

## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS CARITAS EUROPA POSITIONS ON ISSUES OF RELEVANCE AND CONCERN

### **Making social justice and equality in Europe and worldwide a reality**

With rising public scepticism towards the European Union, it has become all the more vital to increase awareness of the potential of EU institutions, and particularly the European Parliament (EP), in fighting poverty and social exclusion in the EU and globally. Realising this potential requires advocacy towards EP candidates and political groups to keep issues such as poverty eradication, job creation, equal opportunities, peace and humanitarian interventions, human rights protection, sustainable development and policy coherence high on the political agenda. It also requires strong democratic institutions and participatory decision making. It is thus highly relevant that people vote in the European elections and select candidates who prioritise the fight against poverty and social exclusion, who are willing to listen to civil society and who maintain regular dialogue with national parliaments. In this context, it is worth considering the [Guidelines for civil participation in political decision making](#), adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

⇒ What is this document and Caritas Europa's positions of relevance and concern?

Our objective is ahead of the EP elections to promote across the EU coherent Caritas Europa messaging specific to particular concerns identified by Caritas member organisations working locally with people in need. With this document, we aim therefore to provide an overview of the needs of the people, the problems related to responding appropriately, as well as Caritas' proposed solutions/recommendations. We hope this document can be used to present Caritas Europa's main concerns and advocacy messages to candidate Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and the political groups. Each topic of concern is described in one page, followed by an annex linking these concerns to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Member organisations are invited to translate these positions of concern and to contact candidate MEPs and engage them in dialogue regarding the national level concerns. Upon request, Caritas Europa may also be able to provide member organisations with more detailed information or policy proposals regarding specific issues. At the same, Caritas Europa will be using this document identifying our positions of relevance and of concern ahead of the EP elections to engage at EU level with the different political groups to try and influence the parties' agendas.

⇒ How to use Caritas Europa's positions on issues of relevance and concern?

This document is intended to support member organisations' actions in preparation of the EP elections. A wide range of options for action is possible, depending on organisational capacities and resources. Member organisations are encouraged to adapt the issues of relevance and concern to fit their national advocacy agendas and organisational priorities. If interested in engaging, actions could include, among others the following: organise dialogues with same political group members to reflect on Caritas' issues of relevance and concern; organise meetings with candidate MEPs to debate the challenges and future vision of Europe; pressure candidates and political parties to commit to people-centred policies; send out template letters prepared by Caritas Europa Secretariat; and/or launch actions and/or campaigns to inform and mobilise EU citizens to use their right to vote in the May 2019 elections. In the case of mobilisation activities, we would encourage member organisations to pay specific attention to reaching out to the most vulnerable citizens to ensure that their voices are heard. Are the beneficiaries of Caritas' services registered to vote and aware of the significance of the May elections when it comes to influencing EU level policy formation and implementation?

Depending on the interests of member organisations, Caritas Europa plans to develop additional tools, like template letters, ideas for political roundtables, postcards (for campaigning), media material, and examples from member organisations, etc. in a package. Our communication unit is responsible for sharing this material and members are encouraged to volunteer to support the cause.

⇒ Need more information?

For more information on the EP elections and Caritas Europa's actions, please contact Shannon Pfohman (for advocacy) and Caritas Europa Comm Unit (for media-related aspects).

## **SDGS AND POLICY COHERENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (PCSD)**

### **2030 Agenda in European external policies: more and better development co-operation and an enhanced PCSD approach**

The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been adopted by all European countries, including all EU Member States. It represents a commitment to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development by 2030 worldwide, ensuring that no one is left behind. The 17 SDGs and their 169 associated targets are global in nature, universally applicable and interlinked.

The EU is expected to have a significant impact on achieving the SDGs worldwide. As the world's biggest development actor, the EU's policies play a central role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. But no positive impact in the lives of those most excluded will be achieved if the Agenda's transformative principles are not reflected in EU decision making process. These principles entail designing policies that redirect the attention to those furthest behind, through participatory processes that take into account their voice. They also demand addressing the social, economic and environmental dimensions in a balanced manner, while anchoring decisions in human rights obligations.

