

Statement on the occasion of the International Day of Families, 15 May

Child Guarantee is more urgent than ever to reduce poverty

On the occasion of the International Day of Families 2020, Caritas Europa calls on the EU to prioritise the creation of the Child Guarantee and to back it with sufficient funds. It should be part of a comprehensive, social and sustainable Europe 2030 Strategy supported by an ambitious EU 2021-2027 budget to achieve child poverty reduction and social inclusion.

In 2018, 23 million children were growing up at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU. This number is expected to increase considerably as the economic shock of the Covid-19 pandemic in Europe takes its toll on families. Various global and European bodies already estimate the impact of the current pandemic on the European economy will be even bigger than that of the 2008-2009 recession.

“The proposed Child Guarantee is crucial and it should be part of a comprehensive, social and sustainable Europe 2030 Strategy that sets a target to halve child and family poverty by 2030. We urge the EU to swiftly adopt and start implementing the Child Guarantee”, said Caritas Europa Secretary General, Maria Nyman.

The Covid-19 crisis shows once again the importance of families as a vital cell for society. Many parents are expected to now combine working from home with childcare and school lessons. Many others are expected to stay at home and attend to their children unable to go to school, while also worrying about how best to find solutions to their financial woes caused by unemployment and loss of income. Single parents are having to manage these concerns and still manage to go grocery shopping, cook, clean and run the household.

In the last few months, we at [Caritas have witnessed how families already facing vulnerable situations are the most affected](#).

“We cannot go out anymore to work. It is very difficult for us to get along with this situation. Only my oldest daughter still has a job, but I am afraid that the company where she works will close soon. We are all hungry. The children ask me for food all the time”, Doinita, a 42-year old mother of six children, told Caritas Romania in [a telephone survey](#).

Doinita lives with her family in a small makeshift barrack made from wood and other scrap materials in the Roma settlement of Craica, in the outskirts of Baia Mare, north-western Romania. Due to the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, she cannot carry out her usual work in the informal economy.

Considering the situation of Doinita’s family and many others like her, immediate measures must be taken to ensure that national as well as EU funding is being used to support children and families at risk. For this, it is essential to ensure access to health and social services for all and to direct particular attention to the most vulnerable. The EU and its Member States will also need to pursue more structural measures in the long term, such as the Child Guarantee, to protect children and their families.

Notes:

- Founded by the United Nations in 1994, The International Day of Families is observed on May 15 every year to celebrate the importance of families, people, societies and cultures around the world.
- For further evidence of families struggling to access health and social services prior to the outbreak of Covid-19, please refer to Caritas Europa's [most recent Poverty Report](#).

For more information, please contact:

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