



**Social
Justice
and
Equality
in
Europe**

is possible!





Caritas Europa reserves the right to not be held responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the information provided in this publication. Liability claims regarding damage caused by the use of any information provided, including any information which is incomplete or incorrect, will therefore be rejected.

The following members of the Caritas Europa Working Group on European Social Models contributed to this publication:

Alexander Machatschke Caritas Austria	Larissa Franz-Koivisto Caritas Finland	Thijs Smeyers Caritas Belgium
Evelyn Karastamati Caritas Greece	Lola Schulmann Caritas France (Secours Catholique)	Walter Nanni Caritas Italy
George Joseph Caritas Sweden	Robert Urbé Caritas Luxembourg	Peter Verhaeghe Caritas Europa – Secretariat
Hasmik Sargsyan Caritas Armenia	Dr. Rosemary Keenan Caritas England and Wales (CSAN)	
Joep van Zijl Caritas Netherlands (Cordaid)	Rosica Nikolova Caritas Bulgaria	
Juraj Barat Caritas Slovakia	Stephan Schwerdtfeger Caritas Germany	

Copy edited by Peter Verhaeghe and Shannon Pfohman.

Published in Brussels in November 2016 by Caritas Europa, Rue de la Charité 43,
1210 Brussels, Belgium.



This publication has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation «EaSI» (2014-2020). For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>

The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission.

Foreword

“

“The situations we face in the rural area are very complex due to the fact that the population is increasingly aging and is lacking the help of younger generations. Because of poverty and lack of jobs, the young people are choosing to go abroad to work in order to earn a somewhat decent income. More and more women are leaving their families, and not always with a labour contract or being sufficiently informed about the situation in the country to which they are going Neither mayors nor local authorities know how to respond to this situation, nor do they have solutions or receive help from the centre.”

Social Worker in Caritas Iasi, Moldova region, Romania

People, especially those facing difficult life circumstances, are at the centre of Caritas' concerns. And so it should also be for politicians and those who share a responsibility for the whole of society and its structures. Caritas Europa believes that structures should serve people, not the other way around. Structures that create or sustain social injustice, poverty and social exclusion have to be rethought and improved, or replaced by more just structures. In this case, more just structures would mean that people experiencing poverty are not shut out and abandoned, but rather, that a supportive social protection system is put in place to empower them and enable them to help themselves.

Such change processes can best be achieved when the people affected are actively involved in the decisions affecting them. By advocating for and with people in need and to transform society into a more just and inclusive civilisation, Caritas encourages people experiencing poverty to engage in these processes and to (re)discover that their voice does matter and that they do have the opportunity to impact their own situations, as well as those of their families' and communities.

With such experiences as the basis for all Caritas advocacy work at local, regional, national, European and global levels, this publication aims to focus on solutions rather than on problems. National, diocesan and local Caritas across Europe do what they can to assist and empower people to escape from poverty, and will continue to do so until states take up their full responsibility for all residents.

I would like to personally thank those people experiencing poverty in Europe for sharing their testimonies and contributing to this publication. I would also like to thank the Caritas service providers, staff, and volunteers who are working to fill structural deficits and to provide a humane response to those in need. Without them, Caritas would

not be able to bring real-life experiences to all political levels. In addition, I'd like to thank the members of the Caritas Europa Working Group on European Social Models, who provided guidance during the development of this publication and who have contributed to our visionary direction for Europe.

Generally, Caritas is called to denounce unjust structures: *“The dignity of the human person and the common good rank higher than the comfort of those who refuse to renounce their privileges. When these values are threatened, a prophetic voice must be raised”*¹ to propose new solutions, because *“inequality is the root of social ills”*² and *“growth in justice requires more than economic growth”*.³

I hope that our Caritas analysis of the reality of poverty and social exclusion in Europe, as well as our innovative ways to address it, will inspire policy makers to explore, test and implement new ways to organise solidarity, in order to achieve greater social justice throughout Europe. I also hope this is perceived as a support to the proposed European Pillar of Social Rights as a crucial instrument for the EU to attain the Sustainable Development Goals. And finally, I hope it shall serve as inspiration for the advocacy of Caritas organisations, civil society organisations and for shaping policies proposed by policy makers in all European countries and beyond to achieve increasingly more, with the people, especially the most vulnerable, at the centre.

**Jorge Nuño Mayer,
Secretary General**

Table of Contents

Executive summary	6
The Caritas Social Model: an introduction	7
Pillar 1	
Family as a vital cell of society	9
1 Caritas's promising practices	12
2 Caritas recommends	15
Pillar 2	
Inclusive labour markets – work as a source of well-being	17
1 Caritas's promising practices	21
2 Caritas recommends	23
Pillar 3	
Social protection as a sound social investment	25
1 Caritas's promising practices	29
2 Caritas recommends	31
Key policy recommendations for resilient social models	32
Conclusion	35
Endnotes	37
Annex I – Overview of Caritas's recommendations	38
Annex II – Caritas Europa's vision of Europe	40
Annex III – List of references	41

Executive summary

This publication presents building blocks for resilient social models in Europe, towards ensuring social justice. This proposal, aimed at ensuring an adequate level of solidarity in our societies, is the result of a long process of observation, reflection and analysis of social realities⁴ and of testing innovative practices in the Caritas network, based on the Caritas vision of society.

Consideration of poverty in Catholic Social Teaching begins with the foundation that each person is both sacred and social, created in God's image, and destined to share in the goods of the earth as part of a community of justice and mercy. Caritas is convinced of the necessity to provide for those without the means to meet their basic needs and to empower them, but equally of the need to alter unjust structures in society that create poverty and social exclusion. Caritas therefore advocates for change and does this by engaging member organisations who work directly with people experiencing poverty, in order to dialogue and develop advocacy strategies toward change.

Caritas Europa has created a Working Group on European Social Models, with the objective of analysing how solidarity can best be put into practice in order to effectively reduce inequalities and eradicate poverty. The Caritas model is based on three pillars: the family as a vital cell of society and primary safety net; inclusive labour markets, recognising the value of work and people's contribution to society; and the social protection system as an essential solidarity mechanism ensuring the well-being of society as a whole.⁵

Caritas Europa has analysed European social models in the light of increasing inequalities, poverty and the need for more resilient social systems in order to prevent and diminish persistent intergenerational poverty. We are convinced of the necessity to provide for and empower those without the means to meet their basic needs and to alter the structures in society that keep them excluded from the community or its decision-making due to their lack of means. Fundamental respect for human dignity implies that all countries should protect their residents from poverty, as enshrined in article 30 of the European Social Charter of the Council of Europe⁶ and article 34 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.⁷

Resilient Social Models are models able to cope with economic, social and demographic challenges in societies. The financial and economic crisis that started in 2008 proved to be a "stress test" for European social models, and has shown that most models are unable to address adequately all consequences of such crises. *"...Six years after the crisis began in 2008 the economic crisis is still leaving its mark on residents and EU economies. In addition to enormous debt levels with very little economic growth, there are huge numbers of unemployed people and millions of people living in poverty or at risk of poverty"*.⁸ On the contrary, solidarity mechanisms have fallen under more pressure because of the austerity measures taken by governments as a policy to address the consequences of the crisis. Even before the crisis, about 120 million people were living in or at risk of poverty in Europe, which is a clear indication that, even without a crisis, current social protection systems are not keeping the promise to lift all residents out of poverty.