#### **Fully ensure that EU regulations and external policies contribute to SDGs worldwide.**

The European Parliament has a key function in ensuring that EU action responds to the global common good and to the interests of the people at both local and international levels. As the EU's law-making body, it can ensure that EU regulations reflect the comprehensive nature of the SDGs. Likewise, its role on democratic scrutiny of EU institutions can help to ensure that EU policies are coherent with the transformative principles of the 2030 Agenda and responds to the needs of those further left behind.

Caritas Europa calls for an enhanced engagement of the EP on the EU's strategies to achieve the SDGs, through three main mechanisms: (1) shaping regulations accordingly and increasing the focus on global dimensions and impacts in legislative discussions; (2) establishing a permanent effective monitoring, review and accountability mechanism through which the EC reports back to the Parliament on a regular basis; (3) enhancing dialogue with National Parliaments. This dialogue should also involve civil society and the voices of the people experiencing poverty and exclusion. Social problems must be addressed by community networks and not simply by the sum of individual good deeds. Everyone's talents and involvement are needed. We therefore need to develop broader alliances and coalitions.

#### **More and better Official Development Aid (ODA) to address development challenges worldwide**

The EU budget is crucial to put the European values in practice, and solidarity should remain at the heart of EU External Action. The Agenda 2030 also acknowledges the important role public finance plays in many countries in the provision of fundamental rights such as health, education or social protection.

Caritas Europa calls for more and better development finance to tackle root causes of poverty worldwide. This implies restoring the integrity of development aid, accordingly with article 208 of Lisbon Treaty, and enforcing the 0.7% ODA/GNI commitment in a timely manner. ODA should not be serving the EU's own interest in the areas of migration and security, but rather supporting the interest and capacities of communities beyond our borders. Solutions are needed from both the global perspective of *one world with a common plan* as well as local level. This requires both subsidiarity and solidarity, with active participation at all levels. Likewise, engagement with the private sector and blended finance should only occur when it proves an added value in terms of pro-poor development impact, and prioritise local micro, small and medium sized business and social enterprises. The European Parliament should make use of its budgetary capacities to ensure that ODA deploys all its potential in addressing the root causes of poverty, wherever poverty and exclusion are.

#### **Policies coherent with sustainable development (PCSD)**

Private investment and ODA alone cannot suffice for promoting integral human development worldwide. The 2030 Agenda calls for more coherence between different policy areas and EU actors, requiring further co-ordination and joint work at all levels to ensure that EU policies do not undermine development efforts or

environmental protection in third countries. PCSD is a Treaty obligation and a commitment as an integral part of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Caritas Europa calls the EU to fully operationalise mechanisms to make PCSD a reality in policy-making, making a more systematic use of ex-ante and ex-post assessment mechanisms in EU policies with regard to their impact on integral human development and put into practise effective redress mechanisms. The Better Regulation Agenda can serve to this purpose if the focus is put in the economic, social and environmental impact of regulations in developing countries rather than in other EU interests.

## **CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY**

### **Support and protect families**

The family, as the first experience of community in one's personal life, is a place where capacities are nourished and where the foundations for well-being are laid. In this sense, the family is a fundamental pillar of social wellbeing, resulting from its capacity to satisfy the material needs of its members and to help them cope with their difficulties. The family is also the first place where children discover and develop their capacities, build their resilience and become empowered to fully participate in and contribute to society.

In order to fulfil this role, families should be entitled to receive, both from society and from the state, appropriate social, legal and economic protection. Investing in families in order to empower them and to promote the social capital they create is essential for our societies.

Social investment, e.g. in education, leads to reduced health costs, increases people's chances on the labour market and promotes full participation in society. Investing in young people, in particular, benefits the entire society and will contribute to achieving the SDGs, in particular SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, and 10.

### **Support families with low income**

Child poverty is a function of family situations. The most common factors triggering families' descent into poverty include: unemployment or in-work-poverty, long-term illness or the death of a parent, care responsibilities for elderly family members, separation or divorce, as well as discrimination.

Caritas Europa calls for an adequate minimum income for families, enabling them to lead a life in dignity and to give their children all the opportunities they need to develop their full potential. Families with low income should also receive an increased amount of monthly child allowance. Children experiencing poverty should receive additional support from the health care system (including preventive treatment). All children must have equal opportunities in education. Measures taken in this field will contribute to achieving SDGs 1, 4, 5, 8 and 10.

