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## **Poverty: Caritas and Eurodiaconia, call on EU and governments to “invest in not-for-profit social services providers”**

The Caritas and Eurodiaconia networks “are bridging the gap between government support and the true cost of living for people experiencing poverty”. Maria Nyman, Secretary General of Caritas Europa, commented on the findings of a survey conducted by the two organisations in 18 European countries. Her remarks were echoed by Anne-Sophie Wislocki, Acting Secretary General of Eurodiaconia, who said: “Some of our members are struggling a lot with inflation and, despite the increased needs and a harsh winter ahead, some of their services might have to close soon”. 40% of respondents had to implement new measures to deal with the growing poverty they were called to alleviate: opening up new warm spaces, providing more food support, clothing, homelessness services, financial support for housing and energy expenses, and debt counselling. At the same time, however, these bodies were forced to put in place strategies to save money: by reducing office heating and reassigning funds, “but there is a limit to what they can do if they want to continue operating their services and keep their facilities warm to provide care and shelter for people in need”, Ms Wislocki added. Many associations do not receive any financial support or subsidies from the government, as reported by over half of the organisations surveyed. The two networks call on the EU and on European governments to take further action to support vulnerable households as well as to “invest in not-for-profit social services providers. Immediate and targeted support is needed to prevent more people from falling into poverty and to guarantee dignity and wellbeing for all”.

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