The recommendations in this publication provide guidance to EU and national policy makers to review and improve the capacity of their different social models in order to effectively eradicate extreme poverty and social exclusion.

The Caritas Social Model: an introduction

CARITAS EUROPA DEFINES POVERTY AS FOLLOWS

*“Poverty is a multi-dimensional, multi-faceted phenomenon and which is based not solely on income, as hitherto, but includes basic needs, basic human rights and such intangibles as vulnerability, risk, inequality, marginalisation, discrimination, exclusion, a feeling of powerlessness, the circumscribing of options and choices”.*⁹

The preamble of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, adopted in 2015, states: *“We recognise that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge”.*¹⁰

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) recognises that pervasive inequality is a barrier to economic growth: *“it would be a mistake to focus on growth and let inequality take care of itself, not only because inequality may be ethically undesirable but also because the resulting growth may be low and unsustainable. And second, there is surprisingly little evidence for the growth-destroying effects of fiscal redistribution at a macroeconomic level”.*¹¹

However, the economic crisis is not the only cause of this trend. Already before the crisis, tens of millions of people were living in or at risk of poverty in Europe. In 2013 Caritas Europa defined a set of basic principles for a sustainable Social System¹² and analysed the features of the current mainstream European Social Models.¹³ Caritas Europa has developed an analytical model identifying three main sources of social welfare and social security: the family as a vital cell of society and primary safety net; inclusive labour markets recognising the value of work and people’s contribution to society; and social protection systems as sound social investment. These three pillars comprise the Caritas Social Model. They interact with each other and are interdependent. It is important that policy measures in each pillar be coherent with those in the other pillars.

The following chapters present the three pillars of the Caritas Social Model, the essential building blocks for fair and resilient European Social Models addressing inequality, poverty and social exclusion in a just and sustainable way. A radical review and improvement of current European Social Models will also contribute to achieving the promise from the Sustainable Development Goals’ declaration: *“We are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want to heal and secure our planet. We are determined to take the bold and*

*transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path.”*¹⁴

Caritas wants governments to respond to the needs of people and wants to help them to do so. For each pillar of the models, the testimonies and/or life stories of people experiencing poverty allude to the need for policy makers to address these challenges in Europe today, in order to foster greater participation and the dignity of each individual. The practice examples of Caritas projects described indicate how the recommendations can be translated into successful policy measures.

Photo: Lefteris Partalis - Caritas Switzerland





Pillar I

***Family
as a vital cell
of society***

“

“A single mother with three children, one boy (9 years old) and two twin girls (3 years old), is long-term unemployed and struggling on €400 per month from social benefits, like the minimum income scheme (RSI – rendimento Social de Inserção) and family allowances. She doesn’t have any support from other family members and because of that she has to take care of the three children full-time. With this amount she needs to cover education, health, clothing and housing expenses that include rent, electricity, water and gas. Just on housing costs she spends €225 per month and there is not much money left to buy food and medicines for her and her three children. She is supported by Caritas with some food products and financial support for certain expenses. At the beginning of the school period Caritas provided school materials, but appropriate school books are not always available. This mother is registered on the National Employment Service, but she simply can’t find a job.”

Cáritas Diocesana de Santarém, Portugal

“When my children are not there, I don’t beat 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. I’m afraid to appear like a bad dad who doesn’t please his children, and it’s hurting a lot. I think men are too proud and ashamed to seek help.”

Fabrice, single dad of 3 children in shared custody, with €1100 per month, Secours Catholique – Caritas France

“A person who is taking care of a relative with a disability can’t sustain a full-time job. People share that employers are unwilling to employ them because of such an engagement or offer them much lower salaries than usual for a given job”.

Priest working for Caritas in Sofia, Bulgaria

Pillar I

Family as a vital cell of society

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 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. The family should be entitled to receive, from society and from the state, appropriate social, legal and economic protection. This right is even recognised in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (CFR)¹⁵ and the Revised European Social Charter (ESC),¹⁶ and it is specified as one of the Sustainable Development Goals.¹⁷

For instance, **ARTICLE 33 CFR** stipulates that *“The family shall enjoy legal, economic and social protection. To reconcile family and professional life, everyone shall have the right to protection from dismissal for a reason connected with maternity and the right to paid maternity leave and to parental leave following the birth or adoption of a child.”*

ARTICLE 8 ESC states the right of employed women to protection of maternity, which means that their job security is guaranteed during pregnancy and maternity leave, and that they can return to their job after maternity leave.

ARTICLE 16 ESC on the right of the family to social, legal and economic protection states, *“With a view to ensuring the necessary conditions for the full development of the family, which is a fundamental unit of society, the Parties undertake to promote the economic, legal and social protection of family life by such means as social and family benefits, fiscal arrangements, provision of family housing, benefits for the newly married and other appropriate means.”*

ARTICLE 27 ESC, on the right of workers with family responsibilities to equal opportunities and equal treatment, says that *“With a view to ensuring the exercise of the right to equality of opportunity and treatment for men and women workers with family responsibilities and between such workers and other workers, the Parties undertake:*

1. to take appropriate measures:
 - a. to enable workers with family responsibilities to enter and remain in employment, as well as to re-enter employment after an absence due to those responsibilities,

including measures in the field of vocational guidance and training;

b. to take account of their needs in terms of conditions of employment and social security;

c. to develop or promote services, public or private, in particular child day care services and other childcare arrangements;

2. to provide a possibility for either parent to obtain, during a period after maternity leave, parental leave to take care of a child, the duration and conditions of which should be determined by national legislation, collective agreements or practice;

3. to ensure that family responsibilities shall not, as such, constitute a valid reason for termination of employment.”

Sustainable Development Goal 5, on achieving equality between women and men, includes a specific target: *“[To] Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family.”*

Child poverty is to be considered in relation to the situation of the family. The most common factors triggering the entry of families into poverty include unemployment or in-work-poverty, long term illness or death of a parent, care responsibilities for elderly family members, separation or divorce, as well as discrimination.

Families contribute directly to society by providing care services to their infant children, elderly and other family members in need of assistance, and they do so at a lower cost and often better quality than if they were offered such help by the public sector. This contribution to society is important and the time spent thereon should also be recognised and valued, e.g. for the calculation of pension rights.¹⁸

Unprecedented levels of unemployment and poverty emanating from the economic and financial crisis that started in 2008 have alluded to the critical importance of families as primary caregivers and actors of social protection as well as the weaknesses and limitations of the existing social protection systems in place across Europe. Hence, raising interest in evaluating how well national and local social protection systems support families and how they could do better is essential.

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 and increases people’s chances on the labour market and promotes full participation in society. Investing in young people, in particular, benefits the entire society. Taxation policies can also be an important instrument to complement social investment in families, for example by applying tax reductions for families with children.