### **Facilitate work-family life balance**

The legal right to maternity leave of at least 15 weeks should be ensured, as well as parental leave of at least 6 months per parent. Family members should be allowed a number of days per year of special leave for care work in the family (for children, elderly, ill family members). A minimum income should be ensured during longer periods of leave for care work. Sufficient and affordable **child care** facilities should be available, including a high quality level of early childhood education.

### **Enable, support and recognise the value of family care work**

Families contribute directly to society by providing care services to their children, elderly and other family members in need of assistance. In general, they do so at a lower cost and often with better quality than if they were to rely on the public or private sector. This contribution to society is important, and the time spent thereon should also be recognised and valued by society. Caritas Europa calls for a universal approach to child benefits (a monthly child allowance) and for considering the time spent on care work as eligible for the calculation of pension rights.

### **Ensure participation and conduct family impact assessments**

The impact of planned policy initiatives in the areas of employment, education and health policies on the situation of families, and in particular on low-income families should be evaluated through family impact assessments. Those assessments should include: a re-evaluation of tax systems to be family-friendly and

progressive; the acknowledgement of families' contribution to society through their intergenerational nature; the granting of financial compensation in the form of a tax reduction or credit.

## **INCLUSIVE LABOUR MARKETS**

### **Create inclusive labour markets**

Work is a source of well-being allowing for the realisation of many other rights. It allows personal and family maintenance and, insofar as it is freely chosen or accepted, it is also a means of recognition, and equal, responsible participation of both women and men in society. Moreover, the labour market is the context for income generation that contributes to the existence and financing of desired living standards. Inclusive labour markets mean, on the one hand, the availability of decent jobs for all working age people and, on the other hand, the official recognition of people's contributions to society through unpaid caring or volunteering.

The labour market, however, is also associated to number of poverty risks, especially when salaries are insufficient to meet living costs or in cases of unemployment. Whoever does not find a job, whoever loses his or her job or leaves the labour market without protection, is potentially in danger of becoming impoverished. In addition, not all people of working age have the same access to a job. Not only is there a lack of paid work, but people seeking employment do not always possess the qualifications required by the labour market nor have their qualifications recognised. For labour markets to contribute to reducing poverty, social exclusion and inequalities, measures are necessary to protect the dignity of work and workers, as well as to prevent and fight discrimination in access to the labour market. Initiatives and measures in this sense will contribute to achieving SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10 and 16.

### **Ensure access to the labour market**

Over 18 million men and women in the EU are out of work (Eurostat - September 2017). The vast majority of families where the adults are unemployed are at risk of poverty. Even in families where an adult is employed, around 10% are at risk of food deprivation or unable to meet other basic needs due to low wages and precarious employment contracts. More efforts are required to support the transition between education and the labour market and in between jobs, and to facilitate the recognition of skills and qualifications attained abroad. Employment within not-for-profit organisations and social enterprises, making use of their job creation potential, should also be supported.

### **Ensure decent wages**

Considering the last 20 years, the current number of working poor is unprecedented. Adequate minimum wages have to be ensured in order for employment to really contribute to fighting poverty, and the tax gap between wages and capital has to be reduced in favour of wages.

### **Ensure social rights of all workers**

All workers, regardless of their employment status, should be entitled to social rights as defined in international and European legal instruments. Public social protection and social insurance systems should be guaranteed and be adequate. Private systems may be used as complementary schemes, but their existence can never justify a decrease of public social protection schemes, both in terms of coverage and adequacy. In addition, the value of family care work has to be recognised and valued by society. People should be entitled to a minimum income as well as to social rights during longer periods of leave for care work. Time spent on care work should be taken into account for the calculation of pension rights.

### **Ensure equal pay for equal work**

Pay gaps related to age, nationality, ethnicity, sex or disability are unacceptable and have to be addressed. Practices such as lower minimum wages for workers under 21, as well as other discriminatory practices in wage formation should be stopped.

