

Statement regarding the European Parliament's written declaration on investing in children

## **The European Parliament confirms that fighting child poverty is top priority for Europe**

**More than 400 Members of the European Parliament support Caritas Europa's call to prioritise the fight against child poverty. The European Parliament's written declaration now asks both the European Commission and the Council of the EU to dedicate funds for the eradication of child poverty in Europe.**

"At the end of the month we do not have much money and the money we have is needed to buy food," explained 12-year-old Jessica, one of the 27 million children living in poverty in the EU today.

More than one child in four is at risk of poverty or social exclusion in Europe. Poverty experienced in childhood can have life-long consequences and be passed on to the following generations. The eradication of child and family poverty is at the centre of our action and based on three key pillars: access to adequate resources, access to affordable quality services (childcare, education, health care, housing and family support) and children's right to participate in decisions affecting them.

Thus, Caritas Europa fully supports the European Parliament's call on the Commission and the Council to act now to eradicate child poverty in Europe. To this end, we propose that European leaders make maximum use of the flexibility clause under the Stability and Growth Pact and exempt social expenses related to children. Investing in the fight against child and family poverty today and the years to come will lead to a stronger and more competitive Europe in future. Hence, Member States should be able to use the flexibility clause at least until 2020 to ensure sustainable funding for child poverty-related policies.

"Children are our present and our future. The EU and its Member States have what it takes to eradicate child and family poverty by 2020. We now expect them to show more political will and courage to make it happen," said Jorge Nuño Mayer, Secretary General of Caritas Europa.

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