Photo: Lefteris Partalis - Caritas Switzerland



1

CARITAS'S PROMISING PRACTICES

“Rojdestvo Hristovo”

Centre for mothers in disadvantaged situations

Caritas Bulgaria

What is offered

The centre offers personalised vocational training and social counselling programmes dealing with the specific needs and challenges of each individual. There are craft workshops where the women can develop their skills according to their interests. The workshops function as both work therapy and a source of some, albeit modest, additional income. Staff members help support young women from institutions to transition into leading an independent life, by providing temporary accommodation and work. The centre works closely with the regional state administration, employment bureaus, and social service institutions.

Objective

The project aims at empowering single mothers in an integrated approach, enabling them to (re-)enter the regular labour market and to combine this with their family responsibilities.

Outcome

In the twelve years of its existence, the centre has helped more than 300 mothers in need. More than 60 have achieved and maintained a stable material and social status; six were hired as full-time employees at the centre itself. As a result, these families have escaped from poverty, which has an equally decisively positive impact on the social and economic situation of their children.

PREP®

The Prevention & Relationship Enhancement Programme

Caritas Denmark

What is offered

PREP is a course aimed at helping couples to stay together as well as to focus on how their everyday life together can get (even) better. The course enables couples to strengthen their relationship and reduce the risk of a breakdown. It supports families to be a safe haven and a place for children to develop their capacities. While the course is value-based, it is not religious or political. Caritas shares the values of sustaining relationships and focusing on families. The course is based on over 30 years of research in the area of relationships.¹⁹ PREP is not therapy; it is a course based on teaching and exercises. The teaching lessons are conducted in plenum while all exercises and talks are carried out by

Photo: Isabel Corbier - Caritas Belgium



the couples privately. No one has to share personal information with anyone other than their partner and there is no group work. PREP teaches marital/premarital couples essential skills, such as: how to communicate effectively, work as a team, solve problems, manage conflict, and preserve and enhance love, commitment and friendship.

Caritas Denmark has a team of educated and certified PREP-teachers who are all volunteers. The Centre for Familieudvikling (family development) has the copyright and is responsible for course materials and education of PREP-teachers in Denmark. Caritas organises the courses in cooperation with local parishes, schools and the like.

Objective

This project contributes to increasing the resilience of marriage partnerships, empowering the partners to prevent a break-up, thus avoiding the high human costs (especially for children) related to separations, as well as the related economic costs for society. It is an example of social investment with long-lasting positive effects.

Outcome

The Danish National Centre for Social Research has documented that PREP has a positive effect and can prevent divorce. Further info can be found at:

<http://www.smartmarriages.com/prep.overview.html>

Social Inclusion and Rehabilitation

Centre for Roma Children and their Families

Turulung, Caritas Satu Mare, Romania

What is offered

The centre, established in 2014 by Caritas Satu Mare, targets people in need coming from disadvantaged, especially rural, areas. Most of the beneficiaries are Roma, families with more than three children living in bad conditions, and with no access to education, the health system or social assistance. The project focuses on three pillars: Community, Development and Inclusion. At the centre, children with a school dropout history receive social and educational support, thus helping them to access education or continue their schooling. They also benefit from an after-school programme, leisure activities, hygiene and medical assistance, socialisation and recreational activities, as well as psychological and faith support. The children's parents are also integrated into educational and professional training programmes and benefit from counselling services to help them find employment opportunities.

Objective

The aim of the project is to enhance the living conditions for Roma and other vulnerable groups in need in Satu Mare and Maramures Counties. The project attempts to respond to the deficiency in the skills of the children's parents when it comes to labour market needs and to also improve the children's school access and educational advancement.

Outcome

The project is an essential support for this geographical area, as few NGOs or local authorities have developed such programmes there before. Since the project's implementation, 1,000 beneficiaries have been assisted. The project has also had a powerful community impact, as in 2015, when a group of German students helped in the construction of the first playground in Turulung for the children in the community. The innovative aspect of the project is reflected in the fact that the whole family is accompanied and supported, not only the children. The centre achieves a good success rate.

Photo: Caritas Switzerland





2

**CARITAS
RECOMMENDS**

Based on the challenges presented above, this section lists recommendations specific to the first pillar of the family as a vital cell of society and a primary safety net. Policies should be designed in such a way as to:

- Ensure the right to family life: **facilitate work-family life balance** and support families by providing:
 - monthly **child allowance** - adopt a universal approach to child benefits; and families with a low income should receive an increased amount of such allowance;
 - sufficient and affordable **child care** facilities;
 - **family counselling** services.
- Enable, support and recognise the value of **family care work** by:
 - ensuring the legal right to maternity leave of at least 15 weeks, as well as parental leave of at least 6 months;
 - allowing a number of days per year of special leave for care work in the family (for children, elderly, the ill);
 - ensuring a minimum income during longer periods of leave for care work;
 - considering the time spent on care work as eligible for the calculation of pension rights.
- **Re-evaluate tax systems** to be family-friendly and progressive (redistributing wealth from rich to poor); taking into consideration families' contribution to society, through their intergenerational nature, by granting financial compensation in the form of a tax reduction or credit.
- Assess 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, in the form of **family impact assessments**.



Pillar 2

***Inclusive labour
markets –
work as a source
of well-being***

Pillar 2

Inclusive labour markets – work as a source of well-being

“

“The problems I see is in the attitude of employers, i.e. [in offering] moonlighting jobs, employers prefer [temporary] contracts for services instead of regular employment contracts. They frequently offer no benefits or care for employees.”

Response of a Caritas Czech Republic social worker to a survey conducted for this publication

“We are both employed but our income is little more than the national minimum wage of about €505 per person. We don't pay rent so our income was enough to cover the daily expenses of a normal family with a three year old daughter. But we recently discovered that our daughter has a rare disease, which forces us to travel long distances for treatment three times a week. This situation has worsened our social and economic situation. We spend €650 per month on treatment and travel costs and we don't receive any support to help us with these expenses. Our current wages do not allow us to bear our daily costs and we are not eligible for additional social benefits. We used to have a decent life but now it is difficult.”

A beneficiary of Cáritas Diocesana de Santarém, Portugal

“I used to be a construction worker, but I lost my job when the company went bankrupt. My wife has a mental illness and often needs psychiatric support. Long-term unemployment and lack of support caused me distress and, unfortunately, I started having drinking problems. I have three children who attend school but I cannot give them the support they require to perform at school. I wish I had never lost my job or had more support to get back on track”.

Caritas Slovenia beneficiary

Work is a source of well-being because it allows 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 where an income can be generated in order to contribute to the existence and financing of desired living standards. However, the labour market also entails a 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 in great 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 have the qualifications currently required by the labour market or see their qualifications recognised.

Photo: Antonio Fantasia - Caritas Europa



Work is a **fundamental right** upon which the promotion of social justice and civil peace directly depends. “...[T]he primary capital to be safeguarded and valued is man, the human person in his or her integrity...”²⁰ In a single paragraph later in the encyclical, Pope Benedict reiterates certain traditional particulars about human work: that it be freely chosen; be respectful of the worker; without discrimination; enabling a family to meet their needs and the educational needs of their children; prohibiting child labour; allowing the organisation of workers (unions) and their voices to be heard; providing “enough room” for personal and spiritual development; and being supportive of a decent retirement.²¹ Work has the potential to enhance the human dignity of every person. Work is a crucial aspect for people to enjoy full participation in society, and societies should aim at creating job opportunities for all. In line with active inclusion policies, adequate income, sustainable employment, and good services remain mandatory objectives for every economic system oriented towards justice and the common good. Inclusive labour markets, therefore, should **recognise the value of work and people’s contributions to society**.