### **Ensure job security**

The increased use of temporary and short-term contracts not only contributes to increasing in-work-poverty, it also affects the future of workers and their families. Temporary work without objective justification should remain the exception and unlimited duration employment contracts the rule.

## **SOCIAL PROTECTION AND COHESION**

### **Create resilient and performing solidarity systems**

Governments have a crucial responsibility in ensuring human dignity and the social rights of all by organising solidarity in an inclusive and empowering way. Social protection systems should be inclusive and protect people against risks, such as unemployment, family caring responsibilities, poor health and ageing. In some countries, the social insurance coverage paid out against income loss is insufficient for decent living. Social risks such as unemployment, accident, sickness and loss of income due to retirement typically lead directly to poverty. Even when social assistance payments are paid out, the amounts in some countries are often too low to ensure a life lived in dignity. The state, however, has a crucial responsibility to ensure human dignity and the social rights of all by organising solidarity in an inclusive and empowering manner. Policy initiatives in this area will contribute to achieving several SDGs and in particular SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11 and 16.

### **Ensure participation through civil dialogue**

Civil society should be invited and enabled to participate fully in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of solidarity mechanisms.

### **Ensure sufficient and sustainable funding for social protection**

Social protection systems should be financed through social insurance and taxation on all income sources and should not come under pressure as a consequence of financial decline, economic crisis or of demographic ageing.

### **Ensure a social investment approach**

In order to give people the best possible start in life, it is of utmost importance to invest in early childhood education and care, and to ensure free access to at least primary and secondary education. Complementary to the above, it is necessary to invest in preventative health care and to ensure accessible, affordable health care provision. Providing adequate home care, including supporting care work by family members, deserves particular attention and can be an alternative to or a postponement of institutionalisation.

### **Ensure access to adequate social benefits**

In case people are temporarily or permanently unable to earn a decent income, a solidarity mechanism should be in place to ensure an income and access to services. This requirement is consistent with our position to safeguard the right of every person to lead a life in dignity and to participate fully in society. People should be entitled to an adequate minimum income as well as social rights during longer periods of leave for care work, and the time spent on care work should be taken into account for the calculation of pension rights.

### **Ensure access to social services**

People need to be properly informed about their social rights and entitlements and how to access them, including by accessing assistance to ensure the enforcement of their social rights. In order to avoid non take-up, benefits should be given automatically as much as possible, without the entitled person explicitly having to ask for them. It is vital to safeguard timely means tested access to quality, appropriate and affordable social housing.

## **WELCOMING SOCIETIES**

### **Foster welcoming societies**

Integration should be a dynamic, multidirectional process in which newcomers and the receiving communities intentionally work together, based on a shared commitment to tolerance and justice, to create a secure, welcoming, vibrant, and cohesive society. The integration process must take into account the need to balance duties and responsibilities between migrants and receiving communities.

The responsibility for integration rests not with one particular group but rather with many actors, including the migrants themselves, the receiving government, institutions, communities, and so forth.

A cohesive and welcoming society must provide migrants with the necessary means to overcome challenges and barriers that hinder their integration as well as ensure their full participation, empowerment and inclusion of all members of society: migrants and natives alike. Ensuring both aspects will benefit not just migrants but the common good, i.e. society as a whole. Measures taken in this field will contribute to achieving SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11 and 16.

### **Create a culture of encounter and a positive narrative**

Over time, migration has become a highly politicised issue. Most European policy-makers have opted for short-term, fear-driven reactions instead of long-term strategies on migration that would benefit everyone: those in need, those looking for a better life in Europe, as well as Europeans. Working with migrants is just as important as working with receiving communities in order to change mind-sets and contribute to creating a positive, narrative of inclusion.

### **Ensure more comprehensive social policies for all**

It is vital not to dismiss residents' lived experiences and concerns (i.e. fear, economic problems, marginalisation). It is also important not to pit migrants and residents against each other, for economic resources and access to services, as this tends to promote xenophobia. European states must work toward balancing their duties to migrants and receiving communities. Finally, it is paramount to develop new comprehensive social policies and strengthened existing ones that go beyond the limited concept of integration as mere "socio-economic access" and that fight all forms of discrimination and marginalisation.

