of its members' work today and it will continue to do so as migration increases. Eurodiaconia has therefore integrated this topic into its work programme for 2010, starting with a consultation meeting among members to better understand work being carried out in this area. The conclusions of this meeting will be used to develop a policy position paper on access to services for migrants and future work on migration and discuss what further activities Eurodiaconia can carry out to support members on this topic such as additional seminars, partnerships etc. We invite all member organizations to attend this meeting where we will share our experiences, best practices and projects and work towards a policy position on access to social services for migrants. For more information and the letter of invitation please see [here](#).

If you would like to attend please complete the attached [registration form](#) and send it to Aisling Van Vliet [aisling.vanvliet@eurodiaconia.org](mailto:aisling.vanvliet@eurodiaconia.org) or fax it to +32 22342865. Catherine Storm, Policy and Membership Development Officer is the staff member responsible for this event. She can be contacted at [catherine.storm@eurodiaconia.org](mailto:catherine.storm@eurodiaconia.org).

### Eurodiaconia Secretary General visits Diaconia in Greece.

12 March 2010

In autumn 2009 Eurodiaconia was contacted by an organization from Greece – Diakonia Greece – who was interested in membership of Eurodiaconia. They attended the Dialogue Seminar in December 2009 and following discussion with the Supervisory Board it was proposed that the Secretary General should visit Greece to see the work of the organization on the ground and discuss with them and with the Church of Greece the potential for membership in Eurodiaconia. Heather Roy carried out this visit from 28 February – March 1 2010.

#### About the Organisation

Diakonia Greece is a hospital support programme running in the central Athens area. The organization has over 300 active children could not be based merely on a percentage of the volunteers who work on a rota system to spend time with adult rate - that this was not based on actual needs and vulnerable and isolated patients in hospitals. Examples of that children have specific needs of their own. Chief Justice patients supported in the project are children with disabilities who have been abandoned by their parents or elderly people who are long term hospital residents and have no family to support them. In the case of children, volunteers give three 3 hour shifts each day to each child, ensuring that for 9 hours of each day the child has company and emotional care. In the case of adults the time is slightly less, but an average of 6 hours per day. The volunteers are supported by 3 social workers and one administrator employed by Diakonia Greece and all volunteers receive extensive training before starting in a hospital as well as monthly support groups for volunteers to discuss their experiences. The staff work very closely with both in a way that is compatible with the constitution. For the hospital social workers and nurses and contact every argumentation of DVV der EKD (in German), please see volunteer while on their shift to make sure things are going well. Volunteers have to report to nurses at the beginning and end of their shift. It is clear that they are there to provide company and emotional support and not to take the job of nurses.

The organization was founded by Father Vasileios, an Orthodox hospital Chaplain who saw a need to provide support for lonely and abandoned patients in hospital. The service started as a volunteer effort but has grown into a small NGO with 4 full time staff and over 300 active volunteers. As well as his clear commitment to Diaconia, Father Vasileios has a strong management orientation and has spent a lot of time organizing the work. A bespoke IT programme has been developed – DiakoniaNet which manages all the data needed for the project and records everything related to the volunteers and others. It is used daily by the staff. This programme is a very advanced volunteer management tool and could be very interesting to other volunteer organizations.

Diakonia Greece has been recognized by several public bodies and has had an award from the President of Greece for its services.

Heather was able to meet with Rev Dr Adamantios Agoustidis who is now responsible in the Church of Greece for Diaconia. It was possible to discuss the current situation of Diaconia in Greece and the possible developments in the future. It was agreed that Eurodiaconia and the Church of Greece would keep in close contact, particularly through Father Adamantios and Diakonia Greece and in the future we could explore membership possibilities.

If you would like further information on Greece please contact Heather Roy at the Eurodiaconia office.

#### More...

- [Eurodiaconia member co-authors "Ways Out of Poverty"](#)
- [Entire still welcomed for the 2010 Eurodiaconia Award](#)
- [Eurodiaconia member seminar on social services](#)
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