This right is recognised in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (CFR)²² and the Revised European Social Charter (ESC).²³

ARTICLE 15, 1 CFR states that “Everyone has the right to engage in work and to pursue a freely chosen or accepted occupation.”

ARTICLE 1 ESC on the right to work specifies that: “With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right to work, the Parties undertake:

1. to accept as one of their primary aims and responsibilities the achievement and maintenance of as high and stable a level of employment as possible, with a view to the attainment of full employment;
2. to protect effectively the right of the worker to earn his/her living in an occupation freely entered upon.”

ARTICLE 2 ESC declares the right to just conditions of work.

ARTICLE 4 ESC states the right to a fair remuneration.

Sustainable Development Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth includes a specific target: “By 2030, [to] achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.”

Despite these goals and articles to protect workers, attention has to be given to the growing phenomenon of **in-work-poverty** in Europe. Quality employment includes decent working conditions and adequate wages, enabling workers and their families to lead a dignified life. Social partners and the competent authorities should ensure that these conditions are safeguarded in juridical norms that protect work and ensure its proper remuneration. In this sense, undeclared work has to be addressed. A smart

Photo: Isabel Corthier - Caritas Belgium



taxation policy can contribute to bringing the lowest (net) wages to a decent level and at the same time, address the so-called unemployment trap.

Inclusive labour markets also require the availability of (short-term) support between 2 jobs. People who are unemployed must have access to employment counselling services and opportunities for retraining in order to increase their chances on the labour market. Measures also need to be implemented to facilitate labour market participation of people with mental or physical disabilities. Anti-discrimination policies should increase opportunities for labour market participation of marginalised groups, such as the Roma or migrants as well as the equal participation of women and men.

According to official statistics on **youth unemployment** and people not in education, employment or training (NEETs), specific efforts in the framework of life-long learning are necessary to facilitate the transition between school and vocational education and training and the labour market.

Governments should consider becoming an employer of last resort as the lessons of the Great Depression are as valid in social terms now as they were in the 1930s. No society can afford to regard so many of its unemployed residents as expendable. Notwithstanding the fact that governments need to increase the number of long-term viable jobs paying good wages, given the huge fall in employment and its impact on unemployed people of every age, governments should also consider being an employer of

last resort through voluntary programmes. These should be framed so as not to distort the market economy, but to provide socially useful work for those seeking employment. There are many areas in the social economy where this could be introduced (for example, in long-term care). This does not mean that social services should be dependent on people who are long-term unemployed, taking up positions on a government programme. These services should be provided as part of mainstream provisions. However, this approach does have the potential to create additional jobs, particularly in times of economic difficulty.

Long-term unemployed people, in many countries representing 50% or more of the unemployed, deserve special attention with a targeted approach to break barriers and facilitate labour market participation through individual pathways back to work. In this context, the job creation potential of not-for-profit organisations and social enterprises should be promoted, and public authorities should be the employer of last resort, in particular for the most disadvantaged groups or those furthest from the labour market or in low qualified jobs. This marks one of the building blocks of an inclusive labour market policy.

Working conditions should also allow a balance between **work and family life**, taking into account the contribution families make to society by providing care to their children and/or other dependent family members. In this sense, it is recommended that policy makers consider options such as a life-time account for working hours, allowing for a flexible distribution of time between work and family or caring responsibilities.

Photo: Antonio Fantasia - Caritas Europa



CARITAS'S PROMISING PRACTICES

Cooperative Part-time Entrepreneurship

Cooperatief Ondernemen in Nederland - COIN
Cordaid – Caritas Netherlands

What is offered

Cooperative Part-time Entrepreneurship is an innovative concept, launched in 2013 by the Tientjes Academy supported by Cordaid. In 2013, the first cooperative for part time entrepreneurs was launched in Breda: De Vrije Uitloop. This cooperative consists of thirteen different individuals, who work from their own passion and talents, and includes: a website designer, furniture maker, photographer, gardener, coach, among others. This cooperative came to being with the close cooperation of the local authority in Breda, by creating a 'minimal regulation zone' which exempts these informal entrepreneurs from the restrictions applicable to those living in Breda on minimum income. The cooperative members continue to receive a minimum income whilst making a profit. Part of their profit is saved via the cooperative, enabling them the ability to afford supplies or cover further schooling fees. The difference is paid out to the local authority as profit and in this way a part of their minimum income payment is repaid.

Objective

The project aims at supporting long term unemployed people to make the transition to employment by enabling them to create their own jobs without running the risk of losing all income in cases where the activity doesn't generate enough income to live on from the very start.

Outcome

COIN has concluded agreements with several Dutch cities, thus creating the conditions for cooperatives to be created in a safe environment but with the clear target of preventing people ending up in the poverty trap. It is a good example of using social benefits as social investment in people. Further info can be found at:

<https://www.cordaid.org/en/> and www.devrijeuitleop.nl

Magdas hotel

Caritas Vienna, Austria

What is offered

A former retirement home was turned into an individually-designed 78-room boutique hotel with a €1.5m loan from Caritas and €60,000 raised through crowdfunding. It is run by trained refugees and experienced hotel staff and offers guests from around the world a smart, urban and



Photo: Meabb Smith, Trócaire - Caritas Ireland

multicultural "home" with an added social value: offering job opportunities to people who have very few opportunities on the regular labour market.

Objective

Magdas Hotel is designed to be a role model in combatting poverty by creating new jobs for refugees, who would otherwise be far from the labour market. The hotel is a social business; its focus is not the maximisation of profit, but the maximisation of societal benefits and social inclusion.

Outcome

Currently around 20 refugees from 16 different countries are fully employed at the hotel. The initiative was a finalist in the European Social Innovation Competition in 2013.

Further information can be found at:

<http://www.magdas-hotel.at/en/hotel/>

Employment project

Caritas Slovenia

What is offered

In Slovenia, unemployed people are offered an opportunity to gain job experience and develop skills by being employed in Caritas projects. They are accompanied and coached by Caritas staff in their search for a job on the regular labour market. These Caritas employment projects are partly funded through tenders by the state and partially by Caritas.

Objective

This Caritas employment project aims at integrating long-term unemployed people into the labour market and into society.

Outcome

In 2014, Caritas Slovenia had 31 persons employed through the programme. Further information can be found at:

http://www.ess.gov.si/delodajalci/financne_spodbude/razpisi/javna-dela-2016-prvo-javno-povabilo



CARITAS RECOMMENDS

Based on the afore-mentioned challenges presented, this section lists recommendations specific to the inclusive labour markets pillar of the Caritas Social Model.