### **Ensure inclusion in the labour market and job security**

Besides financial security, employment allows migrants to be and feel more integrated, to actively participate in and be more connected to the receiving community. European states should do more to create employment opportunities for people of varying skills and abilities. States should support migrants in developing their professional and vocational skills through the following measures:

- By cutting the waiting period before asylum seekers are allowed to work;
- By foreseeing fast-track programmes to quickly get migrants jobs in areas where there are a shortage of workers and by creating a framework to recognise qualifications earned abroad;
- By introducing active labour market policies that offer trainings, consultations and job matching services.

### **Guarantee access to good quality, available and affordable services for everyone**

Migrants in Europe frequently lack access to services, such as safe and affordable housing, quality healthcare and specific support for post trauma and inclusive education. Access to basic healthcare should be guaranteed to everyone regardless of the person's legal status or his/her country of origin (including non-documented migrants); effective housing policies and access to education for migrants should also be ensured/ guaranteed. Social services should be of good quality, be available and affordable for migrants equally to residents; migrants should generally be helped in understanding the receiving country's social systems and services. Social and health service providers should be more involved in contributing to policies fostering migrants' social inclusion and not in activities that jeopardise their solidarity and human rights principles, such as providing information that might lead service users to provide data that would lead to deportations or to refuse people who are residing irregularly. A separation in law and practice between competencies of migration law enforcement authorities and of those working in social services or justice must be very clear. Such services cannot be subject to external checks with respect to the profile of beneficiaries being supported. Measures that criminalise undocumented migrants and persons engaging with them (i.e. "Délits de solidarité" in France) must be avoided since they have a negative impact not only as regards the right of access to social rights and services but also to other fundamental rights, such as the right to liberty and security of a person, human dignity, the right to life and the right to an effective remedy.

### **Foster and encourage participation to society**

Migrants' participation must encompass more than just their political participation and economic contribution to the receiving society. Participation is about playing an active role in one's own fate and circumstances, i.e.

recognising one's agency to make decisions and to act. However, difficulties in obtaining residency permits and citizenship prevent migrants from participating in local and national decision-making processes, and migrants are rarely represented in trade unions, political parties or civil society movements. Governments, opinion leaders, and civil society in general all benefit from policies that ensure equal opportunities, and facilitate the participation of all members of society. An environment in Europe must be guaranteed that fosters integral human development and empowerment.

## **ASYLUM AND MIGRATION**

It is high time for the EU and its Member States to design long-term migration and asylum policies that put EU values, solidarity and human rights at the centre and facilitate human mobility rather than block it, while also contributing in the implementation of SDGs 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13 and 16.

### **Solidarity and migrant's rights at the core of EU's policies**

EU institutions and Member States are currently finalising the reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). The revamping of Dublin III regulation will be key for the success of this reform, as the regulation's current implementation is not functioning efficiently and is creating huge damaging human costs. A permanent mechanism of solidarity sharing for people in search of protection should be adopted among Member States (MS). Relocation in different EU MS should take into account each individual situation, family links, language skills and preferences of the asylum seeker that would increase integration prospects. In addition, the EU and its MS must ensure the respect of and promote EU's core values such as human dignity and human rights for all migrants, regardless of legal status and nationality, in its territories, at its borders and worldwide. Collective pushbacks and expulsion must be forbidden and prosecuted, and access to basic rights and services must be ensured for all. The hotspot approach must be overhauled to ensure a fair, efficient and transparent asylum procedure and dignified reception conditions. NGOs that provide support to migrants (at the border, at sea or inland) must stop being criminalised.

### **Expansion of safe and legal pathways**

Limited safe and legal pathways to Europe result in migrants embarking on dangerous journeys, further fuelling irregular migration and the business of smugglers and human traffickers. Since 2015, in effort to curb migration by closing borders, migrants' rights and access to EU territory have been drastically restricted, including for people in search of protection. Instead of stemming migration at all costs, the EU and its Member States should expand safe and legal pathways to Europe, including resettlement, humanitarian visas, humanitarian admission, family reunification, or community sponsorship schemes. These channels, as well as worker and student mobility should be eased in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10.7 (facilitating orderly, safe, and responsible migration and mobility of people).

