
Poverty: requests for help from Caritas and Eurodiaconia up by 40% in Europe. Need for “immediate and targeted support” for low-income people

“In one year, there has been a 40% increase in people seeking support from Caritas and Eurodiaconia centres”. These findings come from a survey released today that was conducted in 18 European countries by the two social service providers – a Catholic organisation and a Christian organisation respectively. Caritas Europa and Eurodiaconia represent 107 member organisations and provide support to more than 35 million people each year. The rising cost of living in recent months “is severely impacting” single parents, pensioners and young people, that is to say, low-income people who can no longer cover basic needs (heating their homes, buying food or paying rent). The increase in people seeking support was particularly high for Caritas France (+60% of new beneficiaries), Caritas Finland (+75%) and Stockholm City Mission (+50%), and was even more marked (+90%) for the Caritas office of the Portuguese Diocese of Evora. The two organisations advocate for the urgent introduction of “social tariffs, energy efficiency improvements and food VAT reduction”, and urge governments to “introduce or update minimum income schemes and minimum wages, improve access to affordable, adequate and low-emission housing, and make public transport more affordable”. There are fears that the situation could get worse in 2023, because people are depleting their savings to cover the increased costs.

Sarah Numico