- Protect **all workers' rights** and fight exploitation of, for example, undocumented workers.
- Establish an **adequate minimum wage**.
- Ensure wage equality between women and men – equal pay for equal work.
- Improve **job security** by limiting the use of short-term contracts.
- Introduce measures to support the **transition between** education and the labour market (youth employment), i.e. by promoting the connection between school curricula and required labour market skills.
- Provide employment counselling services facilitating labour market participation, in particular for newly arrived migrants, and the transition between jobs.
- Facilitate the recognition of skills and qualifications attained abroad.
- Reduce long-term unemployment by implementing **reinsertion trajectories** and skills upgrading.
- Reduce the gap between the official and effective retirement age by adapting job content to the needs of older workers.
- Support employment within not-for-profit organisations and social enterprises, making use of their job creation potential.
- End discriminatory practices that pose barriers.





Pillar 3

***Social protection
as a sound social
investment***

“I have €565 and a small additional benefit, but with the rent and everything, this is tough. I don't smoke anymore, for 10 years. I don't drink, I don't go out, I buy very few new dresses. We cannot do that anyway, that is impossible. I am always at home, always. I am ashamed a little as well. I try to handle things, I try to look happy, but it is not easy. And we have our dignity; we don't want everyone to know that we go to Secours Catholique to eat. I don't know how I will live on but we'll see. I don't count so much, I think we have still time to think about the future.”

Marie, 54, Secours Catholique – Caritas France, a beneficiary who has always worked but who lost her husband 8 years ago and then became, and remains, sick

“Even the ambulance refuses to help the homeless. It has happened many times, to call 112 for a man on the street, lying unconscious, and they [have] refused to send an ambulance. They say, there are more important subjects, there are not enough doctors, etc. and they can't deal with the homeless ...”

A Caritas employee working with homeless people in Burgas, Bulgaria

“I am a teacher at a school [established] in a former mining town during communism. The school is on the edge of town in a very poor neighbourhood, and [the] students come predominantly from the Roma community, residing in makeshift housing on the outskirts of town. In this community there are periodic outbreaks of hepatitis; and water, electricity and heating infrastructure is poor. The school has been renovated and equipped but the student dropout rate is high. Parents send their children to school purely to not lose their allowance (eligibility is conditioned by the child's school attendance). However, children rarely come to school because they do not have proper clothes and do not have conditions at home to ensure their hygiene. Parents do not realise the importance of education and it is very difficult to convince the children to pay attention to education. In school, there are many substitute teachers; many of them come and go because of low salaries and lack of motivation.”

Teacher and collaborator in a Caritas day centre in Petrosani, Romania

Pillar 3

Social protection as a sound social investment

Well-being, from a cultural and social perspective, is well rooted in a political environment where justice, equality and solidarity are presumed as the basis of human co-existence. Next to inclusive labour markets and family policies, the welfare state provides for, or should provide for, concrete social infrastructure in which these basic principles are embedded. The social infrastructure, or social protection system, can be organised in various forms, according to the different existing cultures, constitutional assets and levels of civil and social capital. This could include financial supplements, contributions, and/or service provision, which could contribute to the welfare and development of both individuals and groups in a given community, while also fostering their participation in the social environment. In this sense, the social protection system of the welfare state includes the third important pillar of Caritas Europa's European Social Model, as it influences well-being.

Indeed, one of the main political responsibilities of every public institution, according to Caritas's perspective, is to continuously improve well-being. This provides protection against social risks, such as unemployment, accidents, illness, and disability, and by supporting old-age pensions. Social protection is financed through tax revenues and/or deductions from wages and salaries. In some countries, the social insurance coverage paid out against income losses is insufficient for decent living. Social risks such as unemployment, accident, sickness and old age 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 way.

The primary objectives of a social protection system should be to enable human development, to tackle poverty, to provide a safety net in case of need, and to respond to health problems, retirement and unemployment. Families too often lack the resources to create an enabling environment for their children to fully develop their potential from an early age, or even to grow and develop themselves if they've grown up poor and disadvantaged or find themselves in situations of extreme vulnerability. Ensuring access to education, health care, housing and adequate social protection is essential for achieving social justice and reducing inequality.



Photo: Caritas Switzerland

Social benefits should be adequate to allow people to focus on further developing their capacities and remaining healthy. Minimum income schemes should not be considered long-term solutions for people experiencing poverty, and should be combined with enabling services that support people to increase their chances on the labour market.

This dire need, however, is under threat as a consequence of the financial decline and austerity policies. But, even without the challenges associated with the economic crisis, existing social protection systems have not prevented the more than 120 million people in the EU living in or at risk of poverty. This shows that lawmakers have been neglecting gaps and are failing to adapt the system to cover all people in need.

These rights are recognised in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (CFR)²⁴ and the Revised European Social Charter (ESC)²⁵ and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.²⁶

ARTICLE 14 CFR stipulates the right to education:

- “1. Everyone has the right to education and to have access to vocational and continuing training.
2. This right includes the possibility to receive free compulsory education.
3. The freedom to found educational establishments with due respect for democratic principles and the right of parents to ensure the education and teaching of their children in conformity with their religious, philosophical and pedagogical convictions shall be respected, in accordance with the national laws governing the exercise of such freedom and right.”

ARTICLE 34 CFR: “The Union recognises and respects the entitlement to **social security benefits and social services** providing protection in cases such as **maternity, illness, industrial accidents, dependency or old age**, and in the case of **loss of employment**, in accordance with the rules laid down by Union law and national laws and practices. **Everyone residing and moving legally** within the European Union is entitled to social security benefits and social advantages in accordance with Union law and national laws and practices. In order to combat social exclusion and poverty, the Union recognises and respects the **right to social and housing assistance** so as to ensure a decent existence for all those who lack sufficient resources, in accordance with the rules laid down by Union law and national laws and practices.”

ARTICLE 35 CFR: “Everyone has the right of access to preventive **health care** and the right to benefit from medical treatment under the conditions established by national laws and practices. A high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the definition and implementation of all the Union’s policies and activities.”

ARTICLE 36 CFR: “The Union recognises and respects access to **services of general economic interest** as provided for in national laws and practices, in accordance with the Treaties, in order to promote the social and territorial cohesion of the Union.”

ARTICLE 12 ESC on the right to social security states: “With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right to social security, the Parties undertake:

1. to establish or maintain a system of social security;
2. to maintain the social security system at a satisfactory level at least equal to that necessary for the ratification of the European Code of Social Security;
3. to endeavour to raise progressively the system of social security to a higher level;
4. to take steps, by the conclusion of appropriate bilateral and multilateral agreements or by other means, and subject to the conditions laid down in such agreements, in order to ensure:
 - a. equal treatment with their own nationals of the nationals of other Parties in respect of social security rights, including the retention of benefits arising out of social security legislation, whatever movements the persons protected may undertake between the territories of the Parties;
 - b. the granting, maintenance and resumption of social security rights by such means as the accumulation of insurance or employment periods completed under the legislation of each of the Parties.”

ARTICLE 14 ESC on the right to benefit from social welfare services says that “With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right to benefit from social welfare services, the Parties undertake:

1. to promote or provide services which, by using methods of social work, would contribute to the welfare and development of both individuals and groups in the community, and to their adjustment to the social environment;
2. to encourage the participation of individuals and voluntary or other organisations in the establishment and maintenance of such services.”