### **Uphold human rights and refugee rights in external aspects of migration policies**

EU institutions and MS seek to increase co-operation with migrants' countries of origin and transit to manage migration. This has already been done with Turkey, Libya and Sub-Saharan and North African countries. The respect of human rights should be at the core of such partnerships, by putting into place human rights monitoring and accountability mechanisms. Co-operation with countries not respecting human rights should be overhauled and people should never be returned to a country where they risk facing abuses. International co-operation on migration should never exempt the EU and its MS from upholding their obligation under the Geneva Convention and human rights law. This applies to all the activities carried out by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency as well.

### **Development aid should not be used as a tool to curb migration**

There is an increasing trend in Europe to leverage development aid in relations with third countries in order to step up co-operation in "migration management", including the facilitation of return and readmission. Development aid is sometimes even used to directly finance border controls (i.e. with Libyan coast guards). Development aid, instead, should be used to eradicate poverty in developing countries and allocated according to priority needs, in line with article 208 of the Lisbon Treaty and development aid principles, towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG 16. Development aid should never be instrumentalised to fulfil EU's migration control objectives. EU funding instruments, such as the EU

Emergency Trust Fund for Africa or the Multi-Annual Financial Framework should be transparent and incorporate adequate safeguards to reflect this. Civil society organisations should be fully involved in the design and implementation of those instruments and their role should be acknowledged.

### **Ensure safeguards while returning migrants**

Safeguards enshrined in the EU Return Directive should be ensured to carry out return in a safe, humane and dignified way and in compliance with human and refugee rights. Access to basic rights (e.g. health care), special attention to the needs of vulnerable people, and the best interest of the child and family unity must always be ensured during return procedures. A fair, efficient and transparent asylum procedure should always be implemented before a rejected asylum seeker is returned. People should never be returned to a country in conflict or at war or where they would be at risk of persecution (non-refoulement). Member states should refrain from using the concepts of safe third country and first country of asylum as those risk sending people in need of protection to unsafe places without an examination on the merits of their asylum application. Alternatives to detention should be privileged and detention should always be a last resort measure, moreover being kept short as possible. Voluntary return should prevail over forced return and voluntary return programmes should ensure proper reintegration in the country of return. The legal status of people living in limbo situations in EU countries, where they cannot be returned due to a situation beyond their control, should be regularised as quickly as possible.

## **HUMANITARIAN AID**

### **More than money: saving lives and restoring dignity**

An emergency can strike anytime, overwhelming the most vulnerable people and leaving them with nothing. Humanitarian crises occur all the time in Europe, in neighbouring countries and in the rest of the world. The increasing number of natural disasters, the extent of protracted global crises and the outbreak of new conflicts demand the adoption of new solutions when it comes both to preparedness and response.

During the first World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in 2016, governments, international organisations as well as civil society organisations committed to a joint endeavour in order to reduce human suffering and to respond to crises in a better and more effective way. Implementing WHS's vision is fundamental to put the people impacted at the centre of humanitarian action and restore dignity in those areas where life has become more than harsh. Taking preventative measures toward achieving SDGs 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13 and 16 could help in diminishing the prevalence of humanitarian crisis.

### **An EU committed to humanitarian action**

The European Union and DG ECHO are one of the biggest humanitarian donors at the global level. EU assistance is embedded in the Treaty of Lisbon and considered by EU citizens as an expression of European solidarity, one of the Union funding values. Challenges ahead require a continuous and consistent support to the EU humanitarian budget. It is necessary to ensure that a separate budget line for humanitarian action after 2020 is kept in the next Multiannual Financial Framework, and that an appropriate annual budget is guaranteed every year. Commitments and payments should be kept at the same level, this being a non-negotiable element for implementing partners. We acknowledge that positive agreement among EU Institutions and specific support of the EP has been so far a key strength in order to improve consistency on this.

