

Statement on the occasion of World Day of Social Justice

Social Justice is part of Europe's DNA

On the occasion of World Day of Social Justice, 20 February, Caritas Europa calls on the European Commission to propose and defend a Pillar of Social Rights that has a tangible impact on the situation of millions of people affected by poverty and social exclusion.

"When my children are not there, I don't heat my apartment. As for the food, when they are not here, I eat less. I don't want them to feel that I miss money. I tighten my belt. The hardest part is that I cannot give them what I would like to," told Fabrice, father of 3, to a social assistant of Caritas France (Secours Catholique).

"Social justice is a fundamental European value. It is part of Europe's DNA. A European Pillar of Social Rights, firmly based on the Revised European Social Charter, will enable Europe to respect the dignity of the millions of people who, like Fabrice, are trapped in poverty. We all need a strong political leadership at European and national level to put the common good at the centre of the political agenda," said Shannon Pfohman, Advocacy and Policy Director at Caritas Europa.

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Notes to editors:

- **Caritas Europa position paper:** Towards a European Pillar of Social Rights for more social justice and equality in Europe
- **Who are most at risk of falling into poverty in Europe?** In its report [End Poverty in Europe – our Solutions to make it Happen](#), Caritas Europa identified the 5 categories of people that are most at risk of falling into poverty in Europe: **long-term unemployed** people, **working poor**, **single parents**, **children**, and **migrants and refugees** as the groups of people most at risk of poverty.
- **What solutions do we have to build sustainable and efficient welfare models in Europe?** In our report [Social Justice and Equality in Europe](#) is possible Caritas Europa demonstrates that sustainable social models require to be based on **three main pillars: family and community, inclusive labour markets** and **adequate social protection systems**.
- Caritas Europa is a member of the INGOs of the Council of Europe and supports the Council's call on the European Commission to include the [European Social Charter](#) in the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#).



Caritas Europa is a network of 49 member organisations in 46 European countries and one of the 7 regions of Caritas Internationalis. Our members assist and provide services to millions of people in need. Caritas Europa aims at lifting people out of poverty by empowering them and by influencing unjust structures and unfair policies that keep people trapped in positions of disempowerment.