ARTICLE 23 ESC covers the right of elderly persons to social protection.

ARTICLE 30 ESC provides for the right to protection against poverty and social exclusion.

Several **Sustainable Development Goals** include related specific targets:

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere, as stated in particular in target 3: “Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.”

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages, as covered in particular by target 8: “Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.”

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning, set out in particular in target 1: “By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant effective learning outcomes”; target 2: “By

2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education”; and target 3: “By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.”

Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries, as promoted in particular by target 4: “Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.”

Access to affordable and quality services, such as education, health care, housing and social counselling, along with adequate income support, together with inclusive labour markets, are the cornerstones of effective active-inclusion policies.

Access to services is a basic right. **Universal services and benefits** should cover vital needs: all persons in the country should have access in the same way. While access should be universal, the level of benefits may vary according to, for instance, the composition and level of income of the family.

Public authorities are responsible for the protection of social rights and for regulating and organising the **provision of services**. This includes the legal framework regarding quality standards (including working conditions). The state should offer/organise services, if no private initiative is available (not-for-profit or profit based). Where private initiatives are available, the freedom of choice of providers should be guaranteed and public authorities should control fair competition between providers. In order to achieve this, the state regulator and potential state providers (agencies) should be separate bodies.

There is a need to ensure that structure and organisation, functioning, financing and access to **social protection systems** are designed in a way that they effectively contribute to reducing poverty. The ILO Social Protection Floors recommendation (n° 202) reaffirms the critical role of social protection for society’s progress, economic recovery, greater equality and social justice. Therefore, expenses of the social protection system are to be considered as an investment in/for society, not as a cost.

Universal benefits should be complemented by **targeted, means-tested services and benefits** aimed at supporting vulnerable groups of people to move out of situations of poverty. Such measures include counselling services and financial benefits. Authorities should aim at gradually shifting from a **selective universalism** (e.g. child allowances for all with income below certain levels) to a **progressive universalism**.

Emergency level measures should provide a safety net for people who find themselves without other benefits. The safety net should be on the same level for all. Emergency measures are temporary, eligible to all, for as long as recipients do not have access to universal and/or targeted measures necessary for living in dignity.

CARITAS'S PROMISING PRACTICES

This section depicts some practice examples of Caritas projects and indicates how the recommendations can be translated into successful policy measures aiming toward fair, just and effective solidarity mechanisms.

Fa Bene

Caritas Turin, Italy

What is offered

“*Fa bene*” is a pilot project, created and launched by a network of associations, architects and creators, cooperatives, vendors and citizens who share a simple idea: those who shop in some of the local markets in Turin can buy some more food to be given to the people who cannot afford fresh and quality food. Moreover, market vendors donate their unsold stock at the end of each day. The collected food is distributed and delivered by bike to families reported by social services to be in need. In turn, those who receive food packages return what they have been given by committing to community service.

Objective

To enable access to healthy food and employment of unemployed people aged 50+.

Outcome

Among the people working permanently in “*Fa bene*”, there are many over-50s reintegrated into working life. Their experiences are examples of “inclusion” and social “cohesion” at the same time, in a welcoming context fostering change and adaptation.

Support towards employment

Secours Catholique – Caritas France

What is offered

This programme provides support, by Secours Catholique, to unemployed people seeking new jobs. There are 50 “support towards employment” teams all around France, composed of volunteers, for this purpose. Among these, ten offer collective support in addition to the personalised support leading towards employment. Collective support is done in coordination with the personalised support and aims at decreasing feelings of despair and loneliness prominent among people who are unemployed. Personalised support is based on listening, offering support to gain self-confidence, and in the administrative procedures to get a job. The implemented activities are, for instance, IT

workshops to write curricula vitae and search for job offers, support with transportation for job seekers who need to travel for job interviews, etc.

Objective

The programme contributes to increasing self-confidence and personal motivation, thanks to the group support effect.

Outcome

As a result of this programme, beneficiaries tend to feel less lonely, which helps to increase their self-confidence, to be motivated for the job search and to successfully find a job.

The Elpis Project

Caritas Greece

What is offered

The Elpis Project provides support to 650 poor families in different geographical regions of Greece through monthly food distributions. The project is funded by Caritas Italy, Caritas Spain, Caritas France and Catholic Relief Services and is carried out by Caritas Greece in collaboration with Caritas Europa.

Objective

The main goal of the Elpis Project (“Elpis”, meaning hope) is to contribute to the reduction of the consequences of the economic crisis in Greece among poor and socially excluded people.

Outcome

The project addresses the situation of extreme poverty of people, both Greek citizens and migrants, who have no or little access to basic food or nutrition. The social counselling, which is combined with the food distribution, enables people to explore other ways to escape from their vulnerable situation in poverty by identifying their strengths.

Photo: Elodie Perriot, Secours Catholique - Caritas France





Photo: Caritas Switzerland

CARITAS RECOMMENDS

Based on the challenges presented above, this section lists recommendations specific to the social protection pillar of the Caritas Social Model.

- **Ensure comprehensive national social provision coverage**, covering the vital needs of all persons residing in the country.
- Guarantee universal access to **social services** and user-friendly access to social benefits.
- Inform residents of their social rights and benefit entitlements.
- Ensure that residents have access to assistance to enforce their social rights.
- Invest in **early childhood education and care**, ensuring free access to at least primary and secondary education, including the use of means-tested school allowances/scholarships and to prevent/reduce early school-leaving.
- Provide adequate **home care**, including care work by family members, in order to prevent or postpone institutionalisation. Care homes for the elderly must meet quality standards and be monitored regularly.
- Safeguard timely means-tested access to **quality, appropriate and affordable social housing**.
- Invest in preventative health care and ensure **accessible, affordable health care** provision.
- Ensure a means-tested income, i.e. **unemployment benefits**, for people who are temporarily unemployed, in combination with measures supporting their re-entry to the labour market, such as via (re-)training, job counselling, language training, etc.
- Guarantee a means-tested **minimum income** above the poverty line.
- Calculate pension rights within the framework of **public retirement schemes** on the basis of number of days/years worked, with a minimum and maximum level; and also take into account periods of inactivity for reasons of family care work.
- Create a fiscal framework to **promote complementary public retirement schemes**.
- Ensure sufficient and sustainable funding for social protection by **financing social protection systems through taxation on all income sources**, not only on labour, and by not coming under pressure as a consequence of financial decline, economic crisis, or of demographic ageing.
- Ratify the **European Social Charter** and all provisions as well as the **Collective Complaints Mechanism**.

Key policy recommendations for resilient social models

1.

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE FAMILY AS A VITAL CELL OF SOCIETY AND A PRIMARY SAFETY NET

- Ensure the right to family life: **facilitate work-family life balance** and support families by providing:
 - Monthly **child allowance** - adopt a universal approach to child benefits;
Families on a low income should receive an increased amount of allowance.
 - Sufficient and affordable **child care** facilities.
 - **Family counselling** services.
- Enable, support, and recognise the value of **family care work** by:
 - Ensuring the legal right to maternity leave of at least 15 weeks, as well as parental leave of at least 6 months.
 - Allowing a number of days per year of special leave for care work in the family (for children, elderly, the ill).
 - Ensuring a minimum income during longer periods of leave for care work.
 - Considering the time spent on care work as eligible for the calculation of pension rights.
- **Re-evaluate tax systems** to be family-friendly and progressive (redistributing wealth from rich to poor); take into consideration families' contribution to society, through their intergenerational nature, by granting financial compensation in the form of a tax reduction or credit.
- Assess 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, in the form of **family impact assessments**.

