

**Statement:** Caritas Europa calls EU MS to trigger the Temporary Protection Directive to protect people seeking refuge in the EU

# We must welcome people fleeing Ukraine

**Ahead of the Justice and Home Affairs Council taking place on 3 March, Caritas Europa calls on EU Member States to approve the triggering of the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) as proposed by the European Commission on 2 March.**

The implementation of the TPD would provide EU Member States with a greatly needed flexible tool to quickly grant protection and various rights to people who flee Ukraine.

“ **Considering the seriousness of the situation for the people fleeing Ukraine, it is essential that political debates do not hinder the activation of this mechanism – although some practical and legal details will need to be further worked out and the implementation monitored. Of crucial importance at the moment is the need to provide immediate safety and support to the people escaping the dangers of the war in Ukraine**”

**Maria Nyman**

Secretary General of Caritas Europa

We want nevertheless to stress that the Temporary Protection Directive does not prevent people from applying for the refugee status under the 1951 Refugee Convention, nor does it prevent Member States to provide more favourable and alternative regular status outside the scope of the TPD, such as for instance, student visas, leave to remain, or temporary residence permits, among others. Given the temporary nature of the TPD, durable solutions and long-term regular status options for people who flee Ukraine should not be overlooked. If the triggering of the TPD goes ahead, it is crucial that Member States provide a secure status with a residence permit for the entire duration of the protection, medical treatment, immediate access to accommodation/housing, social welfare or means of subsistence, employment, education for minors, and opportunities for families to reunite. As many displaced people are women with children, their specific needs and vulnerabilities should be catered to and as much as possible, families should not be separated.

“ **We call on Member States to implement the TPD and allow for safe passage across borders to all people seeking protection – Ukrainians but also non-Ukrainians alike who have been living in Ukraine – without discrimination**”

**Shannon Pfohman,**

Policy and Advocacy Director of Caritas Europa

While Caritas Europa and its members will monitor that the TPD is not implemented in a way that downgrades the protection and rights granted to people fleeing the war, considering the current situation, we are pleased by the European Commission's leadership in proposing the activation of the TPD, hoping that it can contribute to harmonising the differences in standards of support and the national responses typically offered by Member States. Besides the TPD, solidarity and responsibility sharing will also need to be addressed to ensure that no Member States is left alone in its response to protecting and relocating these people exiting Ukraine who are so clearly in need.

## more information

**Shanon Pfohman**

Policy and Advocacy Director

Tel: +32 (0)2 235 26 51

Mob: +32 (0)476 98 44 77

[spfohman@caritas.eu](mailto:spfohman@caritas.eu)

**Susan Dabbous**

Communication Officer

Tel: +32 (0)2 235 03 94

Mob: +32 (0)478 58 54 35

[sdabbous@caritas.eu](mailto:sdabbous@caritas.eu)

## about caritas

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.