### **Humanitarian principles at the core**

Humanitarian crises are likely linked to political, economic and security issues. For this reason, the recently launched EU integrated approach to conflicts – as part of EU global strategy - is a good step forward in the direction of developing coherence among EU external policies and ensuring that political priorities do not contribute to exacerbate underlying tensions. Nevertheless, it is important to underline that humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality, independence and humanity are the foundation of humanitarian response. Those principles need to be kept separate from other dimensions. The EU Consensus of Humanitarian Aid marked last year its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and it is still a very good point of reference to recall and respect the principled and needs-based nature of aid. Also, the Consensus acknowledges the importance and the

complementarity of different organisations and humanitarian actors. This diversity and plurality needs to be safeguarded in the coming future as regards EU partners coming from the civil society.

### **Beyond immediate response**

When an emergency strikes it is important to act efficiently and fast in order to limit the worsening of conditions of affected population. However, humanitarian action is not limited to this. Disaster preparedness and Disaster Risk Reduction actions have to be planned and implemented. Capacity building actions must be planned and target local partners, which are ultimately the first responders and the best experts of the territory impacted. Given the increased extent of protracted and chronic crises, predictable and flexible multi-year planning and financing are required to better plan the support to victims of disasters.

Last but not least, depending on the context, the link between humanitarian and development actions shall also be considered and guaranteed. People's resilience depends also on the support they receive before, during and after critical situations. This is one of the reasons why old barriers between humanitarian and development actors need to be overcome. Caritas can well testify this by virtue of its long-standing engagement in local communities.

### **Supporting local partners**

Depending on organisational capacities, local partners are generally the first responders to crises. Despite this, only a minuscule percentage of aid reaches them directly. According to the Grand Bargain, this percentage should reach the 25% by 2020. Direct funding to implementing partners should be fostered and it should go hand in hand with capacity building actions in order to increase professionalisation and, ultimately, accountability. Since the EU committed to this goal during the WHS, steps should be taken in order to make this process feasible and transparent both towards European citizens and organisations in partner countries.

### **Cash and Transfer Programs (CTPs)**

When applicable, the delivery of cash based programmes is an innovative and effective tool to respond to people's needs and restore dignity. In 2017 the European Commission published new guidelines regarding this programme, dedicating important attention to cost-efficiency and simplification. To ensure the programme actually succeeds in empowering beneficiaries, it is necessary to ensure that humanitarian actors maintain continuous dialogue with beneficiaries through proximity, empathy, confidentiality, and humanity. A banking system alone might be more cost efficient but it definitely cannot identify specific vulnerabilities, uphold dignity and enhance ownership. In order to avoid this, smaller CTP should be kept to be tailored and applied to specific situations.

**ANNEX: OVERVIEW CARITAS RECOMMENDATIONS, LINKED TO THE SDGS**

This table is an analysis completed by Caritas Europa to highlight our topical areas of concern and relevance ahead of the EP elections, and on which European legislation exists, while also comparing these to the protection potentially available with the effective implementation of the global Sustainable Development Goals. Of particular interest is to note where protective measures or legislation is lacking, indicating that there is much work still to be done to achieve Caritas Europa's vision of Europe.

Caritas Europa recommends	Theme	Sustainable Development Goals	Sustainable Development targets
Fully ensure that EU regulations and external policies contribute to SDGs worldwide	Development	All 17 Goals	
More and better Official Development Aid (ODA to address development challenges worldwide		Goal 1	All targets
		Goal 10	Targets 1, 2, 7, B
		Goal 17	Target 2
Policies coherent with sustainable development (PCSD)		All 17 Goals Goal 17	Target 14
Provide child allowance	Child and family poverty	Goal 1	Target 3
Invest in early childhood and care		Goal 3	Targets 2, 3, 8
		Goal 4	Target 2
		Goal 5	Targets 1, 2
		Goal 10	Target 3
Recognise family care work		Goal 5	Target 4
Family-friendly taxation		Goal 10	Target 4
		Goal 17	Targets 14, 15
Family impact assessments of policies	Goal 17	Target 14	
Protect worker's rights	Inclusive Labour Market	Goal 1	Target 1, 2
		Goal 5	Targets 1, 5, A
		Goal 8	Targets 5, 7, 8
Establish minimum wage		Goal 1	Targets 1, 2
		Goal 8	Targets 5, 7
		Goal 10	Target 4
Ensure wage equality		Goal 5	Targets 1, 5, A
		Goal 8	Target 5
		Goal 10	Target 2
Improve job security		Goal 8	Target 8
Support transition from education to labour market		Goal 4	Targets 3, 4, 5, B
Provide employment counselling		Goal 5	Target 5
		Goal 8	Target 3
		Goal 10	Target 4
Recognise foreign qualifications		Goal 4	Target B
Implement labour market reinsertion		Goal 4	Targets 3, 4 ; 5