2.

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING INCLUSIVE LABOUR MARKETS - RECOGNISING THE VALUE OF WORK AND PEOPLE'S CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY

- Protect **all workers' rights** and fight exploitation, for example, of undocumented workers.
- Establish an **adequate minimum wage**.
- Ensure wage equality between women and men – equal pay for equal work.
- Improve **job security** by limiting the use of short-term contracts.
- Introduce measures to support the **transition between** education and the labour market (youth employment), i.e. by promoting the connection between school curricula and required labour market skills.
- Provide employment counselling services facilitating labour market participation, in particular for newly arrived migrants, and the transition between jobs.
- Facilitate the recognition of skills and qualifications attained abroad.
- Reduce long-term unemployment by implementing **reinsertion trajectories** and skills upgrading.
- Reduce the gap between the official and effective retirement age by adapting job content to the needs of older workers.
- Support employment within not-for-profit organisations and social enterprises, making use of their job creation potential.
- End discriminatory practices that pose barriers.

3.

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS

- **Ensure comprehensive national social provision coverage**, meeting the vital needs of all persons residing in the country.
 - Guarantee universal access to **social services** and user-friendly access to social benefits.
 - Inform residents of their social rights and benefit entitlements.
 - Ensure that residents have access to assistance to enforce their social rights.
 - Invest in **early childhood education and care**, ensuring free access to at least primary and secondary education, including the use of means-tested school allowances/scholarships, and to prevent/reduce early school-leaving.
 - Provide adequate **home care**, including care work by family members, in order to prevent or postpone institutionalisation. Care homes for the elderly must meet quality standards and be monitored regularly.
 - Safeguard timely means-tested access to **quality, appropriate and affordable social housing**.
 - Invest in preventative health care and ensure **accessible, affordable health care** provision.
 - Ensure a means-tested income, i.e. **unemployment benefits**, for people who are temporarily unemployed, in combination with measures supporting their re-entry to the labour market, such as via (re-)training, job counselling, language training, etc.
 - Guarantee a means-tested **minimum income** above the poverty line.
 - Calculate pension rights in the framework of **public retirement schemes** on the basis of the number of days/years worked, with a minimum and maximum level; and also take into account periods of inactivity for reasons of family care work.
- Create a fiscal framework to **promote complementary public retirement schemes**.
 - Ensure sufficient and sustainable funding for social protection by **financing social protection systems through taxation on all income sources**, not only on labour, and by not coming under pressure as a consequence of financial decline, economic crisis, or of demographic ageing.
 - Ratify the **European Social Charter** and all provisions as well as the **Collective Complaints Mechanism**.

4.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO NATIONAL AUTHORITIES

- Ensure participation of people experiencing poverty and the NGOs defending their interests through social analysis, social policy development, and the monitoring and evaluation of policy measures.
- Protect basic social rights by integrating them as human rights in national constitutions; make the European Social Charter and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights binding and enforceable.
- Set up a national anti-poverty and employment strategy, taking into account the Sustainable Development Goals - and that includes national targets for poverty reduction and employment - as well as measures to achieve the targets and a budget for their implementation.
- Include equality between men and women as a cross-cutting priority in the national strategy.
- Develop complementary targeted measures for specific target groups, such as integration measures for migrants and refugees.
- Enhance the capacity of automatic stabilisers.
- Calculate reference budgets according to a common methodology, in addition to the at-risk-of-poverty rate, in order to establish the level of adequacy of replacement incomes and social benefits.

5.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EU INSTITUTIONS

- Ensure participation of people experiencing poverty and the NGOs defending their interests through social analysis, social policy development, and the monitoring and evaluation of policy measures.
- Reinforce commitment to achieving the Europe 2020 poverty reduction goal and its interrelationship with the 2030 Agenda, i.e. the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Ensure complementarity between structural funds, the European Social Fund and FEAD.
- Support Member States to reform their social protection systems in light of the above recommendations.
- Use the flexibility clause of the Stability and Growth Pact to allow EU Member States to exempt social investment from the calculation of national budgetary expenditure, at least until 2020, in particular for investment in children: early childhood education and care, formal education and family support.
- Establish a unified means-testing tool (a multi-dimensional set of indicators on well-being and poverty) at EU level.
- Promote research in related areas through the FP 7 – Horizon 2020 programmes in order to provide evidence-based guidance to reform social protection systems towards increased social justice.

Conclusion

The Caritas Social Model provides a framework for an integrated approach to creating and improving the wellbeing of people and the society in which they live. Family policies, labour market policies and social protection policies are interdependent and can reinforce each other's positive outcomes. This requires a vision of society which goes beyond short term political and budgetary concerns.

Indeed, saving money in one policy area might immediately contribute to a better balanced budget, either this year or next, but it might put a tremendous extra burden on the state budget in 10 or 15 years' time. Social spending should be approached and acknowledged as a social investment. A higher coverage rate, or increasing the minimum income to an adequate level, will increase this year's state budget, but the return on investment over a period of time of 10, 15 or 20 years will be much greater. Such investments will not only contribute to reducing inequality, poverty and social exclusion, but will also contribute to a better-performing economy, fewer social tensions and

reduced costs. It will enable the authorities to keep the state budget in balance while contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and respecting the country's international legal social obligations as enshrined in the European Social Charter, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and other international conventions.

A country, a society, cannot afford to sustain inequalities. The social and economic cost is too heavy and puts the burden on future generations. Reducing poverty and inequality requires a long term vision. Politicians with the capacity to develop such vision and to act upon it are true leaders. They defend and promote the common good as well as the policy orientations that create cohesion and resilience in society. We hope that this publication will offer them inspiration and guidance in their efforts to become builders of solidarity and social cohesion. By doing so, states will make decisive progress in promoting integral human development.

