

Event - launch of publication

## **WELCOME! Migrants make Europe stronger**

**7 December 2016**

### **Agenda**

8:30	Registration & breakfast
8:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome by Francois Cornet, Director of Caritas Belgium International</li> <li>• Introduction to the Housing Café project by Julie Vanstallen, Communication Officer at Caritas Belgium International</li> <li>• Presentation of the publication “WELCOME! Migrants make Europe stronger” and its main findings by Jorge Nuño Mayer, Secretary General of Caritas Europa</li> </ul>
9:00	<p>Debate with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MEP Brando Benifei, S&amp;D</li> <li>• Manuela Geleng, DG EMPL, Head of Unit social investment strategy</li> <li>• Agnese Papadia, DG HOME, Policy officer</li> <li>• Oliviero Forti, Head of the Migration Department, Caritas Italy;</li> <li>• George Joseph, Director of the Migration Department, Caritas Sweden;</li> <li>• Gabriela Sonnleitner, CEO Hotel Magdas, Caritas Austria;</li> <li>• Martina Tomanová, Migration expert, Caritas Czech Republic</li> <li>• Anita Arakelian, employee at Hotel Magdas, coming from Syrian</li> <li>• Adee Jabar, employee in Caritas Belgium, coming from Iraq (tbc)</li> </ul> <p>Moderated by Shannon Pfohman, Policy and Advocacy Director of Caritas Europe</p> <p>Questions, answers &amp; recommendations</p>
9:50	Concluding remarks by Jorge Nuño Mayer, Secretary General, Caritas Europa
10:00	End of the programme

### **Background on the publication**

With this publication, Caritas Europa - the network of 49 Caritas organisations in 46 European countries - seeks to bridge the gap between obstacles to integration and participation of migrants. Based on Caritas' experiences throughout Europe, the publication describes the multitude of obstacles witnessed on the ground and suggests ways to foster the full participation of migrants in receiving communities to achieve greater social cohesion.

The publication is composed of three main parts:

1. Reality on the ground – what are the needs of refugees and migrants? What is Caritas seeing on the ground relative to migrants' integration in Europe? We observe three main barriers to participation: cultural, structural and socio-economic. However, these barriers should not be considered as a rigid classification, but rather as a tool to understand integration as a comprehensive process, which should not be limited to job inclusion only. The three barriers are strongly interconnected, as are the actions that should be planned and implemented in order to overcome them and the challenges migrants' are facing.
2. Caritas' vision of an inclusive Europe, which is a welcoming environment where everybody can enjoy equal access to goods and services and where migrant integration is based on dialogue and shared rights and responsibilities. Both migrants and receiving communities are empowered to participate in society; integration must be a multilateral process.
3. Experiences from the ground and promising practices. 21 Caritas projects from 13 countries in Europe are described, which contribute to addressing the three barriers to integration.

In this publication, Caritas Europa calls on the European states to implement national integration plans that go beyond the limited concept of socio-economic access and to ensure migrants and receiving communities are enabled to be active contributors to society, including by supporting their full participation, empowerment and social inclusion. European states are also responsible for fostering migrants' integration and for ensuring that they have access to good quality, available and affordable basic services (healthcare, housing, education, etc.) and that specific support is available for particularly vulnerable categories of migrants (i.e. women and children).



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