trajectories for long-term unemployed		Goal 8	Targets 3, 5
Adapt jobs to needs of older workers		Goal 3	Target 4
Support employment in not-for-profit		Goal 8	Target 5, 8
		Goal 8	
End discrimination		Goal 16	
		Goal 5	Targets 1, 5
		Goal 10	Targets 1, 2, 3, 4
	Goal 16	Targets 3, 10	

Ensure social provision coverage	Social protection and cohesion	Goal 1	Target 1, 2, 3
Guarantee access to social services		Goal 3	Targets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8
		Goal 5	Targets 1, 5, C
		Goal 1	Target 3
		Goal 3	Targets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8
		Goal 5	Targets 1, 5, C
Inform about social rights and benefits		Goal 10	Targets 2, 3, 4
		Goal 1	Target 3
		Goal 4	Targets 1, 2, 3, 5, A
Ensure access to legal assistance		Goal 5	Targets 2, 4, A, C
		Goal 16	Targets 3, 10
Provide home care		Goal 3	Target 8
Ensure access to social housing		Goal 10	Target 3
		Goal 1	Target 3
		Goal 3	Target 4
		Goal 10	Target 3
Ensure health care provision		Goal 11	Target 1
		Goal 3	Target 1, 2, 4, 5, 8
Ensure unemployment benefits		Goal 1	Targets 1, 2, 3
		Goal 3	Target 8
Guarantee minimum income		Goal 1	Targets 1, 2
		Goal 3	Target 8
Ensure decent pensions		Goal 1	Targets 1, 2
	Goal 3	Target 8	
	Goal 5	Targets 1, 4, 5	
	Goal 10	Targets 1, 4	
Ensure sustainable financing for social protection	Goal 16		

Create a culture of encounter and a positive narrative on migration	Welcoming societies	Goal 5	
Guarantee access to good quality, available, and affordable social services for everyone		Goal 10	Targets 2, 3
		Goal 1	Target 3
		Goal 3	Target 8
		Goal 4	Targets 1, 2, 3
		Goal 10	Targets 2, 3, 4
Foster and encourage participation		Goal 11	Target 1
	Goal 10	Targets 2, 3	

to society		Goal 16	Target 7
Foster the inclusion of migrants on the labour market		Goal 8	Targets 3, 5, 8
		Goal 10	Targets 2, 3, 4

Solidarity and migrants' rights at the core of EU policies	Migration	Goal 1	Targets 1, 2, 4, 5
		Goal 2	Targets 1, 2
		Goal 3	Targets 1, 2, 3, 4, 8
		Goal 5	Target 2
		Goal 8	Target 8
		Goal 10	Targets 2, 3, 4, 7, C
		Goal 16	Target 2
Expansion of safe and legal pathways		Goal 4	Target B
		Goal 10	Target 7
Uphold human rights in external aspects of migration policies		Goal 10	Target 7
		Goal 16	Targets 3, 10,
Development aid should not be used as a tool to curb migration but rather to eradicate poverty and promote SDGs		Goal 1	Target A
		Goal 10	Target B
		Goal 17	Target 2
Ensure safeguards while returning migrants		Goal 10	Target 7
		Goal 16	Targets 3, 6

Saving lives and restoring dignity to people affected by man-made and natural disasters	Humanitarian Aid	Goal 2	Targets 1,2
		Goal 4	Targets 1, 2, 5
		Goal 5	Targets 1, 2
		Goal 6	Targets 1, 2
		Goal 13	Target 1
Going beyond immediate response to emergencies		Goal 1	Targets 5, A
		Goal 10	Targets 2, B
		Goal 11	Targets B, C
		Goal 16	Targets A, B
Support local partners capacities in responding to crises		Goal 10	Target B
		Goal 16	Targets 7, 10, A, B
A principled humanitarian action		Goal 10	Target 2
		Goal 16	Target 3