Photo: Caritas Austria





Photo: Caritas Switzerland

Endnotes

- 1 Evangelii Gaudium (EG), 218.
- 2 EG, 202.
- 3 EG, 204.
- 4 See annex 1 – list of references.
- 5 For more information on the analytical model, see <http://www.caritas.eu/sites/default/files/zeropover-tya-ben.pdf> pp. 7-8.
- 6 Council of Europe, Revised European Social Charter, 1996, Art. 30 – The right to protection against poverty and social exclusion.
- 7 EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, Art. 34, 3.
- 8 Caritas Europa Crisis Monitoring Report 2015, Poverty and Inequalities on the Rise, http://www.caritas.eu/sites/default/files/caritascrisisreport_2015_en_final.pdf.
- 9 Caritas Europa, Poverty in Europe (2001).
- 10 Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, preamble <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>
- 11 Jonathan D. Ostry, Andrew Berg, Charalambos G. Tsangarides, 2014, IMF staff discussion note Redistribution, Inequality, and Growth.
- 12 Caritas Europa, The Future of the Welfare State (2013), pp. 339-347.
- 13 Caritas Europa, The Future of the Welfare State (2013).
- 14 Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, *ibid.*
- 15 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf
- 16 <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168007cf93>
- 17 <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>
- 18 The Belgian Scientific Institute of Public Health (2015) recently calculated that about 860,000 people in Belgium are involved in informal care. The number of hours they spend on this represents more than 150,000 full time jobs. 18% of women, aged 55-64, are informal care givers; making up the largest group. More info available at: <https://www.wiv-isp.be/news/Pages/L'aideinformellerepresenteplusde150000emploisenBelgique.aspx>.
- 19 Mainly from Denver University, USA.
- 20 Pope Benedict XVI, Caritas in Veritate, 2009, No. 25.
- 21 *Ibid.*, No. 63.
- 22 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf
- 23 <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168007cf93>
- 24 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf
- 25 <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168007cf93>
- 26 <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

Annex I

Overview of Caritas's recommendations

This table is an analysis completed by Caritas Europa to highlight the topical areas on which European legislation exists, while also comparing these to the protection that is 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 a European social model.

CARITAS EUROPA RECOMMENDS	EUROPEAN SOCIAL CHARTER	EU CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
PILLAR 1			
Support families and facilitate life-work balance	Art 8; Art 16	Art 9; Art 33	–
Recognise family care work	Art 27	Art 33	Goal 5
Family-friendly taxation	–	Art 33	–
Family impact assessments	Art 16	Art 33	–
PILLAR 2			
Protect workers' rights	Art 1; Art 2	Art 15; 27; 28; 33	Goal 1; Goal 8
Establish minimum wage	Art 4; Art 30	Art 31	Goal 8; Goal 10 – target4
Ensure wage equality	Art 20; Art 27	Art 23	Goal 8
Improve job security	Art 27	Art 15; Art 30	Goal 8
Support transitions	Art 1, Art 30	Art 14; Art 32	–
Provide employment counselling	Art 1	Art 15	–
Recognise foreign qualifications	–	Art 15 – 3	–
Implement reinsertion trajectories	Art 9, Art 10, Art 13	Art 14; Art 29	Goal 4
Adapt jobs to needs of older workers	–	Art 29	–
Support employment in not-for-profit sector	–	–	Goal 8
End discrimination	Art 27	Art 23	Goal 5

CARITAS EUROPA RECOMMENDS

EUROPEAN SOCIAL CHARTER

EU CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

PILLAR 3

Ensure social provision coverage	Art 12; Art 23	Art 34	Goal 1 – target 3
Guarantee access to social services	Art 14	Art 34	–
Inform on social rights and benefits	Art 14	Art 34	Goal 1 – target 3
Ensure access to legal assistance	Art 16; Art 17	Art 34	–
Invest in early childhood and care	Art 17	Art 36	Goal 4 – target 2
Provide home care	Art 13; Art 23	Art 36	–
Ensure access to social housing	Art 31	Art 34	–
Ensure health care provision	Art 11	Art 35	Goal 3 - target 8
Ensure unemployment benefits	Art 12	Art 34 – 1	Goal 1
Guarantee minimum income	Art 12	Art 34 – 3	Goal 1
Ensure decent pensions	Art 23	Art 34 – 1	Goal 1
Ensure sustainable financing for social protection	–	–	–

Annex II

Caritas Europa's vision of Europe¹

People in Europe live in an environment of peace, freedom and solidarity, where human and social rights are fully respected and each person, family and community is empowered to develop.

Europe upholds a community of values, where - with deep respect for diversity - people live and interact together in a spirit of mutual service², building the common home of Europe, which revolves around the sacredness of the human person, and which cares for, defends and protects every man and woman.³ There is a thorough understanding and practice of social cohesion in Europe between north and south, east and west.

The voice of the poor and the organisations defending their interests are enhanced, contributing to a more inclusive society. A strong civil society fully participates in recognised dialogue with the state and the economy. The Church in Europe - and so too Caritas - in a renewed Christian ecumenism and in dialogue with other religions, loves, serves, and accompanies society as a bridge of encounter and dialogue for all people of good will. A more humane economy reduces inequalities, prevents exploitation and offers employment for all. Migrant integration is based on dialogue and shared rights and responsibilities. The state guarantees social protection for all, preferentially for the weakest in our societies.

Europe is a society open to the world and in continuous dialogue with other regions of the world. Europe cares for the common global home and shares responsibility for the world, being prepared and responsive in humanitarian crises, and contributing to the sustainable development of people and communities in other parts of the world and in partnership with local actors.

¹ *Strategic Framework of Caritas Europa 2020.*

² *Pope Francis' address to the Council of Europe, 25.11.2014.*

³ *Pope Francis' address to the European Parliament, 25.11.2014.*

Annex III

List of references

Caritas Europa 2010, *Poverty among Us, Analytical and Empirical Reporting on the Root Causes of Poverty in Europe and what Caritas does about it*.
<http://www.caritas.eu/sites/default/files/zeropovertya-ben.pdf>

Robert Urbé (ed.), 2013, *The Future of the Welfare State, a comparative study in EU countries*, http://www.caritas.eu/sites/default/files/publication_caritas_europa_-_future_welfare_state_0.pdf

Caritas Europa Crisis Monitoring Report 2015, *Poverty and Inequalities on the Rise*, http://www.caritas.eu/sites/default/files/caritascrisisreport_2015_en_final.pdf

Caritas Europa 2016, *End Poverty in Europe: our solutions to make it happen*, <http://caritascare.eu/pdf/Caritas-Cares-2016.pdf>

OECD, May 2016, *Can Investments in Social Protection Contribute to Subjective Well-being? A cross-country analysis*.

EESC, 2015, Bernd Schlueter (rapporteur), *Opinion on Principles for Effective and Reliable Welfare Provision Systems*, <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.soc-opinions.34485>

European Social Progress Index, http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/maps/social_progress

Jonathan D. Ostry, Andrew Berg, Charalambos G. Tsangarides, 2014, IMF staff discussion note, *Redistribution, Inequality, and Growth*

Fiorenza Lipparini, Seva Phillips, Filippo Addarii, Indy Johar, April 2015, *MAKING IMPACT REAL: Encouraging investment into social infrastructure and public good to stimulate the European economy*, <http://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/MakingImpactReal.pdf>

Olivier De Schutter (coord.), 2010, *The European Social Charter: A social constitution for Europe*.

Denis Bouget, Hugh Frazer, Eric Marlier, Sebastiano Sabato and Bart Vanhercke, April 2015, *Social Investment in Europe - A study of national policies*.

A. Bonilla García and J.V. Gruat, ILO, 2003, *Social Protection – a Life Cycle Continuum investment for social Justice, Poverty Reduction and sustainable Development*.

Joan Muyskens, Centre of Full Employment and Equity, 2015, *Inclusive Labour Market: a role for Job Guarantee*



“Injustice is not invincible.”

Pope Francis, Laudato Si' 74 (2015)





Rue de la Charité 43
1210 Brussels - Belgium

Tel. +32 (0)2 280 02 80

info@caritas.eu
www.caritas.eu

caritascare.eu